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& Contae Luimnigh  
Limerick City  
& County Council

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# AN EXPLORATION OF THE RECREATION & AMENITY POTENTIAL OF THE MAIGUE RIVERS

## Phase 1: Baseline Report of Potential Opportunities



Prepared for: Maigue Rivers Trust

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## The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas



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## 1.0 Introduction

The Maigue Rivers Trust commissioned SLR Consulting to undertake an Exploration of the Recreation and Amenity Potential of the Maigue Rivers in County Limerick. This report presents the findings of the first phase of the study, based on desk research, consultations with a wide range of stakeholders and identification of potential options.

SLR Environmental Consulting (Ireland) Limited (**SLR Consulting/ SLR**) was appointed by the Maigue Rivers Trust to undertake an *Exploration of the Recreation and Amenity Potential of the Maigue Rivers* in County Limerick, in December 2020. This report presents the findings of the first phase of the study, including baseline research and investigation of current provision of recreational amenities.

### 1.1 The Maigue Rivers Trust

Rivers Trusts are charities, established by local people, to protect and improve rivers, streams and lakes in a particular river-catchment or an area comprising many river catchments.

The Maigue Rivers Trust (MRT) [www.maigueriverstrust.org](http://www.maigueriverstrust.org) was established in 2016 to protect, enhance and promote the use and enjoyment of the rivers of the Maigue catchment. Central among its objectives are to:

- ✓ **Create awareness** through education programmes, outdoor classrooms and school visits.
- ✓ **Encourage community participation** by developing networks of interest groups to input to the Trust's action plans and to get involved in helping enhance the river.
- ✓ **Improve water quality** by working with sectoral interests to minimise impacts.
- ✓ **Improve fish habitat and fish numbers** by carrying out in-stream works, to better understand current fish stocks and seeking funding for research and fishery management initiatives.
- ✓ **Protect biodiversity** by improving habitat for otter, kingfishers and other species and carrying out catchment wide biodiversity assessments.
- ✓ **Control invasive plants** such as Giant Hogweed, Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam which can seriously affect the biodiversity and amenity value of a river corridor.
- ✓ **Encourage the local angling tradition** by supporting juvenile angling programmes and competition and by supporting angling clubs in the catchment.
- ✓ **Develop amenity access to the river** for recreational activities such as walking, kayaking, archaeology.

The Trust is part of an all-islands network of established rivers trusts in Northern Ireland, England and Wales, and rivers and fisheries trusts in Scotland, linking a wealth of knowledge and expertise in river conservation and management. The Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) and the Local Authority Water and Communities Office (LAWCO) support the rivers trusts across Ireland (the umbrella body for rivers trusts [www.theriverstrust.org](http://www.theriverstrust.org)) with the appointment of an all-island Ireland Development Officer. Through LAWCO, an integrated programme of water management activities (LAWPRO) is carried out in Ireland to meet the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive.

The MRT is engaged in the *Irish Rivers Trust Resilience Pilot Project*, with support from LAWPRO, and have appointed a development officer to coordinate and apply best practice to the Maigue catchment programmes.

A key objective of the Trust is to encourage public appreciation of the river environment by promoting its value for recreation and amenity purposes. It is in this context that the study to explore the recreation and amenity potential of the Maigue catchments was commissioned.

## 1.2 Terms of Reference

The following outlines a summary of the scope of work and objectives as set out in the terms of reference by MRT (see Appendix 1 for full terms of reference).

The aim of this project is to conduct a river recreation and amenity survey that will document river focussed facilities and services, address information gaps, and prescribe a range of potential developments that are likely to be effective. The survey will:

- Collate focussed baseline information on the structure and composition of recreation and amenity provision in the Maigne catchment, and
- Identify potential for developing recreational and leisure activities on and around the rivers in the Maigne catchment.

This will provide required data for the future management of the development in/near the catchment rivers for the benefit of biodiversity, water quality and recreational and other uses by local communities and visitors.

This will include two key phases, with defined deliverables, as follows:

### 1. Analysis of the current usage of the Maigne Rivers for outdoor recreation and amenity

**Deliverable 1:** a document and presentation detailing the current recreation and amenity provision (and condition) for walking, cycling, boating, angling and nature and wildlife observation.

### 2. Identification of the potential for developing recreational and leisure activities on and around the rivers in the Maigne catchment

**Deliverable 2:** a document and presentation that outlines development possibilities in the above categories in order to encourage the interaction with and/or use of the river and/or river environs.

The core objective of this project is identify a suite of recreational and amenity facilities, focused primarily on walking, cycling, boating, angling and nature/ wildlife observation. However, there has been very significant baseline work completed since the foundation of the Trust.

This report presents the findings of the first phase of the study to date. It must be borne in mind that the project has been undertaken during Level 5 of the national Government covid-19 pandemic guidelines, which has prohibited the carrying out of field work. Thus, planned on-site field assessments and face-to-face consultations have not been undertaken to date.

## 1.3 Methodology

Working on the premise that field work was not possible due to government guidelines, the methodology adopted in Phase 1 involved a series of stages:

### 1.3.1 Policy & Strategy Context

A full review of European, national, regional and county policies regarding recreation, tourism and public health was undertaken:

- Review of planning, recreational infrastructure, tourism and biodiversity policies and strategies at EU, national, regional, county and local level;
- Review of Irish and international best practice and options for recreational management;
- Review of local plans, policies and strategies.



A full summary of the review is presented in Appendix 2.

### 1.3.2 Data Gathering

Data gathering through an extensive desk research was undertaken to identify the current provision for recreation in the Maigue Rivers catchment, to include the Maigue, Loobagh, Morningstar, Camogue, Clonshire and Barnakyle rivers, including smaller streams in the catchment. This area drains the eastern portion of County Limerick from the Ballyhoura Mountains in the south, northwards to the Shannon Estuary

### 1.3.3 Mapping

***It must be noted that field work was not possible in this Phase due to Governmental Level 5 restrictions on travel during the covid pandemic in early 2021.***

Desk Mapping was undertaken of a range of natural and cultural heritage features:

- Mapping of geographical, geological and landscape features;
- Designated natural heritage sites, including SACs, SPAs, NHAs and nature reserves.
- Digital mapping of all known recreational and amenity facilities in the Maigue Rivers catchments, including activity trails, heritage sites and amenities;
- Digital mapping of amenities and services, as well as recording of contact details and digital presence.

### 1.3.4 Stakeholder Consultations

A comprehensive list of potential stakeholders was drawn up initially. Consultations were held with a wide range of stakeholders. This included:

- Identification of a full range of stakeholders in the Maigue Rivers catchment for recreation, amenity, landowners and land managers, amenity managers, local development officers, NGOs, active retirement groups, recreational users (walking, cycling, kayaking, rowing, astronomy, birdwatching, angling etc);
- Review of demographics and population profile of County Limerick, and assessment as to how it will influence recreational planning.

Consultations and interviews were held with these stakeholders by telephone/zoom calls, versus face-to-face meetings due to Government Level 5 restrictions during the covid pandemic.

### 1.3.5 International Models of Riverine Recreation

A short review of best practice for riverine recreational models and management was carried out. The UK and USA present some pointers, but given that rivers are owned and managed by different bodies in other jurisdictions, it is clear that in Ireland new models may need to evolve to integrate the recreational opportunities for on-water and beside-water amenities.

### 1.3.6 Citizen Science

A short review of Citizen Science measures was reviewed and a range of relevant initiatives in Ireland were identified through consultations with practitioners in Citizen Science initiatives.

### 1.3.7 Analysis and Conceptualisation

Following each of the above elements, an analysis of the data was carried out and a SCOT analysis developed to identify gaps and possible opportunities for development.

This allowed the identification and mapping of conceptual recreation and amenity opportunities for presentation to the Board of MRT.

The results of Phase 1 of the the work carried out to date are presented in this report.



## 2.0 Policy Context for Recreation & Amenity

This chapter examines the geographical, demographic and policy context for the development of recreational and amenity options for the Maigue Rivers catchments.

### 2.1 What is Recreation?

It is useful to define the concept of 'Recreation' at the outset of the study, with a focus on outdoor recreation for the Maigue Rivers.

**Outdoor recreation refers to those sporting, recreational and holiday pursuits based on use of the resources of the countryside and which contribute to healthy active lifestyles. "Countryside" includes land, water and air. The term "recreation" in this context applies to sporting and recreational activities which operate in the countryside. It does not include sporting activities which take place in the countryside on confined courses or pitches specifically designed and constructed for those sports, e.g. golf, football, show jumping, etc.**

*Definition provided by National Countryside Recreation Strategy*

[www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/127c4b-national-countryside-recreation-strategy/](http://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/127c4b-national-countryside-recreation-strategy/)

Waterways Ireland has developed a system of "blueways" along the inland navigations which are defined as:

**'a network of multi-activity recreational trails, based on or alongside idyllic lakes, canals and rivers in Ireland. They provide scenic routes into the heart of rural Ireland by canoe, bike or on foot. Connect with friends and family as you escape to unique natural environments. Feel totally chilled out on a guided paddling trip; build up an appetite on an exhilarating electric bike trip; or gently meander on a canal-side walk. Tranquil *Blueway* journeys, where the pace of life is slow, along glistening waters, softly fringed and abundant with nature'.**

[www.waterwaysireland.org](http://www.waterwaysireland.org)

Across Europe, the terms 'Green' and 'Blue' infrastructure are commonly used to describe natural and semi-natural areas and features (land, vegetation and waterways) in public or private, rural, urban and peri-urban areas that deliver a broad range of eco-system services (water and air quality, biodiversity) that underpin a healthy environment, including spaces for recreation and amenity<sup>1</sup>.

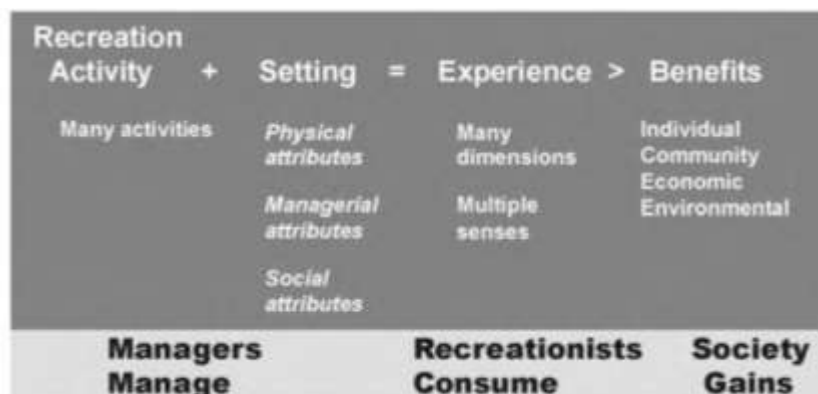
A healthy network of green infrastructure provides positive benefits for citizens, visitors and biodiversity, but it requires careful planning and coordination. Green infrastructure includes biodiversity-rich natural areas such as rivers, woodlands, ponds or wild flower meadows. Across the EU, the Natura 2000 network of protected nature areas<sup>2</sup> constitutes the backbone of the continent's green infrastructure to conserve and revitalise degraded environments and to catalyse the development of wider networks of green infrastructure.

In the European sense, 'green infrastructure' describes what infrastructure is and what it can do. Traditionally, public 'green areas' were seen simply as places for leisure or forestry for example, whereas green infrastructure offers more multi-functionality at potentially lower cost. For example, planting trees and restoring wetlands may be more effective than building a water treatment plant or ever higher flood walls. Additionally, green infrastructure provides opportunities to develop enhanced habitats for biodiversity and local mitigation of climate change.

<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/ecosystems/benefits/index\\_en.htm](https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/ecosystems/benefits/index_en.htm)

<sup>2</sup> Natura 2000 includes the Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) network

Since the expansion of outdoor recreation in the USA in the 1970s, it is recognised that well managed infrastructure in the right setting will deliver excellent experiences to individual users, with significant social and economic benefits (see below).



In Ireland, in discussing outdoor recreational infrastructure, 'green' typically refers to land-based activities (walking, cycling, hiking, nature viewing) and 'blue' refers to water based activities (kayaking, canoeing, swimming, boating, angling etc).

Throughout the study, these broad terms will be used in describing recreational and amenity potential, linked to the concept of integrated 'green-blue' infrastructure.

## 2.2 Policy Context for Recreation & Amenity in Mague Rivers

There is an extensive international, national, regional and county policy framework to support the development of green and blue infrastructure, designed to enhance the availability and accessibility of recreational amenities for both citizens and tourists.

A review of the extensive policy framework for recreation, biodiversity, health and green infrastructure planning was undertaken. From EU level to county plans in Limerick, almost all policy- and decision-makers are committed to delivering extended green and blue infrastructure to meet broader environmental and climate objectives, through smarter travel, recreational amenity and public health measures.

Critically, it is the stated policy of Limerick City & County Council across its (draft) county development plan (CDP) and local area plans (LAPs) to ensure that community infrastructure and opportunities for passive and active recreation are exploited to contribute to vibrant villages and towns. The LC&CC also commits to protecting semi-natural open spaces from inappropriate development in the interest of recreational enjoyment and community well-being, flood protection and biodiversity. It seeks to work in partnership with other agencies to develop active and passive recreational opportunities, such as extending the recreational walkway/ cycleway access along rivers. Such a policy is conducive to healthy communities, inclusivity and accessibility to recreational amenities for all abilities.

These policies are summarised in Table 1 below, while a full review is presented in Appendix 2. If even a proportion of these policies are delivered, then the outlook for outdoor recreational amenities in Limerick and nationally looks positive.

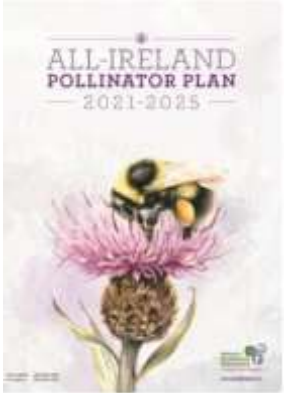
Coupled with the policy framework, the Programme for Government 2020 made significant phased funding provision to realise the ambitious targets.

**Table 1 Policy Framework for Recreation and Amenity Development**

Policy / Strategy	Key Elements
<b>INTERNATIONAL / EUROPEAN</b>	
<b>United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals</b>  <a href="https://sdgs.un.org/goals">https://sdgs.un.org/goals</a>	<a href="#">The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</a> , adopted by all UN Member States in 2015, is a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for the planet. At its heart are seventeen (17) <i>Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</i> , with an urgent call for action by all countries in a global partnership. The SDGs recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth –while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests. The SDGs address issues of <u>water</u> , <u>energy</u> , <u>climate</u> , <u>oceans</u> , <u>urbanization</u> , <u>transport</u> , <u>science and technology</u> . In order to make the 2030 Agenda a reality, broad ownership of the SDGs must translate into a strong commitment by all stakeholders to implement the global goals at national, regional and local level.
<b>Paris Climate Agreement (International, 2016)</b>	Climate change is a global emergency that requires coordinated solutions at all levels and international cooperation to help countries move toward a low-carbon economy. To tackle climate change and its negative impacts, 197 countries adopted the <a href="#">Paris Agreement</a> at the <a href="#">COP21 in Paris</a> on 12 December 2015.
<b>EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030</b>	The European Commission adopted the new <a href="#">EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and an associated Action Plan (annex)</a> - a comprehensive, ambitious, long-term plan for protecting nature and reversing the degradation of ecosystems. It aims to put Europe's biodiversity on a path to recovery by 2030 with benefits for people, the climate and the planet, underpinning EU's contribution to international negotiations on the global post-2020 biodiversity framework. The Biodiversity Strategy aims to build resilience to future climate change impacts, forest fires, food insecurity or disease outbreaks, including by protecting wildlife. It contains specific commitments by 2030:
<b>European Green Infrastructure Strategy</b>	The EC adopted an EU-wide strategy to promote green infrastructure, to restore the health of ecosystems and ensure that natural areas remain connected together, and allow species to move across their entire natural habitat, so that nature keeps on delivering its many benefits to us. The strategy promotes the deployment of green infrastructure across Europe as well as the development of a Trans-European Network for Green Infrastructure in Europe, a TEN-G network.
<b>EU Territorial Agenda 2030: <i>A Future for all Places</i></b>	The <i>EU Territorial Agenda 2030</i> was adopted at an informal meeting of the Council of Ministers responsible for Spatial Planning and Territorial Development, in December 2020, under the German Presidency. It builds upon the Green Deal and constitutes a high level commitment to principles of place-based sustainable development and territorial cohesion.
<b>EU Europarc Federation</b>	Established as an EU funded LIFE programme in 1995 to examine sustainable tourism in protected areas. EuroParc published a charter in 2000 that commits signatories to implement a local strategy for sustainable tourism defined as: <i>'Any form of development, management, or tourist activity which ensures the long-term protection and preservation of natural, cultural, and social resources and contributes in a positive and equitable manner to the economic development and well-being of individuals living, working or staying in protected areas'.</i>
<b>IRELAND – NATIONAL RECREATION &amp; LANDSCAPE POLICIES</b>	
<b>National Countryside Recreation Strategy (to be updated by Comhairle na Tuaithe 2021)</b>	Outdoor recreation refers to those sporting, recreational and holiday pursuits based on use of the resources of the countryside and which contribute to healthy active lifestyles. "Countryside" includes land, water and air. The term "recreation" in this context applies to sporting and recreational activities which operate in the countryside. It does <u>not</u> include sporting activities which take

	place in the countryside on confined courses or pitches specifically designed and constructed for those sports, e.g. golf, football, show jumping, etc <sup>3</sup> .
<b>Outdoor Recreation Plan for Public Lands (2017-2021) Coillte, NPWS, Waterways Ireland, Bord na Móna, Inland Fisheries Ireland</b>	The national for public lands and waters was developed by five public landowning organisations (Coillte, NPWS, Waterways Ireland, Bord na Móna and Inland Fisheries Ireland, respectively), as a strategic development plan for recreation on public lands and waters, comprising 15% of Ireland's land surface. The plan focused on seven strategic themes including: managing & maintenance of recreational infrastructure; improving recreational facilities; developing consistent standards; promotion of outdoor recreation; and maximising the benefits to communities.
<b>Outdoor Rural Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) Dept. Rural &amp; Community Development, May 2020</b>	ORIS contributes to the strategic objective of strengthened rural economies and communities as set out in the <i>Project Ireland 2040</i> strategy. The objective is to provide funding for new outdoor recreational infrastructure and for necessary repair, enhancement or promotion of existing outdoor recreational infrastructure in countryside areas. The scheme invests in the physical infrastructure that underpins sporting and recreational activities based on the use of the resources of the countryside; contribute to active lifestyles while building on the economic and tourism potential, and so are to the benefit of both local communities and tourist visitors alike. The scheme may also provide some limited funding for the marketing and promotion of such infrastructure, typically as part of a wider project involving capital supports.
<b>Guide to Planning &amp; Developing of Small Vessel Water Trails in Ireland (2013) Waterways Ireland, with ISC, NTO, Canoe Ireland</b>	This practical guide sets out the general considerations for planning and development of a small vessel water trails for kayaking and canoeing, including snorkelling, exemplified by case studies. The guide proposes practical considerations of requisite trail attributes, safety, strategic planning & partnership, development costs, as well as responsibilities for longer term management & maintenance. Key considerations are issues of ownership rights in relation to the navigation, as well as fishing rights and the need for landowner consultation and agreement to gain permissive access.
<b>National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017 – 2021</b>	Objective 1 – Mainstream biodiversity into decision-making across all sectors; 1.1.3. All Public Authorities and private sector bodies move towards no net loss of biodiversity through strategies, planning, mitigation measures, appropriate offsetting and/or investment in Blue-Green infrastructure; 1.1.6. Local Authorities will review and update their Development Plans and policies to include policies and objectives for the protection and restoration of biodiversity; 1.1.7. Develop a Green Infrastructure at local, regional and national levels and promote the use of nature based solutions for the delivery of a coherent and integrated network; Objective 6 – Expand and improve management of protected areas and species; 6.2.1. Increase connectivity of the protected areas network using appropriate buffer zones, corridors, stepping stones and/or flyways.
<b>The All Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021 – 2025 (5-year Road Map)</b>	The 2015-2020 Pollinator Plan made it clear that 33% of Ireland's bee species are threatened with extinction due to reduced amounts of food and safe nesting sites in our landscapes.  The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan for 2021-2025 is a new five-year road map that aims to help bees, other pollinating insects and our wider biodiversity – as part of better management of our whole landscape to permanently support our struggling biodiversity. It is more

<sup>3</sup> [www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/127c4b-national-countryside-recreation-strategy/](http://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/127c4b-national-countryside-recreation-strategy/)

	<p>ambitious with multiple partners coming together to deliver coordinated actions and encourages farmers, local authorities, schools, gardeners and businesses to create habitats where pollinators can survive and thrive.</p> <p>The AIPP 2021-2025 has <b>186 actions</b> spread across <b>six objectives</b>. It has a 16-person steering group who provide oversight, with implementation coordinated by the National Biodiversity Data Centre. Responsibility for delivering the actions is shared out among the main partner organisations, who have committed to taking action and funding them. There are 6 core objectives:</p> <p><b>Objective 1:</b> <a href="#">Making farmland pollinator friendly.</a>  <b>Objective 2:</b> <a href="#">Making public land pollinator friendly.</a>  <b>Objective 3:</b> <a href="#">Making private land pollinator friendly.</a>  <b>Objective 4:</b> <a href="#">All-Ireland Honeybee Strategy.</a>  <b>Objective 5:</b> <a href="#">Conserving rare pollinators.</a>  <b>Objective 6:</b> <a href="#">Strategic coordination of the Plan.</a></p>
<p><b>'Realising our Potential' National Action Plan for Rural Development</b> (Dept. Culture, Heritage &amp; The Gaeltacht, 2017)</p>	<p>The National Action Plan for Rural Development commits to delivering funding for recreational infrastructure, training and jobs creation, using our natural assets. It identified a number of pillars to promote rural development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pillar 3 '<i>Maximising our Rural Tourism and Recreational Potential</i>', focuses on the development of greenways and blueways, and other recreational opportunities, and to support sustainable rural jobs through targeted tourism initiatives.</li> <li>1. Pillar 5 <i>Improving Rural Infrastructure and Connectivity</i> includes improvement of connectivity of rural areas through broadband connection and improved transport links.</li> </ul>
<p><b>National Landscape Strategy for Ireland (2015-2025)</b> Dept. Arts, Heritage &amp; The Gaeltacht</p>	<p>The <i>National Landscape Strategy</i> (NLS) obliges Ireland to implement policy changes and objectives concerning the management, protection and planning of the landscape. The NLS is used to ensure compliance with the European Landscape Strategy and to establish principles for protecting and enhancing our landscapes while positively managing its change.</p>
<p><b>National Peatlands Strategy (2015)</b></p>	<p>The <i>National Peatlands Strategy</i> was prepared in 2015 to guide the national approach to peatlands management and conservation, underpinned by consideration of land management/ peatland conservation and restoration, and protection of habitats/ hydrology</p>
<p><b>Birdwatch Ireland</b> Status of Biodiversity (2019)</p>	<p><a href="https://birdwatchireland.ie/app/uploads/2020/05/BWI-collated-data-on-status-of-biodiversity-1.pdf">https://birdwatchireland.ie/app/uploads/2020/05/BWI-collated-data-on-status-of-biodiversity-1.pdf</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two thirds of Ireland's regularly occurring wild bird species are Red or Amber-Listed Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland. <b>Farmland birds in particular are continuing to show declines and no recovery</b> from the catastrophic and steady crash in population since the 70s. Habitat loss &amp; and change in farming practices are leading causes of losses.</li> </ul> <p>Reports on catastrophic decline of bird species on agricultural lands from 1970 – 2010 and onwards to the present –due to other categories, with the incidence predicted to increase over the next 12 years; this has been linked to the threat from fertiliser and pollution on selected fish species<sup>4</sup></p>


<sup>4</sup> NPWS (2019). The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland, p. 90 - <https://www.npws.ie/publications/search?title=article+17&keyword=&author=&series=All&year=&x=31&y=8>


NATIONAL HEALTH POLICIES	
<b>National Sports Policy (2018-2027)</b>	The policy underpins all sports and recreational-related development in Ireland. It starkly estimates that 4,000 deaths a year are attributable to Irish people not engaging in enough physical activity. Physical inactivity has been estimated to cost Ireland approximately €1.5 billion per year.
<b>'Get Ireland Active'</b> <b>The National Physical Activity Plan (2016, NPAP)</b>	The NPAP made specific recommendations for Local Authority action to get citizens active: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development and promotion of walking and cycling strategies in each LA area</li> <li>• Ensure planning, design and development of towns and villages promote activity through a network of footpaths and cycling routes;</li> <li>• Continuous professional development of those responsible for design on the role of physical activity</li> <li>• Explore opportunities for recreation in the natural environment.</li> </ul>
<b>Healthy Ireland 2013-2025 – A Framework for Improving Health and Wellness</b> <b>Dept. of Health, 2013</b>	The vision is “ <i>a Healthy Ireland, where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone’s responsibility</i> ”. Improved access to recreation is an integral part of the strategy. Greater community connections and cohesion are critical to a successful delivery “ <i>the impact of positive social interaction cannot be underestimated. Social interaction and supporting social connectedness and involvement in community life are a keystone in empowering people and building strong communities for health and wellbeing.</i> ”
<b>Children’s Sport Participation and Physical Activity Study (CSPPA) Irish Sports Council with the ESRI, 2013</b>	The CSPPA study aimed to:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) provide a national database of physical activity, physical education and sport participation levels of children and youth in Ireland,</li> <li>ii) assess indices of health and fitness in a sub-sample of the target population,</li> <li>iii) collect and analyse information on the factors influencing participation ... all with a view to getting Irish children more active more often.</li> </ol>
<b>'People, Place and Policy – Growing Tourism to 2025'</b> <b>Dept. Transport, Tourism and Sport</b>	The Government’s vision for tourism is that Ireland will have a vibrant and attractive tourism sector that makes a significant contribution to employment across the country, as set out in <i>People, Place and Policy: Growing Tourism to 2025</i> . The objective of investing in, and developing the tourism proposition will seek to maximise tourism’s potential to support regional economic and social development.
<b>Culture 2025</b> <b>Éire Ildánach 2025</b> <b>Dept. Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural &amp; Gaeltacht Affairs</b>	<i>Culture 2025</i> sets out an overarching vision and framework for the future and outlines the priorities for action over the coming years. Through this policy framework, the Government seeks to nurture creativity, boost citizen participation, help more people to follow a sustainable career in the cultural sector, promote Ireland’s cultural wealth and ensure a cultural contribution to wider social and economic goals.
<b>Heritage Act 1995</b>	The definition of heritage in the Act includes monuments, archaeology & related objects, architectural heritage, flora, fauna, wildlife habitats, landscapes, seascapes, wrecks, geology, heritage gardens and parks and inland waterways. Heritage can also intangible, including local history, folklore, place names, culture, collective memories, traditions, historic documents, language, rituals, symbolism, fashion, literature, song and music, spiritually and genealogy. It consists of objects, structures, and processes that are passed from generation to generation as they have a distinct historic, social, cultural or environmental value.



NATIONAL – REGIONAL – COUNTY – LOCAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK	
<b>National Planning Framework Project 2040</b>	<p>The NPF sets out ten (10) National Strategic Outcomes (NSO) or priorities to guide future development: Compact Growth; - Enhanced Regional Accessibility; - Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities; - High Quality International Connectivity; - Sustainable Mobility; - A Strong Economy supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills; - Enhanced Amenities and Heritage; - Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society; - Sustainable Management of Water and other Environmental Resources; - Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health.</p> <p>Community and Recreation are key issues in providing facilities and amenities that support Community, Economy and Environment.</p>
<b>The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region, adopted in January 2020</b>  <b>RSES Southern Region 2020</b>	<p>The RSES sets out regional policy for the growth of the Southern Region for the next 12 years. It seeks to support the regeneration and growth of Limerick City with high quality mixed-use sustainable and transformative projects, meeting national and international standards in innovation, quality design, exemplary urbanism and place making. Furthermore, the RSES seeks to revitalise Limerick's towns, villages and rural areas.</p> <p>RSES recommends a Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan, for <i>Limerick – Shannon Metropolitan Area (LSMA)</i> which includes Annacotty, Castleconnell, Patrickswell, and Mungret in Limerick. The LSMA has growth potential, with regard to the third level institutes; access to Shannon Airport and Shannon Foynes Port facilities; for the region to prosper, a strong Limerick City is paramount. The provision of <i>walking and cycling infrastructure</i> is identified as a means to sustain healthy communities and promote quality of life. Improved quality of life is seen as a means to build and safeguard inclusive communities and crosses all facets of the strategy.</p> <p>The RSES supports the development of new regional and local scale recreational and sporting facilities, including stadia, public parks and green spaces. It encourages public bodies and private clubs to work together and to develop cooperative arrangements for the use of private spaces, which are not often readily available to the public. Greenways boost the economy, and deliver health and community benefits. The RSES promotes potential for linkages between the Great Southern Greenway and the North and South Kerry Greenways. Other areas such as estuaries, forests and uplands are also highlighted as important natural amenities and key natural and recreational assets for the community. The development of blueways and access to waterways is identified throughout the strategy. Built heritage and archaeology have long played a role in local communities and many act as tourist attractions within communities. The RSES identifies community involvement as critical to protect our heritage through community and educational programmes such as 'Adopt a Monument'.</p>
<b>Shannon Catchment Flood Risk &amp; Management Plan Studies (CFRAM) - OPW</b> <b>Flood Risk Assessment 2018 Shannon Estuary South (OuM24)</b>	<p>Flood Risk Management LC&amp;CC is committed to managing flood risk in accordance with the principles set out in Government guidance 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management' (DEHLG and OPW, Nov, 2009).</p>
<b>Limerick 2030 Vision: An Economic and Spatial Plan for Limerick</b>	<p>The Limerick 2030 Vision sets out a framework that integrates economic development with spatial planning, underpinned by bespoke marketing. The plan has the support of major public and private stakeholders in Limerick and dynamic 'Limerick Economic Forum', chaired by Mr Denis Brosnan. It is a rallying call for public sector action and private sector investment of over €1 billion in enterprise and investment infrastructure - to transform Limerick through the economic, social and physical infrastructure.</p>
	<a href="https://www.limerick.ie/council/services/planning-and-property/limerick-development-plan/limerick-development-plan-2022-2028">https://www.limerick.ie/council/services/planning-and-property/limerick-development-plan/limerick-development-plan-2022-2028</a>



<p><b>Limerick City &amp; County Development Plan 2022-2028</b></p> <p><i>Under consultation</i> <i>First combined city &amp; county development plan</i></p> 	<p><i>existing (2010-2016) Settlement Hierarchy for Limerick County</i> – Mungret is a Tier 1 Gateway Town to Limerick City; Kilmallock is a Tier 2 Key Town; Adare, Croom and Patrickswell are Tier 3 Centres of Transport Corridors. All others (Bruff, Bruree, Kilfinane, Pallaskenry and Caherconlish are ‘Tier 4 Small Towns’; all others are ‘small villages’.</p> <p>Ecologically sensitive areas located within Limerick include aquatic and terrestrial ecological areas, part of an extensive network of watercourses and wetlands: - <i>Rivers</i>, streams and riparian zones (such as River Shannon, Abbey River, Groody River, Mulkear River, River Mague, River Feale and the Allaghaun River); - <i>Loughs</i> (such as Westfields, Lough Gur, Dohoye Lough); and – <i>Bogs, fens and marshes</i> (Knockalisheen, Griston Bog and Ellaha fen).</p> <p>The provision of walking and cycling to sustain healthy communities and promote quality of life.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Development of greenways and blueways provides a valuable recreational resource to local communities, as well as tourism potential. The Great Southern Greenway offers huge potential to develop linkages with the (emerging) Kerry Greenways. Access to the River Shannon has potential for the development of blueways and a world class waterfront along its banks. Embracing the network of rivers throughout Limerick should be examined and developing a blueway network should be explored throughout the City and County.</li> <li>2. Sports &amp; Recreation: collaborative provision of new recreational and sporting facilities to support the multifunctional use of buildings. LC&amp;C are preparing a <i>Sports and Recreation Strategy for Local Authority owned facilities</i>. This will feed into the preparation of the proposed Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Limerick City &amp; County Development Plan 2022-2028</b></p> <p><i>Background-paper on Environment, Heritage, Landscape &amp; Green-Infrastructure.</i></p>	<p>Green Infrastructure planning promotes integrated spatial planning by identifying multifunctional zones and by incorporating habitat restoration measures and other connectivity elements into various land-use plans and policies, linking peri-urban and urban areas. Green infrastructure is made up of open spaces, waterways, gardens, woodlands, green corridors, wildlife habitats, street trees, natural heritage and open countryside. The concept of multifunctional areas of land is a key feature of green infrastructure in providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recreational space for healthy exercise, play and outdoor relaxation;</li> <li>• wildlife habitats;</li> <li>• Contributing an attractive natural element to an area;</li> <li>• Improving local environmental quality in people’s everyday living and working environments;</li> <li>• providing flood storage space and riparian habitats;</li> <li>• helping areas to cope with the impacts of climate change;</li> <li>• Providing areas for local food production - in allotments, gardens and through agriculture;</li> <li>• Foster environmental awareness within the community.</li> </ul> <p>Acknowledgment of the importance of green infrastructure should be accompanied by recognition of the fact that it should be carefully managed and that ecological needs should take precedence over public access and amenity. It is often the case that amenity uses and needs are different and from those of green infrastructure and ecological processes</p>
<p><b>Limerick Cultural Strategy - A Framework 2016 – 2030</b></p>	<p>Limerick Cultural Strategy aims to grow the county’s cultural capacity by retaining and attracting creative practitioners to live and work in Limerick, to place culture at the heart of the economic growth and regeneration of Limerick; to engage citizens through involvement in culture growth and regeneration of Limerick and to increase and support the role of the creative industries in Limerick.</p>

	Cultural events are key enablers to promoting and attracting people to the town. At a local level, the Council sees a similar role for cultural opportunities in rural towns.
<b>Heritage Plan 2017-2030 Limerick City &amp; County Council</b>	Limerick stretches back over 5,000 years and more- remains of deserted medieval settlements, as at Abington and Tomdeeley, near Askeaton. However, Kilmallock and Newcastle West, Adare and Askeaton and Limerick City have the richest physical remains of the medieval past. Range: town walls, religious foundations, to castles and more modest houses. Other features, such as the pigeon house at Adare, can be found in both urban and rural locations. Our medieval urban foundations evolved e.g. at Kilmallock where provision was made for the town to extend northwards. While at Adare the original town of the Middle Ages was virtually abandoned in the 19th century as the Dunraven family sought to develop a model streetscape as an enhancement of their demesne.
<b>Limerick Cultural Strategy - A Framework 2016 – 2030 Limerick Arts Office (May 2016)</b>	Limerick has a proud, rich history and heritage that has informed our culture. The objectives of the strategy broadly concur with the themes of the Government policy document, Culture 2025. Ambition 5 of Limerick's Cultural Strategy states: "To place culture at the heart of the economic growth and regeneration of Limerick" and outlines objectives to achieve this ambition – to recognise the unique qualities of Limerick's Heritage – historic and contemporary – and incorporate these into Development Plans and creative place-making strategies as a force for revitalising urban space and communities.
<b>Limerick Tourism Development Strategy 2019 -2023 Limerick City &amp; County Council</b> 	The LTDS identified Limerick's unique position on the west coast of Ireland, and as a gateway to the Wild Atlantic Way, as central to developing the sector. The strategy to develop tourism across Limerick city and county envisages that the total number of visitors to Limerick will reach 1.1 million per annum, generating more than €360 million in revenue and creating 1,500 new jobs by 2023 ( <i>Note: projections were made per-covid pandemic</i> ). It aligns with the <a href="#">Limerick 2030 Economic and Spatial Plan for Limerick</a> which has earmarked tourism as one of the key sectors for future growth and addresses the need for a joined-up tourism strategy for Limerick, with a more coordinated approach to the development of the sector. The framework for tourism is based around four key drivers, with a solid foundation of attributes and assets in both urban and rural environments: based on following Themes 1. Into the Blue 2. Energy Unleashed 3. Vibrant History 4. Alive and Kicking
<b>Kilmallock Local Area Plan 2019-2025</b>  <b>Kilmallock Walled Town: Public Realm Plan</b>	The Council is guided by the national tourism policy outlined in the Tourism Action Plan 2019 – 2021 by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, and at a local level by the <i>Kilmallock Walled Town Public Realm Plan, 2009</i> , and the <i>Limerick Tourism Strategy 2017 – 2023</i> . The tourism strategy seeks to capture opportunities for tourism development in Limerick City and County. Kilmallock has been identified as a part of the medieval stronghold theme of the Strategy and is part of the cluster titled ' <i>Foundation and Frontier</i> ' which includes Lough Gur, Bruff, Bruree and Kilmallock. The importance of tourism to the town is recognised in the <i>Socio Economic Plan</i> and the <i>Kilmallock Sustainable Development Report 2018</i> .
<b>ADARE Local Area Plan 2015-2021</b>	Adare has ... a wide range of activities including sports, arts and culture, local history and heritage, youth, environmental and local development. ...as well as important features and amenities that offer both active and passive recreational opportunities and provide important wildlife habitats. The recently completed all-abilities play-ground at the Adare Recreation and Community

	Complex in the Manor Fields is of enormous benefit for local children. The River Bank Walk along the Maigue provides an area of passive and active amenity and is an important contributor to the quality of life of the residents of the village and surrounding areas. The Council ... will endeavour to work with the local community in relation to community and recreational requirements. The identification of possible amenity walkways and cycle routes throughout the village forms an important part of the plan.
<b>Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026</b>	Theriver amenity within Croom offers potential for tourism development and works to the walkway along the river bank has facilitated access..... It is important that this resource is harnessed in a sustainable manner. Sustainable tourism development will not only increase revenue for the area, but will also deliver on conservation, environmental and social goals. The River Maigue is the most important natural asset of the town and has further potential for use as an amenity. the recreational value of the River Maigue has been developed through the linear walkway/cycleway which runs parallel to the river. The adjacent 13 acres of parkland is filled with woodland paths, seating, picnic areas and a children's playground. With an integrated approach from landowners, lands to the rear of Main Street adjacent to the river provide a potential development opportunity for continuing this walkway along the river. It is the <u>policy of this plan to encourage the development of this area.</u>
<b>Kilfinane Local Area Plan to 2022</b>	Kilfinane is set on a plateau north of the Ballyhoura Mountains and south of the Golden Vale, Capitalising on Kilfinane's location on the slopes of the Ballyhoura mountains and associated outdoor recreational activities, the town has become increasingly important to service tourism. The Glenduff stream and the River Loobagh (latter outside the LAP boundary) are recognised as an important amenity and are valued as a natural habitat. The designation of lands by the stream as open space and recreation recognises the importance of the natural habitat of the river. Indicative Walkways have been indicated on the zoning maps, contributing to the river as an amenity and to reinforce the buffer zone between the river and any form of development.
<b>BALLYHOURA/ MAIGUE RIVERS RELEVANT PLANS</b>	
<b>Ballyhoura Country 2020 – The Way Forward (TDI)</b>	<b>Vision</b> To firmly establish Ballyhoura Country as an outstanding Tourism and Recreational destination in the Heart of Rural Munster offering an exceptional range and quality of experiences in outdoor activity pursuits, and living and built cultural heritage that will bring significant socio-economic benefits to the residents and businesses of the area and a better experience for the visitor.  To realise the proposed vision and the associated goals there are five recommended key strategies for Ballyhoura Country over the 2015-2020 period. These follow best international practice for destination development and form the foundation for the action plan..
<b>Munster Vales – Strategic Plan 2020-2025</b>	<b>The Munster Vales five-year plan</b> will support the development of tourism opportunities and position Munster Vales as a key tourism destination. The strategy aims to <b>maximise partnership</b> working between the four local authorities, providing opportunities for local businesses with joined up products and experiences across the area. By harnessing collaborative investment and support, the strategy will deliver <b>increased visitor numbers</b> , encouraging visitors to <b>stay longer</b> and <b>spend more</b> across the towns, villages and tourism businesses in the area, supporting a sustainable rural economy based on low-impact activity tourism. Recommended focus on Communities; Awareness; Connection; Experiences; and Experience Routes
<b>Concept Development and Feasibility Study – Munster Peaks (Ballyhoura Development 2014)</b>	'The guiding vision for the 'Great Southern Mountain Park' is the development of a coherent, differentiated and cohesive destination offering a diverse range of outdoor recreational activities, and living and built cultural heritage, a combination that will bring significant socioeconomic benefits to the people of the area. Concept: Adventure tourism can include 'hard adventure activities' such as bungee jumping, white-water rafting and skydiving, the majority of those undertaking an adventure activity are engaging in 'soft adventure' such as walking, cycling, angling, horse riding and water sports. The soft adventure category can even extend to activities such as archaeology and birdwatching.

## 2.3 Local Development Policies

A number of key development documents have been developed by Ballyhoura Development, Ballyhoura Country and West Limerick Resources Limited to develop recreational and tourism policies for the sub-region.

These were considered for the development of some of the concepts contained herein.

### **The importance of community and green infrastructure in Local Area Planning.**

National and local policies recognise the importance of community infrastructure and recreation opportunities to a vibrant community.

The collective well-being of an urban settlement is correlated with the quality of the urban environment. Open spaces assist LCCC and the community achieve the wider Objectives for biodiversity, health and well-being, placemaking and identity. Open spaces can contribute to the intangible values of a community's sense of pride, civic activities and engagement, and collective ownership.

Green spaces contribute to the legibility of an urban settlement assisting one's sense of location, direction and orientation. Local area plans seek to ensure that community infrastructure and a range of open space opportunities for passive and active recreation contribute to a vibrant, prosperous urban settlement. This supports the principles of healthy communities, inclusivity and accessibility to facilities for all abilities, and sustainability to ensure Limerick is a greener, cleaner, more welcoming place to live, work, visit and attract investment.

### **At a local level, relevant policy documents include:**

- Limerick and Clare Sports and Physical Recreation Strategy, June 2013
- Limerick City Council Sports and Recreation Plan 2010 – 2019
- County Limerick Recreation Strategy and Action Plan 2010 – 2012
- Healthy Limerick programme launched in 2017;
- The Limerick Cultural Strategy – A Framework 2016-2030;
- Local Area Plans - various
- Limerick Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2016 – 2021

## 3.0 Environmental & Cultural Setting of the Maigue Rivers

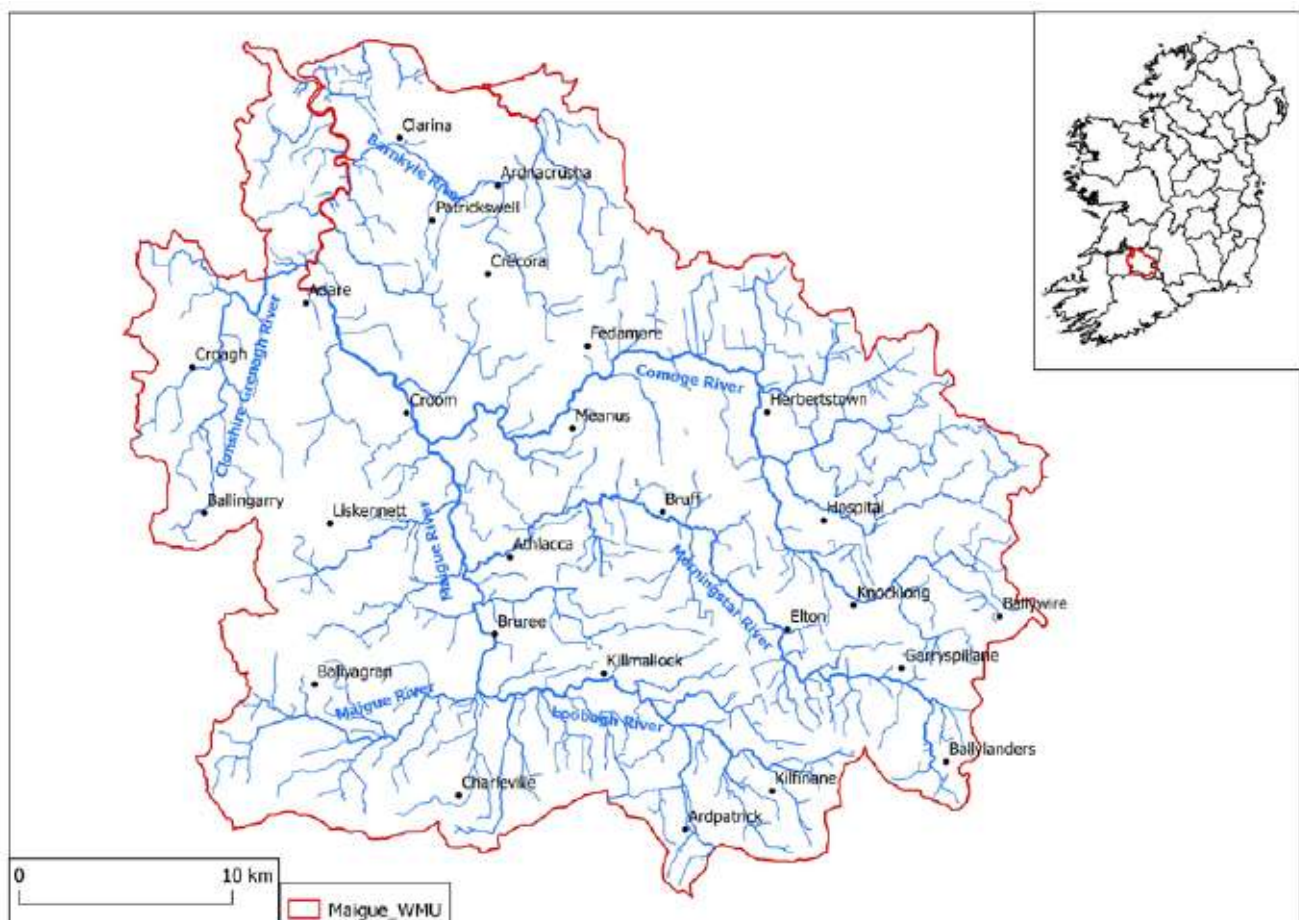
The River Maigue and its principal tributaries, the rivers Loobagh, Morningstar, Clonshire, Barnakyle and Camoge, encompass a land area of 1000 km<sup>2</sup> and includes 1300 km of river channel, mainly in County Limerick. The rivers are situated in a particular geological and geographical environmental setting which determines the natural and cultural history of the catchment, as well as its recreational potential.

### 3.1 Natural Environment of Maigue Rivers

The River Maigue and its principal tributaries, the rivers Loobagh, Morningstar, Clonshire, Barnakyle and Camoge, encompass a land area of 1000 km<sup>2</sup> and include 1300 km of river channel, mainly in Co. Limerick. The river displays a classic dendritic drainage pattern as it crosses the lowlands of East Limerick (Figure 1).

The rivers Maigue and Loobagh rise in the Mullaghareirk and Ballyhoura Mountains to the south and southeast of County Limerick and drain northwards to the Shannon Estuary. The Morningstar and Camogie Rivers rise in the Galtees and Slieve Felim Mountains respectively, while the Clonshire rises in the hills at Knockfierna and the Barnakyle at Fedamore respectively.

Figure 1 Map of Maigue Rivers Catchment





The landscape of Limerick is largely sculpted by glacial activity, comprising rich pastoral lowlands with rolling hills, lakes, rivers, fens and woodlands. The Maigue Rivers are mainly situated in glacially derived soils that support diverse ecology and species-rich habitats, including fields and hedgerows, riparian zones alongside small lakes and rivers, as well as estuarine wetlands. The Maigue Rivers, Bleach, Glasha and Dromore Loughs are popular for angling, boating and a limited number of water sports, as well as for their amenity value and beauty.

East County Limerick is well served by national roads infrastructure. It is traversed by major national arterial routes, including the Limerick-Tralee/Killarney M20-N21; the Limerick-Cork N20 (planned to be upgraded to motorway M20), as well as the east-west scenic Shannon Estuary Way (N69), an extension of the Wild Atlantic Way. The N24 feeds north-westwards from Waterford-Tipperary to Limerick City in the eastern part of the county and catchment. A network of regional roads (R511, R512, R513, R516, R518) connect the main towns and settlements in the catchment areas of the Maigue Rivers.

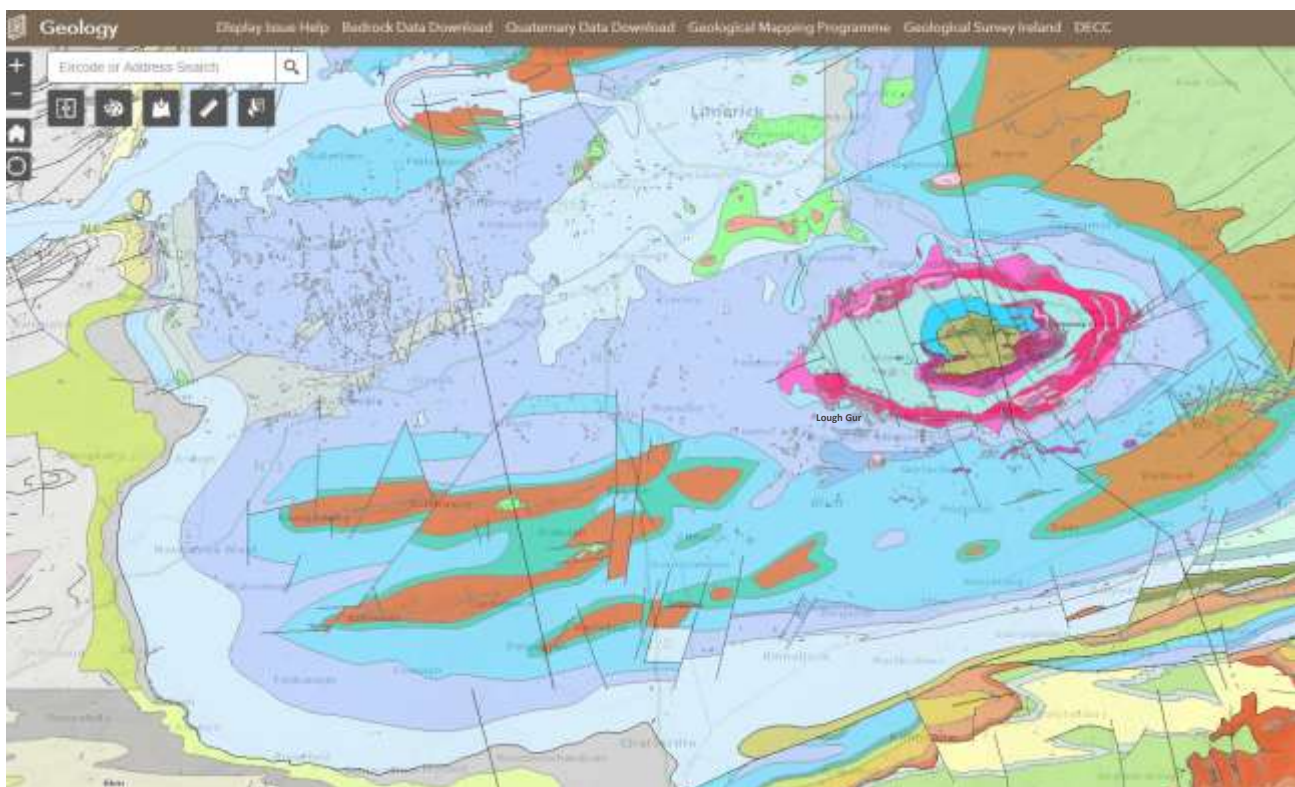
In addition, the 'rail-to-trail' *Great Southern & Western Greenway* runs from Rathkeale to Abbeyfeale, but it is planned to extend it from Rathkeale westwards to Listowel and ultimately Tralee, with the feasibility of an eastern extension from Rathkeale to Adare being examined.

East Limerick is traditionally a landscape of intensive farming within the rich farmlands of the Golden Vale. It is associated with dairying, pork and equine production in the lowlands and sheep farming in the uplands. There is a strengthening organic and slow food movement within the region, with a number of flagship producers and food markets emerging, including the weekly Farmers Markets and Urban Cooperatives.

### 3.1.1 Bedrock Geology of East Limerick

The bedrock geology of east County Limerick determines the landscape and familiar topography of the region (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2 Bedrock Geology of County Limerick**



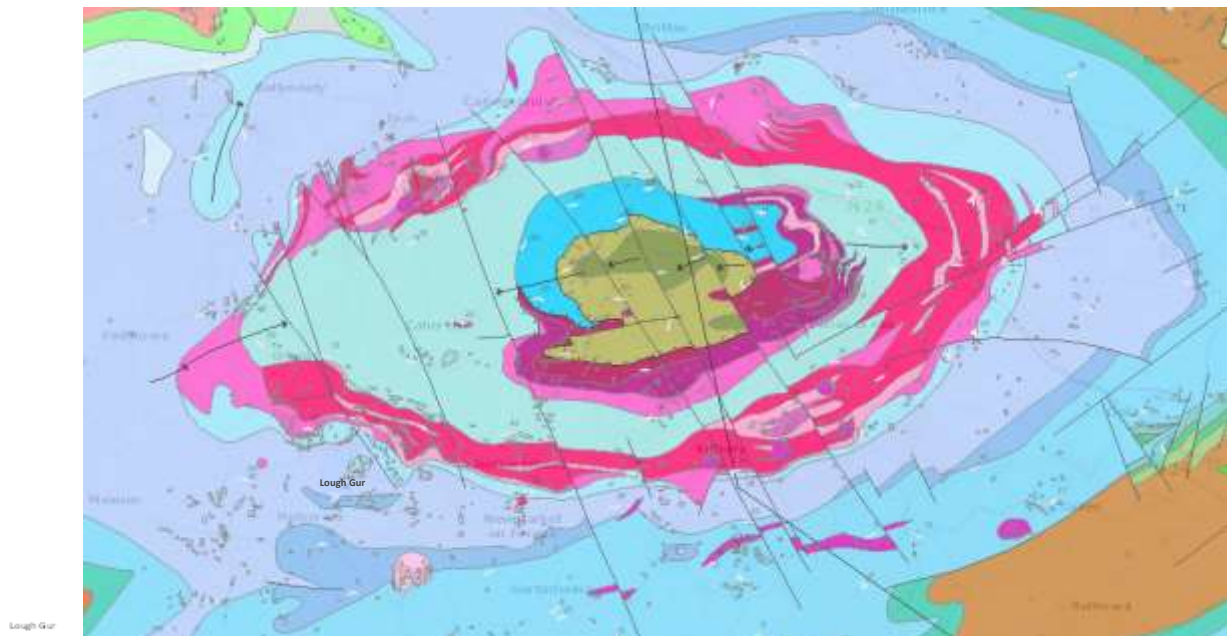
Source: Geological Survey of Ireland 1: 100,000 map series

The southern and eastern uplands of the county form a sub-circular rim of Lower Palaeozoic sandstones, siltstones and greywackes rocks (c. 400-450 million years old), which can also be seen in the hills of Knockfierna and Ballinruane. The central basin is dominated by Carboniferous limestones (c. 350-320 million years old), shown in shades of blue on the map. The latter are overlain by a thick cover of glacial tills and calcareous soils that underpin the rich agricultural lands of the region.

The eastern county is host to an ‘eye-shaped’ volcanic province (shown in pink, Figure 2; detail, Figure 3, ), also of Carboniferous age. These create the distinctive landscape between Lough Gur and Caherconlish. A series of highly unusual rock features can be seen, including lava tubes and columnar ‘organ pipe’ structures, similar to the famous Giants Causeway in Antrim, albeit millions of years older than the latter.

As referenced in the Ballyhoura Countryside Recreation Strategy (2007)<sup>5</sup>, the concept of an integrated *Natural Area* has been developed by English Nature. It refers to the connection between geology, geomorphology and landscape, habitats, species, and land use, which incorporate elements of both biodiversity and geodiversity. This concept could be expanded given the unique nature of Limerick’s geological heritage.

**Figure 3 Limerick’s Volcanic Province**



### 3.1.2 Landscape Character Assessment

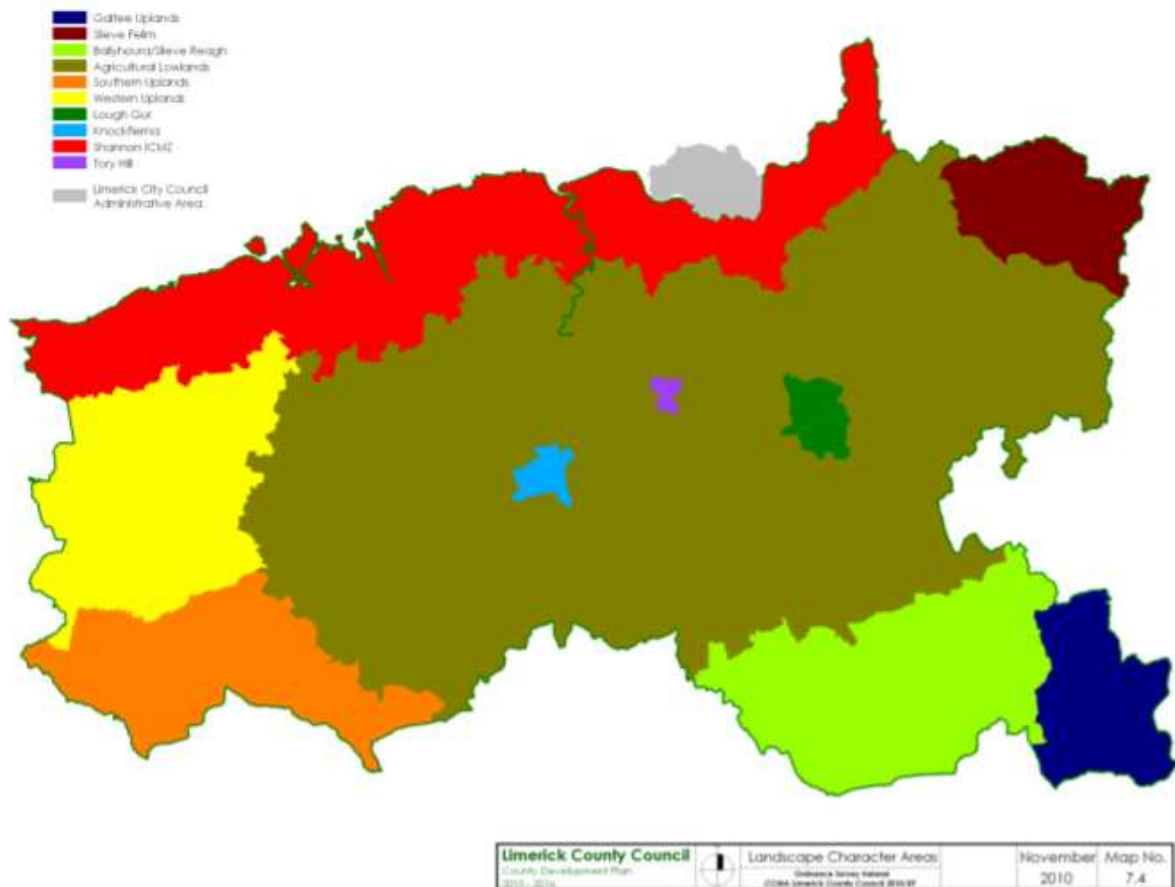
A Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) was carried out by Limerick City & County Council for the 2010-2016 County Development Plan (as extended).

The LCA is largely influenced by the bedrock geological ‘foundations’ of the county (Figure 4).

<sup>5</sup> Cregan, M. (2007) Ballyhoura Countryside Recreation Strategy. Prepared for Ballyhoura Development Ltd.



Figure 4 Landscape Character Assessment (LC&CC, CDP 2010-2016)



It is clear that the Maigue Rivers flow through a landscape characterised as 'Agricultural Lowlands' from Ballyhoura / Slieve Reagh Hills in the south, to the Shannon Lowlands.

Further details of the soils and physical characteristics of the Maigue Rivers catchment is presented in a detailed report on the MRT website (Dalton & Walsh)<sup>6</sup>.

### 3.1.3 Ecology & Habitats

The Maigue Rivers Trust has commissioned a series of technical reports pertaining to the ecology and habitats of the rivers in the catchment, including assessment of riparian habitats and water quality within the main river and its tributaries<sup>7</sup>.

The Maigue river and many of its tributaries are of ecological and ornithological importance, supporting nationally important breeding populations of invertebrate and vertebrate species. This system supports a high level of in-stream biodiversity (fish, invertebrates, aquatic plants and algae) and riverbank biodiversity (in riparian habitats).

Details of the fish stocks in the Maigue rivers are outlined in a detailed report for MRT on the website (Harrington, 2017)<sup>8</sup>. Seventeen fish species have been recorded from the estuarine and freshwater areas of the Maigue catchment. The rivers of the catchment are home to salmon and otter (Annex II listed species) as well as the

<sup>6</sup> <https://maigueriverstrust.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Maigue-River-Characterisation-1.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> <https://maigueriverstrust.ie/biodiversity/scientific-reports-and-studies-on-the-river-maigue/>

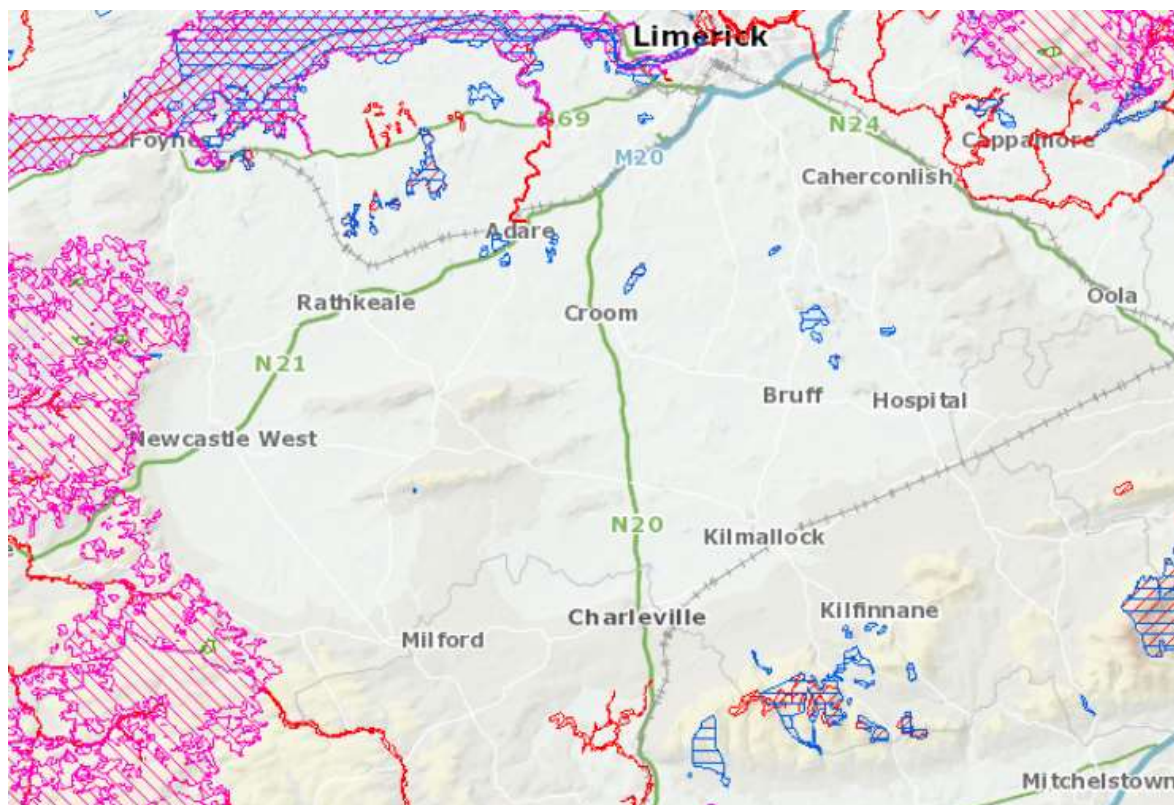
<sup>8</sup> <https://maigueriverstrust.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Fish-stocks-Maigue-ISBN.pdf>

lamprey and white-clawed crayfish. Three-spined stickleback *Gasterosteus aculeatus* are abundant in the Maigue and its tributaries. Salmon were found in the Maigue (main channel) lower Camoge, Loobagh, Morningstar and Clonshire rivers, but were absent from the upper Camoge tributaries and Gloscha and Barnakyle rivers.

The Maigue catchment supports a number of Natura designated **Special Areas of Conservation** (SACs) for a range of habitats under the EU Habitats Directive, as well as **Special Protection Areas** (SPAs) for bird species under the EU Birds Directive (Figure 5; Table 2). These are managed by the National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS).

A number of riverine habitats are subject to invasive species, including zebra mussel, Japanese crayfish and plant species such as Japanese knotweed and giant hogweed. The Maigue Rivers Trust are supporting various projects to assess the level of invasion and also community measures to remedy the situation where (if) possible. In the Loobagh Catchment for example, a Giant Hogweed Eradication Project is underway, with the support of local volunteers and community activists<sup>9</sup>.

Figure 5 Map of NPWS Designated Sites, Co Limerick



The NPWS has also designated a number of sites across the catchment as **proposed Natural Heritage Areas** (pNHA) as seen on Figure 5 (see also Table 2).

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.rte.ie/news/environment/2019/0807/1067320-giant-hogweed/>

**Table 2 Protected Sites in Maigue Catchments, NPWS**

Designated Site Type	Sites within Maigue Rivers Catchment	Comment
<b>Special Area of Conservation (SAC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curraghchase Woods</li> <li>• Tory Hill</li> <li>• Glen Bog</li> <li>• Ballyhoura Mountains</li> <li>• Lower River Shannon (incl. River Maigue upstream to Adare)</li> <li>• Askeaton Fen Complex</li> </ul>	Shown in red / red hachure on Figure 5
<b>Special Protection Area (SPA)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mullaghareirks Mountains</li> <li>• Stacks Mountains</li> <li>• Slieve Felim uplands</li> </ul>	shown in pink hachure on Figure 5
<b>Proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lough Gur</li> <li>• Bleach Lough lakes</li> <li>• Adare Woodlands</li> <li>• Curraghchase Woods</li> <li>• Loughmore Common Turlough</li> <li>• Skoolhill</li> <li>• Herbertstown Fen</li> <li>• Ballyhoura Mountains – including:</li> <li>• Ballyroe Hill &amp; Mortlestown Hill, Ballycourty Wood, Castleoliver Woods, Mountrussel Wood</li> </ul>	shown in blue hachure on Figure 5

These sites form a network of protected areas under the stewardship of the NPWS, but also offer excellent opportunities for sensitive wildlife watching and seasonal changes in nature.

### 3.1.4 Water Quality of the Maigue Rivers

Under the provisions of the Water Framework Directive (WFD), a River Basin Management Plan was prepared in 2008 for the entire length of the ‘Shannon International River Basin District’. This led to effective inter-agency working to manage the water quality along the length of the waterway. In 2008, many of the rivers had ‘moderate’ to ‘poor’ surface water and chemical water quality, with total status in ‘need of restoration’.

The EPA undertakes a full national assessment of water quality every three years under the WFD, using ten physical, biological and chemical indicators to measure the quality in Ireland’s rivers, lakes, transitional and coastal waters and groundwater. These provide an update on biological quality and nutrient concentrations in each category, as well as information on the input of nutrients to the marine environment and change/ trends. The most recent report on surface water quality was published by the EPA in late 2020, providing an update on the quality of water using information collected in 2019<sup>10</sup>.

Over one third of rivers and a quarter of lakes are **failing to meet their environmental quality standards for nutrients**. High levels of nitrogen concentrations in the south and southeast in particular are adversely impacting the quality of our rivers and estuaries. Nitrate is increasing in nearly half of sites and phosphate levels are also rising in a quarter of river sites. This contrasts with pre-2015 when only a small number of sites had increasing nitrate (1.4%) and phosphate (4.2%) concentrations. Although more than half of rivers and lakes are of good biological quality, they are not as **biologically healthy** as they should be. However, surveyed rivers in 2019 have shown more improvements than declines.

The 2017-2019 data for nitrate in rivers show that 47% of river sites have unsatisfactory nitrate concentrations. The maps (Figure 6) shows that **nitrate concentrations** are highest in rivers in the south, southeast and parts of

<sup>10</sup> <http://epa.ie/pubs/reports/water/waterqua/Water%20Quality%20in%202019%20-%20an%20indicators%20report.pdf>

Ireland where there is more intensive farming coupled with freely draining soils and lower rainfall. For **phosphate**, sites with higher concentrations are evident in the catchments of the east and northeast, but also in the Shannon Estuary South catchment in the southwest of the country.

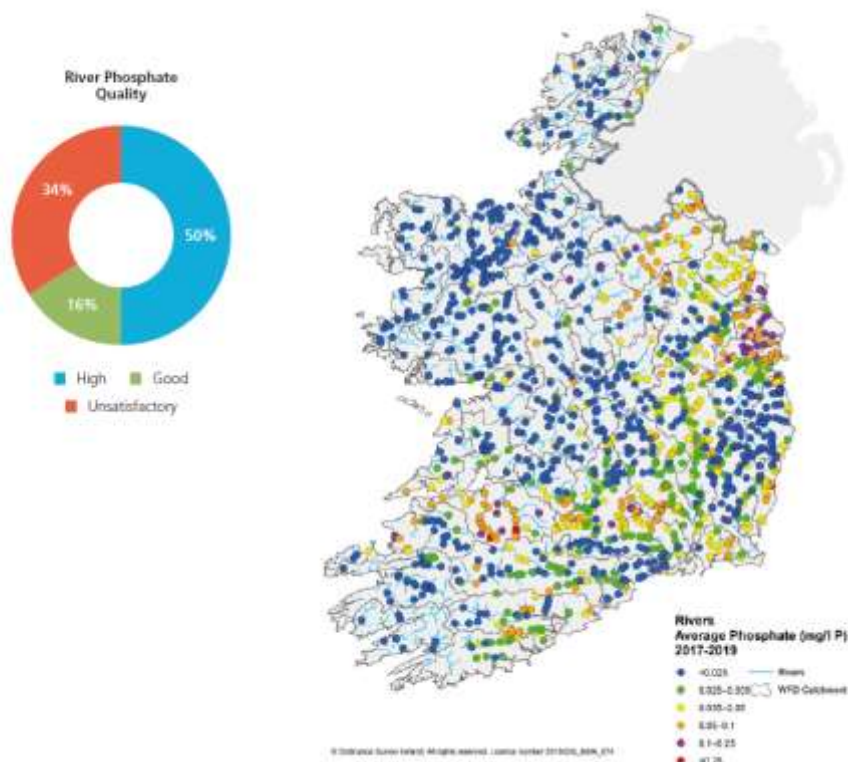
The EPA 2019 findings were not positive in terms of the phosphate and nitrate nutrient load for the Maigne, with an ongoing challenge in the management of agricultural and sewage runoff entering the rivers of the catchment (see Figure 6). Analysis by the EPA shows that intensive agricultural practices are the predominant source of excess nitrogen in our waters, particularly in the south and southeast of the country. The increasing trend in nitrate concentrations means that focussed action is needed to reduce the nitrate losses to our waters. The forthcoming multi-annual EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and related 'Farm to Fork' strategy are seen as positive developments by the EPA, with opportunities to reduce nutrient inputs to waterways.

The MRT has a number of projects underway to work with stakeholders along the rivers network to address issues of nitrate and phosphate effluent from sewage, agricultural run-off and other point sources. Limerick City & County Council, as well as the IPA, LAWPRO and the Inland Fisheries Association of Ireland (IFI) are essential partners in addressing this pernicious issue for the long term health of the rivers.

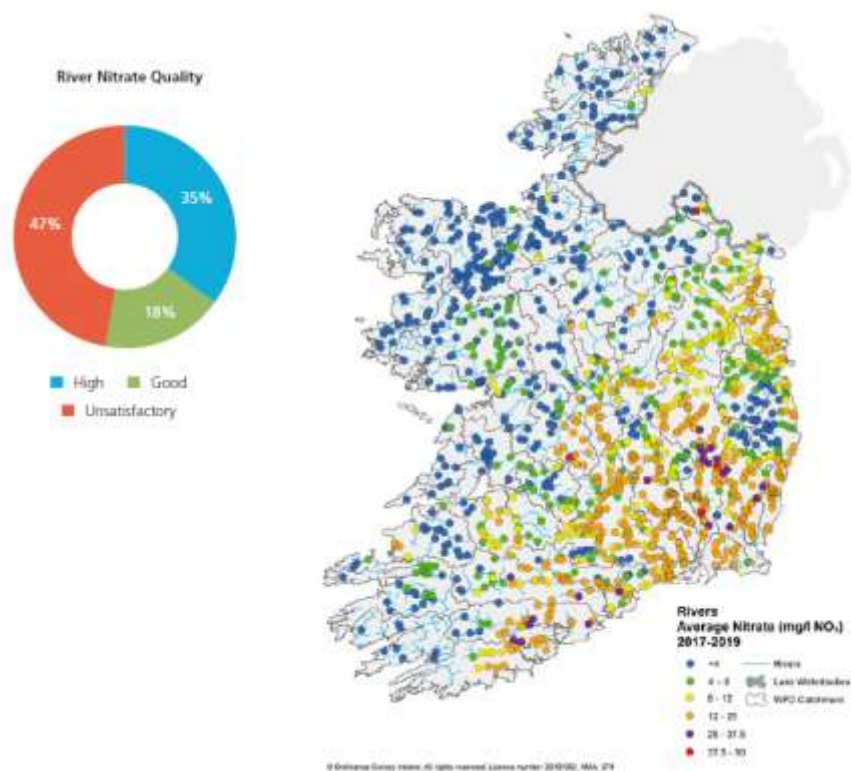
**Good water quality is essential to the development of 'blue' recreation in the Maigne Rivers catchment – whether for angling, kayaking or swimming – and for healthy habitats, tourism and a positive environment for all to enjoy.**



Figure 6 EPA Water Quality in Rivers (2019) -Nutrient Quality



a. River Phosphate Quality for 2019 (EPA 2020)



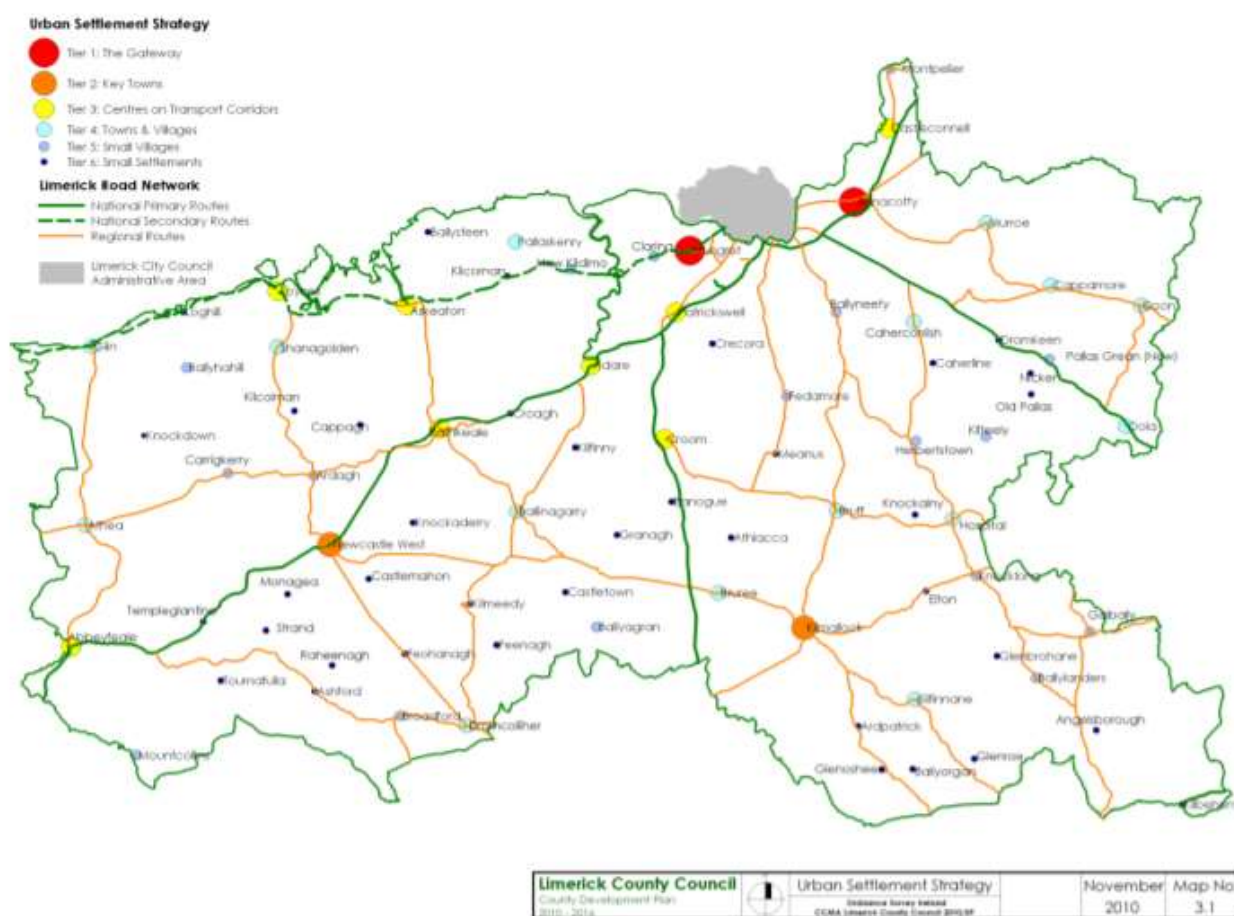
b. River Nitrate Quality for 2019 (EPA, 2020)

## 3.2 The Cultural Environment of the Maigue Rivers

The following short analysis provides a brief overview of the cultural setting of the Maigue Rivers. East Limerick is home to the extraordinary Lough Gur archaeological complex, but is also host to an array of built, agricultural and monastic heritage in terms of supporting outdoor amenities.

### 3.2.1 Settlement Pattern of County Limerick

Limerick City and County Council is in the process of developing the first combined city-county County Development Plan (2022-2028). The council has proposed hierarchy of towns, in line with best planning practice, to allocate resources and priorities according to servicing, transport and demographic requirements.



For the Maigue catchments, the town of Kilmallock is the Key Town for east Limerick, while the towns of Adare, Patrickswell and Croom are located on transport nodes. All other settlements are classified as towns or small villages. Thus, it can be observed that the Maigue Rivers catchment is primarily a rural location, dotted with small settlements.

### 3.2.2 Demographic Profile of Co. Limerick (2016)

It is useful to review the demographic profile of County Limerick in assessing the needs and planning of recreational amenities. Data were gathered from the POBAL geo-profiling web portal<sup>11</sup> to assess the profile, based on analysis of the most recent national census data (CSO, 2016).

The following data and graphs are reflective of all of County Limerick as the Mague catchments span the areas covered by two Local Development Companies (Ballyhoura Development and West Limerick Resources).

In 2016, the total population of the county was **194,899** people. Of these, **29,288 people (15%)** are living with a disability. There are slightly more females than males in the county (Table 3).

**Table 3 Demographic Profile of County Limerick (CSO, 2016)**

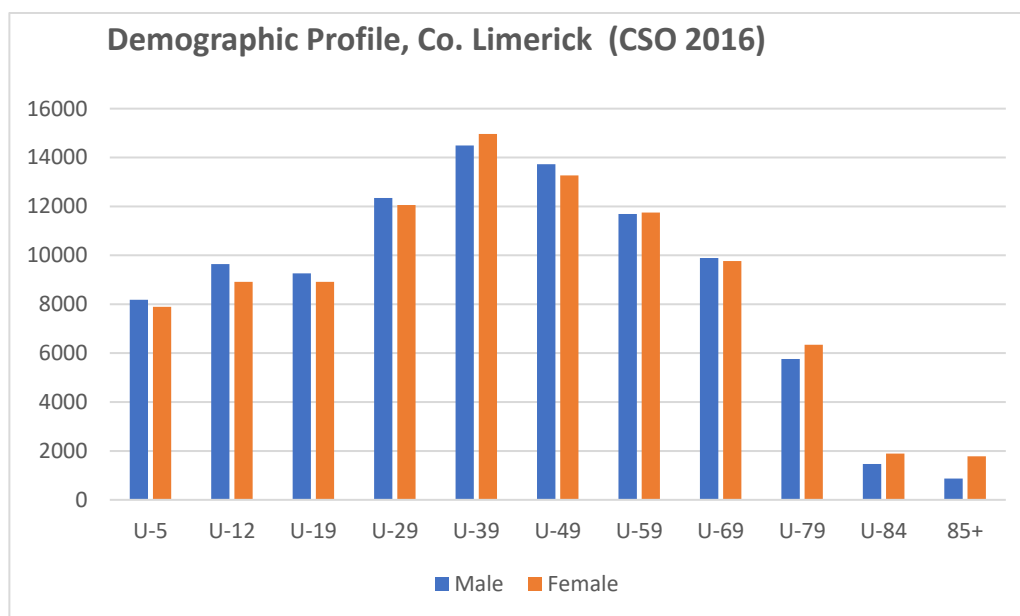
Age	Male	Female	Total
U-5	8180	7894	16074
U-12	9642	8919	18561
U-19	9266	8917	18183
U-29	12349	12056	24405
U-39	14496	14967	29463
U-49	13724	13268	26992
U-59	11689	11753	23442
U-69	9893	9766	19659
U-79	5764	6343	12107
U-84	1468	1895	3363
85+	869	1781	2650
<b>Total</b>	<b>97,340</b>	<b>97,559</b>	<b>194,899</b>

The **demographic profile has a classic bell curve, with a good distribution across all age groups** (Figure 7). The data show a peak in the 30-39 age group, within a 'bulge' in the +20-59 years age groups (41% of total population). The numbers of U-5 years children (8%) and in the U-12 to U-19 age groups (19%) suggest that population growth may be slowing. There is a marked decline in the numbers of people aged +80 years (3%), but the 'bulge' in the middle years will be moving into those age groups in the coming decades.

<sup>11</sup> <https://maps.pobal.ie/>

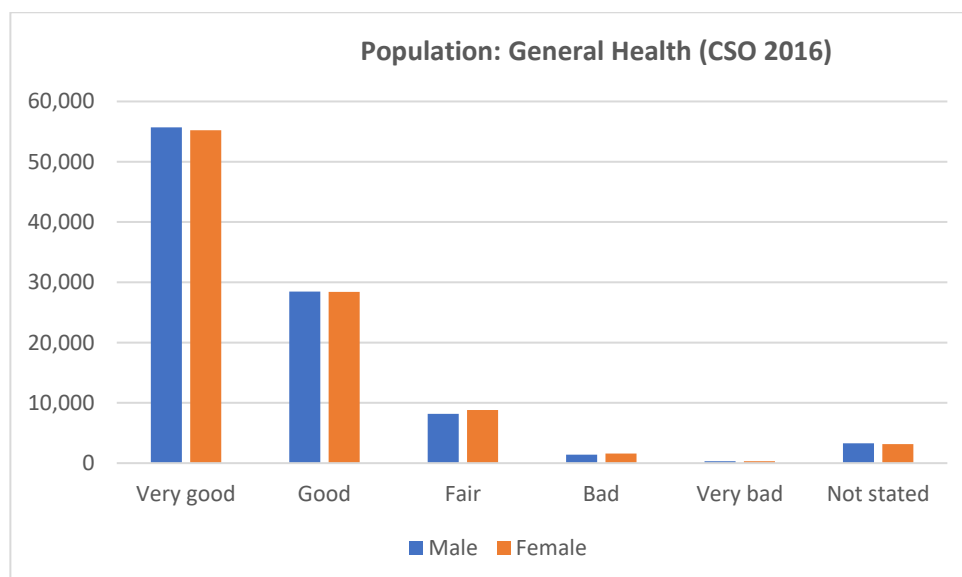


Figure 7 Demographic Profile of County Limerick (2016)



The general health of the population is self-reported to be 'Good – Very Good' by 86% of the population; 'Fair' by 9%; and 'Bad-to-Very Bad' by 2% of the citizens. Health reports are almost equally balanced by male and female respondents (see Figure 8). These data suggest that **the general population is in good health** and will likely seek **increasing opportunities for recreation** to remain so as the population ages.

Figure 8 Health Profile of Population of County Limerick (2016)



In terms of work, over **37% of the total population were in gainful employment in 2016**, with 31% working in management to lower professional jobs; 36% in semi-skilled to manual jobs; 6% work in agriculture; 4% are unskilled and 3% are self-employed 'own account'. 18% work in 'other' categories of 'gainfully employed' work.

The **general population of county Limerick is highly educated**, with more than 65% reporting a higher level qualification. Women are more likely to be qualified in social sciences, business and law, while men trend towards engineering, manufacturing etc.

In relation to transport mode, the CSO data show that most people still **rely on the motor car** to get to work/school and college, reflecting perhaps the **lack of integrated public transport** in rural areas to get to employment or college in the City area, and the lack of safety for walking or cycling to work or school on busy commuter routes. The majority of people commute less than 45 minutes to work, school or college (84%).

These data are summarised by settlement in the current Limerick City & County Draft Development Plan consultation documents (see Table 4 below).

**Table 4 Limerick 2022-2028: Settlement Hierarchy – Key Facts**

Demographic Profile - Census					
Local Area Plans	Bruff	Cappamore	Caherconlish	Hospital	Kilfinane
Population 2016 (+/-) Change on 2011	803 persons (+2.5%)	620 persons (-8%)	1,476 persons (+15%)	653 persons (+3.6%)	789 persons (+1.4%)
Population 2011	783 persons	675 persons	1,279 persons	630 persons	778 persons
2016 Age Profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0-14 cohort 23%</li> <li>15-24 cohort 10%</li> <li>25-44 cohort 28%</li> <li>45-64 cohort 23%</li> <li>65 plus cohort 16%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0-14 cohort 19%</li> <li>15-24 cohort 12%</li> <li>25-44 cohort 28%</li> <li>45-64 cohort 23%</li> <li>65 plus cohort 17%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0-14 cohort 29%</li> <li>15-24 cohort 8%</li> <li>25-44 cohort 35%</li> <li>45-64 cohort 16%</li> <li>65 plus cohort 12%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0-14 cohort 20%</li> <li>15-24 cohort 9%</li> <li>25-44 cohort 28%</li> <li>45-64 cohort 23%</li> <li>65 plus cohort 20%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0-14 cohort 21%</li> <li>15-24 cohort 11%</li> <li>25-44 cohort 27%</li> <li>45-64 cohort 24%</li> <li>65 plus cohort 17%</li> </ul>
2016 Pop. by Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>412 males</li> <li>391 females</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>299 males</li> <li>321 females</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>712 males</li> <li>764 females</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>329 males</li> <li>324 females</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>407 males</li> <li>382 females</li> </ul>

Table 15 – Local Area Plan Settlements Demographic Profile

Travel & Transport					
Local Area Plans	Bruff	Cappamore	Caherconlish	Hospital	Kilfinane
Mode of Transport to Work, School or College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>19% On foot</li> <li>62% By car</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>18% On foot</li> <li>61% By car</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8% On foot</li> <li>75% By car</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>29% On foot</li> <li>56% By car</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>25% On foot</li> <li>61% By car</li> </ul>
Journey Time to Work, School or College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>22% Less than half an hour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>28% Less than half an hour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>39% Less than half an hour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>45% Less than half an hour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>51% Less than half an hour</li> </ul>
College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>38% Less than 15 minutes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>34% Less than 15 minutes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>25% Less than 15 minutes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16% Less than 15 minutes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15% Less than 15 minutes</li> </ul>
Household Car Ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16% No car</li> <li>49% One car</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20% No car</li> <li>53% One car</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12% No car</li> <li>41% One car</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>22% No car</li> <li>52% One car</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>22% No car</li> <li>52% One car</li> </ul>

Table 18 – Local Area Plan Settlements Travel & Transport

In conclusion, a highly qualified, working population in County Limerick will make increasing demands for recreational infrastructure based on trends across Europe and Ireland. As reported in the Ballyhoura Countryside Recreation Strategy (2007)<sup>12</sup>, a study by the Countryside Recreation Network (UK)<sup>13</sup> concluded that green exercise has positive impacts on public and environmental health. Such benefits may be harnessed by Limerick City & County Council, in partnership with the Local Development Companies, other agencies and local community groups. This is a positive challenge to be embraced through the provision of an accessible recreational infrastructure along the Maigue Rivers catchments in the coming decades.

### 3.2.3 Cultural Heritage

East County Limerick is host to a huge array of archaeological sites and monuments, as well as an extraordinarily rich medieval heritage.

The map on Figure 9 presents the mapped sites and monuments across the county, with particular concentration around the internationally important archaeological site of Lough Gur (Figure 10).

<sup>12</sup> Cregan, M. (2007). Ballyhoura Countryside Recreation Strategy – prepared for Ballyhoura Development

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.outdoorrecreation.org.uk/wp-content/themes/orn/pdf-archive/2005%20-%20VOL%2013-1%20Spring.pdf>

**Lough Gur** encompasses a complex archaeological site within an area rich in prehistoric monuments, that includes enclosures, stone circles, standing stones, hut sites, cairns, banks, pit burials, crannogs and other settlement features dating from the Neolithic period but also encloses features that range through the Beaker and Bronze age burial sites.

As well as the lake itself, the Lough Gur complex includes an enclosed habitation site at Knockadoon; megalithic wedge tombs, including the 'Giant's Grave'; the Carraig Aille stone forts and early Christian sites at New Church; as well as field settlements and crannogs such as Bolin Island along the lake shore. The surrounding area is a rich archaeological landscape offering unique glimpses into the lives of Ireland's earliest settlers to the present time. The lake sediments at Lough Gur preserve rich palynological (pollen) records that chart the environmental history of Ireland since the last Ice Age, reminding us that climate change is constant.

At Knockadoon on the shores of Lough Gur, *"three main phases of activity are represented on this site. The first, dating to the late Neolithic, is an unenclosed habitation. This was succeeded by a second phase during which the domestic site was enclosed by a double-kerbed wall. Long after its occupation role, [the site] was used as a burial ground in the late prehistoric/early historic period."*

Later structures were built in the vicinity of Lough Gur through the early Christian and later medieval periods (Figure 9). The Lough Gur complex was used for ritual purposes and ongoing research is investigating the potential for an *International Dark Skies Park* to celebrate the rich evidence of archaeo-astronomical understanding of seasonal celestial activities at Lough Gur and neighbouring Grange.

**Figure 9 Wealth of Sites & Monuments in East Limerick**



Map sources: National Monuments Service: <https://maps.archaeology.ie/HistoricEnvironment/>



Figure 10 Multiple Sites & Monuments at Lough Gur



**Grange Stone Circle**, situated just 350m west of Lough Gur, is Ireland's largest and oldest stone circle and is aligned to the winter and summer solstice.. Its first inhabitants used this ancient place as a ritual and sacred site of ritual and sanctity, in an area surrounded by prehistoric monuments. The entrance to the circle is marked by the tallest stones and these are mirrored on the opposite side, creating an alignment on the midsummer moon (June 24). Facing the two entrance stones at WSW are two tall orthostats forming a V-shaped notch, where it is suggested that the stones were aligned upon the early November sunset, the festival of Samhain (8 November). The heaviest of the stones was set at the NE towards the midsummer sunrise (June).



In 1827, the stone circle was described as having forty-three stones of various dimensions remain forming a perfect circle. Grange was restored in the 1870s and new stones appear to have been erected over the decades, creating the 113 that are visible today. The site was excavated in 1939 by Ó Ríordáin, who was of the opinion that most of the stones were original and suggested that there was 'no indication of the fill having been disturbed'.

Beaker and Food Vessel pottery was recovered below the modern surface but was recorded under the introduced layer and around the bases of the circle stones. Three samples from recent 2012 excavations and three from residues on pottery excavated in 1939

returned radiocarbon dates that range from 3020-2574 cal. BC while further dates provide a time-frame for bank construction in the period 3020–2574 cal. BC. The absence of Beaker pottery from under or in the bank also strongly suggests that the bank was in place prior to the use of Beaker ceramics (*photo and text source: <https://maps.archaeology.ie/HistoricEnvironment/>*).

Elsewhere across East Limerick, there are multiple archaeological features and clusters of:

- enclosures and ring barrows (Stephenstown, Elton, Mitchelstowndown West);

- ringforts (Greenmount, Crecora);
- souterrains, cists, ringforts and raths (Cush); fulacht fia (Ballycahane); and
- an innumerable array of archaeological features preserved in the rich pastoral lands of the Maigue catchments.

The early medieval period in East Limerick saw a number of early Christian sites developing (Dysert Aonghusa), with churches, graveyards and holy wells, many of which became important centres of monasticism and learning in the later medieval period (Adare, Athlacca, Monaster).

A key feature of County Limerick is its fine heritage of Medieval towns and castles, with associated infrastructure of walls, bridges. The walled town of Kilmallock is a fine example on the Loobagh River, with merchants' houses, collegiate churches and wall gates. At Bruree, there is the ruin of the Norman De Lacy castle in the Morningstar catchment.



*The medieval bridge at Bruff on the Morningstar River*

There are many tower houses and castles (Castleroberts) dotted across the landscape of East Limerick, frequently in defensive sites close to river crossings, as well as medieval corn mills on many of the smaller rivers in the Maigue catchment (Beabus/ Derryvinnane on the Clonshire) as well as at Croom on the Maigue. Medieval bridges survive (Castleroberts, Adare, Croom, Kilmallock) and provide vital crossing points to this day.

Archaeological and historical details are beyond the scope of this study, but there is certainly a range of highly significant cultural heritage features that may be considered for inclusion in experiential recreational trails within the county. Lough Gur could be repositioned as a regional 'Discovery Centre', focused on its complex environmental, archaeological and astronomical heritage.



## 4.0 Analysis of Current Recreational Provision, Mague Rivers

The Mague Rivers catchment in East Limerick is well-endowed with a wealth of natural assets, including rivers, streams, lakes and fens, most of which are amenable to outdoor recreation or nature viewing in some form. This section assesses current recreational provision, its strengths and gaps, as well as potential for future infrastructure within the catchment.

Recreational usage of the Mague Rivers varies from place to place within the catchment. Traditional usage focuses on angling and boating, while walking and kayaking access are limited. As the current demographic profile suggests (Section 3.2.1), there is, and will be, an increasing demand for safe, outdoor spaces for all age groups to be active both on-water and off-water.

The Mague Rivers catchment in East Limerick is surrounded by low mountain and hill ranges which provide excellent amenities and opportunities for outdoor recreation. The catchment is well-endowed with a wealth of natural hydrological assets due to the topography, including rivers, streams, lakes and fens, most of which are amenable to outdoor recreation or nature viewing of some form.



*Alders and willow trees in reflection on river, March 2021*

## 4.1 Assessment of Range of Recreation and Amenities

An initial assessment was conducted of the full range of recreation available in the Mague Rivers catchment, as well as amenities, heritage centres and service providers (accommodation, food, guides, etc).

A spatial presentation of the data are shown on the map in Figure 11, while a full tabulation of amenities and service providers, with websites, is presented in Appendix 3.

It is clear that there is a very significant baseline array of amenities and services available within the sub-region. As outlined in a number of the Ballyhoura Countryside studies<sup>14</sup> that have been completed to assess the potential for countryside recreation and tourism development, the challenge lies in the integration of these services and products to develop an outdoor destination of scale.

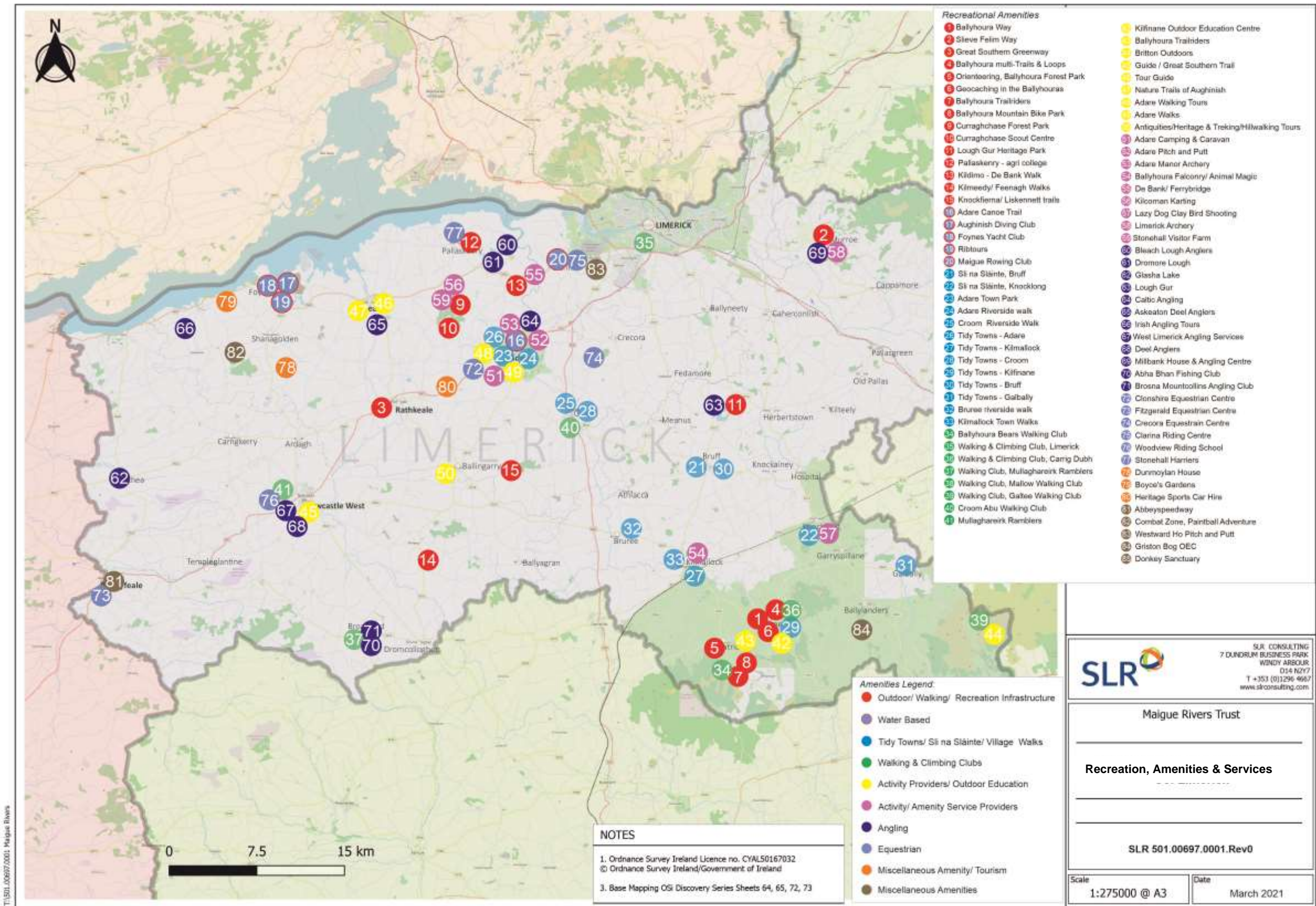


*Outdoor recreation at Curraghchase Forest Park*

<sup>14</sup> Ballyhoura Countryside Recreation Strategy (Cregan 2007) for Ballyhoura Development Concept Development and Munster Peaks (TDI, 2014) for Ballyhoura Country



Figure 11 Map showing Range of Recreation, Amenities & Services, Maigue Rivers Catchment



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## 4.2 Current Provision of Outdoor Recreation & Amenity

The following identifies the key strengths and elements of the Mague Rivers current and planned infrastructure to identify gaps that could be addressed in the future. This is structured into five (5) principal recreation and amenity types, as required by the terms of reference, but further (6) 'Other Recreation' is added to include other activities and (7) to include Heritage Amenities that could be included in experiential recreation. The types are classified as formal / informal, grade and length, with comment as necessary.

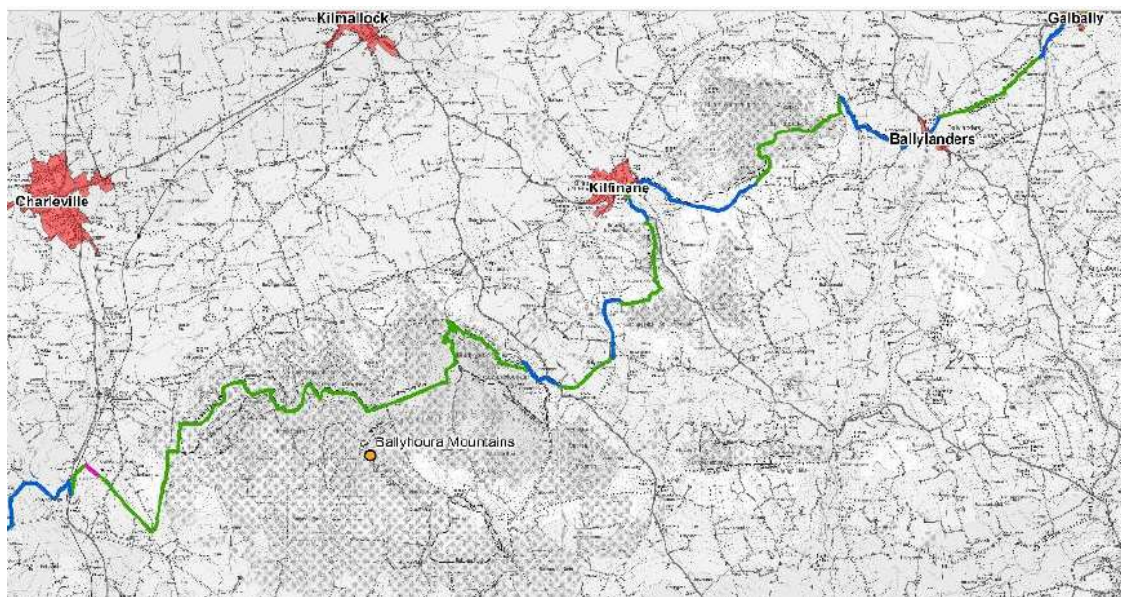
1. Walking
2. Cycling
3. Angling
4. Boating
5. Nature Viewing
6. Other Recreation
7. Heritage Amenity

**It must be noted that due to covid-19 government restrictions, it has not yet been possible to field verify and record a number of physical information and features such as access and egress points (for the rivers), parking, canoe slips etc.**

Limerick City & County Council have an important role in developing and supporting recreational amenities across the county. Ballyhoura Development facilitates the sustainable development of recreational infrastructure across east Limerick and north Cork. West Limerick Resources likewise supported the early development of the Great Southern Greenway and a range of walking / hiking trails in the Mullaghareirk Mountains just to the southwest of the Mague Rivers catchment.

The existing recreational provision is summarised on Table 5 overleaf and shown graphically on **Error! Reference source not found.**

**Figure 12 Condition Map of Ballyhoura Way (2019)**



*Map showing audited condition of Ballyhoura Way as part of Beara Breifne Way (OSNI for Fáilte Ireland, 2018)*  
*Green segment – off-road; Blue segment – on-road; Pink – requires work*

Table 5 Activity Provision for Outdoor Recreation & Amenity

Recreation	Current Provision	Formal/ Informal	Type	Length	Grade	Comment	Condition
<b>1A. RURAL WALKING</b>	<b>Ballyhoura Way</b> (part of: <i>Beara Breifne Way</i> *) (see Figure 12)	F	Linear/ long distance	89km	Moderate	John's Bridge to Limerick Junction - 4 days walking  Refer to <b>Ballyhoura Trails app</b> for routing and walk-specific information.	Sport Ireland nationally approved walking routes. Managed by Ballyhoura Heritage & Environment. Routes are generally in good to excellent conditions <sup>15</sup> .
	<b>Slieve Felim Way</b>	F	Linear/ long distance	43km	Moderate	Murroe (Limerick) to Silvermines (Tipperary) – 2 days walking	Waymarked Way Mainly through Coillte Forestry over SI Felim Mountains to Keeper Hill to Silvermines, Co Tipperary.
	<b>Ballyhoura Country tracks and trails</b>	F	Multi	Varied	Mixed challenge	<b>Ballyhoura Trails Guide app</b> provides excellent information, trail heads, parking, distance, grade, maps and services Trail APP/4 languages EN ES DE FR	<b>*Potential for Trail confusion:</b> o Multiple waymarked routes meeting at certain points e.g. looped walks, cycle trails, mountain bike trails o Lack of consistent waymarking – type, location and branding
	<b>Attychraan Loop</b>	F	Loop Walk	5km	Easy	Kilbehenny	Sport Ireland nationally approved walking routes. Managed by Ballyhoura Heritage & Environment. Routes are generally in good to excellent conditions.  Refer to <b>Ballyhoura Trails app</b> for routing and walk-specific information.
	<b>Ballinaboola Woods</b>	F	Linear	10km	Moderate	Ardpatrick/ Cross routes with mountain bike trails	
	<b>Benard Loop</b>	F	Loop Walk	18km	Hard	Anglesborough / Mitchelstown	
	<b>Blackrock Loop</b>	F	Loop Walk	11km	Hard	Kilfinane/ Temporary detour in effect (Mar2021)	
	<b>Canon Sheehan Loop</b>	F	Loop Walk	7km	Easy	Ardpatrick/ Kilmallock	
	<b>Castlegale Loop</b>	F	Loop Walk	7km	Moderate	Kilfinane/ Mitchelstown	
	<b>Darby's Bed Loop</b>	F	Loop Walk	7km	Moderate	Galbally	
	<b>Darragh Hills Loop</b>	F	Loop Walk	10km	Moderate	Kilfinane/ Mitchelstown	
	<b>Knockduv Loop</b>	F	Loop Walk	5km	easy	Ardpatrick/ Charleville	
	<b>Molanna Loop</b>	F	Loop Walk	13km	Moderate	Kilfinane/ Mitchelstown	

<sup>15</sup> \*Ballyhoura Way was audited as part of a Beara Breifne Way audit for Fáilte Ireland in Dec. 2019, which made specific recommendations for route upgrades.

Recreation	Current Provision	Formal/ Informal	Type	Length	Grade	Comment	Condition
<b>1A. RURAL WALKING (cont')</b>	<b>Paradise Hill Loop</b>	F	Loop Walk	13km	Moderate	Anglesborough / Mitchelstown	
	<b>Ballyhoura Lyre na Freaghan</b>	F	Loop Walk	2km	Moderate	Glenosheen	
	<b>Ballyorgan Nature Trail</b>	F	Loop Walk	4.8km	Moderate	River Keale waterside walk Nature viewing / biodiversity	4.5* review online
	<b>Knockcarron Golden Mile Loop</b>	F	Loop Walk	4km	Easy	Knocklong/ Galbally	
	<b>Knockcarron – Lakelly Loop</b>	F	Loop Walk	6km	Moderate	Knocklong/ Galbally	
	<b>Forest Walks</b>						In Clonshire catchment / Washing Creek
	<b>Curraghchase – Curragh Loop</b>	F	Loop walk	2.4km	Strenuous	multi-use walking and cycling trails to suit occasional walkers and cyclists. Mature broadleaf & conifer forest, limestone cliff walls; Glenisca Lough; old Yew woodland habitat being restored.	Managed by Coillte within Forest Park – excellent amenity that is very well used
	<b>Curraghchase – Glenisca Trail</b>	F	Loop Walk	3.6km	Moderate		Low gradient, uneven surfaces; narrow in places
	<b>Curraghchase – Lake Trail</b>	F	Loop Walk	1km	Easy	multi-access trail to explore nature. There are benches along the lake trail to admire the old house. Cross onto Lady's Island by two bridges	Suited to users of all abilities along smooth forest road and trail. Wheelchair users, kids on bikes and family groups on foot or bike.
	<b>Arboretum Trail</b>	F	varied	20-40 mins	easy	The old arboretum of Curragh Chase hosts extensive collection of trees& shrubs from world, planted by de Vere family. There is also a Pet Cemetery to be seen.	Trails guides with "signal signs" to learn more about the individual trees.
	<b>Liskennett Woods</b>	F	Wooded	1-1.5 hrs	easy	Recent enhancements through ORIS – benches/ trail signage	Unsurfaced forest trails suited to families and small groups
<b>1B. URBAN WALKING</b>	<b>Knockfierna</b>	F	Wooded	9km	Easy-mod	Forest trails	Unsurfaced trails; Down's Cave; Bats; Cairn
	<b>Ballinruane Woods</b>	F	Wooded trails	1-2hrs	Easy-mod	On western edge of catchment	Community café in Kilmeedy provides refreshments and safe parking for the trails
	<b>Adare River Walk</b>	F	Linear	2km	Easy	Maigue riverside walk, from bridge to old Quay. Is one of the few 'beside-river' dedicated walkways along the Maigue and	Well surfaced and signed; benches alongside Maigue River – suited to people of all ages and abilities. Has been oversubscribed during covid, requiring a one way walking system. Well used by active retired people.

Recreation	Current Provision	Formal/ Informal	Type	Length	Grade	Comment	Condition
						creates a model of what could be.	Potential for expansion downriver to create longer route (permission required)
	<b>Adare Town Park</b>	<b>F</b>	Loops	1km	Easy	Formal gardens and waterways, within town	Formal pathways and gardens – very well managed and used; suited to all ages
	<b>Adare Town Loops</b>	<b>F/I</b>	Linear/ Loops	2-3km	Easy	Series of off-road walks linking through the village	New loops around the town on surfaced paths, leading to Sports grounds and linking core village to the Maigue river. Plans to extend as part of LAP
	<b>Croom Town Park</b>	<b>F</b>	Loops	2km	Easy	Riverside park with loops, and biodiversity zones	Excellent amenity, with pathways and biodiversity zones along Maigue Could use river frontage for on-water activities /boating - kayaking access
	<b>Bruff riverside walk</b>	<b>I</b>	Loop	1-2km	Easy	Informal riverside green zones; biodiversity; floodplain	Recreational zone along Morningstar – plans to expand zone in LAP
	<b>Kilmallock riverside walk</b>	<b>I</b>	Loop	2km	Easy	Informal riverside green zones; biodiversity; floodplain	Zoned recreational zone along Loobagh in LAP Potential for expanded zones of biodiversity planting and links to sports amenities
	<b>Kilfinane open spaces</b>		Loops	2-3km	Easy		Limited open space within town to Loobagh and Garran stream – plans within LAP to expand river frontage
	<b>Hospital recreational spaces</b>		Linear / Loop	2-3km	Easy		Limited recreational amenity within urban area – on Camogue
	<b>Murroe -Glenstal Woods</b>	<b>F</b>	Loop Walk	15km	Moderate	Loops off Slieve Felim Way	Outside catchment
	<b>Slí na Sláinte Routes</b>						
	<b>Knocklong Slí na Sláinte</b>	<b>F</b>	Loop	2.7km	Easy	Start at Community Centre, St. Joseph's Church and crossroads; downhill past old school, quarry, graveyard, castle ruins, to start.	All Slí na Sláinte routes are developed to Irish Heart Foundation standards – all are alongside roadways – and designed to get more people active through walking.
	<b>Bruff Slí na Sláinte</b>	<b>F</b>	Loop	3.5km	Easy	Route starts at Community Café and runs north to Holycross .	
	<b>Adare Slí na Sláinte</b>	<b>F</b>	Loop	XXX	Easy		
	<b>Athea Slí na Sláinte</b>	<b>F</b>	Loop	XXX	Easy		



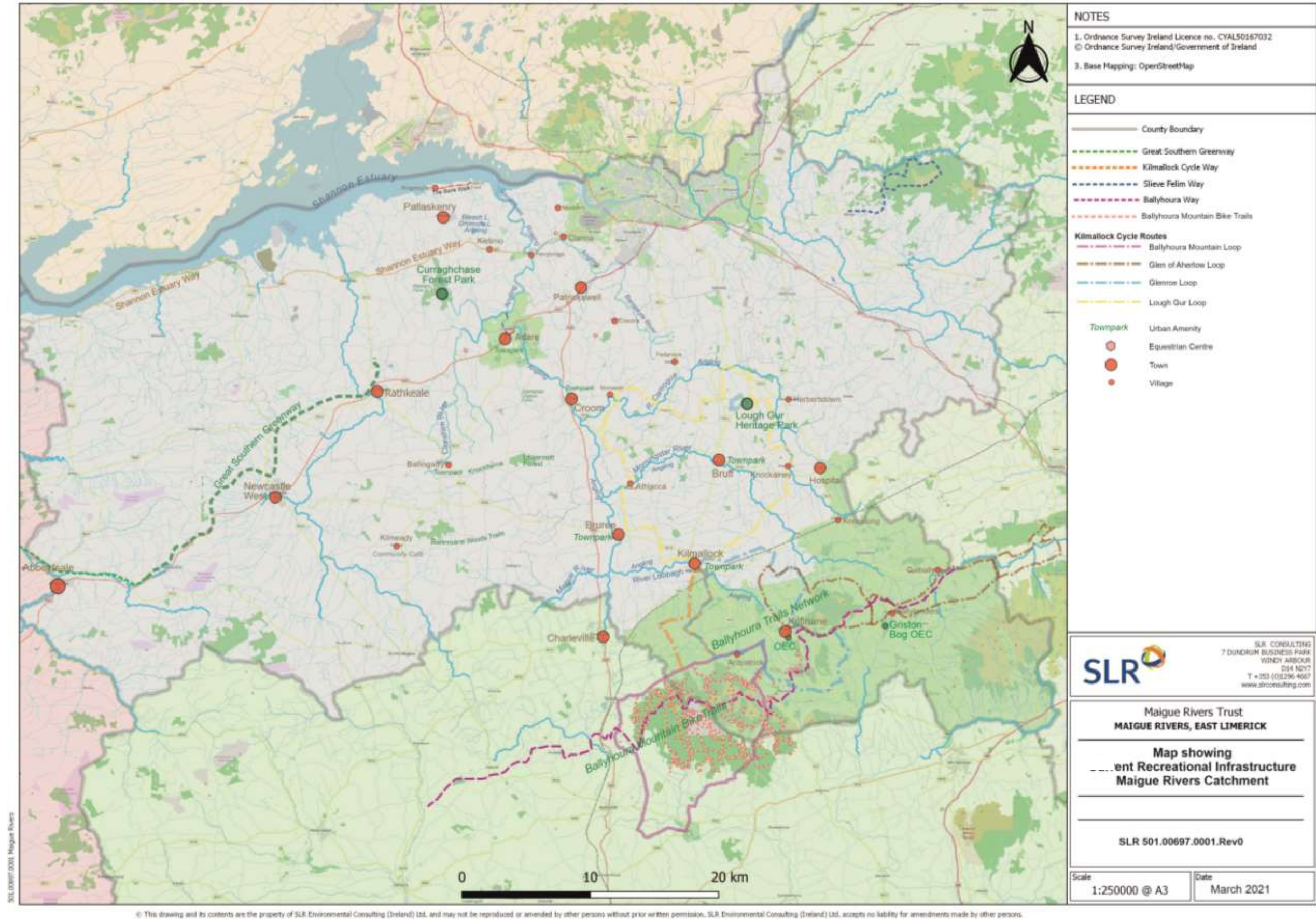
<b>2. CYCLING</b>	<b>Great Southern Greenway</b>	F	Linear	39km	Easy	Combined walking/ cycling trail along old railway line	Excellent facility developed over 25 years by community actors. Now part of mainstream tourism planning with potential to extend east to Adare (subject to feasibility) (perhaps to Patrickswell??) and westwards into Kerry
	<b>Ballyhoura -Castlepook Bike Loop</b>	F	MountainBike	51km	Severe	Part of Ballyhoura Mountain Bike Trails	Mainly on forest tracks and trails, with mixed level of challenge.
	<b>Ballyhoura -Garanne Bike Loop</b>	F	MountainBike	35km	Difficult		Mt Bike trails are widely held to be in excellent condition, attracting 30,000 pa.
	<b>Ballyhoura Greenwood Loop</b>	F	MountainBike	6km	Moderate		
	<b>Ballyhoura Mountrussel Loop</b>	F	MountainBike	17km	Difficult		Developed in collaboration with Coillte
	<b>Ballyhoura Streamhill Loop</b>	F	MountainBike	41km	Severe		
	<b>Kilmallock Cycling Hub (KCH)</b>	I	Road route	multi	Easy-Mod-Hard	Kilmallock cycling hub – routes to Galtees/ Lough Gur/ Ballyhoura	County cycling hub for East Limerick – varied array of loops, suited to range of abilities
	<b>Ballyhoura Route 1</b>	F	Road route	70km	Challenging	KCH Loop 1	Challenging route over Ballyhoura Mountains
	<b>Ballyhoura Route 2</b>	F	Road Route	22km	Moderate	KCH Loop 1A	Shorter route off main Loop 1
	<b>Glen of Aherlow Route 2</b>	F	Road Route	83km	Moderate	KCH Loop 2	Scenic route via Galbally
	<b>Lough Gur Route 3</b>	F	Road Route	62km	Moderate	KCH Loop 3	Lowland route to Lough Gur, minor hills
	<b>Glenroe Route 4</b>		Road Route	70km	Moderate	KCH Loop 4	Route over Ballyhoura/ Castleoliver
	<b>Shannon Estuary Way</b>	F	Road route	multi	Moderate	Scenic estuary route linked to Wild Atlantic Way	Part of Wild Atlantic Way – cycleway on road
<b>3. ANGLING</b>	<b>Bleach Lough</b>	F	Fly fishing	Lake	All	Game and Coarse Fishing; Shore / Boat Fishing/ Season Permits & Day Permits /Group / Corporate.	55 acre spring lake, run by local group on commercial basis. Fully wheelchair accessible
	<b>Dromore Lough</b>	F	Fly fishing	Lake	All	Bank fishing of brown trout –	Open fishery, managed by IFI
	<b>Maigue - no fixed angling access routes</b>	I	Brown Trout	Maigue	Clubs	Club angling along various stretches of the rivers	Angling is open to registered clubs & visitors – brown trout (closed fishery for salmon)
	<b>All Maigue Rivers – guided angling</b>	F	Brown Trout	Maigue	Commerical	Number of well-established excellent guides	
	<b>Angling – education/ Something Fishy</b>	F	Fly fishing	Maigue	Youth	Clubs & IFI education schemes	IFI programme with clubs to engage younger people in the joys of angling

<b>4. BOATING</b>	<b>Rowing at Newtown/ Ferrybridge Quay</b>	I	Rowing/ Trad	Tidal	Moderate	Restoration of traditional boats; rowing on tidal reaches of Maigue	Approach to refurbish the old turf quay at Ferrybridge (east) to allow easier access for rowing and gandelows
	<b>Boating on tidal run from Ferrybridge to Adare</b>	I	Boating	Tidal	Challenging	Safety concerns – need to know the tides and mud-flats	Challenging route requiring local knowledge of river. Proposal to restore the old Turf Quay at Adare at downstream end of Adare Riverwalk as access point
	<b>Croom Kayak Trail</b>	I	River trail	3km	Easy-Mod	Informal trail from Ballynabanoge Bridge (upstream) to Croom used for Croom River Festival	Route used informally for Croom Riverfest Issues around water levels during the summer but may provide the core of Maigue River Blueway
	<b>Gandelows – traditional boating</b>		Estuary			Traditional flat-bottomed boats – used in salmon fishery on Maigue Shannon Estuary- now in decline.	Newtown community runs classes in boat construction for young people with lessons in how to use them safely in the estuary. Would like to see increased usage and festival to celebrate the heritage of salmon families
<b>5. NATURE/ WILDLIFE VIEWING</b>	<b>Curraghchase Forest Park - number of looped way marked trails to suit all abilities; multi- access trails suitable for wheelchair users</b>	F	Varied – suited to all user groups			313 hectares of mixed woodlands, park land and lakes - rich habitat for a diverse range of animals and plants.	Excellent amenity to view nature - Curraghchase House is an international conservation site for Lesser Horseshoe Bat & other native species such as Daubentons' Bat.
	<b>Griston Bog, Ballylanders Outdoor Education Centre</b>	F	Wildlife viewing; Outdoor Classrooms			wide variety of flora and fauna, bees and insects & waterlife. A wooden walkway leads visitors through peatland, with interpretative panels along the route.	The bog hosts <i>Outdoor Classrooms</i> to explore nature in inspiring surroundings.  There is potential to expand this facility through various measures.
	<b>Newtown Flats @ Maigue Estuary</b>	I	Bird Migration			Superb place to watch wild geese/ plovers/ etc	Wetlands with migratory flocks of ducks, geese and wildlife. Access is unclear as yet, but has potential to be a key element of Maigue project for birdwatching
	<b>Lough Gur/ Grange - astronomy</b>	F	Astronomy			Potential to create Dark Skies Park, linked to ancient astronomy	Proposals underway to develop an International Dark Skies Park – with support of Limerick's astronomy fraternity. Links to

							archaeo-astronomical alignments and understanding of celestial patterns.
	Dunnaman Organic Farm	F	Organic farm	Short	Easy	(Planned) open farm; organic centre; biodiversity; trails	Owner plans to open farm with walks/ trails to showcase biodiversity & education
	Ballyhoura Orchards	F	Organic apple			SME commercial apple farm & drinks manufacture	Potential to capitalise on increasing interest in Irish-produced organic / sustainability
	Stonehall Wildlife Park					Adjacent to Curraghchase Forest	Family run amenity; wildlife viewing
6. OTHER	Curraghchase Scout Centre	F	Scouting activities			Within Forest Park	
Orienteering	Curraghchase O-trail	F	O-trail				Permanent orienteering course has been laid out with controls spread out across the Park
Equestrian	Clonshire Equestrian Centre	F	Riding			Equestrian Trails	Strong tradition of horse breeding and riding lends itself to equestrian amenities . Potential for bridle trails?
	Crecora Equestrian Centre	F	Riding				
	Clarina Riding Centre	F	Riding				
	Stonehall Harriers	F	Hunting				Book of harriers (100yrs), hunts on a regional basis with hotels
7. HERITAGE AMENITY	Lough Gur Heritage Centre	F/ I	Mixed amenity			Walks, Archaeology, Heritage, Environmental Heritage & Learning - Astronomy / Dark Skies viewing	Superb facility, with plans to expand the outdoor offering, based on sustainability and carrying capacity. Potential to expand the environmental heritage to inform current understanding of climate change
	Adare Heritage Centre	F	Heritage			Guided walks around the town / town park/ abbey/ friary	
	Thomas Fitzgerald Centre, Bruff	F	History			Celebrates JFK family	Maternal line
	Newtown Salmon Memorial	F	Trad fishing			Commemoration of trad salmon fishing on Mague & Shannon	
	Old Irish Ways Museum	F	Heritage			Celebrating traditions of Limerick	
	Terra Nova Fairy Garden	F	Family			Family friendly/ outdoor trails	



Figure 13 Map showing Current Recreational Infrastructure





#### 4.2.1 Walking Infrastructure

The provision of green infrastructure in terms of walking is mixed throughout the catchment and relies heavily on a few key developments and amenities for safe off road walking.

##### Rural Walking Infrastructure

The provision for walking and hiking in the **southern catchment of the Loobagh and upper Maigue Rivers** is excellent in the Ballyhoura Mountains, with an excellent array of well-developed looped and linear walking trails through forestry and extensively farmed hill areas, and along the Keale River. In terms of the condition of the trails, a recent review of the Ballyhoura Way as part of an audit of the Beara Breifne Way (Failte Ireland, Dec. 2019) provided a high level audit to point to maintenance and off-roading improvements where possible.

These trails are marketed through Ballyhoura Country and also via the Ballyhoura Trails App. The latter provides up-to-date information for trail users, as well as links to accommodation, guiding and food services.

In the **central portion of the Rivers Maigue, Camogue and Morningstar**, the walking infrastructure is limited, outside of the villages and towns. There are limited walking amenities at *Knockainey Woods* near Hospital that are well used locally. The *Lough Gur Heritage Centre* provides a series of walking trails, around the heritage centre and eastern lakeshore; however, these are short and do not provide a circum-navigational trail around the lake. The reason for this is non-access to lakeshore lands and also to conserve bird populations and habitats in the western zone of the Lough Gur. Management at Lough Gur recognise the carrying capacity limits, and are undertaking various measures to expand the seasonality of the facility to spread the visitor load. Interestingly, due to covid restrictions, the visitor numbers in January 2021 were equivalent to those of a standard summer month. There are proposals to develop a Dark Skies Park at Lough Gur to celebrate the archaeo-astronomy of the complex including Grange Stone Circle, and the potential to attract winter visitors.

In the **west and northwest of the Clonshire and mid-Maigue catchments**, *Curraghchase Forest Park* provides an excellent array of well-managed walking & cycling trails, as well as the De Vere arboretum and a café / WC and guiding services. West of the catchment, the *Great Southern Greenway* passes from Rathkeale to Abbeyfeale, but with exceptional potential (subject to feasibility studies) to extend the Greenway east to Adare (and possibly Patrickswell). This would be a truly groundbreaking amenity, that would ultimately have the potential to link Limerick City through the Maigue catchment onwards to Tralee in County Kerry. It would introduce 'slow' tourism to east Limerick and could be a 'game-changer' for rural villages and towns.

In the **west/ southwest of the lower-mid Maigue catchments**, a number of small forested hills offer local walking amenities, including *Liskennett*, *Knockfierna* and *Ballinruane Woods*, respectively. These are well used locally and have significant potential for increased walk-cycle linkages to provide 'trails of scale' linking the villages of Kilmeedy and Ballingarry. In this area also, the *Dunamann Organic Farm* is considering opening trails to explore on-farm organic production and biodiversity. The monastic heritage of *Dysert Aonghusa* could also be linked via walking trails to the farm.

In the **east/ northeast of the Barnakyle and lower-Maigue catchments**, there is very limited infrastructure for walking outside of Adare. The riverside walk in Adare village is the only formal 'beside water' trail in the entire catchment, offering a 2km loop to users. However, the informal *The Bank Walk* from Ferrybridge to Ringmoylan is used locally and offers a potential route for formal development, subject to the permission of up to 37 landowners. There may also be potential to extend The Bank Walk upstream from Ferrybridge to Adare, but this would require significant exploration as to suitability and discussions with landowners.

The river estuary is a birdwatcher's paradise and there may be scope to explore options for nature viewing (see below) at Newtown wetlands.

##### Urban Walking Infrastructure

Limerick City & County Council (LCCC) has committed to enhanced urban connectivity of open spaces to address wider sustainable transport/movement goals, and biodiversity principles of the movement of flora, fauna,




pollinators and insects. Connected open spaces contribute to an active and healthy lifestyle providing opportunities to cycle and walk/run, safe from traffic.




Over the past 30 years, the development of the Tidy Towns Network among 36 communities have been instrumental in the development of recreational amenities in smaller villages and town settlements.






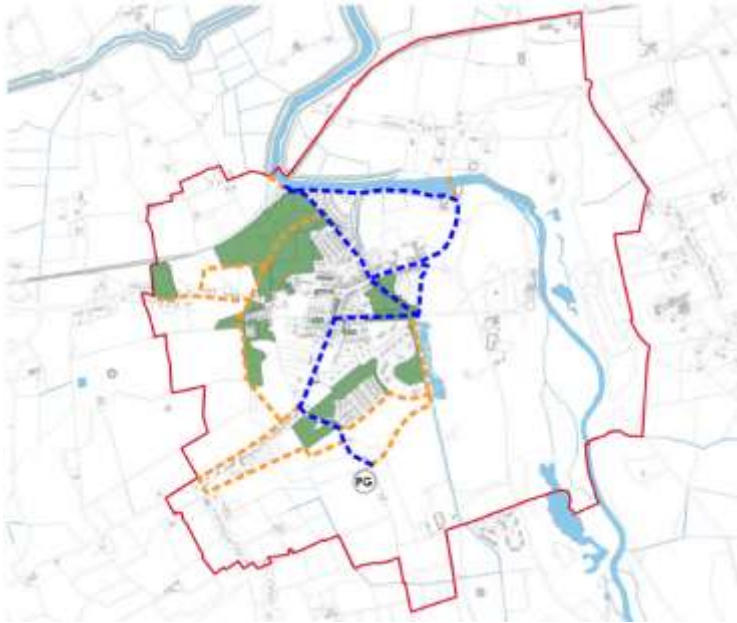
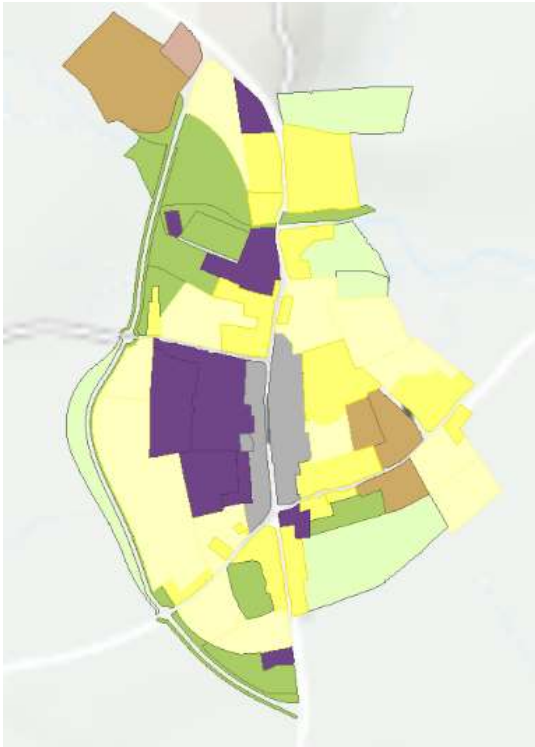
*River paths provide safe walking and cycling infrastructure for families to enjoy*

The town-based walking infrastructure is improving throughout the Mague Rivers catchment through the Local Area Planning (LAP) process. LCCC's commitments to increased green (and blue) infrastructure are leading to highly positive developments for the towns of Kilmallock, Bruff, Hospital, Croom and Adare in particular, with a number of smaller scale green developments at village level.

Town/Village	River	Comment
<b>Kilmallock</b>  <b>Kilmallock Local Area Plan 2019-2025</b>  <b>Kilmallock Walled Town: Public Realm Plan</b>  Kilmallock is a key town in East Limerick with a rich historical built heritage, including medieval plots and structures, the 18/19th century vernacular streetscape, and its location along the River Loobagh offers opportunity for	Loobagh	<p>Kilmallock supports ecosystems associated with the River Loobagh, open field and hedgerows, mature trees, green spaces by the Town Walls and the new Glen Wood - an urban woodland development by the local community. Significant recreational improvements are flagged within the Local Area Plan, optimising access along the River where development is prohibited due to flooding risk; with Townpark walking trails, a new footbridge over the Loobagh and improved linkages throughout the town. LCCC also commits to allotments for community gardens.</p>  <p><b>Key Proposals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal footpath links northwards from Site of Friars Gate with agreement of adjacent (private) owners</li> <li>Internal footpath links southwards to Site of Water Gate</li> <li>Building screen hedge planting situated around western boundary of Glanville Fields</li> <li>Low hedge planting to screen car parking within school grounds</li> <li>Possible car park (approx. 40 spaces) at entry to town on Bruff Road with provision for cycle and foot links to Clavin Road Town Trail</li> <li>Internal picnic and seating area with information signage within band of river and adjacent to proposed car park</li> <li>Indigenous planting along river bank around car park and on site of sewage treatment plant (to be decommissioned)</li> <li>Under-grounding of utilities</li> <li>Removal of non-conforming uses adjoining Site of Water Gate</li> <li>Structural and information signage at Site of Friars Gate and by river bridge on White Town Street</li> </ul> <p><b>Town Park</b></p>

<p>recreational trails linked to its heritage.</p>		
<p><b>Croom</b></p>  <p>Croom is well known for the School/ Court of Gaelic Poetry, which flourished in the 18th century. Gaelic poets were known collectively as <i>Fili na Maighe</i> "The Poets of the Maigue". Glenogra Castle outside the town is known as the home of the Colleen Bawn.</p>	<p><i>Maigue</i></p>	<p>The recreational amenity value of the River has been developed through the linear walkway/cycleway, parallel to the river. The adjacent parkland (13 acres) hosts woodland paths, seating, picnic areas and a playground. The Well Meadow provides passive recreation, with community aspirations to develop a boardwalk to link from town park to town centre - with support of landowners, along riverside lands to the rear of Main Street there is an opportunity to continue this walkway along the river. On the western bank, with the exception of the restored mill building there is limited public access..</p> <p>There is potential to provide greater public access to the river and therefore to harness its amenity value. The LAP incorporates proposals to achieve this objective through the development of walks and both active and passive amenity. The LAP also states that <i>"introduction of a slipway along the riverbank adjacent to the Civic centre provides a real opportunity for active use of the river and the development of a blueway system along the River Maigue"</i>.</p> 

<p><b>Bruff</b></p>	<p><i>Morningstar</i></p>	<p>LCCC plans to improve the riverside amenities with walking trails and biodiversity planting</p>   <p><i>Bruff village on the Morningstar</i></p>
<p><b>Adare</b></p> 	<p><i>Maigne</i></p>	<p>LCCC has committed to expanding the walking/cycling infrastructure through the town to provide safe connectivity to key activity zones along the Maigne and the GAA/ Sports grounds.</p> <p>The River Bank Walk along the Maigne provides an area of passive and active amenity and is an important contributor to the quality of life of residents and surrounding areas. LCCC has committed to develop community recreational requirements. The identification of possible amenity walkways and cycle routes throughout the village forms an important part of the LAP (see map). LCCC will facilitate the development of walkways in co-operation with private, voluntary and public sector. It will also facilitate opportunities for food production through allotments or community gardens at appropriate locations.</p>

		
<b>Hospital</b>	<i>Camogue</i>	<p>LCCC plans to improve the riverside amenities with walking trails and biodiversity planting</p> 

In addition to these existing and planned amenities in the larger towns and villages in the Mague catchments, there are a number of **Slí na Sláinte routes**, approved by the Irish Heart Foundation, centred in smaller villages offering short, safe walking options for residents.



#### 4.2.2 Cycling Infrastructure / Amenity

There are five key amenities in the Mague Rivers catchments in terms of cycling infrastructure, which offer an excellent array of options for local recreational users and visitors alike.

- (i) The *Great Southern Greenway* and its possible extension eastwards towards Adare
- (ii) The *Ballyhoura Mountain Bike Trails* provide an exceptional amenity of 94 km of dedicated trails. User numbers are increasing year on year (excepting 2020 due to covid restrictions), providing a much needed boost to the Ardpatrick – Kilfinane small business network.
- (iii) The *Kilmallock Cycle Hub*, which offers five long-distance and looped cycle routes through some of the most scenic areas of County Limerick. They extend over the Ballyhoura Mountains into north Cork; through to the Glen of Aherlow in Tipperary and northwards to Lough Gur.
- (iv) *Curraghchase Forest Park* – a network of gentler, family-friendly trails on forest tracks.
- (v) *Shannon Estuary Way* - scenic route on the Wild Atlantic Way from Limerick to Clare.

If mooted extensions of the Greenway take place, then the options for cycling can be expanded linking Limerick to Abbeyfeale in safer off-road settings.

The restoration of the defunct *Great Southern Charleville Spur* as a 'rail-to-trail' project holds could link the southern Mague Rivers catchment / Ballyhoura Mountains northwards to the GS Greenway and onwards to Limerick City to the east or Kerry to the west. This link would be transformational for the towns and villages along the way, offering an integrated servicing network. However, this is highly sensitive due to land ownership and access issues and is a longer term prospect only.

A further option for cycling would be to develop a loop around the eastern *Limerick Volcanic Province*, offering glimpses of the geo-heritage of Limerick, and its unique volcanic structures and features.



#### 4.2.3 Boating/ Water Sports Infrastructure

Despite the extensive river network, the Mague Rivers are used only to a limited extent for boating and kayaking from the Estuary to upstream of Croom to Bruree, with generally poor awareness among the general population. However, there is a significant minority of citizens who are interested in developing boating and kayaking and ultimately a **designated Blueway** (which is in line with LCCC stated policy objectives).



In the Maigue and Shannon Estuaries, a long tradition of licensed salmon fishing, using flat-bottomed cots known locally as **gandelows**, survived until 2016, when the salmon licences were finally terminated for stock conservation purposes. This boating / fishing tradition passed down through families and a local group based in Newtown is trying to retain the heritage and skills involved in both boat building and fishing. A monument was commissioned to celebrate the salmon fishing heritage in Newtown and a festival of rowing is held annually to celebrate the gandelow tradition at Ferrybridge.



*Traditional Shannon Gandelow*

The waters of the lower Maigue are tidal and require knowledge of the tidal regime and navigational skills concerning the mudflats. The Newtown **rowing club** are training young people in **gandelow boat-building** and navigation techniques, a project that could be incorporated into the future Maigue Rivers recreational planning. This will require enhanced amenities at Ferrybridge to provide safe access and egress at the old Turf Quay, likely incorporating a floating pontoon to deal with tides, and related parking/WC and changing facilities.

In Adare, there is also a project being undertaken to restore the old Turf Quay on the Maigue near the railway crossing. Ownership was an issue, but appears to have been resolved. Should this project proceed, there is scope to develop a floating pontoon/ marina at the Quay allowing **boating** along the river between Adare and Ferrybridge. This section of the river is tidal and would require careful planning of access and egress points, as well as skippers who know the river and the various mudbanks etc. If the quay were redeveloped, it could also serve as the terminus for a proposed kayak trail from Croom (Bruree) to Adare, above the tidal reach of the Maigue.

Upstream at Croom, a number of local people use the River Maigue for **kayaking**, from 3km upstream near the old creamery on a run down to Croom townpark. The annual Maigue River Festival has expanded the use of the river by organising a 3km fun event for families (50 people), with the permission of landowners. Kayaking can be conducted from Bruree downstream on the Maigue to the Creamery and on to Croom, but upstream is unsuitable as the river is too shallow particularly in summer. There is possibility to develop a trail downstream from Croom townpark past Caherass, Castleroberts to Adare, along a scenic pastoral route to Adare manor. Permission would be required from landowners.



*Kayaking is an easy-to-learn activity, suited to all ages*

On the River Camogue, it is possible to paddle from Grey Bridge downstream and on to the Maigne, but is not suitable for extensive development according to local paddlers. There are 13-14 weirs along the Maigne and if the river levels are too low in Summer, it is not possible to paddle.

**The Blueways Network** is being expanded nationally through Waterways Ireland in conjunction with Canoe Ireland and local authorities. Traditionally, canoeing and kayaking were seen as niche activities, but the expansion of the blueways has seen an increasing number of people of all ages participating. There is scope for the Blueways network to expand to other rivers, offering easier and safer access for all, through improved communication and 'Give it a Go' days to encourage uptake. It may be pertinent to establish an activity zone at Croom Townpark, with both kayak and bike hire, and the town could become a more proactive recreation hub to encourage people to try out water sports as a safe and fun recreational option.

There are options to develop a Blueway and expand the kayaking/ paddling trails on the Maigne Rivers

- Establish safe, permissive access and egress points
- Signage, water safety, guidance boards
- Proactive engagement with schools and youth clubs to get young people on the water
- 'Give it a Go' activity days where all the kit is provided via e.g. festivals, sports days or summer camps.



*Paddling on the Liffey with simple access infrastructure*

There are currently limited options to enjoy **Swimming/ Cold Swimming** on the Maigne Rivers, but locally people swim in the River Maigne at Bruree and Croom in the summer, at sites known to be safe for children. These are not sign posted and there is scope to expand the offer. An option may be to establish 'Lidos' as used at Banagher on the River Shannon, which provides a platform with stepped access and egress for safety.

Water Safety Ireland offers training / coaching and advice in summer camps to ensure the safety of participants.

The concept of wild swimming and all-year-round swimming are gaining popularity among adults nationwide. These activities could be promoted for general health and for e.g. Christmas charity swims and so forth.

#### 4.2.4 Angling Amenities

The Maigne River was once renowned for its salmon and wild brown trout fishery. However, the intensification of both population and agriculture has led to consequent declines in water quality (see Section 3.1.4 above) and eutrophication. The arterial drainage programmes since the 1950s led to disruption of spawning beds as well as

the 'canalisation' of the river. This has had a negative impact on fisheries; salmon stocks are currently estimated to be 30% of what they should be and salmon fishing is prohibited to conserve the remaining stocks.

There are three angling clubs active on the Maigue mainly for brown trout. In order to fish, one must become a member of a club and it is not easy to acquire a visitor day ticket. It was noted that the angling membership is aging and the clubs are actively trying to recruit younger members. Likewise the IFI run 'Something Fishy' type days for youngsters to get them involved in angling.

Access to the Maigue Rivers for angling relies on the goodwill of the landowners and there is currently no permissive pathway along the river banks.

Ireland attracts almost 135,000 international anglers each year, for an estimated 400,000 recreational anglers. It is considered by visitors to Ireland that angling is relatively hassle free and inexpensively compared to other angling destinations. Inlands Fisheries of Ireland (IFI) has developed a new Angling Marketing Strategy (2019) which will inform the future development of the angling product.

Angling is popular on the small lakes of East Limerick, especially on Bleach Lough, Dromore Lough and Lough Gur. Each of these offers coarse and/or game angling, and provide reliable access. Bleach Lough in particular is an excellent amenity, managed by a club, with excellent facilities including piers, boats, wheelchair accessible boats, club house and related amenities.

#### *Opportunities for Angling Development*

- Angling clubs are actively targeting young members and schools and provide practical training for youngsters in how to bait and cast the rod. It is critical that a new generation will grow to love and manage the sport.
- Angling is popular among the 'new Irish' from Eastern Europe and angling may provide a way to get recreationally active, while also being a socially innovative inclusion measure.
- Angling is an excellent pursuit for people with psychological stress or mental health issues, and measures could be enacted with GPs/ psychologists to engage, in particular, older men in social angling.

#### **4.2.5 Nature Viewing, Outdoor Education and Citizen Science**

East County Limerick is host to a number of key facilities that provide significant opportunities to engage in the outdoors through recreation and environmental education. There are a number of key sites within the Maigue Rivers catchment that are suited to viewing riverine, estuarine and wetland botany, ecology, geology and astronomy, as well as forest and bog habitats and their specific wildlife.

*Curraghchase Forest Park*, in the catchment of the Clonshire River, provides walking, cycling, orienteering activities, with a range of nature viewing opportunities. Significantly, Curraghchase is host to an internationally important conservation site for the Lesser Horseshoe Bat, as well as providing habitats for other bat species.

*Griston Bog*, in the southeastern extremity of the Maigue catchments, is located in the upper reaches of the Morningstar River near Ballylanders. It offers a series of bog walks and an outdoor classroom experience to explore specific habitats and species of bogs. There is potential to expand this facility, in association with the Kilfinane Outdoor Education Centre.





*Griston Bog – boardwalks for nature viewing of the bog*

In the upper reaches of the catchment, there is plenty of scope for birdwatching also in the Ballyhoura Mountains, where there are SPAs for the hen harrier and other upland habitats to be observed.

In the lower tidal reaches of the Mague and along the Shannon Estuary shoreline, there are wonderful opportunities for birdwatching on the shoreline at *Ringmoylan* and at *Newtown wetlands*, which welcome migratory geese, ducks and a range of other wildfowl annually. There is potential to promote these wonderful spaces for birdwatching to a wider audience, and in particular to get young people interested in recognising species and tracking their arrivals and departures.



*Discreet bird hides along rivers provide excellent nature viewing points*

At Lough Gur, the management team are working to expand the natural sciences offering by increasing the environmental history interpretation, including the palynological (pollen) records in the lake sediments that chart climate change over the past 10,000 years since the end of the last Ice Age.

There is a highly positive initiative underway to develop an *international Dark Skies Park* around Lough Gur that will provide opportunities for understanding of archaeo-astronomical understanding and the relationship of alignments of monuments at Grange Stone Circle and other sites.

Birdwatch Ireland and local activists in county Limerick strongly encourage opportunities to engage citizens in nature viewing. There has been a voluntary level of schools engagement, but emplacement of info-signage at key sites could be implemented as a 'quick win' by Limerick City & County Council at key points along the rivers.



Dublin City Council – information board about wildflowers along River Liffey

Linked to Office of Public Works (OPW) statutory efforts to adopt nature-based catchment management to mitigate flooding events, there may be scope to expand wildlife and nature watching through habitat creation along Maigue rivers and flood plains to address climate change, could provide opportunities throughout catchment. Engagement with communities to develop these solutions is central to the OPW's approach<sup>16</sup>.

### Farming and Wildlife

Increasingly the farming and food production community is open to welcoming visitors to experience the wildlife to be seen on active farms and demonstrate small scale rewilding measures.

There are open family farms at Rigneys Farm near Curraghchase and an emerging opportunity to view wildlife and restoration of biodiversity at Dunnaman Organic Farm just west of Croom, as well as nature viewing at Stonehall park. The increasing move to agri-environmental measures is positive for the environment, but it is critical that food consumers understand how this is happening and the positive impacts it induces for water quality.

There is a vibrant market collective offering locally grown foods at *Urban Food Co-Op* and *Farmers' Markets* from Charleville to Patrickswell, as well as *Neighbourfood* initiatives across the catchment. All such initiatives reach the public and incur a more sustainable way of living and thinking among the wider population.

<sup>16</sup> OPW presentation at LAWPRO *Reimagining Irish Rivers - Working with Nature* webinar, 22 March 2021



Limerick City and County Council has committed to providing spaces for community allotments and gardens in open spaces within the smaller towns and villages within the Maigue Catchments. This could be a very positive means of engaging actively with citizens to get involved in nature through growing vegetables and flowers. Experience elsewhere suggests enormous interest in gardening (and even more so since the covid-19 pandemic restrictions).



*Dublin City Council: Community Allotments on 'open space' flood plain of the River Liffey, Chapelizod*

## Citizen Science

**Citizen Science may be defined as “the collection and analysis of data relating to the natural world by members of the general public, typically as part of a collaborative project with professional scientists.”**

Citizen science harnesses the knowledge and enthusiasm of local communities and enables them to collect data and collaborate in the monitoring and analysis of local environmental features and can help shape solutions to environmental problems at both local and regional levels. Community-based monitoring is where communities self-organize to monitor local environments in an effort to increase or safeguard environmental quality or to encourage accountability of monitoring by official agencies. It involves citizen scientists, who work on a bottom-up basis to inform decisions and policy, from an evidenced-based approach, about environmental issues in their local area<sup>17</sup>.

There are various levels of Citizen Science from (i) initial engagement and getting people interested in their local waterbodies, followed by (ii) active engagement in data collection, reporting and (iii) longer term monitoring.

This requires **coordination** by a project manager, **contribution** of time and effort; **collaboration** in larger projects; and with increasing knowledge and experience, **co-creation** in the design of larger scale projects.

<sup>17</sup> Hegarty, S., Slaimi, A., O'Connor, N., Regan, F. (2021) Citizen Science and Water Quality Monitoring: Evidence from Dublin and Beyond.

Citizen Science is highly important in data collection, especially in monitoring of water quality, in first and second order streams (where there is currently no systematic monitoring) in Ireland. A national approach to water quality monitoring has developed at three levels:

1. EPA – Environmental Protection Agency
2. LAWPRO – Local Authorities Waters Programme
3. The Rivers Trust network (Ireland and UK)
4. Citizen Science initiatives

The Community Water Officers of the Local Authorities LAWPRO network provide an excellent network of active officials who can advise and direct citizen science efforts. It is strongly recommended that all records of water and ecological monitoring should be forwarded to the National Biodiversity Data Centre as the central repository of all recordings in Ireland: <https://www.biodiversityireland.ie/irelands-citizen-science-portal>

There are a number of **Citizen Science Projects** (CSPs) underway through the Catchments/ LAWPRO and Rivers Trust network in Ireland, supported by the EPA and other state agencies.

Three case studies of typical CSPs are presented below.

#### ***Case Study 1 - Citizen Science: The River Loobagh<sup>18</sup>***

The River Loobagh, with a catchment of approximately 129km<sup>2</sup>, rises in the Ballyhoura Mountains and flows through Kilfinane and Kilmallock before joining the River Maigne south of Bruree. The Loobagh and its tributaries are important salmon spawning waters and also support healthy populations of trout. Water quality in the Loobagh is generally good, particularly since the wastewater treatment plants serving Kilfinane and Kilmallock were upgraded in recent years. However, in August 2014, 70,000 gallons of slurry leaked from a steel slurry tower into the river just up-stream of Kilmallock and killed hundreds of fish over several kilometres.

A decision was taken locally to pilot a model of catchment management which would mobilise the local communities to become stewards of their aquatic resources and allow the river to achieve its potential as a high status water body and thriving fishery. It would also embed the idea that economic, social and environmental sustainability are inextricably linked, and that local management allows communities to achieve benefits while also protecting water quality and biodiversity. An education and awareness programme called “**Streamscapes Loobagh**”, developed by Coomhola Salmon Trust, and funded by LCCC, was delivered to all of the primary and secondary schools in the catchment and evening sessions were held in three locations for the wider community, with extremely positive feedback. A stakeholder group was established with representatives from community groups, landowners and farming organisations, Ballyhoura Development, Coillte, Inland Fisheries and local councillors. A study trip was undertaken to the Ballinderry catchment in Northern Ireland to look at the work of The Rivers Trust there.

There are several other initiatives undertaken in the catchment including:

- **In-Stream Works:** Local anglers, with the assistance of IFI, identified in-stream works to improve the habitat for Salmon and Trout and restore fish numbers after the fish kill. They approached local councillors in Kilmallock-Cappamore who supported the proposals and allocated funds to phase 1 of the works. These included the construction of rubble mats, weirs, gravel beds, thalwegs and other structures to improve the conditions for fish to breed and thrive. The funding was used to purchase stone and gravel; works were carried out by OPW under their River Improvements Programme.
- **Riverfly Monitoring Programme** is a “citizen science” project which has been up and running in the UK for a number of years. It will be trialled in the Loobagh over the coming months. This project will provide training to interested community members, anglers and landowners in a simplified method of biological monitoring, which

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.catchments.ie/catchment-case-study-river-loobagh/> June 2016, by Anne Goggin

will allow people to monitor and assess their local rivers and streams. The first training session is scheduled for October this year and has been offered to members of the stakeholder group. If feedback from this group is positive, the programme will be offered to the wider community.

- **Control of Invasive Species:** Giant Hogweed is a problem along the banks of the Loobagh. Ballyhoura Development applied for funding under Local Agenda 21, to provide training to participants in a local Rural Social Scheme in pesticide use and control of invasive species. It was envisaged that eradication from the catchment would take between five and ten years.

**There was a perceptible shift in attitude to the River Loobagh: members of the stakeholder group and community groups embraced the challenge to “let’s see what we can do about it”! This is the essence of meaningful citizen engagement and empowerment.**

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### ***Case Study 2 - Citizen Science: Dragonflies and Damselflies Citizen Science Mapping Project<sup>19</sup>***

Dragonflies and damselflies provide a useful indicator of freshwater water quality. The National Biodiversity Data Centre provided online training videos and interactive quizzes for citizen scientists who want to learn how to identify and map them.

**Dragonfly Ireland 2019 – 2024** is an all-Ireland survey of dragonflies and damselflies, and their habitats, coordinated by the National Biodiversity Data Centre in Ireland and by the Centre for Environmental Data and Recording in Northern Ireland. The survey is funded by the Environmental Protection Agency as part of a citizen science project focusing on aquatic species and their potential as bioindicators. The NBDC made videos to allow citizen scientists to get started on identifying and recording dragonflies and damselflies.

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### ***Case Study 3: Wexford school children working to understand their local streams<sup>20</sup>***

The local community in Duncannon, County Wexford have worked to understand their local streams and beach, and what they can do to improve their water quality. Bringing about water quality improvements requires a good knowledge of the pressures impacting on water quality, and the identification of practical solutions to address them. This should be accompanied with local community engagement and wider stakeholder participation, from the onset. In Duncannon, considerable work was undertaken by Wexford County Council (WCC) to address water quality issues affecting the beach at Duncannon, and its Blue Flag, within the Waterford Harbour, a national Priority Area for Action.

WCC collaborated with local school children and their families to promote awareness of the uniqueness of the area, and showcase the wonderful life that exists in the small coastal streams. The LAWPRO worked with WCC and Inland Fisheries Ireland to deliver a classroom talk, focused on the importance of local streams for a range of aquatic life, especially as breeding grounds for sea trout. They discussed the need to ensure that they are kept clean as they also flow onto the beach, which had recently lost its Blue Flag. The children were taken on a field trip out to one of the local streams and shown the ‘water bug kick sampling monitoring technique’ to discover the range of water bugs that can be found, even in small streams less than two metres wide. These water bugs included mayfly, which are very sensitive to pollution, and more tolerant species such as water shrimp. This was followed by a discussion on the physical shape of the river and its banks, and the importance of the riverside plant life to the health of streams. The highlight of the day was the capture of a young salmon (returned of course) during a demonstration of the electrofishing technique used by Inland Fisheries Ireland to monitor fish in our rivers.

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<sup>19</sup> [www.catchnems.ie](http://www.catchnems.ie) by Dave Wall, Citizen Science Officer with the National Biodiversity Data Centre

<sup>20</sup> August 2019, [EPA Catchments Unit: 2nd Cycle 2015-2021](#), [Citizen Science](#), [News](#), [Stories](#), [Water and Communities](#)

These case studies on Catchment.ie demonstrate that Citizen Science can be carried out by any members of the public by volunteering to collect scientific data to monitor biodiversity, invasive species and water quality. The widespread use of smartphones means that scientific data can now be very easily shared and mapped, resulting in a rapid increase in the number and type of citizen science research projects.



**Citizen Science Ireland** <http://citizen-science.ie/> is an initiative to harness the knowledge gained by practitioners and researchers and to involve citizens across a range of scientific disciplines in Ireland. CSI is member of the European Citizens Science Association and the aim is to build collaboration, community and credibility in the field of citizen science. A number of organisations and projects have been established to help the coordination and communication of citizen science across Europe.

The Mague Rivers Trust is working with LAWPRO to build a Citizen Science programme with local communities to become involved with the longer term management of their local waterways. Research is being actively undertaken at the Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick to work with Limerick communities to develop awareness of citizen science potential and initiatives.

Citizens working together can collect much more scientific data than scientists working alone. Participating in citizen science can increase public engagement with and understanding of important environmental issues. Citizen science moreover can encourage people of all ages to get out into nature and can contribute to an increased sense of community.

#### 4.2.6 Other Recreational Amenities

In addition to the walking – cycling – angling – boating recreational amenities, there is a number of other activities available on the Rivers network.

The *Scout Centre at Curraghchase* hosts a full range of outdoor forest activities for scouting groups. There is also a permanent orienteering trail in the Forest Park (O-trail) that can be enjoyed by all age groups.

*Horse riding* is available at a number of riding centres in Crecora, Clonshire and Clarina, but there may be opportunities to develop bridle paths as seen throughout the UK. This would be highly dependent on landowner permission and may be too challenging in the current environment.

There is a range of other ‘fixed’ amenities such as *clay pigeon shooting* (e.g. Lazy Dog) in the upper reaches of the catchment, but these have not been examined in detail in this study to date.



### 4.3 Gap Analysis & SCOT

The above analysis highlighted both the strengths and gaps in provision in the Mague Rivers catchment.

A **SCOT Analysis** (Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, Threats) exercise was carried out to capture the core issues identified during the above baseline analysis – see Table 6 below.



Table 6 SCOT Analysis – Maigue Rivers Recreation & Amenity

STRENGTHS	CHALLENGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Beautiful pastoral scenery</b> in the Golden Vale</li> <li>✓ <b>Walking/ Cycling provision good</b> across range of settings – hill trails, greenway, forests, town parks, with potential for more</li> <li>✓ <b>Great Southern Greenway</b> running across the county</li> <li>✓ World class <b>Ballyhoura Mountain Bike Trails</b> in upper Maigue catchment</li> <li>✓ <b>Lough Gur</b> and <b>Curraghchase outdoor amenities</b>, offering access to combined natural &amp; cultural heritage</li> <li>✓ <b>Cultural history of fishing</b> on Maigue &amp; Shannon Estuary</li> <li>✓ <b>Expanding range of Town Parks</b> and <b>Slí na Sláinte</b> routes within small villages and towns</li> <li>✓ <b>Demographic profile</b> of educated young and middle ages, with likely increased demand for more amenities</li> <li>✓ <b>Increased participation in outdoor recreation</b> among all age groups (particularly during covid), including retired</li> <li>✓ <b>Tourism access into county</b> from Shannon Airport/ Limerick City of Sport and Wild Atlantic Way</li> <li>✓ <b>Increased policy &amp; financial supports</b> for outdoor recreation at national and county levels.</li> <li>✓ <b>Strong LDCs (Ballyhoura/ WLR)</b> with track record in supporting outdoor recreation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Poor Access</b> along extensive river network, with limited beside-water / on-water access for a range of activities.</li> <li>○ <b>Weak infrastructure</b> (parking, signage, gates, access) for riverside activities</li> <li>○ <b>Insurance and anti-social behaviour concerns</b> of farmers (<i>perceptual</i>)</li> <li>○ <b>Weak awareness of river amenities</b> among schools/ citizens, thus under-usage</li> <li>○ <b>Uncertainty of rights re. ownership &amp; access</b> at river quays in Adare and Ferrybridge</li> <li>○ <b>Lack of signature recreational events &amp; festivals</b> in the lower the Maigue Catchments</li> <li>○ <b>Lack of defined infrastructure</b> to view nature in the wild e.g. salmon runs; bird migrations; spring wildflowers; bats</li> <li>○ <b>Lack of informal huts/ camping facilities</b></li> <li>○ <b>Communication of local events</b> in lowland communities could be improved to visitors</li> <li>○ <b>Marketing &amp; packaging</b> of activities could be improved across the region</li> <li>○ <b>Multiple policies for green infrastructure</b>, but relatively <b>limited implementation</b> of access to green infrastructure in rural areas.</li> </ul>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Increased use of Maigue Rivers for ‘blue’ recreation</b> through negotiated access, working with farmers</li> <li>❖ <b>Restoration of traditional quays</b> to provide access/ egress</li> <li>❖ <b>Development of Blueway</b> for kayaking, boating, angling trails, linked to trails and Greenways</li> <li>❖ <b>Potential for recreational infrastructure of scale:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Great Southern Greenway</b> &gt;&gt; extend to Adare &amp; Tralee; expand its reach through Maigue catchment to....</li> <li>• <b>Restore the GSR Charleville Spur</b>, to link from Ballyhoura Way &gt;&gt; Beara Breifne Way to Limerick</li> <li>• <b>Develop The Bank Walk</b> from Ferrybridge north to Estuary; potentially all the way to Adare</li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ <b>Lough Gur as ‘Discovery Park’ with Dark Skies Park</b> and cycle trail to Limerick Volcanic Centre (extend seasonality)</li> <li>❖ <b>Use of Curraghchase Forest Park/ Knockfierna/ Liskennett/ Ballinruane and Knockainey woods</b> to expand ‘soft’ recreation, nature viewing and e.g. ‘Forest Therapy’</li> <li>❖ <b>Enhanced nature viewing amenities; bird hides; bat walks</b></li> <li>❖ <b>Nature-based catchment management:</b> create habitats</li> <li>❖ <b>Use of abandoned mills/ farmsteads</b> to provide rustic accommodation, especially on long distance trails</li> <li>❖ <b>Networking of recreational enterprises:</b> collaboration to compete through bundling/ marketing</li> <li>❖ <b>Integrated calendar of events</b> of local festivals &amp; events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lack of access</b> to riverside / river frontage by landowners</li> <li>• <b>Inability to secure safe access and egress</b> to realise some of the ‘beside water/ on-water’ opportunities.</li> <li>• <b>Failure to secure requisite resourcing &amp; funding</b> to realise recreational opportunities</li> <li>• <b>Lack of vision and management commitment</b> to action on delivering the objectives of county and local development plans and tourism strategies</li> </ul>

## 5.0 Tourism Potential: Recreation & Amenity

The requirement for integrated recreational infrastructure is key to meeting the demands of citizens for safe places to recreate and view nature, as well as meeting ecological and climate mitigation targets. However, excellent recreation and amenities are also essential to attract and retain visitors in East Limerick, thus supporting local enterprises and the vibrancy of rural communities.

### 5.1 Tourism Trends in Ireland

Fáilte Ireland research confirms that tourism continues to be one of Ireland's key industries. 2019 was the best year to date for Irish tourism, attracting just over 9.7 million international visitors, spending €7.4 billion, with growth recorded across USA, Germany and France, with a slight decrease in GB visitors. The latest data for 2019 show a slight rise of overseas visitors, in comparison with 2018<sup>21,22</sup>. Table 7 below shows the yearly trends in visitor numbers (both overseas and domestic) and revenues generated (2014-2019), reflecting the positive upward trend in tourism numbers.

**Table 7 Tourism Numbers in Ireland 2014-2019** <sup>23</sup>

Overseas Tourists (000s)	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	% change 2019 vs 2018
Overseas (000's)	7,105	8,036	8,742	9,023	9,609	9,700	+ 0.7%
Total ForEx Earnings (€m)	5,137.7	5,963.5	6,539.9	6,959.2	7,384	7,386	+0.0%
Domestic Tourists (000s)	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	% change 2018 vs 2017
Domestic Tourists (000's)	8,991	9,125	9,359	9,626	10,919	11,621	+6%
Revenue (€m)	1,713.5	1,725.3	1,797.7	1,879.1	2,006.0	2,150	+7%

Tourism spend in Ireland is very significant as shown in Table 7. Fáilte Ireland research has broken this down further to the typical daily spend (€, per diem) by visitor type (Figure 14). A typical overseas holiday maker spends c. €96 per day, while a domestic visitor spends €74 per day.

These expenditures are very significant, principally outside of the cities, with a strong distribution to regional and rural economies and create significant numbers of jobs and tax revenues (Figure 14).

In the context of Mague Rivers, every 1,000 extra international tourists will generate 20 jobs.

<sup>21</sup> CSO Overseas Travel June 2019

<sup>22</sup> Tourism Ireland data quoted in Irish Times 15/7/2019.

<sup>23</sup> Fáilte Ireland Tourism Facts 2019 (pub. Jan 2021) (*Overseas*) / CSO Household Survey 2019 (*Domestic*)

Figure 14 Per Diem Spend by Visitor Type, Ireland (2019)



### 5.1.1 Tourism Market Segments

Fáilte Ireland has conducted research over the past few years in identifying the core market segments that would enjoy the Irish experience and offering. The two main **international target segments** that would be appropriate in the context of the Maigue River Catchments are:

- ✓ **Culturally Curious** are independent “active sightseers”, seeking ‘freedom’ through authentic and unusual experiences, exploring, connecting with nature off the beaten track, and prepared to pay for insightful guide. They love to walk, cycle or boat to explore a new place. They are typically 40+ in age and will usually travel in a couple or as an individual, but rarely in a family group.
- ✓ **Great Escapers** are looking for time out to recharge their batteries and reconnect with each other. They want to be in nature and soak up beauty but will also visit a castle or landmark. They enjoy being off the beaten track to explore the elements – stars, water etc. and will take part in strenuous but not extreme activities; appreciate peace and quiet, but also enjoy the ‘wow factor’ without too much effort. They are usually couples in their 30s, may have young children, or couples in their 40s-50s without children.

Fáilte Ireland has outlined a **domestic segment** that could also be appropriate for the East Limerick offer <sup>24</sup>:

- ✓ **Connected Families** make up 23% of the domestic tourism market, comprising relatively young families, parents in their 30s-40s and children under-10. Holidays offer an opportunity to spend quality time together, creating lasting memories. They plan ahead to find best places to stay, hidden gems and activities that can be shared. Connected Families book 3-6 months ahead, online. Typical family breaks are for 4-7 days, staying in hotels or self-catering houses.

Understanding the needs of the target markets assist in planning for their needs and in provision of appropriate recreational infrastructure and amenities to ensure their enjoyment and retention for longer in the area.

<sup>24</sup> Fáilte Ireland: *Driving Growth Through Segmentation*. [www.failteireland.ie/publications](http://www.failteireland.ie/publications)



## 5.2 Assessment of Demand for Recreation

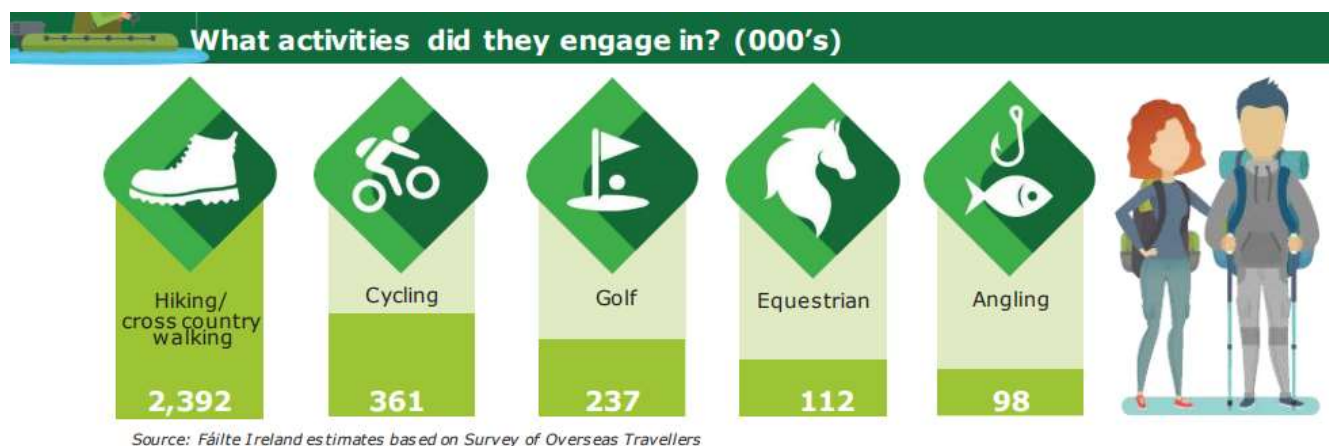
To assess the likely demand for a particular type, or mix of, recreational amenities, it is critical to have access to the right information. Demand assessment requires background research, primary consultations and field analyses/ surveys in order to estimate the future demand for specific recreational amenities<sup>25</sup>. Central to this is the attempt to assess the carrying capacity of a given locality or region, in terms of the numbers of recreational users that can be sustainably welcomed. This may be defined as follows:

- **Recreational carrying capacity** can be defined as the maximum amount of recreation use and resulting impacts that can be accommodated in a park or outdoor recreation area without unacceptable change to natural and cultural resources and quality of the visitor experience.
- **Engineering** refers to technical design of river access, signage, and other recreational amenities, development, and infrastructure. Intentional design of river recreation sites should encourage ethical and responsible river use, promoting self-regulation of crowds and recreational behaviour in desired patterns.

Without primary data for the Mague Rivers, it is challenging to quantitatively estimate the likely usage and thus the carrying capacity of the catchment. It is clear from project consultations that qualitatively the rivers are significantly under-utilised relative to their potential for blue amenities (boating, kayaking, canoeing), although less so traditionally for angling. However, this is likely to change as the recreational amenities are developed. For instance, the Lough Gur Heritage Centre is currently undertaking assessment studies as the facility may be already be reaching its carrying capacity in terms of its ethos and sustainability objectives.

Research into activity trends among international visitors suggest that visitors to Ireland are increasingly seeking outdoor experiences with options to 'get away from it all' through activity based holidays (Fáilte Ireland, see Figure 15).

Figure 15 Fáilte Ireland: Activities Engaged In – Overseas Visitors 2019



County-wide research suggests that the demand for outdoor activities and experiential recreation is increasing year on year, which is reflected in the defined objectives and actions of the *Limerick Tourism Development Strategy & Action Plan 2019-23*. It aims to increase the total number of visitors to Limerick City and County to 1.1 million, generating €360.6 million in revenue and creating 1,500 new jobs in the tourism sector by 2023<sup>26</sup>).

<sup>25</sup> Haas, G.E., M.D. Wells, V. Lovejoy, and D. Welch. January 2007. *Estimating Future Recreation Demand: A Decision Guide for the Practitioner*. US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, Program & Policy Services, Denver, Colorado.

<sup>26</sup> Limerick Tourism Development Strategy & Action Plan 2019-2023. Note these targets are very likely to be distorted by the Covid -19 pandemic and the effective cessation of tourism from Q1/ 2020 – through to Q2/2021 (likely).

The Limerick strategic objectives address the many opportunities associated with four key segments, with significant focus on outdoor recreation throughout the county:

- **Waterways**
- **Activities**
- **Heritage and**
- **Arts & Culture**

These opportunities will be realised based on the following thematic framework (Figure 16) and related actions for each.

**Figure 16 Thematic Framework: Limerick City & County 2019-2023**

<p><b>THEME 1: INTO THE BLUE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A Shannon river/estuary location with a network of rivers and lakes throughout the county</li> <li>- Opportunity to develop Limerick's blueways, facilitate greater access to waterways and link in with greenways</li> <li>- Responds to the "Great Escapers"- consumer segment</li> </ul>	<p><b>THEME 2: ENERGY UNLEASHED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strong base throughout Limerick</li> <li>- Existing attractions among the most popular in Limerick (e.g. Ballyhoura Mountain Bike Trails)</li> <li>- Responds to the "Social Energisers" consumer segment</li> <li>- Significant untapped potential for adventure sports tourism and building on Limerick's reputation for sporting excellence</li> </ul>
<p><b>THEME 3: VIBRANT HISTORY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strong base throughout Limerick</li> <li>- Existing attractions among the most popular in Limerick (e.g. the Hunt Museum, King John's Castle, Desmond Banqueting Hall)</li> <li>- Responds to the "Culturally Curious" consumer segment</li> <li>- Likely to appeal to US market</li> <li>- Heritage led tourism traditionally strong performer</li> </ul>	<p><b>THEME 4: ALIVE AND KICKING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Taps into Limerick's vibrant art and culture scene</li> <li>- Existing attractions performing well - Foynes Flying Boat Museum, Limerick City Gallery of Art, Limerick City Museum</li> <li>- Responds not only to the "Culturally Curious" consumer segment but also to aspects of the Social Energiser segment, especially those interested in a contemporary urban culture experience</li> </ul>

Critically, the Limerick Tourism Development & Action Plan made specific proposals that are directly relevant to the current Maigue Rivers study, inter alia:

- ✓ Develop a Blueway Strategy for the county,
- ✓ Facilitate greater access to the waterways as Blueways, with links to Greenways
- ✓ Provide options for the Great Escaper international segment
- ✓ 'Unleash the Energy of amenities such as the Ballyhoura Mountain Bike Trails, to meet the needs of the 'Social Energiser' segment and a range of Adventure Sports opportunities.
- ✓ Enhance the vibrancy of popular attractions, including Kilmallock Walled Town and Lough Gur Heritage Centre, to meet the needs of the 'Culturally Curious' segment.
- ✓ Development of county-wide Festivals and Events

The Action Plan committed to providing management support, with a range of defined partners including Coillte, NPWS and the LDCs (Ballyhoura Development and West Limerick Resources) and to sourcing the requisite funding to deliver the objectives.

At a local/ sub-regional level, the *Ballyhoura Countryside Recreation Strategy 2020*, pointed to the potential for walking, cycling and a range of integrated outdoor activities, linked to opportunities for wildlife watching as the most suitable mix of activities in the Ballyhoura Country, aligned with the Maigue Catchments.

The options considered in the *Munster Mountain Peaks Study (2020)* considered that adventure, and a range of hiking, walking/ hiking and cycling present a significant opportunity mix for the Ballyhoura sub-region. It

considered that the area was well endowed with these activities, but could benefit from digital mapping, Apps development, integrated marketing, bundling of services and collaboration among service providers.

### 5.3 Summary: Tourism Trends

In summary, current research at national, county and local level suggests that the demand for outdoor recreation, supported by a range of amenities and services, is increasing annually.

The Maigne Rivers are well positioned to capitalise on these trends given the current recreational base, the potential for future initiatives and committed policy supports.



Photo Source: [www.canoe.ie](http://www.canoe.ie)



## 6.0 International Best Practice of Riverine Recreation

In assessing the potential for recreational and amenity development in the Maigue Rivers catchment, a short review of international models was undertaken to provide a snapshot of *'what's out there'* and to identify success factors that may be applied.

A review of riverine recreational amenities through the Rivers Trust network in UK and the Verde Valley in USA was undertaken to examine models for recreational development and management. The following provides a set of summary case studies.

### 6.1 International Case Studies

**The Rivers Trust (UK)** [www.theriverstrust.org](http://www.theriverstrust.org)

The Rivers Trust is the umbrella organisation for sixty local Rivers Trusts, groups of environmental charities across the UK and Ireland, dedicated to protecting and improving river environments for the benefit of people and wildlife. The Trust believes that rivers should be valued and enjoyed by all, addressing and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), by taking vital action in protecting and improving river quality and amenities. The approach has had a very significant impact and in particular in developing partnerships with landowners, residents, local authorities and citizen scientists.

Most of the work focuses on water quality and ecological restoration, versus recreational amenities, although a number of individual trusts have emplaced walkways for enhanced river access.



A number of site-specific Rivers Trust projects were reviewed to provide pointers for the Maigue Rivers.

Many of these projects rely on citizen engagement to both identify the issues to be addressed and the voluntary labour to address the issue and solve the problem.

Many projects take time, engagement with landowners and land managers, planning and extraordinary time inputs by volunteers, but the results are profound and contribute to water quality and biodiversity enhancement, as well as creating beautiful riverine recreational spaces for all to enjoy.



## CASE STUDY 1: RESTORATION OF WETLANDS, BROOMFIELD PARK, ENFIELD, UK

Broomfield Park used to house a vast expanse of lawn, which did not do much for nature.

In 2018, work began on a brand new wetland, developed as a partnership between the Coca-Cola Foundation, WWF-UK, Thames21, a local member trust, and Enfield Council. Local community groups also provided invaluable support. Broomfield Wetland has already begun to deliver huge benefits in the local area: boosted biodiversity, cleaner water, amenity for the community, and reduced flood risk for nearby homes. In 2020, the wetland won a 'highly commended' award from the UK's SUDs Awards.



## CASE STUDY 2: FESTIVAL: LONDON RIVERS WEEK, 2019, 2020 (UK)

<https://www.thames21.org.uk/joinacampaign/londonriversweek/>

London has nearly 400 miles of waterways, many unknown outside of local neighbourhoods. Over past 20 years, more than 20 miles of river have been 'rewilded' or restored. Rewilding can involve simple actions such as adding woody material to a river, or removing concrete and metal from its banks. It can also mean giving rivers more space to flood over water meadows, or creating new wetlands beside them.

Week-long festivals were held in 2019 and 2020 to celebrate London's lesser known waterways, resulting in several positive outcomes. Hundreds of people learned about rewilding rivers through films, walks, webinars, online tours, and clean-ups.

Longer term outputs include a podcast on rewilding rivers, a self-guided walks directory and map of London's walks and rewilded river sites, a fish migration map and a river sound map. A special report highlighting the impacts of river restoration work in London was also published.

Volunteers were introduced to the rivers and appraised of various enhancement projects such as removal of weirs to allow fish migration; riverine ecology of plants and insects; followed by active engagement in litter clean-ups; removal of invasive species such as Himalayan Balsam (which smother native plant species) and guided walks by local experts.

Such River Festivals provide opportunities for communal activity, fun and 'hands on' practical clean-ups, and really encourage the local ownership of, and pride in, their smaller streams and waterways.

The website provides links to 17 self-guided walks e.g. <https://www.walkingenglishman.com/ldp/jubileegreenway.html>, all the while fostering the recreational and amenity value of the rivers network, supported by the Local Authorities and various trust funds.



the



### CASE STUDY 3 – RIVER AMENITY, LANCASHIRE, ENGLAND

**The Primrose Lodge Blue and Greenway Project** (PLBGP) aims to convert the former Primrose Mill Lodge into a public open space within the heart of Clitheroe in Lancashire, UK.

In 1787 a 7-metre high dam was constructed to provide a consistent source of water that could be utilised to power a cotton mill, and laterally a print works, paper works, and lifting equipment manufacturer at Primrose Works. The Lodge is now redundant owing to significant re-development of Primrose Works negating the need for water supply. The construction of the Lodge prevented upstream migration of a number of aquatic species but also created an interruption to and artificial sediment regime downstream.



The Lodge was never decommissioned as part of the wider redevelopment, so the negative impact on the aquatic ecology continues, impacting both downstream and upstream. However, the unique nature of the site and lack of human intervention has resulted in the site being given a local conservation designation (Biological Heritage Site). The designation is based on the fact that the industrial activity and artificial nature of the site make a contribution to biodiversity in their own right, as well as supporting flowering ferns and plants that are classed as vulnerable in the “Provisional Lancashire Red Data List of Vascular Plants”. The key features already present will be retained and enhanced, whilst new features are also created.

The project is funded through the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government, through the EU’s European Regional Development Fund (£500,000), as well as ‘Section 106’ funding from Ribble Valley Borough Council and charitable funding from Ribble Rivers Trust.

The project comprises three stages:

- ✓ A fish pass will connect of 9 hectares of Mearley Brook and lead to salmon, sea trout, and eels being present not only in the heart of Clitheroe, but beyond to Worston and into the streams on the side of Pendle Hill. They will, in turn, support other wildlife such as kingfishers, herons and otters.
- ✓ De-silting will create a permanent open water habitat, home to wildfowl and invertebrates that will support bats and other species, as well as adding to the aesthetic value.
- ✓ Creation of a footpath, bridge, viewing area, and signage to enable children to walk to school through a woodland walk and nature park.



The project aims to improve public access and connection to the habitats and diversity of river wildlife for people to explore and enjoy. The project is one of several to convert the whole of the Primrose Mill site into a valued green and blue space for people and wildlife, within an urban surrounding.

## CASE STUDY 4 – RECREATIONAL MANAGEMENT, VERDE RIVER VALLEY, ARIZONA, USA

The Verde River winds through a remote desert environment, one of the last healthy, perennially flowing river systems remaining in Arizona, and home to rare cottonwood-willow gallery forests, abundant wildlife and significant archaeological and historic resources. Although valued for sightseeing and tourism, it has remained relatively unknown as a recreational destination. New initiatives are planned to improve recreational opportunities and foster economic development, as interest in outdoor recreation continues to rise in USA. The impacts of recreational tourism however, need to be managed.

Communities started developing their own distinctive attractions, including river access points, vineyards and wine tasting, and festivals as they acknowledge its recreational, scenic, and economic values of the Verde. A partnership, The Verde Front, was formed as collaboration of people from local communities, SMEs, public land agencies, NGOs and other local stakeholders to develop a sustainable approach to recreation and tourism. Research was carried out to identify best practice from other communities and how to mitigate the impacts of recreation in river corridors. In the Verde River, this included issues such as carrying capacity, education, engineering and enforcement, as well as new opportunities.

Agricultural producers are exploring innovative ideas to improve water efficiency, lessening the impact on Verde River flows and supporting a vibrant local food movement. These recent developments, along with the region's unique cultural history and commitment to sustainability of local businesses, led National Geographic to identify the Sedona Verde Valley as one of about 20 international geotourism worldwide destinations, where communities promote economic growth and tourism while also encouraging protection and restoration of the river's natural resources.

### **Site and Facilities Planning and Design**

Designing recreational amenities properly makes it possible to manage the number of users/visitors and enhance their experience. Proper site design establishes reasonable expectations for use, while also protecting natural resource. Facilities should be geared to provide the type of recreational experience that fits with the natural resources of the site and meets the recreation opportunity goals. Considerations may include a quiet, nature-oriented experience or activity, or a hub for community gatherings and river festivals.

## 6.2 Lessons Learned

Some key lessons can be elicited from these case studies:

### **Site and Facilities Planning and Design**

Designing recreational amenities properly makes it possible to manage the number of users/visitors and enhance their experience. Proper site design establishes reasonable expectations for use, while also protecting the natural resources. Facilities should be geared to provide the type of recreational experience that fits with the natural resources of the catchment and meets agreed recreational goals. Considerations may include a quiet, nature-oriented experience or activity, or a hub for community gatherings and river festivals.

### **Best practices to consider in designing recreational amenities include:**

**Access** for recreation should be planned in full consultation with landowners and land managers, and designed to meet user needs. There is often an inherent tension between improved access, protection of farmlands, natural resources and wildlife, and the quality of the recreational experience for the visitor.

- Avoid development in areas with sensitive habitat or that are located in hazardous/flood-prone areas.
- Use recreational amenity design to protect water quality, promote groundwater infiltration and recharge, and limit erosion.
- Use locally sourced, recycled, or sustainable building materials wherever possible.
- Design features should ideally reflect local heritage and character and blend with the surrounding environment.
- Plant native vegetation at recreation sites and remove non-native plant species where feasible.

- Education** should focus on providing public information and awareness of recreational opportunities, access and water safety. Education around sustainable river use and sharing knowledge of important ecological, historical, archaeological, wildlife, and other natural resources will require imaginative engagement with citizens. This could include the use of trailheads, denoted river access and boat landing points, riverside parks and amenities such as picnic areas, trails or wildlife viewing ‘hides’. Comprehensive signage should include directional signage to reach access points and requisite services in towns and villages.

Important indicators to consider might include:

- Linking the goals of sustainable recreation, such as appropriate access or environmental protection, to capacity levels related to recreational use.
- Once the goals are established, a monitoring plan can be developed which sets out actions and compiles monitoring results to determine if management actions are required to protect the river catchments.



*Nore River catchment pictogram*



## 7.0 Emerging Concepts for Maigue Rivers Catchment

The following concepts for recreational and amenity development are highly provisional and are intended for discussion by the Board of the Maigue Rivers Trust, prior to advancing to Phase 2 of this study.

Extensive discussions were held with a range of stakeholders throughout Phase 1 of the study. Unfortunately, the Government Level 5 restrictions have been in place for the duration of Phase 1 and thus field research and face-to-face consultations have not taken place. It is hoped to rectify this in the early stages of Phase 2.

In the interim, based on the consultants' knowledge of East Limerick and also on discussions with various stakeholders, a number of concepts were defined. These are aimed to integrated the existing infrastructure and to 'join the dots' to address defined gaps in the SCOT Analysis (**Error! Reference source not found.** above).

The key elements of the proposals are presented below Figure 17 Table 8. All concepts are subject to further discussion, particularly in relation to the underlying issue of **permissive access to the riparian banks** for walking, rowing, boating, kayaking and elements of nature watching.

**Table 8 Conceptual Proposals: Recreation & Amenity, Maigue Rivers**

ACTIVITY	Conceptual Proposal
<b>WALKING</b>	
<b>W.1</b>	Formalise 'The Bank' Walk from Ferrybridge to Ringmoylan - based on permissive access of up to 37 landowners.
<b>W.2</b>	Consider upstream expansion of The Bank Walk towards Adare – based on permissive access of landowners; create nature viewing points / bird hides
<b>W.3</b>	Croom: potential to create new walking-cycleway along the old N20 when the planned M20 is constructed – reclaim the road for recreation ( <i>akin to N8 from Mitchelstown to Cahir</i> )
<b>W.4</b>	Develop a series of accessible <b>Local River Walks</b> to provide easy access to nature – require land access negotiation /parking / fencing and stiles
<b>W.5</b>	Expand the network of Town parks and Slí na Sláinte linked to LAP/ Tidy Towns
<b>CYCLING</b>	
<b>C.1</b>	Feasibility Study to extend the <b>Great Southern Greenway to Adare</b>
<b>C.2</b>	Feasibility Study to examine potential to revitalise <b>Great Southern Charleville Spur</b> as a greenway from Charleville to Patrickswell – thus linking Ballyhoura to the (future) GS Greenway from Limerick to Tralee
<b>C.3</b>	Potential for cycleway from Bruff to Lough Gur
<b>C.4</b>	Cycle trail through the Limerick Volcanic Province to explore geo-heritage and Limerick's answer to the Giants Causeway
<b>ANGLING</b>	
<b>A.1</b>	Create Blueway from Croom to Ferrybridge with angling stands and clearly demarcated access points along the waterways

A.2	Create angling access points at each of the other rivers
A.2	Expand 'Something Fishy' training for younger children with IFI/ Clubs
<b>BOATING</b>	<b>The Maigne Rivers are significantly under-utilised for boating, due to (i) land access for safe access and egress (ii) tidal / muddy reaches below Adare, with no weirs or rapids (iii) shallow waters in much of the upstream rivers above Bruree, particularly in Summer. There are 13-14 weirs but cannot paddle over them if water levels too low.</b>
<b>B.1</b>	Examine <b>options for Kayak Trails (all would be subject to landowner permissions)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3km Kayak Trail from Creamery (Banoge Bridge) downstream to Croom</li> <li>• Continuation of Kayak Trail downstream from Croom Townpark to Adare Quay including trail from Castleroberts Bridge to Adare Manor (commercial?)</li> <li>• Kayak/ paddle trail from Bruree to Croom on Maigne</li> <li>• Bruff to Athlaca on the Morningstar</li> <li>• Paddle run on Camogue from grey Bridge downstream</li> </ul>
<b>B.2</b>	<b>Create a Blueway from Croom to Adare</b> – potentially to Ferrybridge pending safety studies (tidal). This would need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advice from Canoe Ireland to meet blueway safety requirements and regulations</li> <li>• Detailed assessment of 'put-in' points for safe access and egress required</li> <li>• Detailed OPW information on water depth &amp; flow guages</li> </ul>
<b>B.3</b>	<b>Restore the old Turf Quays on the Lower Maigne</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Adare – at rail crossing (with parking) – subject to ownership and engineering studies</li> <li>(ii) Ferrybridge to allow safe access and egress for kayaks, rowing boats, gandelows, dinghies, paddle boards etc, with related amenities for clubs/ training</li> </ul>
<b>B.4</b>	<b>Develop floating pontoon/ marina at Adare Quay</b> to accommodate tidal flow and ebb. <b>Establish a floating pontoon at Ferrybridge</b> to allow boat trips from Adare to Ferrybridge based on tidal schedules.
<b>B.5</b>	Establish a <b>swimming 'Lido'</b> at Croom Townpark/ Bruree to allow safe 'all year round' swimming (and possibly Kilmallock??)
<b>NATURE VIEWING</b>	
<b>N.1</b>	Establish key viewing points along Maigne Rivers to view the annual Salmon Run
<b>N.2</b>	Establish nature 'hides' to view birds, otter holts etc e.g. Croom Townpark
<b>N.3</b>	Create <b>Lough Gur Discovery Park</b> to encompass archaeology, environmental history, Dark Skies Park and Limerick Volcanic province
<b>N.4</b>	Expand the <b>Curraghchase nature viewing</b> opportunities and explore options to expand engagement about bats, their habitats and the rationale for the SAC
<b>N.5</b>	Examine the options to <b>open the Newtown Flats as nature viewing zone</b> with bird hides to watch migrating geese, ducks, terns etc
<b>N.6</b>	Examine potential for <b>birdwatching points and photo posts</b> along Maigne Estuary from Ferrybridge to Ringmoyle – along The Bank Walk

N.7	Identify opportunities for <b>night Bat Walks</b> (with bat experts) along key stretches of the Maigue at e.g. Adare, Croom, Bruree, Kilmallock, Kilfinane – as well as in Curraghchase, with Coillte/ NPWS
<b>OUTDOOR EDUCATION</b>	
N.8	Expand the Outdoor Classroom curricula at Griston Bog and Kilfinane OEC Link with Leaving Cert Geography field studies projects
N.9	Expand environmental history opportunities at Lough Gur as part of 'Discovery Centre'
N.10	Develop 'Forest Therapy' trails at Knockainey, Knockfierna and Curraghchase
<b>CITIZEN SCIENCE</b>	
N.11	Engage with 1y & 2y schools and UL/ GMIT in expanding the <b>citizen science projects</b> in areas such as water monitoring/ macro-invertebrate and related Citizen Science modules
N.12	Engage <b>citizens in phenological observations</b> ; Spring watch with BWI; arrival of first salmon, swallows; bud opening of native species; dawn chorus walks and river bird counts
N.13	Develop <b>Community Allotments/ Gardens</b> along the rivers network

These projects will require review and discussion with the Maigue Rivers Trust prior to advancing priority projects and detailed proposals.



Figure 17 Map showing Recreational Concepts – Maigne Rivers Catchment

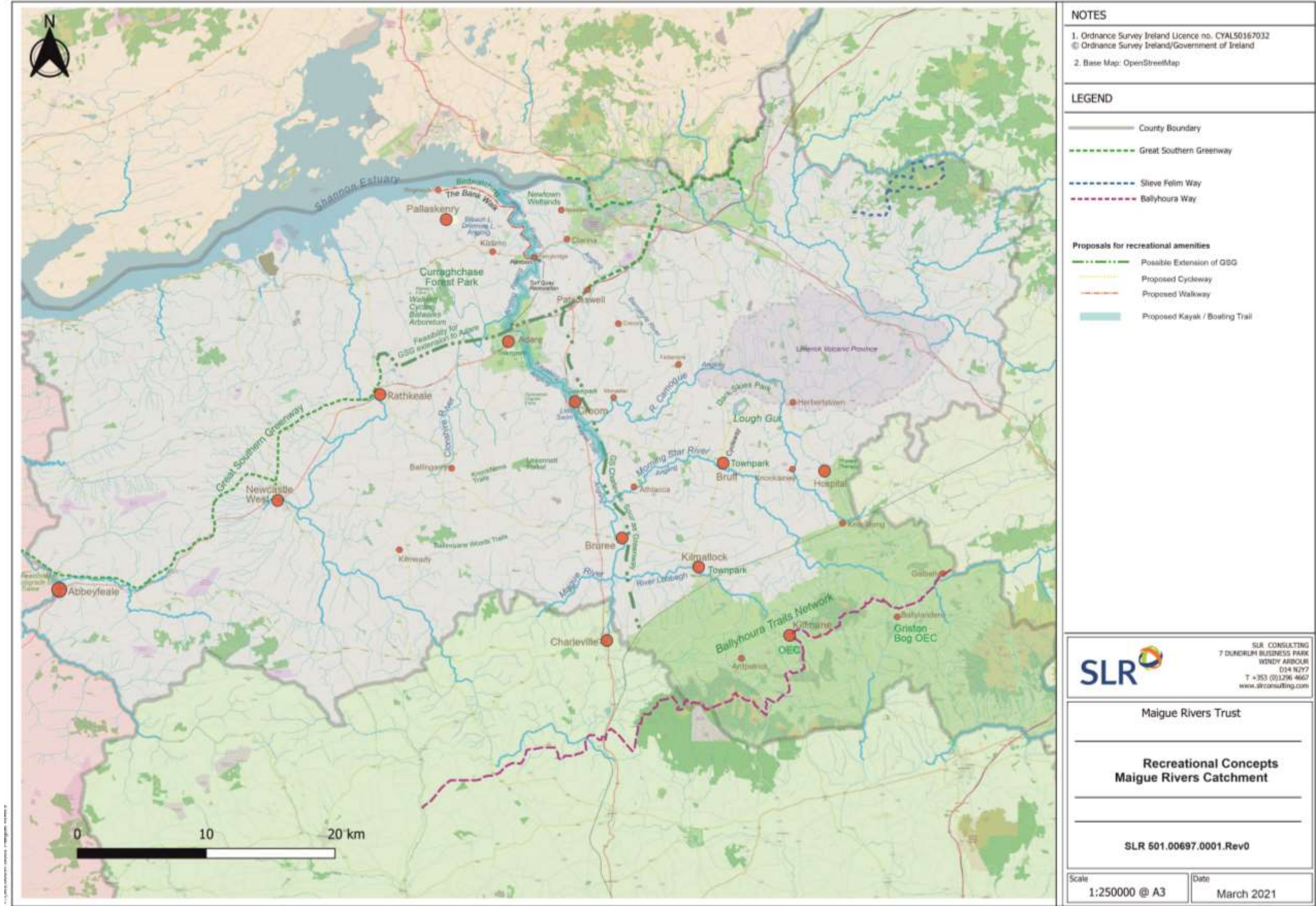
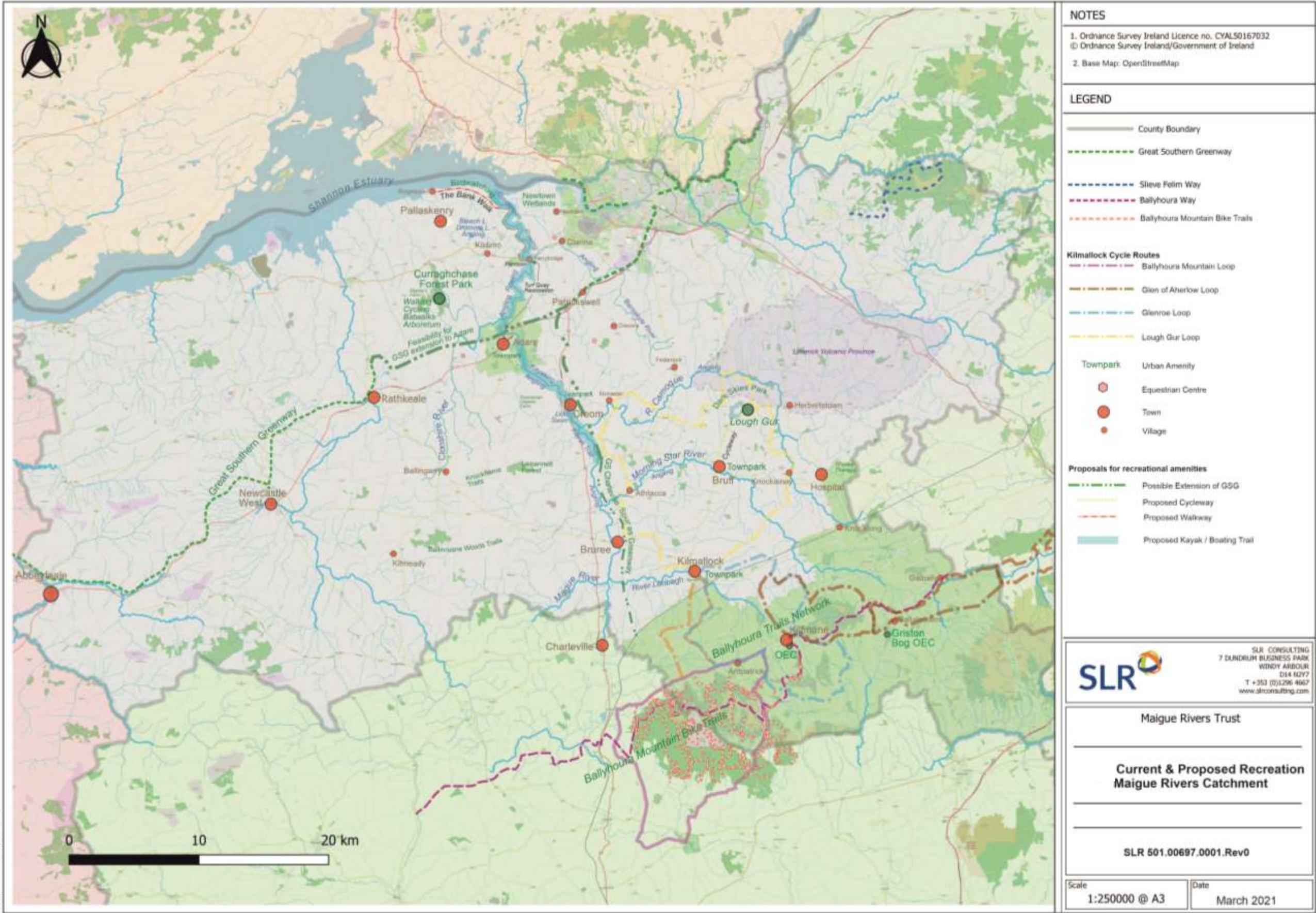




Figure 18 Map showing Current & Opportunities for Recreation & Amenities - Maigue Rivers Catchment



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## APPENDIX 01

### Terms of Reference

#### Exploration of Recreation and Amenity potential of the Mague Rivers

##### 1.0 Context

The River Mague and its principal tributaries, the rivers Loobagh, Morningstar, Clonshire, Barnakyle and Camoge, encompass a land area of 1000 km<sup>2</sup> and includes 1300 km of river channel, mainly in Co. Limerick. This lowland river supports a high level of in-stream biodiversity (fish, invertebrates, aquatic plants and algae) and riverbank biodiversity (in riparian habitats).

The Mague Rivers Trust (MRT) was established in 2016 with the aims of protection, enhancement and promotion of use and enjoyment of the rivers of the Mague catchment. One of the objectives of the Mague Rivers Trust is to encourage public appreciation of the natural river environment by promoting the value of the river and tributaries for recreation and amenity purposes.

##### 2.0 Description of the Project

The aim of this project is to conduct a river recreation and amenity survey that will document river focussed facilities and services, address information gaps, and prescribe a range of potential developments that are likely to be effective. The survey will,

- Collate focussed baseline information on the structure and composition of recreation and amenity provision in the Mague catchment, and
- Identify potential for developing recreational and leisure activities on and around the rivers in the Mague catchment.

This will provide required data for the future management of the development in/near the catchment rivers for the benefit of biodiversity, water quality and recreational and other uses by local communities and visitors.

##### 3.0 Project Scope

The Mague Rivers Trust requires a study examining the current provision and future potential for developing recreation and amenity activities in the Mague River catchment area. These activities must be environmentally sustainable and fit with the mission and objectives of the Trust.

The study should refer to published reports (listed below) and should avoid redoing what has already been identified. The study will highlight relevant points from these reports which overlap with the interests of the River Mague, identify areas not covered and search for additional relevant published studies.

- Ballyhoura Countryside Recreation Strategy 2007
- Ballyhoura Country 2020 – The Way Forward
- Limerick Tourism Development Strategy Action Plan 2019-2023
- Kilmallock Walled Town: Public Realm Plan 2009
- Munster Peaks: Concept Development and Feasibility Study 2014
- Coillte South Munster BAU 7 Strategic Plan 2016-2020



- Slieve Felim Concept Plan 2012
- Lough Gur Environmental Management Study 2008

The study should concentrate primarily, but not exclusively, on the following activities:

1. walking
2. cycling
3. boating
4. angling
5. nature and wildlife observation

The report should cover the following core objectives and deliverables:

#### Analysis of the current usage of the Maigue Rivers for outdoor recreation and amenity

**Objective:** To provide an in-depth assessment via primary and secondary research of the existing recreational and amenity activities on and around the Maigue rivers.

- Provide a breakdown of activity provision (type and scale) across the range of recreational and amenity types. Both organised and informal activities should be identified.
- Assessment of public access point/areas (and condition) to the rivers of the Maigue catchment
- Highlight examples of services providers (e.g. private operators, guides)
- Identify existing relevant events (and numbers of participants) taking place in the catchment area (e.g. the Maigue River Festival held in June 2019, rowing regattas at Ferry Bridge).
- Provide information on physical infrastructure for all existing recreational facilities (e.g. existing walks, cycling trails, canoe slips, car parks, signage) and detail on their condition.
- Detail all information materials available for the river areas (e.g. maps, guides, leaflets, online information, social media)

**Deliverable 1:** a document and presentation detailing the current recreation and amenity provision (and condition) for walking, cycling, boating, angling and nature and wildlife observation.

#### Identification of the potential for developing recreational and leisure activities on and around the rivers in the Maigue catchment

**Objective:** Identify for each of the recreational activities (walking, cycling, boating, angling, nature and wildlife observation) five example development possibilities in order to encourage the interaction with and/or use of the river and/or river environs.

Example developments for each recreation and amenity type should ideally have synergistic linkages with other recreation/amenity activities and identify what additional works are necessary to make the activity possible along that section of the river:

- Suggested activities, location(s) and provider(s)
- Access description and required improvements
- Example event(s) and projected potential numbers
- Current facilities and potential improvements
- Interpretation material requirements
- Synergistic linkages with other recreation/amenity activities
- Strategic fit
- Potential funding opportunities to develop suggested actions

### Walking

- Identify suitable stretches of the bank of the Maigue that could be developed into walking routes and strategically linked to other recreation/amenity activities. These stretches should where possible avoid or bypass houses located close to the water, as well as land in private ownership where public access could be problematic (e.g. the Adare Manor). These should link up with existing walking routes. Identify in each case what would need to be installed (e.g. fencing, fence styles, footpath surfacing) and what permissions/lease/other would be required.

### Cycling

- Identify suitable stretches in the Maigue catchment area that could be (re)developed into cycling routes strategically linked with other recreation and amenity activities. These would make use of existing roads, but be selected in such a way to showcase the river as much as possible.

### Boating

- Identify key kayaking/canoeing routes -, descriptions of routes, difficulties (e.g. which times of the year a particular stretch would be unsuitable for kayaking), possible access points, points where water access should be improved by means of a jetty or slipway in order to encourage more usage of that stretch of river. Other potential activities that could be developed to include, but not limited to: boating downstream of Adareand, gandelow racing at Ferrybridge.

### Angling

- Identifying suitable areas for angling (in conjunction with angling clubs), improvement of access points for angling (e.g. provision of styles), local angling businesses, permit provision, sustainable ways to enhance fish stocks throughout the catchment and potential for re-opening the river to salmon fishing, if only on a catch and release basis.

### Nature and wildlife observation

- Identify areas which could be suitable for observation of river and riparian biodiversity as well as birds and other wildlife. Outline potential facilities (e.g. bird hides, nature finder apps) that will enhance wildlife observation potential. Identify (with examples) other relevant activities put in place along rivers elsewhere in Ireland or Europe which could be successfully developed in the Maigue catchment.

### Other

- Identify any other activities (with examples from elsewhere in Ireland or Europe) that could possibly be encouraged and developed in the area. These could include activities such as swimming and canyoning if a suitable areas could be identified for these.



**Deliverable 2:** a document and presentation that outlines development possibilities in the above categories in order to encourage the interaction with and/or use of the river and/or river environs.





## APPENDIX 02

### Summary of Key Policies, Strategies & Plans

## Appendix 2: Mague Rivers Trust – Policy Review


Policy / Strategy	Key Elements	Relevance to Recreation & Amenity
<b>INTERNATIONAL POLICIES &amp; STRATEGIES</b>		
<b>United Nations (UN)</b> <b>Sustainable Development Goals</b> 	<p><a href="#">The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</a>, adopted by all UN Member States in 2015, is a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for the planet. At its heart are seventeen (17) <i>Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</i>, with an urgent call for action by all countries in a global partnership. The SDGs recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth –while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.</p> <p>The SDGs address issues of <u>water</u>, <u>energy</u>, <u>climate</u>, <u>oceans</u>, <u>urbanization</u>, <u>transport</u>, <u>science and technology</u>. In order to make the 2030 Agenda a reality, broad ownership of the SDGs must translate into a strong commitment by all stakeholders to implement the global goals at national, regional and local level.</p> <p><a href="https://sdgs.un.org/goals">https://sdgs.un.org/goals</a></p>	Underpin all future developments
<b>Paris Climate Agreement</b> <b>(International, 2016)</b> 	<p>Climate change is a global emergency that requires coordinated solutions at all levels and international cooperation to help countries move toward a low-carbon economy. To tackle climate change and its negative impacts, 197 countries adopted the <a href="#">Paris Agreement</a> at the <a href="#">COP21 in Paris</a> on 12 December 2015. The agreement, which entered into force in 2016, aims to achieve three key elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Substantially reduce global greenhouse gas emissions and to limit the global temperature increase in this century to 2 degrees Celcius (2°C) while pursuing means to limit the increase even further to 1.5 degrees (1.5°C).</li> <li>(ii) The Paris Agreement includes commitments from all countries to reduce their emissions and work together to adapt to the impacts of climate change; it also calls on countries to strengthen their commitments over time. The Agreement provides a pathway for developed nations to assist developing nations in their climate mitigation and adaptation efforts while creating a framework for the transparent monitoring and reporting of countries' climate goals.</li> <li>(iii) The Paris Agreement provides a durable framework guiding the global effort and to raise countries' climate ambition over time. To promote this, the agreement establishes two review processes, each on a five-year cycle.</li> </ul>	The Paris Agreement marks the beginning of a shift towards a low-carbon world. Its implementation is essential for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (see above) as it provides a roadmap for climate actions that will reduce emissions and build climate resilience.
<b>European Green Deal 2019</b>	The EU Commission European Green Deal 2019 sets out a roadmap for making the EU's economy sustainable by turning climate and environmental challenges into opportunities across all policy areas and making the transition just and inclusive for all with an overall target of having no net emissions of GHGs in 2050. The EU will also provide financial support and technical assistance to help people, businesses and regions that are most affected by the move towards the green economy. This is called	The EU Green Deal has significant implications for activation of both adaptive and mitigative measures to achieve carbon emissions


	the Just Transition Mechanism and will help mobilise at least €100 billion over the period 2021-2027 in the most affected regions.	reductions and ecosystems/ water quality restoration in Ireland
<b>EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030</b> 	<p>The European Commission adopted the new <a href="#">EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and an associated Action Plan (annex)</a> - a comprehensive, ambitious, long-term plan for protecting nature and reversing the degradation of ecosystems. It aims to put Europe's biodiversity on a path to recovery by 2030 with benefits for people, the climate and the planet, underpinning EU's contribution to international negotiations on the global post-2020 biodiversity framework. The Biodiversity Strategy aims to build resilience to future climate change impacts, forest fires, food insecurity or disease outbreaks, including by protecting wildlife. It contains specific commitments by 2030:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing a larger EU-wide network of protected areas, building upon existing Natura 2000 areas, with strict protection for areas of very high biodiversity and climate value; -</li> <li>• An EU Nature Restoration Plan - a series of concrete commitments and actions to restore degraded ecosystems across the EU by 2030, and manage them sustainably, addressing the key drivers of biodiversity loss; -</li> <li>• Measures to enable the transformative change: setting in motion a strengthened governance framework to ensure better implementation and track progress, improving knowledge, financing and investments and better respecting nature in public and business decision-making;</li> <li>• Measures to tackle the global biodiversity challenge, demonstrating that the EU is ready to lead and adopt ambitious global biodiversity framework under Convention on Biological Diversity.</li> </ul>	
<b>European Green Infrastructure Strategy</b>	<p>The EC adopted an EU-wide strategy to promote green infrastructure, to restore the health of ecosystems and ensure that natural areas remain connected together, and allow species to move across their entire natural habitat, so that nature keeps on delivering its many benefits to us.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The strategy promotes the deployment of green infrastructure across Europe as well as the development of a Trans-European Network for Green Infrastructure in Europe, a TEN-G network, equivalent to the existing networks for transport (TEN-T), energy and ICT.</li> <li>• The development of green infrastructure is seen as a key step towards the success of the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy. The Strategy's target requires that 'by 2020, ecosystems and their services are maintained and enhanced by establishing green infrastructure and restoring at least 15% of degraded ecosystems'.</li> <li>• Green infrastructure contributes to all 6 targets of the Strategy - in particular the full implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directive (target 1) and to maintaining and enhancing biodiversity in the wider countryside and the marine environment (tgt 3 and 4).</li> </ul>	
<b>EU Territorial Agenda 2030: A Future for all Places</b>	<p>The <i>EU Territorial Agenda 2030</i> was adopted at an informal meeting of the Council of Ministers responsible for Spatial Planning and Territorial Development, in December 2020, under the German Presidency. It builds upon the <i>Green Deal</i> and constitutes a high level commitment to principles of place-based sustainable development and territorial cohesion. In furtherance of developing the Green Europe agenda, the Territorial Agenda strategy includes the following priority: <i>To ensure the functioning of resilient, enhanced and accessible ecosystems; support integrated management and the</i></p>	


	<i>development of nature-based solutions; mitigate the risk posed by climate change and biodiversity loss to livelihoods; promote the resilience of all places impacted by climate change and develop place-based mitigation and adaptation strategies; and protect and manage natural and cultural heritage through community empowerment and integrated local and territorial development.</i>	
<b>EU Europarc Federation</b>	<p>Established as an EU funded LIFE programme in 1995 to examine sustainable tourism in protected areas. EuroParc published a charter in 2000 that commits signatories to implement a local strategy for sustainable tourism defined as:</p> <p><i>‘Any form of development, management, or tourist activity which ensures the long-term protection and preservation of natural, cultural, and social resources and contributes in a positive and equitable manner to the economic development and well-being of individuals living, working or staying in protected areas’.</i></p> <p>The aims of the charter are :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ To protect and enhance natural and cultural heritage for and through tourism.</li> <li>☐ To encourage activities which support the maintenance of historic culture and traditions.</li> <li>☐ To communicate effectively to visitors about the special qualities of the protected area</li> <li>☐ To provide education facilities and services that interpret the areas environment</li> </ul>	A Europarc initiative was launched as a pilot project in 2002 to explore ways of providing children with an insight into the reasons why protected natural areas are important and giving them at the same time an enjoyable learning experience. The pilot generated a model concept for a junior ranger programme.
<b>IRELAND POLICIES &amp; STRATEGIES</b>		
<b>PLANNING FRAMEWORK</b>		
<b>National Planning Framework Project 2040</b> 	<p>The NPF sets out ten (10) National Strategic Outcomes (NSO) or priorities to guide future development, as follows:</p> <p>Compact Growth; - Enhanced Regional Accessibility; - Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities; - High Quality International Connectivity; - Sustainable Mobility; - A Strong Economy supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills; - Enhanced Amenities and Heritage; - Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society; - Sustainable Management of Water and other Environmental Resources; - Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health.</p> <p>Community and Recreation are key issues in providing facilities and amenities that support Community, Economy and Environment. People aged 15 or younger will make up 17% of the anticipated 2040 population, requiring provision of facilities and amenities for young people, including playgrounds, parks and sports. However, Census 2016 figures identify that Limerick has an increasingly elderly population, and will require planning for all stages of the life cycle, through universal design for transport, housing, social, cultural and recreational facilities.</p> <p>Land use zoning decisions have impacts on air quality, opportunities for physical activity and social interactions. The NPF places a focus on supporting public health policy, promotes the integration of safe alternatives to the car, by prioritising walking and cycling in both existing and proposed developments. The role of tourism in the Irish economy is well established and intrinsic links exist between agriculture/land management and tourism. Tourism has the capacity to sustain communities, create</p>	<p>The NPF identifies three key components, which are needed to create stronger <u>urban</u> places: -</p> <p>Community – Urban settlements for trading goods, services and ideas, for information, learning and innovation, administration, entertainment, healthcare and worship. Opportunities for greater community interaction and access to services need to be built upon; Economy –need a range of quality urban places to attract people to live, work and invest in. This will drive growth, investment and prosperity; -</p> <p>Environment – Compact sustainable urban growth can help reduce environmental impact by</p>





	<p>employment and deliver real social benefits. The development of greenways and blueways and peatways are all identified in the NPF, as a means to attract visitors to communities and help those communities. Internationally recognised brands promote strategic attractions, like the Wild Atlantic Way and Ireland’s Ancient East, both of which Limerick forms part of. Incorporating green infrastructure into developments is seen as a key to providing a range of uses, goods, and services, that makes the best use of land, manage competing demands and can complement tourism and economic development.</p> <p>Several National Policy Objectives (NPOs) relate to Green Infrastructure, with strong links to natural heritage. Chapter 9 aims to protect, conserve and enhance our natural capital, through green infrastructure planning, as a means of protecting and valuing our important and vulnerable habitats, landscapes, natural heritage and green spaces. Ch.9 also seeks support for green adaptation, to use ecological properties to enhance the resilience of natural systems through creation of green spaces and parks to enable better management of micro-climates.</p> <p>NPO 23: to facilitate the development of the rural economy through supporting a sustainable and economically efficient agricultural and food sector, together with forestry, fishing and aquaculture, energy and extractive industries, the bio-economy and diversification into alternative on-farm and off-farm activities, while at the same time noting the importance of maintaining and protecting the natural landscape and built heritage, which are vital to rural tourism</p> <p>NPO 62 seeks to strengthen the value of greenbelts and green spaces at a regional and city scale, enabling enhanced connectivity to wider strategic networks, prevent coalescence of settlements and to allow for the long-term strategic expansion of urban areas.</p> <p><i>Project Ireland 2040</i> will influence the future direction of outdoor recreation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tourism and agriculture are inextricably linked in rural areas, given that agriculture, in many places, creates and maintains the landscapes upon which tourism trades. The maintenance of access to our landscapes and the creation of new accesses are dependent on maintaining good links with the agricultural sector (NPF, p. 77);</li><li>• Ireland’s landscape offers a wealth of natural and cultural assets which support our quality of life and our visitor economy. We have a duty to future generations to use these assets responsibly whilst making our existing infrastructure work harder to deliver more benefits. The protection, management and planning of the landscape is also interconnected with the National Landscape Strategy for Ireland, and a national landscape character assessment, which, when finalised, will provide consistency in how we characterise and connect with the landscape (NPF, p. 127).</li></ul>	reducing the amount of land take required, utilising existing infrastructure within our settlements, and encouraging more active lifestyles.					
<b>The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region, adopted in January 2020</b>	<p>The Implementation Roadmap for the NPF sets out population targets for Limerick City:</p> <table><tr><td><i>City and County Population</i></td><td><i>2016</i></td><td><i>2026</i></td><td><i>2031</i></td><td><i>2040</i></td></tr></table>	<i>City and County Population</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2026</i>	<i>2031</i>	<i>2040</i>	Has implications for future demand, usage and management of outdoor
<i>City and County Population</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2026</i>	<i>2031</i>	<i>2040</i>			

 <b>RSES Southern Region 2020</b>	<table><tr><td>Limerick City &amp; Suburbs</td><td>94,262</td><td></td><td></td><td>141,000</td></tr><tr><td>Limerick County</td><td>195,000</td><td>229,000 – 235,500</td><td>246,000 – 256,500</td><td></td></tr></table>	Limerick City & Suburbs	94,262			141,000	Limerick County	195,000	229,000 – 235,500	246,000 – 256,500		recreation facilities and amenities in County Limerick
	Limerick City & Suburbs	94,262			141,000							
	Limerick County	195,000	229,000 – 235,500	246,000 – 256,500								
<p>The RSES sets out regional policy for the growth of the Southern Region for the next 12 years. It seeks to support the regeneration and growth of Limerick City with high quality mixed-use sustainable and transformative projects, meeting national and international standards in innovation, quality design, exemplary urbanism and place making. Furthermore, the RSES seeks to revitalise Limerick’s towns, villages and rural areas.</p> <p>RSES recommends a Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan, for <i>Limerick – Shannon Metropolitan Area (LSMA)</i> which includes Annacotty, Castleconnell, Patrickswell, and Mungret in Limerick. The LSMA has growth potential, with regard to the third level institutes; access to Shannon Airport and Shannon Foynes Port facilities; for the region to prosper, a strong Limerick City is paramount. The provision of walking and cycling infrastructure is identified as a means to sustain healthy communities and promote quality of life. Improved quality of life is seen as a means to build and safeguard inclusive communities and crosses all facets of the strategy.</p> <p>The RSES supports the development of new regional and local scale recreational and sporting facilities, including stadia, public parks and green spaces. It encourages public bodies and private clubs to work together and to develop cooperative arrangements for the use of private spaces, which are not often readily available to the public. Greenways boost the economy, and deliver health and community benefits. The RSES promotes potential for linkages between the Great Southern Greenway and the North and South Kerry Greenways. Other areas such as estuaries, forests and uplands are also highlighted as important natural amenities and key natural and recreational assets for the community. The development of blueways and access to waterways is identified throughout the strategy. Built heritage and archaeology have long played a role in local communities and many act as tourist attractions within communities. The RSES identifies community involvement as critical to protect our heritage through community and educational programmes such as ‘Adopt a Monument’.</p> <p>Regional Policy Objective 123 - River Basin Management Plan and Spatial Planning –objective to encourage the <i>integration of river corridors with green infrastructure in settlements.</i> – Regional Policy Objective 124 Green Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote connecting corridors for the movement of wildlife and encourage retention and creation of features of biodiversity value, ecological corridors and networks that connect areas of high conservation value, woodlands, hedgerows, earth banks, watercourses and wetlands.</li></ul>	<p>Open spaces can contribute to the intangible values of a community’s sense of pride, civic activities and engagement and collective ownership.</p> <p>The guidance document “<i>Planning for Watercourses in the Urban Environment</i>” published by Inland Fisheries Ireland provides an integrated watercourse protection strategy.</p>											


	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The RSES recognises the necessity of protecting such corridors and the necessity to encourage the management of features of the landscape that support the Natura 2000 network;</li> <li>• Green infrastructure will be integrated into the preparation of statutory land-use plans in the Region, which will include identifying Green infrastructure and strengthening this network;</li> <li>• All Development Plans and Local Area Plans shall protect, enhance, provide and manage Green infrastructure in an integrated and coherent manner</li> <li>• Any future development of greenways, blue ways, peat ways, cycleway or walkways will include an assessment by the relevant authorities of any impacts that may arise from increased visitor pressures, in particular, on sensitive European sites and the design of the network will consider the provision of protective measures on sites sensitive to disturbance/visitor pressure.</li> </ul> <p>Regional Policy Objective 125 – Green Infrastructure Corridors: transport infrastructure provides potential opportunities to act as Green infrastructure corridors. It is an objective to support local authorities acting together with relevant national infrastructure providers to co-develop infrastructural management plans to enhance biodiversity.</p>	
<b>NATURAL HAZARDS/ FLOODING</b>		
<p><b>Shannon Catchment Flood Risk &amp; Management Plan Studies (CFRAM) -OPW</b></p> <p><b>Flood Risk Assessment 2018</b></p> <p><b>Shannon Estuary South (OuM24)</b></p>  <p><b>Government guidance</b></p>	<p>Flood Risk Management LC&amp;CC is committed to managing flood risk in accordance with the principles set out in Government guidance 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management' (DEHLG and OPW, Nov, 2009).</p> <p>Objective IN 5: Flood Risk Management It is an objective of the Council to: (a) Implement the recommendations of the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government and the Office of Public Works Guidance Documents (November 2009)', and any subsequent guidelines. (b) Require any development proposal in a location identified as being subject to flooding to carry out a flood risk/catchment analysis for the development to assess the likely level of flood hazard that may affect the site to the satisfaction of the Council; (c) Design the development to avoid flood levels, incorporating building design measures and materials to assist evacuation and minimise damage to property from flood waters; (d) Demonstrate that the proposal will not result in increased risk of flooding elsewhere, restrict flow across floodplains, where compensatory storage/storm water retention measures shall be provided on site and will not alter the hydrological regime up stream or downstream or at the development location so as to pose an additional flood risk or to increase flood risk; (e) Proposals should have provision to reduce the rate and quantity of run-off i.e. minimisation of concrete surfaces and use of semi permeable materials and include adequate measures to cope with flood risk, e.g. sustainable drainage systems. (f) Have regard to the Office of Public Works Planning Policy Guidance in the design and consideration of development proposals; and (g) Preserve riparian strips free of development and ensure adequate width to permit access for river maintenance. (h) All flood risk assessment should have regard to national flood hazard mapping, predicted changes in flood events resulting from climate change and the CFRAM and the Shannon International River Basin</p>	<p>Example:</p> <p>A stage 1 flood risk assessment was prepared for Kilmallock. Flood risk assessment maps (FRA) are available under the OPW's CFRAM study.</p> <p>As a response the LAP designates any lands located in the Flood zone as non-vulnerable use, including recreation.</p>




<p><b>‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management’ (DEHLG and OPW, Nov, 2009)</b></p> <p><b>Shannon International River Basin Management Plan</b></p>	<p>Management Plan. The ‘<i>development management justification test</i>’ as detailed in The Planning System and Flood Risk Guidance document will guide Council responses to development proposals in areas at moderate or high risk of flooding.</p>	
<b>RURAL DEVELOPMENT</b>		
<p><b>Our Rural Future - Rural Development Policy 2021-2025 (DRCD 2021)</b></p> 	<p><i>Our Rural Future</i> represents the Irish Government’s blueprint for the post-COVID recovery and development of rural Ireland for the 5 years, 2021-2025. It provides the framework to transform the quality of life and opportunity for people living in rural areas.</p> <p><i>Our Rural Future</i> also supports the objectives of <i>Project Ireland 2040</i> which comprises:</p> <p>(a) the <i>National Planning Framework</i> (NPF) which sets out a spatial strategy for Ireland to accommodate in a sustainable and balanced way an anticipated growth of one million in our population by 2040, with an additional 600,000 people at work; and</p> <p>(b) the <i>National Development Plan</i> (NDP), which will provide infrastructural investment to support the NPF.</p> <p><i>One of the ten Strategic Outcomes which Project Ireland 2040 aims to achieve is “Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities” – this strategy addresses this in particular.</i></p> <p>It builds on the progress achieved through the <i>Action Plan for Rural Development 2017-2019</i> and is underpinned by the <i>Project Ireland 2040</i> objective of achieving Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities. This policy is built around the centrality of <i>People</i> who make up the communities that support and maintain the fabric of rural Ireland. We want to enhance their resilience and ensure their meaningful participation on issues that impact on their lives. It is built around the <i>Places</i> where our rural communities live, where businesses start up and grow, and which are gateways to our heritage, culture and natural environment. We want our towns and villages to be vibrant and lived-in places which capitalise on their local strengths and assets.</p>	<p><i>Key policies are identified for</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community development; Connectivity – digital and transport;</li> <li>• Villages &amp; Towns – enhancing and incentivising social and economic regeneration</li> <li>• Economy &amp; tourism – focus on outdoor recreational activities</li> </ul> <p>Agri-environmental measures; Renewable energies and bioeconomy/ circular economy</p>
<p><b>‘Realising our Potential’ National Action Plan for Rural Development (Dept. Culture, Heritage &amp; The Gaeltacht, 2017)</b></p>	<p>The National Action Plan for Rural Development commits to delivering funding for recreational infrastructure, training and jobs creation, using our natural assets. It identified a number of pillars to promote rural development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pillar 3 ‘<i>Maximising our Rural Tourism and Recreational Potential</i>’, focuses on the development of greenways and blueways, and other recreational opportunities, and to support sustainable rural jobs through targeted tourism initiatives.</li> <li>• Action 176 commits to “<i>agree and implement a scheme to indemnify private landowners with regard to recreational users of their lands</i>” with the national State Claims Agency.</li> <li>• Action 202 commits to “<i>develop dedicated actions that assist in the promotion and development of Ireland’s natural landscape characteristics with regard to management, employment, tourism and innovation pilots</i>”.</li> </ul>	<p><i>(under review, 2021)</i></p> <p><i>Pillar 5: Key developments in Limerick:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Limerick Clare Local Link bus service</i> in County Limerick and</li> <li>• <i>nine Broadband Connection Points</i> (BDPs) identified by the Council as key locations identified under the Broadband</li> </ul>

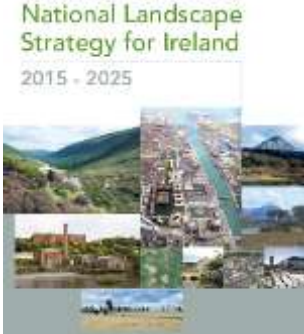



	<p>Protecting local services including rural transport, and ensuring all homes and businesses in rural Ireland have Broadband connection were identified as key deliverables.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pillar 5 <i>Improving Rural Infrastructure and Connectivity</i> includes improvement of connectivity of rural areas through broadband connection and improved transport links.</li> </ul>	<p>Programme for early connection in the roll out of the National Broadband Plan (NBP).</p>
<b>RECREATION &amp; NATURAL HERITAGE</b>		
<p><b>National Countryside Recreation Strategy</b> <i>(to be updated by Comhairle na Tuaithe 2021)</i></p>	<p>Outdoor recreation refers to those sporting, recreational and holiday pursuits based on use of the resources of the countryside and which contribute to healthy active lifestyles. “Countryside” includes land, water and air.</p> <p>The term “recreation” in this context applies to sporting and recreational activities which operate in the countryside. It does <u>not</u> include sporting activities which take place in the countryside on confined courses or pitches specifically designed and constructed for those sports, e.g. golf, football, show jumping, etc<sup>27</sup>.</p>	
<p><b>Outdoor Recreation Plan for Public Lands (2017-2021)</b> <i>Coillte, NPWS, Waterways Ireland, Bord na Móna, Inland Fisheries Ireland</i></p> 	<p>The national for public lands and waters was developed by five public landowning organisations (Coillte, NPWS, Waterways Ireland, Bord na Móna and Inland Fisheries Ireland, respectively), as a strategic development plan for recreation on public lands and waters, comprising 15% of Ireland’s land surface. The plan focused on seven strategic themes including: managing &amp; maintenance of recreational infrastructure; improving recreational facilities; developing consistent standards; promotion of outdoor recreation; and maximising the benefits to communities.</p> <p>The <i>Outdoor Recreation Plan</i> asserts that the value of outdoor recreation annually to Ireland’s economy is €1.2 billion. It was also estimated that €165 million investment is required over five years (2017-2021) to manage and maintain the recreational assets on public lands, with the potential to generate an additional €142 million per annum as the market grows.</p> <p><i>“Creating a step-change in the provision and maintenance of outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities on state lands and waters”</i></p>	<p>The potential for job creation from outdoor recreation in rural areas is significant – Fáilte Ireland estimates that €1 million of tourism expenditure generates 29 jobs in tourism.</p>
<p><b>Outdoor Rural Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS)</b></p>	<p>ORIS contributes to the strategic objective of strengthened rural economies and communities as set out in the <i>Project Ireland 2040</i> strategy. The objective is to provide funding for new outdoor recreational</p>	<p>Rural Programmes and Policy Unit</p>

<sup>27</sup> [www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/127c4b-national-countryside-recreation-strategy/](http://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/127c4b-national-countryside-recreation-strategy/)

<p><b>Dept. Rural &amp; Community Development, May 2020</b></p> 	<p>infrastructure and for necessary repair, enhancement or promotion of existing outdoor recreational infrastructure in countryside areas. The scheme invests in the physical infrastructure that underpins sporting and recreational activities based on the use of the resources of the countryside; contribute to active lifestyles while building on the economic and tourism potential, and so are to the benefit of both local communities and tourist visitors alike. The scheme may also provide some limited funding for the marketing and promotion of such infrastructure, typically as part of a wider project involving capital supports.</p> <p>The scheme supports the provision of outdoor infrastructure that is, in the main, freely available to the public. The type of projects typically funded by the Scheme include trails, walkways, cycleways, greenways, blueways and mountain access routes. Innovative projects that provide outdoor infrastructure are encouraged, including improved access to recreational facilities for older people and those with disabilities.</p> <p>ORIS does not supplant the Greenway strategy by funding regional or national greenways i.e. those greenways that are over 20km in length. However, under ORIS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Necessary repair or small improvement works on those greenways (which are older than 3 years), local extensions of those greenways, local spurs off those greenways, and the development of infrastructure to link a rural town or village to such greenways may be considered.</li> <li>• Blueway projects funded under ORIS must be in line with the Blueway Management and Development Guide published by The Blueway Partnership</li> <li>• Trail projects funded under ORIS should be developed in line with Sport Ireland advice, including their Trail Criteria Guidelines</li> <li>• Projects should be in the countryside (i.e. not within the environs of towns or villages).</li> <li>• ORIS may fund recreational infrastructure linking a town or village into the countryside, and linking towns or villages to other outdoor recreation facilities located in the countryside.</li> </ul> <p>All proposed projects must be ready to commence at end-2020 for Measure 1 or early in 2021 for Measures 2 &amp; 3, capable of being delivered in a realistic timeframe i.e. within a 12 month timeframe for Measure 1 projects, or 18 month timeframe for Measure 2 &amp; 3 projects. It is advisable that feasibility studies and planning permissions (if required) are in place or substantially progressed prior to the submission of a project application.</p>	<p>Department of Rural &amp; Community Devt Govt Buildings, Brook Street , Ballina, Co. Mayo, F26 E8N6 <a href="mailto:ORIS@DRCD.gov.ie">ORIS@DRCD.gov.ie</a></p> <p>indicative budget of €10 million is available for successful projects under the 2020 ORIS funded by DRCD and Fáilte Ireland - under 3 different categories (Measures) based on the size of the investment requirement.</p> <p>Given the potential impact of CV pandemic on the Irish economy and the tourism sector, projects that can display a specific tourism or other sectoral impact that may aid economic recovery are encouraged.</p> <p>DTTS <i>Greenways Strategy</i>, July 2018, sets out Government priorities in funding of greenways in Ireland over a 10 year period, with a dedicated funding stream.</p> <p>Funding is available separately for walkways, cycleways and other outdoor infrastructure located in towns and villages under the Town &amp; Village Renewal Scheme.</p>
<p><b>Guide to Planning &amp; Developing of Small Vessel Water Trails in Ireland (2013) - <i>Waterways Ireland, with ISC, NTO, Canoe Ireland</i></b></p>	<p>This practical guide sets out the general considerations for planning and development of a small vessel water trails for kayaking and canoeing, including snorkelling, exemplified by case studies. The guide proposes practical considerations of requisite trail attributes, safety, strategic planning &amp; partnership, development costs, as well as responsibilities for longer term management &amp; maintenance.</p>	<p>Potential for small vessel trails on the Mague, using national guidance</p>

	<p>Key considerations are issues of ownership rights in relation to the navigation, as well as fishing rights and the need for landowner consultation and agreement to gain permissive access, and other permissions that may be required.</p> <p>Potential environmental considerations in relation to impact on natural heritage, archaeological sites and potential for introduction of invasive species into spawning streams/ lakes are presented.</p> <p>there are practical sections on trail planning and design consideration, based on the national established trail classification and grading system. Other issues include water &amp; wind; trail length; and access and egress. Planning of small vessel trails must consider trail head, signage, travel distances, route options, technical standards and supporting services such as camping.</p> <p>Practical planning and advice on funding are provided, with details for the small vessel trail planning process.</p>	
<p><b>National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017 – 2021</b></p> 	<p>Objective 1 – Mainstream biodiversity into decision-making across all sectors;</p> <p>1.1.3. All Public Authorities and private sector bodies move towards no net loss of biodiversity through strategies, planning, mitigation measures, appropriate offsetting and/or investment in Blue-Green infrastructure;</p> <p>1.1.6. Local Authorities will review and update their Development Plans and policies to include policies and objectives for the protection and restoration of biodiversity; 1.1.7. Develop a Green Infrastructure at local, regional and national levels and promote the use of nature based solutions for the delivery of a coherent and integrated network;</p> <p>Objective 6 – Expand and improve management of protected areas and species;</p> <p>6.2.1. Increase connectivity of the protected areas network using appropriate buffer zones, corridors, stepping stones and/or flyways.</p>	
<p><b>The All Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021 – 2025 (5-year Road Map)</b></p> 	<p>The AIPP 2021-2025 aims to help bees, other pollinating insects and wider biodiversity through better management of landscapes to support our struggling biodiversity. It is more ambitious with multiple partners coming together to deliver coordinated actions : farmers, local authorities, schools, gardeners and businesses to create habitats where pollinators can survive and thrive. The AIPP 2021-2025 has 186 actions spread across six objectives. It has a 16-person steering group who provide oversight, with implementation coordinated by the National Biodiversity Data Centre. Responsibility for delivering the actions is shared out among the main partner organisations, who have committed to taking action and, funding those actions themselves. There are 6 core objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objective 1: Making farmland pollinator friendly.</li> <li>Objective 2: Making public land pollinator friendly.</li> <li>Objective 3: Making private land pollinator friendly.</li> <li>Objective 4: All-Ireland Honeybee Strategy.</li> <li>Objective 5: Conserving rare pollinators.</li> <li>Objective 6: Strategic coordination of the Plan.</li> </ul>	<p>The 2015-2020 Pollinator Plan made it clear that 33% of Ireland’s bee species are threatened with extinction due to reduced amounts of food and safe nesting sites in our landscapes</p> <p>Limerick City and County Council have signed up to the objectives of the new Pollinator Plan and are actively seeking to deliver on the objectives set out in the Plan</p>

<p><b>National Landscape Strategy for Ireland (2015-2025)</b> <b>Dept. Arts, Heritage &amp; The Gaeltacht</b></p> 	<p>The <i>National Landscape Strategy</i> (NLS) obliges Ireland to implement policy changes and objectives concerning the management, protection and planning of the landscape. The NLS is used to ensure compliance with the European Landscape Strategy and to establish principles for protecting and enhancing our landscapes while positively managing its change. The NLS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elaborates a high level policy framework to achieve balance between the protection, management and planning of the landscape by way of supporting actions;</li> <li>• Sets out specific measures to integrate and embed landscape considerations in all sectors which influence landscape and enhance the quality of decision-making by those who have an impact on it;</li> <li>• Aims to inform and assist in the resolution of challenges arising from competing priorities in the landscape e.g. infrastructural provision versus landscape protection, or local versus national objectives; and</li> <li>• Aims to improve the decision making process to support a living landscape, and strengthen community identity by understanding landscape and its dynamic interactive characteristics.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>National Peatlands Strategy (2015)</b></p> 	<p>The <i>National Peatlands Strategy</i> was prepared in 2015 to guide the national approach to peatlands management and conservation, underpinned by the following considerations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Land management</li> <li>2. Peatlands conservation &amp; restoration</li> <li>3. Regulatory Regimes which govern extraction</li> <li>4. National Code of Environmental Practice</li> <li>5. National and Community Benefits of Peatland Conservation</li> <li>6. Financing and Funding Issues</li> </ol>	
<p><b>Birdwatch Ireland</b> <b>Status of Biodiversity</b></p>	<p><a href="https://birdwatchireland.ie/app/uploads/2020/05/BWI-collated-data-on-status-of-biodiversity-1.pdf">https://birdwatchireland.ie/app/uploads/2020/05/BWI-collated-data-on-status-of-biodiversity-1.pdf</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two thirds of Ireland's regularly occurring wild bird species are Red or Amber-Listed Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland. Farmland birds in particular are continuing to show declines and no recovery from the catastrophic and steady crash in population since the 70s. Habitat loss &amp; change in farming practices are leading causes of losses.</li> <li>• Corncrake, Barn Owl, Yellowhammer, Twite, Whinchat as well as the suite of breeding waders like Curlew, Lapwing, Dunlin, Golden Plover, Redshank and Snipe are severely threatened.</li> <li>• Other more common farmland birds like Common Kestrel and Stock Dove are showing declines now, with Skylark and Meadow Pipit also ones to watch.</li> </ul>	<p>Notes for 2019 that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "NPWS Article 17 report to the European Commission on the status of protected species (2019) including water-dependent species states 'The Agriculture category represents the highest percentage of High-importance pressures (Figure 9) relative to other categories, with the incidence</li> </ul>



	<p>Reports on catastrophic decline of bird species on agricultural lands from 1970 – 2010 and onwards to the present.</p> <p>Greenhouse gas emissions nationally have increased and those from agriculture have not only increased, they are projected to increase further out to 2030 to 38% of total emissions<sup>28</sup>.</p>	<p><i>predicted to increase over the next 12 years; this has been linked to the threat from fertiliser and pollution on selected fish species<sup>29</sup></i></p>
<b>HEALTH POLICIES</b>		
<b><i>National Sports Policy (2018-2027)</i></b>	<p>The policy underpins all sports and recreational-related development in Ireland. It starkly estimates that 4,000 deaths a year are attributable to Irish people not engaging in enough physical activity. Physical inactivity has been estimated to cost Ireland approximately €1.5 billion per year. The vision can be summarised as follows:</p> <p><i>“people will be inspired, their lives enriched, their enjoyment enhanced, and their quality of life improved as a result of their own active or social participation in sport ...”</i></p>	
<b><i>‘Get Ireland Active’ The National Physical Activity Plan (2016, NPAP)</i></b>	<p>The <i>National Physical Activity Plan (2016)</i><sup>30</sup>, arising from the <i>Healthy Ireland Framework (2013)</i><sup>31</sup>; and other policies including the <i>Smarter Travel Framework</i> and the <i>National Cycle Policy Framework</i><sup>32</sup>, all point to the need for increased physical activity by the populace.</p> <p>The NPAP made specific recommendations for Local Authority action to get citizens active:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development and promotion of walking and cycling strategies in each LA area</li> <li>• Ensure planning, design and development of towns and villages promote activity through a network of footpaths and cycling routes;</li> <li>• Continuous professional development of those responsible for design on the role of physical activity</li> <li>• Explore opportunities for recreation in the natural environment.</li> </ul>	<p>Such strategies are echoed in other EU jurisdictions. In 2005, in recognition of the health benefits of physical activity, the Swedish National Food Administration and Institute of Public Health prepared a 79 point action plan calling on local municipalities to produce action plans covering redesigning the local environment to encourage activity; changes in education to spread more knowledge about activity and nutrition habits; requiring the medical services to place</p>

<sup>28</sup> Ireland’s Provisional Greenhouse Gas Emissions 1990-2018 [https://www.epa.ie/pubs/reports/air/airemissions/ghgprovemissions2018/Report\\_GHG%201990-2018%20Provisional%20Inventory%20October%202019.pdf](https://www.epa.ie/pubs/reports/air/airemissions/ghgprovemissions2018/Report_GHG%201990-2018%20Provisional%20Inventory%20October%202019.pdf)

Ireland’s Greenhouse Gas Emissions Projections 2018-2040

[https://www.epa.ie/pubs/reports/air/airemissions/ghgprojections2018-2040/Greenhouse\\_Gas\\_Projections.pdf](https://www.epa.ie/pubs/reports/air/airemissions/ghgprojections2018-2040/Greenhouse_Gas_Projections.pdf)



<sup>29</sup> NPWS (2019). The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland, pg 90


<https://www.npws.ie/publications/search?title=article+17&keyword=&author=&series=All&year=&x=31&y=8>

<sup>30</sup> <https://health.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Get-Ireland-Active-the-National-Physical-Activity-Plan.pdf>

<sup>31</sup> <https://health.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/HealthyIrelandBrochureWA2.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> [http://www.smartertravel.ie/sites/default/files/uploads/2013\\_01\\_03\\_0902%2002%20EnglishNS1274%20Dept.%20of%20Transport\\_National\\_Cycle\\_Policy\\_v4%5B1%5D%5B1%5D.pdf](http://www.smartertravel.ie/sites/default/files/uploads/2013_01_03_0902%2002%20EnglishNS1274%20Dept.%20of%20Transport_National_Cycle_Policy_v4%5B1%5D%5B1%5D.pdf)

	<p>These all aim to enhance societal health and wellness through greater recreational participation across all strata. Getting children active remains a national priority with a particular emphasis on getting children active from pre-school age through active play right through the school to college cycle via the Active School Flags programmes and physical infrastructure measures such as cycle lanes, footpaths and 'slow school' zones.</p>	<p>more emphasis on nutrition and activity; and among others, more involvement with sports associations to get people active.</p>
<p><b>Healthy Ireland 2013-2025 – A Framework for Improving Health and Wellness</b> <b>Dept. of Health, 2013</b></p> 	<p>The vision is <i>"a Healthy Ireland, where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone's responsibility"</i>.</p> <p>Improved access to recreation is an integral part of the strategy. Greater community connections and cohesion are critical to a successful delivery <i>"the impact of positive social interaction cannot be underestimated. Social interaction and supporting social connectedness and involvement in community life are a keystone in empowering people at the individual level and building strong communities for health and wellbeing."</i></p> <p>Some key objectives (under Theme 3 – Empowering People &amp; Communities) include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full implementation of the Physical Educational programmes in primary and secondary schools together with the Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) offer in all second level schools.</li> <li>• Enable older people to maintain and improve the quality of their health and wellbeing.</li> <li>• Create 'activity friendly' environments: cycle lanes, playgrounds, well-lit paths, etc.</li> <li>• Local authorities will engage with local communities, schools and other stakeholders to plan facilities that are appropriate to the needs of the community.</li> </ul> <p>Targets that relate to the delivery of this recreational strategy include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase by 5% the number of adults with a healthy weight by 2019.</li> <li>• Increase by 6% the number of children with a healthy weight by 2019, and</li> <li>• Increase by 20% proportion of the population undertaking regular physical activity</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Children's Sport Participation and Physical Activity Study (CSPPA)</b></p>	<p>The CSPPA study aimed to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>iv) provide a national database of physical activity, physical education and sport participation levels of children and youth in Ireland,</li> <li>v) assess indices of health and fitness in a sub-sample of the target population,</li> </ul>	<p>The Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (RCPI) published recommendations on the clinical treatment of obesity and how it might</p>


<p><b>Irish Sports Council with the ESRI, 2013</b></p>	<p>vi) collect and analyse information on the factors influencing participation ... all with a view to getting Irish children more active more often.</p> <p>Key findings that may influence the design and implementation of the Recreational Strategy are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Just 19% of primary and 12% of post-primary school children met the Department of Health and Children physical activity recommendations – at least 60 minutes daily of moderate to vigorous physical activity.</li> <li>• Girls were less likely than boys to meet the physical activity recommendations.</li> <li>• The likelihood of meeting the physical activity recommendations decreased with increasing age.</li> <li>• One in four children were unfit, overweight or obese and had elevated blood pressure.</li> <li>• 35% of primary pupils and 10% of post-primary pupils received the Department of Education and Skills recommended minimum minutes of physical education per week, increasing by just 5 minutes per week on average since 2004.</li> </ul>	<p>be reduced by physical activity<sup>33</sup>. However, the emphasis was on the broad benefits of physical activity versus weight loss itself. In terms of public policy, they recommended that societally we should aim for a built environment that encourages exercise, play and active travel; and integration of physical activity into the education setting from pre-school years. Health professionals have a key role to play in signposting inactive people to active lifestyles.</p>
<p><b>CULTURAL HERITAGE</b></p>		
<p><b>Culture 2025</b> <b>Éire Ildánach 2025</b> <b>Dept. Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural &amp; Gaeltacht Affairs</b></p> 	<p><i>Culture 2025</i> sets out an overarching vision and framework for the future and outlines the priorities for action over the coming years. Through this policy framework, the Government seeks to nurture creativity, boost citizen participation, help more people to follow a sustainable career in the cultural sector, promote Ireland's cultural wealth and ensure a cultural contribution to wider social and economic goals.</p> <p>The arts have always been an integral part of Irish life. It is the objective of this Department to provide an appropriate resource, policy and legislative framework to support the stimulation and development of the Arts in Ireland, such that the economic returns and employment, and access to and participation in the arts by all sections of Irish society, are maximised.</p> <p>The strategy document notes the importance of natural and built heritage in framing cultural identity, and it contends that investment in natural heritage sites promotes heritage, health and economic benefits at local and national levels</p>	
<p><b>Heritage Act 1995</b></p>	<p>The definition of heritage in the Act includes monuments, archaeology &amp; related objects, architectural heritage, flora, fauna, wildlife habitats, landscapes, seascapes, wrecks, geology, heritage gardens and parks and inland waterways. Heritage can also intangible, including local history, folklore, place names, culture, collective memories, traditions, historic documents, language, rituals, symbolism, fashion, literature, song and music, spiritually and genealogy. It consists of objects, structures, and processes that</p>	<p>Th approach is to include heritage in every aspect of decision making at local, community and statutory level.</p>



<sup>33</sup> RCPI (2014) *'The Race We Don't Want to Win'* and *'Expert Report on Clinical management and Treatment of Obesity'* (2015).

	<p>are passed from generation to generation as they have a distinct historic, social, cultural or environmental value.</p> <p>Among objectives, the non-statutory aims are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contribute to a sense of community, sense of place, respecting the natural, cultural and built environments and biodiversity.</li> <li>• to maximise the resources and expertise of agencies working in the heritage area,</li> <li>• complement and maximise potential of heritage for tourism development, local economic development, and supporting principles of sustainable planning and development.</li> <li>• strengthen existing community development initiatives, assist local communities to secure funding for projects, e.g. Tidy Towns, etc.</li> </ul> <p>AIMS: raising awareness; acquire knowledge through survey and research on heritage &amp; make it available to the wider public; promote best practice and support economy &amp; strengthen tourism</p> <p>For Archaeology: (4) To support the local economy and strengthen tourism by: a. Developing interpretative signage at publicly accessible sites, b. Recording visitor numbers at major unmanned sites, c. establishing a trail of Limerick's Tower Houses and d. establishing a trail of early Christian sites in Limerick.</p>	<p>SWOT – key relevance to MRT</p> <p>S: strong community interest and engagement with heritage</p> <p>W: over-reliance on volunteers/ economics over long-term heritage</p> <p>O: potential to raise awareness and engage with young people</p> <p>T: scarcity of trad heritage skills/ loss of natural habitat, eutrophication, biodiversity</p>
<p><b>Architectural Heritage Protection - Guidance for Planning Authorities (2011) a</b></p> <p><b>Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1999 - its purpose is to identify, record, and evaluate the post-1700 architectural heritage of Ireland, uniformly and consistently to assist protection and conservation of our built heritage.</b></p>	<p>Record of Protected Structures (RPS) The Planning and Development Act 2000 (Amended) requires each planning authority to compile and maintain an RPS in the interest of safeguarding of heritage interest. The RPS is a mechanism for the statutory protection of the built heritage and forms part of each planning authority's development plan. The Minister may recommend structures to the planning authorities for inclusion on the RPS. As the Planning Act allows a Planning Authority to make additions to or deletions from the RPS, the most recent edition of the RPS contained in the CDP should be consulted. Exempted development provisions are not applicable to such structures where proposed development would materially affect the character of the structure, or any element of the structure that contributes to its special interest.</p> <p>Further advice includes the national guidance document Architectural Heritage Protection - Guidance for Planning Authorities (2011) and the various publication in the Advice Series which gives practical information on the care of older buildings, and the various elements that constitute their unique, distinctive, traditional fabric.</p>	<p>e.g. There are 64 structures within the Kilmallock LAP boundary listed as Protected Structures in the RPS by the Council. Refer to Appendix 2 of this plan.</p>
<b>TOURISM DEVELOPMENT</b>		
<p><b>'People, Place and Policy – Growing Tourism to 2025'</b> <b>Dept. Transport, Tourism and Sport</b></p>	<p>The Government's vision for tourism is that Ireland will have a vibrant and attractive tourism sector that makes a significant contribution to employment across the country, as set out in <i>People, Place and Policy: Growing Tourism to 2025</i>. The objective of investing in, and developing the tourism proposition will seek to maximise tourism's potential to support regional economic and social development.</p>	<p>This Policy reflected that while the focus of tourism development should be to optimise the export value of tourism through increased</p>



	<p>The overall aim is to align strongly with national rural development policy to drive rural development through tourism. In January 2017, the Government launched <i>Realising our Rural Potential: An Action Plan for Rural Development</i> (see below) that sets out a framework of supports at national and local level to ensure that people who live in rural areas have increased opportunities for employment locally, and access to public services and social networks that support a high quality of life.</p> <p>Five pillars are set out to drive delivery:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Supporting Sustainable Communities;</li> <li>2. Supporting Enterprise and Employment;</li> <li>3. Maximising Rural Tourism and Recreation Potential;</li> <li>4. Fostering Culture and Creativity in Rural Communities; and</li> <li>5. Improving Rural Infrastructure and Connectivity.</li> </ol> <p>In February 2018, the Government launched <i>Project Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework</i>, the overarching policy and planning framework for the social, economic and cultural development of Ireland. The report specifically states the need for ‘<i>tourism development and promotional branding to ensure that .....areas are developed and promoted in such a way as to play their full part in tapping the economic potential of regional and rural areas in the region</i>’ (p.35).</p>	<p>international visitors to Ireland, we must</p> <p><i>“protect the invaluable assets that are our natural, cultural and built heritage”.</i></p> <p>Tourism must be carefully planned, managed and monitored to avoid inadvertent or cumulative adverse impacts on Ireland’s natural and cultural assets.</p>
<b>LIMERICK CITY &amp; COUNTY POLICIES &amp; STRATEGIES</b>		
<b>Limerick 2030 Vision: An Economic and Spatial Plan for Limerick</b>	<p>The Limerick 2030 Vision sets out a framework that integrates economic development with spatial planning, underpinned by bespoke marketing. The plan has the support of major public and private stakeholders in Limerick and dynamic ‘Limerick Economic Forum’, chaired by Mr Denis Brosnan. It is a rallying call for public sector action and private sector investment of over €1 billion in enterprise and investment infrastructure – to transform Limerick through the economic, social and physical renaissance of Limerick City Centre and the wider Midwest Region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The key aims of the plan include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The creation of 12,000 jobs in Limerick, with 5,000 in the City Centre;</li> <li>• To accelerate and scale economic investment;</li> <li>• To secure and deliver key strategic sites; and</li> <li>• By 2030 to transition and transform Limerick into a major economic force in the Irish and European economy.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Key to the delivery of the plan is the development of strategic sites overseen by the Limerick 2030 team, to revitalise the City Centre and raise the quality of development.</p> <p>Education and up-skilling programmes are a dominant feature of Limerick 2030, as enablers of the transformation through both the University of Limerick relocating certain teaching programmes, in</p>	


	<p>redesigned and redeveloped locations and centres in the city; and the Limerick Institute of Technology by expanding into medical technology as part of a new 'Medical Village' and into fashion in its recently established 'Fashion Incubator'.</p> <p>In addition, the Plan has supported future-proofing education and skill programmes in IT and engineering (the <i>Limerick for IT</i> and <i>Limerick for Engineering</i> initiatives) that LC&amp;CC have located in dedicated, education centres in the City Centre (at Granary and proposed Digital Academy). Considerable progress has been made since the Plan was launched in 2013, with over 9,000 new jobs created and over 750,000 sq. ft. of knowledge and office space under development.</p>	
<p><b>Limerick City &amp; County Development Plan 2022-2028</b></p>  <p><b>First combined city &amp; county development plan</b></p>	<p><a href="https://www.limerick.ie/council/services/planning-and-property/limerick-development-plan/limerick-development-plan-2022-2028">https://www.limerick.ie/council/services/planning-and-property/limerick-development-plan/limerick-development-plan-2022-2028</a> <i>existing (2010-2016) Settlement Hierarchy for Limerick County</i> – Mungret is a Tier 1 Gateway Town to Limerick City; Kilmallock is a Tier 2 Key Town; Adare, Croom and Patrickswell are Tier 3 Centres of Transport Corridors. All others (Bruff, Bruree, Kilfinane Pallaskenry and Caherconlish are 'Tier 4 Small Towns'; all others are 'small villages'.</p> <p>The accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment highlights the following: Transition to low carbon economy must reflect the elements of the NPF, such as compact settlements, but also to support local production to meet local needs, ranging from local food production to light engineering.</p> <p>In transitioning to low carbon transport, the RSES promotes "low carbon connectivity" both nationally and internationally. Regional Policy Objective 139 mentions ports, with particular relevance for Limerick, as Foynes is an important link in the international transport infrastructure for the region and the country as a whole. The Development Plan will have a separate section on the estuary and the importance of the port to Limerick.</p> <p>Ecologically sensitive areas located within Limerick include aquatic and terrestrial ecological areas, part of an extensive network of watercourses and wetlands: - <i>Rivers</i>, streams and riparian zones (such as River Shannon, Abbey River, Groody River, Mulkear River, River Maigue, River Feale and the Allaghaun River); - <i>Loughs</i> (such as Westfields, Lough Gur, Dohoye Lough); and – <i>Bogs, fens and marshes</i> (Knockalisheen, Griston Bog and Ellaha fen).</p>	<p>Reflects the very rural nature of the Maigue Rivers catchments.</p> <p>National planning guidance requires 'considerations of community facilities and open space', when preparing development plans and assessing planning applications. To prompt these considerations, LC&amp;CC requires housing developers to submit a <i>Sustainability Statement and Social Infrastructure (SSIA)</i> as part of their planning applications, since the CDP 2010. The term green infrastructure is now considered more appropriate, defined as looking at the totality of open space in an area, and the opportunities to develop a connected system of parks, green wedges, green corridors and green spaces. The connectivity of open space is important to address wider sustainable transport/movement goals and biodiversity principles of the movement of pollinators and insects. Connected open space can also contribute to a more active and healthy lifestyle providing</p>

		opportunities to cycle and walk/run at ease and safe from traffic.
 <p><b>LIMERICK DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022-2028</b> Background Paper Community &amp; Recreation</p> <p><b>Playgrounds</b></p> 	<p>Limerick City is recognised as a World Health Organisation Healthy City and a member of the <i>National Healthy Cities and Counties Network</i>. Healthy Limerick aims to improve health, wellbeing and quality of life by ensuring all sectors are aware of and collaborate to achieve a healthy society across the county. CSO 2016 suggests that 56.9% of Limerick people classify themselves as being in ‘very good health’. The ‘Health in all policies’ (HiAP) approach to public policy demands that health implications of decisions be embraced to improve population health and health equity (Helsinki Declaration, WHO 2014), from planning policy stage to implementation. The provision of walking and cycling infrastructure is requisite to sustain healthy communities and promote quality of life.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Development of greenways and blueways provides a valuable recreational resource to local communities, as well as tourism potential. The Great Southern Greenway offers huge potential to develop linkages with the (emerging) Kerry Greenways. Access to the River Shannon has potential for the development of blueways and a world class waterfront along its banks. Embracing the network of rivers throughout Limerick should be examined and developing a blueway network should be explored throughout the City and County.</li> <li>4. Playgrounds are an integral part of public services, allowing children to play outside while contributing to child friendly communities. The provision of playgrounds, whether by the Council or the local community, should be of the highest standard.</li> <li>5. Arts &amp; Culture: Opportunities exist to build on the natural and built cultural amenities of Limerick to increase public engagement in arts &amp; culture and stimulate economic development.</li> <li>6. Sports &amp; Recreation: collaborative provision of new recreational and sporting facilities to support the multifunctional use of buildings. LC&amp;C are preparing a <i>Sports and Recreation Strategy for Local Authority owned facilities</i>. This will feed into the preparation of the proposed Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.</li> </ol>	<p>Community and recreation facilities play a vital role in building community resilience, inclusiveness, economic growth and health and wellbeing. The new Limerick Development Plan will place a focus on providing the critical mass to sustain and build communities. This in turn will lead to increased demand for Community and Recreation facilities across Limerick.</p>
<p><b>Limerick City &amp; County Development Plan 2022-2028 Connectivity &amp; Infrastructure Issues Paper</b></p>	<p>A fundamental shift towards sustainable travel is necessary – at its heart an emphasis on sustainability – achieving behavioural change with a focus on walking, cycling and public transport as real alternatives for travelling within larger urban centres. Enhanced rural transport links must also be encouraged, moving from the car to viable public transport links.</p> <p>The National Planning Framework set out National Policy Objectives (NPO):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NPO3 identified the following element for Limerick: Development of a strategic cycleway network with a number of high capacity flagship routes.</li> <li>• NPO 27 Ensure the integration of safe and convenient alternatives to the car into the design of our communities, by prioritising walking and cycling accessibility and integrating physical activity facilities for all ages.</li> </ul>	<p>National Development Plan (Transport) - potential for nature-based design solutions for mitigation design shall be considered. Part (A) Projects Identified, including Pre-Appraisal Stages in Limerick’s strategic inter-county linkages: N20 Limerick to Cork N69 Limerick to Foynes Port</p>

	Regional and Local Policy Objectives also focus on provision of walking and cycling connectivity, contributing to climate mitigation goals.																																																																			
Limerick City & County Development Plan 2022-2028 Settlement Hierarchy – Key Facts	<table><tr><th colspan="6">Demographic Profile - Census</th></tr><tr><th>Local Area Plans</th><th>Bruff</th><th>Cappamore</th><th>Caherconlish</th><th>Hospital</th><th>Kilfinane</th></tr><tr><td>Population 2016 (+/-) Change on 2011</td><td>803 persons (+2.5%)</td><td>620 persons (-8%)</td><td>1,476 persons (+15%)</td><td>653 persons (+3.6%)</td><td>789 persons (+1.4%)</td></tr><tr><td>Population 2011</td><td>783 persons</td><td>675 persons</td><td>1,279 persons</td><td>630 persons</td><td>778 persons</td></tr><tr><td>2016 Age Profile</td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>0-14 cohort 23%</li><li>15-24 cohort 10%</li><li>25-44 cohort 28%</li><li>45-64 cohort 23%</li><li>65 plus cohort 16%</li></ul></td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>0-14 cohort 19%</li><li>15-24 cohort 12%</li><li>25-44 cohort 28%</li><li>45-64 cohort 23%</li><li>65 plus cohort 17%</li></ul></td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>0-14 cohort 29%</li><li>15-24 cohort 8%</li><li>25-44 cohort 35%</li><li>45-64 cohort 16%</li><li>65 plus cohort 12%</li></ul></td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>0-14 cohort 20%</li><li>15-24 cohort 9%</li><li>25-44 cohort 28%</li><li>45-64 cohort 23%</li><li>65 plus cohort 20%</li></ul></td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>0-14 cohort 21%</li><li>15-24 cohort 11%</li><li>25-44 cohort 27%</li><li>45-64 cohort 24%</li><li>65 plus cohort 17%</li></ul></td></tr><tr><td>2016 Pop. by Sex</td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>412 males</li><li>391 females</li></ul></td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>299 males</li><li>321 females</li></ul></td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>712 males</li><li>764 females</li></ul></td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>329 males</li><li>324 females</li></ul></td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>407 males</li><li>382 females</li></ul></td></tr></table> <p>Table 15 – Local Area Plan Settlements Demographic Profile</p> <table><tr><th colspan="6">Travel &amp; 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Limerick City & County Development Plan 2022-2028 Background-paper on Environment, Heritage, Landscape & Green-Infrastructure.	<p>Green Infrastructure planning promotes integrated spatial planning by identifying multifunctional zones and by incorporating habitat restoration measures and other connectivity elements into various land-use plans and policies, such as linking peri-urban and urban areas</p> <p>Implement measures to reduce the barrier effects of roads, railways and technical objects in rivers and streams to facilitate species spatial responses to climate change - general policies and guidance could be included in the infrastructure chapter to highlight this issue and suggest means of dealing with it. This would help with assisting the movement of species such as otters (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) following infrastructure projects. In broader terms the movement of species in response to climate change should be facilitated by suitable construction of infrastructure which would have adequate passage mechanisms and permeability to allow the movement of plants and animals on a landscape scale.</p>	“Green infrastructure may be defined as a strategically planned network of interconnected natural areas and other open spaces that conserve or replicate natural ecosystem functions and provides a wide array of benefits to people and wildlife. Green Infrastructure helps ensure the sustainable provision of ecosystem																																																																		



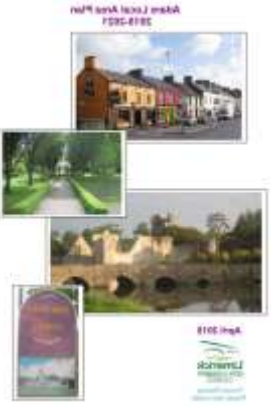
	<p>Green infrastructure is made up of open spaces, waterways, gardens, woodlands, green corridors, wildlife habitats, street trees, natural heritage and open countryside. The concept of multifunctional areas of land is a key feature of green infrastructure in providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recreational space for healthy exercise, play and outdoor relaxation;</li> <li>• wildlife habitats;</li> <li>• Contributing an attractive natural element to an area;</li> <li>• Improving local environmental quality in people's everyday living and working environments;</li> <li>• providing flood storage space and riparian habitats;</li> <li>• helping areas to cope with the impacts of climate change;</li> <li>• Providing areas for local food production - in allotments, gardens and through agriculture;</li> <li>• Foster environmental awareness within the community.</li> </ul> <p>Acknowledgment of the importance of green infrastructure should be accompanied by recognition of the fact that it should be carefully managed and that ecological needs should take precedence over public access and amenity.</p> <p>Water Quality: is connected to that of human health and of human usage of the assimilative capacity of watercourses for treated discharges from wastewater treatment plants. Many of the settlements in County Limerick are constrained by the lack adequate treatment facilities. This is a major issue for land use planning and extensive consultation will take place with Irish Water throughout the Development Plans review process. this will pose a huge resource challenge for the Local Authority, in ensuring that treatment infrastructure is able to keep pace, with what could well be increased demand for these services in Limerick's towns and villages.</p>	<p>goods and services, while increasing the resilience of ecosystems"</p> <p>It is often the case that amenity uses and needs are different and from those of green infrastructure and ecological processes and this should be recognised in the plan. In some situations public access may be possible but this aspect of green infrastructure should be carefully assessed in order to minimise the possible effects of public access and associated infrastructure, such as paths, that are needed to support it.</p>
<b>Limerick Cultural Strategy - A Framework 2016 – 2030</b>	<p>Limerick Cultural Strategy aims to grow the county's cultural capacity by retaining and attracting creative practitioners to live and work in Limerick, to place culture at the heart of the economic growth and regeneration of Limerick; to engage citizens through involvement in culture growth and regeneration of Limerick and to increase and support the role of the creative industries in Limerick.</p> <p>Cultural events are key enablers to promoting and attracting people to the town. At a local level, the Council sees a similar role for cultural opportunities in rural towns.</p>	<p>Objective H7 Cultural Heritage It is the objective to the Council to: a) Seek and support opportunities to implement the aims and Objectives of the Limerick Cultural Strategy b) Recognise the valuable contribution of creative communities and practitioners to creative place-making, community development, growth, tourism and well-being for the citizens</p>
<b>Limerick Local Economic and Community Plan 2016 – 2021</b>	<p>The LECP sets out objectives and actions to support economic development and local community development, by the Council with other economic and community development stakeholders. The role of Local Community Development Committees (LCDC) and the Public Participation Network (PPN) is recognised as a means to ensure that policy is meaningful for local communities, by implementing and monitoring the community elements of the plan.. They also have a general role in seeking to ensure</p>	

	effectiveness, consistency, co-ordination and avoidance of duplication between the various elements of local authority activities in the community.	
<b>Heritage Plan 2017-2030 Limerick City &amp; County Council</b>	<p>Limerick stretches back over 5,000 years and more- remains of deserted medieval settlements, as at Abington and Tomdeeley, near Askeaton. However, Kilmallock and Newcastle West, Adare and Askeaton and Limerick City have the richest physical remains of the medieval past. Range: town walls, religious foundations, to castles and more modest houses. Other features, such as the pigeon house at Adare, can be found in both urban and rural locations. Our medieval urban foundations evolved e.g. at Kilmallock where provision was made for the town to extend northwards. While at Adare the original town of the Middle Ages was virtually abandoned in the 19th century as the Dunraven family sought to develop a model streetscape as an enhancement of their demesne.</p> <p>One of our significant treasures is the thatched heritage that has survived, albeit, is very vulnerable to a number of threats. While most of this stock consists of a vernacular legacy and encompasses the two primary house types, the direct entry thatched house and the lobby entry style of house, the variety of surviving structure ranges from commercial buildings (public houses and shops) and stables. No mention of Limerick's thatched heritage would be complete without reference to the cottage ornee buildings erected and re-modeled over the years by the Dunraven family along Adare's Main Street. In the interests of safeguarding the cultural and built heritage over 2000 structures have been identified for their contribution to the heritage in our City and County and have been designated 'Protected Structures' under section 51 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (Amended).</p>	
<b>Limerick Cultural Strategy - A Framework 2016 – 2030 Limerick Arts Office (May 2016)</b>	<p>Limerick has a proud, rich history and heritage that has informed our culture. The objectives of the strategy broadly concur with the themes of the Government policy document, Culture 2025. Ambition 5 of Limerick's Cultural Strategy states:</p> <p>"To place culture at the heart of the economic growth and regeneration of Limerick" and outlines objectives to achieve this ambition – to recognise the unique qualities of Limerick's Heritage – historic and contemporary – and incorporate these into Development Plans and creative place-making strategies as a force for revitalising urban space and communities.</p>	
<b>Limerick Tourism Development Strategy 2019 -2023</b> <b>Limerick City &amp; County Council</b>  <small>Action Plan 2019-2023</small>	<p>The LTDS identified Limerick's unique position on the west coast of Ireland, and as a gateway to the Wild Atlantic Way, as central to developing the sector. The strategy to develop tourism across Limerick city and county envisages that the total number of visitors to Limerick will reach 1.1 million per annum, generating more than €360 million in revenue and creating 1,500 new jobs by 2023 (<i>Note: projections were made per-covid pandemic</i>). It aligns with the <a href="#">Limerick 2030 Economic and Spatial Plan for Limerick</a> which has earmarked tourism as one of the key sectors for future growth and addresses the need for a joined-up tourism strategy for Limerick, with a more coordinated approach to the development of the sector. The framework for tourism is based around four key drivers, with a solid foundation of attributes and assets in both urban and rural environments: based on following Themes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Into the Blue</li> <li>2. Energy Unleashed</li> </ol>	<p>The objectives are highly compatible with the offering within the Maigue Rivers catchment :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waterways</li> <li>• Activities</li> <li>• Heritage</li> <li>• Arts and Culture</li> </ul>

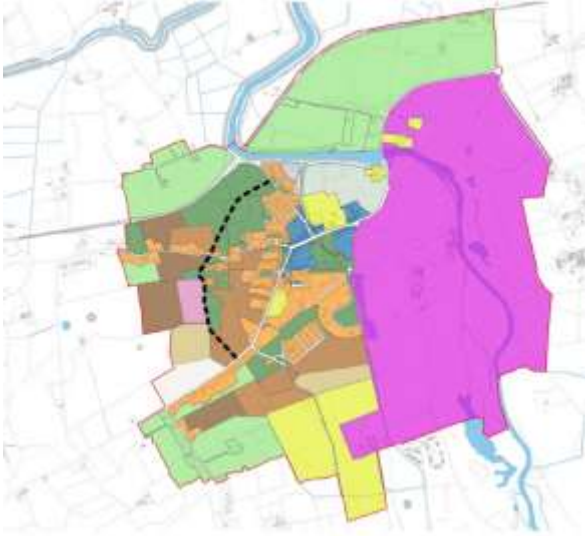

	3. Vibrant History 4. Alive and Kicking	
<b>LOCAL AREA PLANS/ SETTLEMENTS, CO LIMERICK</b>		
<p><b>Kilmallock Local Area Plan 2019-2025</b></p> <p><b>Kilmallock Walled Town: Public Realm Plan</b></p> <p><i>The Council is guided by the national tourism policy outlined in the Tourism Action Plan 2019 – 2021 by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, and at a local level by the Kilmallock Walled Town Public Realm Plan, 2009, and the Limerick Tourism Strategy 2017 – 2023.</i></p> <p><i>The tourism strategy seeks to capture opportunities for tourism development in Limerick City and County. Kilmallock has been identified as a part of the medieval stronghold theme of the Strategy and is part of the cluster titled ‘Foundation and Frontier’ which includes Lough Gur, Bruff, Bruree and Kilmallock.</i></p> <p><i>The importance of tourism to the town is recognised in the recent Kilmallock Socio Economic Plan</i></p>	<p>Public Realm: Town Context p17</p> <p>Natural Environment • The simple and natural qualities of the riverside landscape need to be protected. Although a good riverside park has been created south of the bridge, much of the northern River Loobagh landscape <u>remains inaccessible</u>.</p> <p>Access and Circulation • Public transport to and from the town is inadequate. • There is no direct pedestrian linkage between the monuments and the northern riverside. • Pedestrian movement around the outer edges of the town is poor.</p> <p>Public Realm • A continuous Walled Town walk along the outer edge of the west walls should be developed, together with associated public open space improvements. • Public access to the northern part of the river should be improved. • The existing historical town walks should be safeguarded and enhanced. • A long distance walkway along the river and around the town would greatly contribute to the appreciation of its heritage and landscape qualities.</p> <p>Tidy Towns – feedback: The Riverside Park is a prominent feature, however, the timber name board is starting to rot and the bollards at the pedestrian entrance from Wolfe Tone Street need painting. • The River Loobagh provides a broad range of habitats and potential could be extended by judicious planting of more native trees, especially oak – the Riverside Park might be a good starting point and the grounds of Colaiste Iosaef would draw in the pupils there. • Part of the river bank is being undermined by erosion, and the remedial work already undertaken needs to be extended. • The extensive presence of Giant Hogweed beside the river, if confirmed, needs to be addressed.</p> <p>Objectives for Transport in LAP are as follows:</p> <p>Objective T11 Network of pedestrian and cycle facilities: It is an objective of the Council to encourage walking and cycling as more convenient, popular and safe methods of movement in Kilmallock, in accordance with the principles of <i>Smarter Travel</i> and any other subsequent guidelines at national level. Future development proposals for the new residential, serviced sites, community and recreation, and enterprise lands will demonstrate at design stage consideration of Smarter Travel, mobility and connectivity with the town centre and community infrastructure.</p> <p><i>Combined off-road footpath and cycleway link</i> will be encouraged along the proposed distributor road and the River Loobagh.</p> <p>6.6 Natural heritage and Climate Change Kilmallock supports a number of urban habitats, including ecosystems associated with the River Loobagh, open field and hedgerows, mature trees, green spaces by the Town Walls, the new Glen Wood - an urban woodland development by the local community, the Famine Memorial Park, and open spaces around the Priory and Collegiate Church.</p>	<p>Kilmallock Local Area Plan -Summary</p> <p><b>6.5</b> Tourism is an established business sector in Kilmallock, and has more potential, with a hotel in the town, the rich historical built heritage in the town, including medieval plots and structures, the 18/19th century vernacular streetscape, Kilmallock’s location in the Golden Vale and the River Loobagh, and the town’s proximity to the Ballyhoura Mountains, Lough Gur, Bruff, Bruree and Knockainey.</p> <p>Kilmallock is a cycling hub located close the Ballyhoura’s and its mountain cycling trails. Kilmallock also takes its place on the <i>Ballyhoura Country marketing</i> platform by Ballyhoura Development Ltd under the LEADER programme. Kilmallock Tourism Development Ltd. – a local community initiative has progressed a number of tourism projects in Kilmallock over the years. East and West Walls, the Famine Memorial Park and the urban park to the north of the town and the riverside park. Kilmallock’s LAP zones 21.9 ha for Open Space and Recreation, and 12.6 ha for Open Space and Sports Grounds.</p>

<p><b>and the Kilmallock Sustainable Development Report 2018.</b></p>	<p>Zoning : Kilmallock Promoting land use patterns and economic activity that minimises effects on climate change is an Objective of Limerick City &amp; County Council - will endeavour to promote responsible development and management of land, drainage systems and natural habitats and the local delivery of energy, efficiency and adaptation to climate change in Kilmallock. The plan, through its zoning template, has tried to include the maximum amount of relevant land use zonings for a town the size of Kilmallock to allow diverse uses, which can cater for the needs of the town and encourage biodiversity and ecology. Closely related to zoning is the issue of flooding. To guard against flooding the land around the River Loobagh, which runs through the town, has been designated as non-vulnerable uses. This also has the advantage of preserving the settings of the archaeological monuments in this area. It also has the advantage of ensuring a continuous habitat corridor through the town.</p> <p>Objective H9: Climate Change - e) Promote <u>responsible development and management of land, drainage systems and natural habitats</u> and to encourage development at appropriate locations, which minimise the use of fossil fuels and maximises the use of local or renewable resources.</p> <p>Objective C4: New amenity areas/walkways, allotments and community gardens It is an objective of the Council to: (Kilmallock)</p> <p>a) Continue to facilitate the development of walkways as indicated on the Amenity Map in the Appendices in co-operation with local interested parties including the private, voluntary and public sector. Any proposed development adjacent to such walkways must incorporate connecting pathways into the designated walkway in their design. Developments shall be designed to ensure that properties overlook proposed walkways.</p> <p>b) Co-operate with other agencies to enhance and provide recreational and amenity facilities in the area, and</p> <p>c) Facilitate opportunities for allotments or community gardens at appropriate locations.</p>	<p>LCCC Objective C2 Protection of lands zoned for open space and encourage active and passive use of open space:</p>
<p><b>ADARE Local Area Plan 2015-2021</b></p>	<p>Adare is located approximately 10 miles to the south west of Limerick city along the N21, Limerick to Killarney national primary route. In the settlement strategy as defined by the County Development Plan 2010-2016 it is defined as a Tier 3 settlement, on a transport corridor.</p> <p>Chapter 6: Transport</p> <p>The Government's policy 'Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future', the Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 - 2022, the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 - 2016, and the 30 year Mid-West Area Strategic Plan (MWASP) all point in the direction of improving existing transport infrastructure and designing new infrastructure that will make non-car transport modes more attractive. Bus Eireann runs a daily service from Limerick to Killarney and Limerick to Tralee which stops in Adare village. Maintaining and improving the bus connections between Adare and Limerick city is a key objective to ensuring that the village develops in an efficient and sustainable manner and an alternative</p>	<p>At a national level, 'Smarter Travel' has as a target that by 2020 the percentage of those travelling to work by car will decrease from 65% to 45%. It recommends a range of actions, many to be implemented through the NDP Project 2040.</p> <p>Note the demographics of Limerick car usage for commuting to work &amp; school/ college</p>



	<p>to the car as a choice of travel is promoted. Rural bus (Rural Link?), the community bus company operates a weekly service in the Adare and the wider west Limerick area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The N21 Limerick to Killarney road passes through the centre of Adare causing serious traffic congestion issues. Therefore the need for a complete bypass for the village is a priority, as highlighted in the MW Regional Planning Guidelines and the MWASP.</li> <li>• LCCC is committed to development of a matrix of access routes, reflecting personal safety, choice, and convenience to services and amenities - future development of residential and education and community zoned lands adjacent to Adare 'village estate' shall provide pedestrian/cycle connections through the grounds of Adare Manor to the village centre</li> <li>• Should resources permit it is intended to develop a footpath/cycleway along local road L-1422-314 from Deerpark estate to the GAA grounds</li> <li>• Provision of a safe pedestrian access northwards to Desmond Castle is also desirable.</li> <li>• The Limerick-Foynes railway line closed to passengers in 1963 and to freight traffic in 1999. The Shannon Foynes Port Company and Irish Rail have indicated the potential for the re-opening of the line for freight traffic. This LAP includes a policy to safeguard the rail line against encroachment that would compromise the long term development of the rail facility.</li> </ul> <p>Chapter 7: Water Management/ Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) A stage 1 FRA was prepared for Adare.. OPW preliminary flood risk assessment maps (PFRA) are available for Adare under the OPW's CFRAM study. These indicate substantial areas of land along the River Mague and the Droichidín stream are located in the Flood Zone. In this zone most development is considered vulnerable to flooding. As a response the LAP designates most vacant lands located in the Flood zone as open space or agricultural use. This plan rezones a large area of land in the townlands of Blackabbey and Islandea from residential to open space. Also an area of land adjacent to the existing town park has been rezoned from town centre mixed uses to open space.</p> <p>Chapter 8 Environment &amp; heritage Adare is an Architectural Conservation Area – with consequent restrictions on developments etc Objective EH6: Designated Sites and Nature Conservation It is the objective of the Council to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Protect the integrity of the downstream Lower River Shannon SAC, through establishment of buffer zones around the river.</li> <li>b) Ensure that appropriate waste water infrastructure is provided in advance of new developments ..... within correct environmental limits.</li> <li>c) Ensure that development projects likely to have significant effects on the Lower River Shannon SAC are subject to AA and will not be permitted under this plan unless they comply with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.</li> </ol> <p>In terms of general nature conservation the Council will protect undesignated habitats such as notable trees and hedgerows and ponds/wetlands and other natural features of local importance.</p>	
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	<p>In recognition of the special character of Adare Manor a significant area of the demesne lands to the east of the plan area have been designated a special control area (SCA).</p> <p>Objective EH7: Special Control Area</p> <p>Development including residential houses, holiday homes and holiday apartments shall not be permitted on land zoned special control area. Ancillary leisure/tourism development which complements the use of Adare Manor may be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there will be no impact on the integrity of this Special Control Area or on the natural habitat of the river.</p> <p>Chapter 9 Community &amp; Recreation</p> <p>Adare has ... a wide range of activities including sports, arts and culture, local history and heritage, youth, environmental and local development. ...as well as important features and amenities that offer both active and passive recreational opportunities and provide important wildlife habitats. The recently completed all-abilities play-ground at the Adare Recreation and Community Complex in the Manor Fields is of enormous benefit for local children. The River Bank Walk along the Mague provides an area of passive and active amenity and is an important contributor to the quality of life of the residents of the village and surrounding areas. The Council ... will endeavour to work with the local community in relation to community and recreational requirements. The identification of possible amenity walkways and cycle routes throughout the village forms an important part of the plan.</p> <p>Objective C 2: New amenity areas and Walkways</p> <p>It is the objective of the Council to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Continue to facilitate the development of walkways as indicated on the Amenity Map in co-operation with private, voluntary and public sector. Any proposed development adjacent to such walkways must incorporate connecting pathways into the designated walkway in their design. Developments shall be designed to ensure that properties over look proposed walkways.</li> <li>b) Co-operate with other agencies to enhance and provide recreational and amenity facilities</li> </ul> <p>Objective C 3: Allotments and Community Gardens</p> <p>It is the objective of the Council to facilitate opportunities for food production through allotments or community gardens at appropriate locations.</p>	
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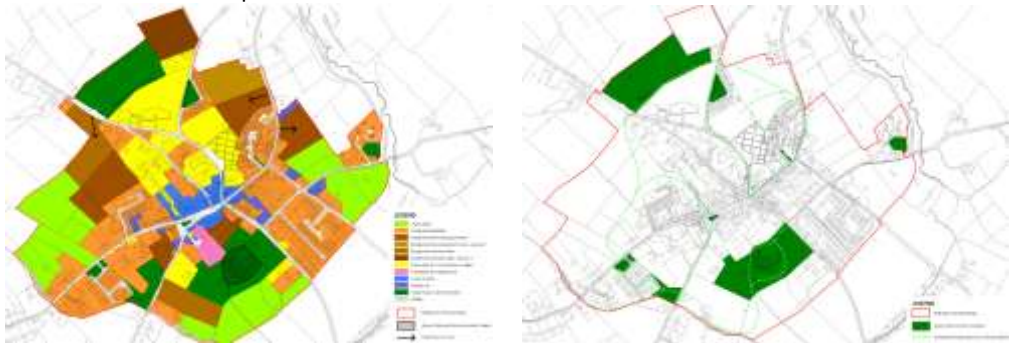
		
<p><b>Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026</b></p>  <p>Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026</p> <p>March 2020</p>	<p>Chapter 5 Tourism</p> <p>The river amenity within Croom offers potential for tourism development and works to the walkway along the river bank has facilitated access..... It is important that this resource is harnessed in a sustainable manner. Sustainable tourism development will not only increase revenue for the area, but will also deliver on conservation, environmental and social goals.</p> <p>Objective ED 5: Tourism</p> <p>It is the objective of the Council to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Enhance the tourism potential of the Croom area on appropriately zoned lands, including new environmentally sustainable tourism products and visitor accommodation, including co-operation with the relevant bodies in the marketing and promotion of tourism in the area;</li> <li>(b) Enhance the tourism potential of the town, including promotion of appropriate tourism products in the town, such as the association with the Maigue Poets in an environmentally sustainable manner;</li> <li>(d) Continue to facilitate the enhancement of existing open spaces in the town</li> <li>(e) Encourage new development for the tourist industry near existing services and infrastructure to support the general economic vitality of the settlement.</li> <li>(f) Protect the natural, built and cultural heritage features from unwarranted encroachment or unsuitable development.</li> </ul> <p>Chapter 6 Transport</p>	<p>LCCC guided by the national tourism policy outlined in the <i>Tourism Action Plan 2019 – 2021</i> by Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and at a local level by the <i>Limerick Tourism Strategy 2017 – 2023</i>. The Tourism Strategy seeks to capture opportunities for tourism development in Limerick City and County. The town is well known for the School/ Court of Gaelic Poetry, which flourished here in the 18th century. These Gaelic poets were known collectively as <i>Fili na Maighe</i> “The Poets of the Maigue”. Glenogra Castle outside of the town is also known as the home of the Colleen Bawn. Other features of tourism potential include the two large Mills, either side of the River Maigue and Croom Castle, a</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bus Eireann run a 3x daily bus services through to Limerick and Cork Cities. Maintaining and improving this service remains a priority.</li> <li>• Future proposals for residential development should demonstrate compact walkable/cyclable neighbourhoods with the shortest linkages to community facilities, open space and the town centre.</li> <li>• Future development of residential and education and community zoned lands in the vicinity of Orthopaedic Hospital and the new school shall provide pedestrian/cycle connections through the residential estates along the Crecora Road and into the town centre.</li> </ul> <p>Objective 3.2 (d) Ensure that adequate facilities and access provisions are provided for those with disabilities in the community.... in line with current best practice.</p> <p>Chapter 7: Infrastructure</p> <p>Flood Risk: Flood risk maps (FRA) are available for Croom @ CFRAM study. These indicate areas along the Skagh Road are in the Flood Zone. The extent of the flood is demonstrated - all development is considered vulnerable to flooding. The precautionary approach has been adopted in this instance and these lands have been zoned for Agricultural purposes.</p> <p>Chapter 8 Environment and Heritage</p> <p>The River Mague is the most important natural asset of the town and has further potential for use as an amenity. the recreational value of the River Mague has been developed through the linear walkway/cycleway which runs parallel to the river. The adjacent 13 acres of parkland is filled with woodland paths, seating, picnic areas and a children's playground. With an integrated approach from landowners, lands to the rear of Main Street adjacent to the river provide a potential development opportunity for continuing this walkway along the river. It is the <u>policy of this plan to encourage the development of this area</u>. On the western bank, with the exception of the restored mill building there is limited public access. There is potential to provide greater public access to the river and therefore to harness its amenity value. This plan includes an Amenity Map that incorporates proposals to achieve this objective through the development of walks and both active and passive amenity.</p> <p>Both passive and active open space is required in Croom close to the town centre. The Well Meadow provides for passive recreation. Active recreation is catered for by a number of facilities and clubs. The community centre provide for some indoor sports facilities. There is an existing GAA ground located outside the town on Church Road. There is a soccer club located to the east of the town to the side of the community centre. The Council will require developers to make provision for sport and recreational infrastructure commensurate with the needs of the development as an integral element of their proposals.</p> <p>Objective EH 06: Tree Protection and Nature Conservation</p> <p>It is the objective of the Council to protect natural stone boundary walls, mature trees, woodlands and hedgerows. Development that requires the felling or harming of such trees shall not normally be</p>	<p>private residence. One of the renovated Mill buildings operates as a business location, while scope exists to develop the other Mill building, potentially for tourism uses.</p> <p>The route for the M20 has yet to be selected and as such cannot be included in this plan - there may be impacts to the town from the final selected route.</p> <p><i>"The Mague River Trust was established to protect, enhance and cherish the rivers and lakes of the River Mague catchment for the benefit and enjoyment of all. Furthermore, it seeks to promote the utilisation and enjoyment of the River.</i></p> <p><i>The introduction of a slipway along the riverbank adjacent to the Civic centre provides a real opportunity for</i></p>
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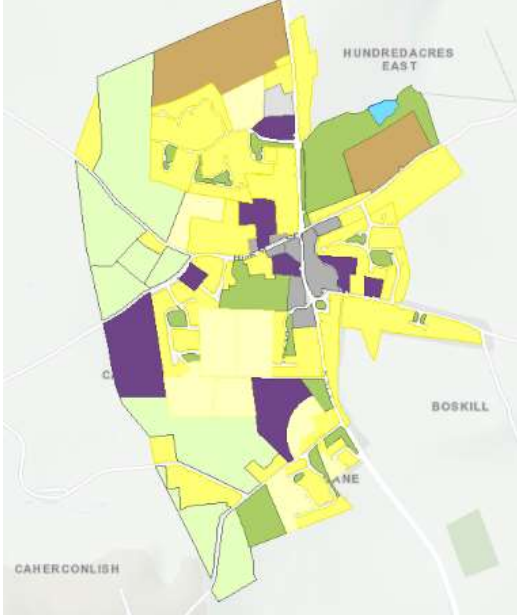

	<p>permitted unless otherwise supported by a tree survey report establishing that the subject trees are of no ecological or amenity value.</p> <p>Chapter 9 Community and Recreation</p> <p>Policy C1: It is the policy of the Council to ensure that community infrastructure and a range of open space opportunities for passive and active recreation contribute to a vibrant, prosperous settlement. This is conducive to ethical principles of healthy communities, inclusivity and accessibility to facilities for all abilities, and sustainability to ensure that Croom is a greener, cleaner, more welcoming place to live, work and attract investment.</p> <p>In recent times the term 'green infrastructure' is considered more appropriate, when looking at open space provision - defined as looking at the totality of open space and the opportunities to develop a connected system of the parks, green wedges, green corridors. The connectivity of open space addresses wider sustainable transport/movement goals, and biodiversity principles of the movement of flora, fauna, pollinators and insects. Connected open spaces can also contribute to a more active and healthy lifestyle providing opportunities to cycle and walk/run at ease, and provide safety from traffic.</p> <p>Objective C1: Protection of lands zoned for open space</p> <p>It is the objective of the Council to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Protect existing open space, by not permitting development, which encroaches on open space by reducing the recreational value to the public.</li> <li>(b) Protect semi-natural open space areas from inappropriate development in the interest of recreational enjoyment, community health and well-being, flood protection and biodiversity.</li> <li>(c) Seek in partnership with other agencies to develop active and passive recreational opportunities, such as extending the recreational walkway/ cycleway along the river bank.</li> </ul> <p>Objective C4: New amenity walkways, allotments and community gardens</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Continue to facilitate the development of walkways as indicated on the Amenity Map in co-operation with private, voluntary and public sector.</li> <li>(b) Co-operate with other agencies to enhance and provide recreational and amenity facilities in the area.</li> <li>(c) Facilitate opportunities for food production through allotments or community gardens at appropriate locations.</li> </ul> <p>Amenity Map for Croom :AP</p>	<p><i>active use of the river and the development of a blueway system along the River Mague."</i> Croom LAP</p>
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<p><b>Kilfinane Local Area Plan to 2022</b></p>	<p>Kilfinane is set on a plateau north of the Ballyhoura Mountains and south of the Golden Vale, in the Agricultural Lowlands Landscape Character Area as determined by the Limerick CDP 2010-2016. The pastoral nature of the agricultural landscape around Kilfinane reflects the function of the town as a service centre for the agricultural sector, primarily dairying. Capitalising on Kilfinane's location on the slopes of the Ballyhoura mountains and associated outdoor recreational activities, the town has become increasingly important to service tourism.</p> <p>The Glenduff stream and the River Loobagh (latter outside the LAP boundary) are recognised as an important amenity and are valued as a natural habitat. The designation of lands by the stream as open space and recreation recognises the importance of the natural habitat of the river. Indicative Walkways have been indicated on the zoning maps, contributing to the river as an amenity and to reinforce the buffer zone between the river and any form of development.</p>	

	<p>A number of field boundaries within the plan area, while lacking mature impressive trees, nonetheless form an essential part of the natural fabric of the area.</p> <p>Chapter 9 Community &amp; Recreation</p> <p>Policy C1 Community and Recreational Facilities - It is the policy of the Council to ensure that the education, health facilities, recreation, open space and community needs of residents, both new and existing, can be provided for by suitably zoning lands for these purposes. The Council will require future development in Kilfinane to be accompanied by a corresponding expansion of these facilities and amenities.</p> <p>Objective C 1 Open space hierarchy and playground provision</p> <p>It is the objective of the Council to seek the provision of well designed, high quality, accessible and useable open space in all residential development in accordance with the development management standards of the County Development Plan.</p> <p>Objective C 2 New amenity areas and Walkways</p> <p>It is the objective of the Council to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to facilitate the development of walkways as indicated on the Amenity Map in co-operation with local interested parties including the private, voluntary and public sector. Any proposed development adjacent to such walkways must incorporate connecting pathways into the designated walkway in their design. Developments shall be designed to ensure that properties over look proposed walkways.</li> <li>Co-operate with other agencies to provide recreational and amenity facilities in the town.</li> </ol> <p>Objective C 3 Allotments and Community Gardens</p> <p>It is the objective of the Council to facilitate opportunities for food production through allotments or community gardens at appropriate locations.</p> <p>Kilfinane LAP Zonal Map</p>  <p>Kilfinane LAP – Amenity</p>	
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<p><b>Bruff</b></p> <p><b>Local Area Plan</b></p>		<p><a href="https://viewer.myplan.ie/">https://viewer.myplan.ie/</a></p> <p>GZT Zone: G4 - Active open space ('apple green') and ) G5 - Mixed/general 'green'/ recreation/ conservation, other zones (olive green) are zoned as "Recreation and Amenity" are dispersed throughout the area, and include playgrounds, parks, areas for outdoor activities, sports centres, sports pitches, and landscaped areas.</p>
<p><b>Hospital</b></p> <p><b>Local area Plan</b></p>		<p><a href="https://viewer.myplan.ie/">https://viewer.myplan.ie/</a></p> <p>GZT Zone: G4 - Active open space ('apple green') and ) G5 - Mixed/general 'green'/ recreation/ conservation, other zones (olive green) are zoned as "Recreation and Amenity" are dispersed throughout the area, and include playgrounds, parks, areas for outdoor activities, sports centres, sports pitches, and landscaped areas.</p>



<p><b>Caherconlish</b></p> <p><b>Local Area Plan</b></p>		<p><a href="https://viewer.myplan.ie/">https://viewer.myplan.ie/</a></p> <p>GZT Zone: G4 - Active open space ('apple green' and ) G5 - Mixed/general 'green'/ recreation/ conservation, other zones (olive green) are zoned as "Recreation and Amenity" are dispersed throughout the area, and include playgrounds, parks, areas for outdoor activities, sports centres, sports pitches, and landscaped areas.</p>
<p><b>Ballyhoura/ East Limerick</b></p> <p><b>Ballyhoura Country 2020 – The Way Forward (TDI)</b></p>	 <p>Vision To firmly establish Ballyhoura Country as an outstanding Tourism and Recreational destination in the Heart of Rural Munster offering an exceptional range and quality of experiences in outdoor activity pursuits, and living and built cultural heritage that will bring significant socio-economic benefits to the residents and businesses of the area and a better experience for the visitor.</p> <p>There are twin goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. to broaden the appeal of Ballyhoura as a destination for the key international market segment of Sightseeing and Culture Seekers.</li> <li>2. to increase market penetration in the Adventure/Activity market segment,</li> </ol> <p>To realise the proposed vision and the associated goals there are five recommended key strategies for Ballyhoura Country over the 2015-2020 period. These follow best international practice for destination development and form the foundation for the action plan. 5 key actions:</p>	<p>Covers similar area in northern half of Ballyhoura.</p> <p>Differentiation is critical <i>"Sightseers and Culture Seekers are the main tourism potential for Ireland and Ballyhoura and it is estimated that there are 20 million potential tourists in Ireland's four main overseas markets".</i></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key Strategy 1: The Team Approach –Increasing Collaboration, Partnership &amp; Buy-in (incl Gateways / Munster Vales / domestic marketing to 100,000 homes</li> <li>• Key Strategy 2: Developing Signature Attractions, Increasing Things to See, and Upgrading Outdoor Activities (outdoor pursuits/ equestrian/ natural &amp; cultural heritage points; festivals)</li> <li>• Key Strategy 3: Providing a High Quality Visitor Experience (welcome/ training/ SMEs/ stories/ guiding)</li> <li>• Key Strategy 4: Destination Marketing – Focusing on Each Segment and Sector – (separate strategies for each segment)</li> <li>• Key Strategy 5: Using Digital Technology to Generate Business and Increase Brand Awareness (high Q website/ booking systems/ apps/ trails - interlinked and easy access)</li> </ul> <p>The primary challenges are in respect of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. finance to undertake the strategies, developments and actions outlined in this plan;</li> <li>2. close Ballyhoura Fáilte relations with its local stakeholders, county councils and the national tourism agencies;</li> <li>3. marketing communications.</li> </ol> <p>Strategic Recreational development proposals:</p> <p>Proposals for Ballyhoura Trailhead aim to raise the profile of the facility and to cater for in excess of 100-150,000 visitors p.a. over the period of the plan by widening the appeal of the site to the <u>family market</u>. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ballyhoura Trailhead Masterplan, which reflects the need to coordinate development of this increasingly popular attraction over a multi-year timeframe. This includes development of infrastructure to improve the visitor experience such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• visitor facilities, parking, signage and playgrounds;</li> <li>• development of the trails network to firmly establish as a <u>best-in-Europe</u> trail network;</li> <li>• marketing and promotion measures to ensure the profile of the facility is raised and that the local community are more closely involved;</li> <li>• conservation measures to enhance the local environment including education programmes for schools and other parties.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• implementation of the Ballyhoura Trailhead Partnership, which reflects the need to assign resources to implementation and for a multi agency approach to enable implementation of the Masterplan and the development of Ballyhoura Trailhead as an attraction of international importance. This will require ‘buy-in’ and support from the identified parties.</li> <li>• the construction of a Ballyhoura Trails Visitor Centre, which reflects the need for an amenity with integrated education facility/ bike shop/ bike hire facility/ franchised cafe to facilitate forecast growth. This facility, which is envisaged would be operated by Ballyhoura Fáilte, would provide a source of revenue generation.</li> </ul> <p>Ballyhoura Greenway: the commissioning of a feasibility study into and the construction of a</p>	
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	<p>Ballyhoura Greenway reflects an opportunity to develop a greenway along the disused rail line between Limerick City and Kilmallock via Charleville offering people living in Limerick and visitors to Limerick City and the wider Wild Atlantic Way route a means to access the heart of Ballyhoura.</p> <p>General Recreation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreation Trails map</li> <li>• Recreation Trails APP</li> <li>• Walkers Welcome branding/ B&amp;Bs</li> <li>• Extension of existing walks and cycle trails</li> <li>• Cycle infrastructure such as bike racks</li> <li>• Festivals – walking / steeplechasing</li> <li>• Expansion of the ‘Beast of Ballyhoura’ 2-day event to a 3-4 day event</li> <li>• Links between activity providers and accommodation providers</li> </ul> <p>Equestrian trekking routes/ Ballyhoura</p> <p>Map of equestrian centres</p> <p>Mult-day bundles/ packages</p> <p>Angling – enhanced infrastructure with IFI at key points (stands/ access etc)</p> <p>Canoeing/ Kayaking trails on suitable waters - &gt;&gt; Blueway</p> <p>Cultural Heritage : increase variety and quality of the product offer, to increase awareness of what can be seen and done in the area; to improve accessibility of the heritage offer; to protect and conserve the heritage of Ballyhoura; and to enhance and promote the heritage offer of Ballyhoura with the goal of enhancing visitor satisfaction and increasing local economic return from heritage based tourism.</p> <p>Food heritage : creation of a Ballyhoura Food Trail and a ‘Made in Ballyhoura’ arts &amp; crafts trail builds - develop a Cycling Food / Crafts Trail</p> <p>Maximise the tourism potential of rural pubs includes promotion of nighttime music/entertainment in pubs, linking rambling house sessions</p> <p>wildlife walks in Ballyhoura, provide additional outdoor activities for visitors, local residents and schools based on the varied natural flora &amp; fauna of Ballyhoura.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the provision of information regarding Coillte Forest Recreation Sites on</li> <li>• the launch and promotion of a Ballyhoura Gardens Trail to provide visitors with an increased range of things to see &amp; do</li> </ul> <p>upgrading visitor infrastructure, including measures relating to signage, trailheads, visitor facilities at viewpoints and picnic site opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the improvement of visitor access opportunities, through: the introduction of Mountain Access Project in the Ballyhoura Country area;</li> </ul>	
<p><b>West Limerick Resources Tourism &amp; Heritage</b></p>	<p>West Limerick is bordered by the River Shannon to the north, the River Feale to the west and the Mullaghareirk Mountains to the south. The region extends into the Maigue Rivers catchment in the east, including Adare, Curraghchase Forest Park, Clonshire River and the Maigue River Estuary.</p> <p>Significant strategies have been advanced over the past decade to support outdoor recreation and amenity developments across West Limerick, including the <i>Great Southern Greenway</i> since its conception, and more</p>	

	recently the <i>Shannon Estuary Way</i> , a major initiative linking Limerick to the <i>Wild Atlantic Way</i> , with opportunities for walking, cycling, food, culture and heritage trails to link to the Way.	
<p><b>Munster Vales – Strategic Plan 2020-2025 (Executive Summary)</b></p> 	<p>The Munster Vales five-year plan will support the development of tourism opportunities and position Munster Vales as a key tourism destination.</p> <p>The strategy aims to <b>maximise partnership</b> working between the four local authorities, providing opportunities for local businesses with joined up products and experiences across the area.</p> <p>By harnessing collaborative investment and support, the strategy will deliver <b>increased visitor numbers</b>, encouraging visitors to <b>stay longer</b> and <b>spend more</b> across the towns, villages and tourism businesses in the area, supporting a sustainable rural economy based on low-impact activity tourism.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. COMMUNITIES:</b> local needs and opportunities, ensure communities have the support and toolkit to leverage off the Munster Vales brand and build on the collaborative opportunities between businesses, communities, counties and regions.</li> <li><b>2. RAISE AWARENESS...</b> build on the social media and wider marketing opportunities to expand the Munster Vales brand and deliver tailored, Munster Vales wide</li> <li><b>3. CONNECT :</b> Deliver bespoke projects to consolidate and build the Munster Vales brand particularly linking the mountain ranges and communities at their heart.</li> <li><b>4. DEVELOP EXPERIENCES...</b> Sell the experience by identifying gaps matched to target market visitor requirements, and support businesses to bring high-quality experiences to market.</li> <li><b>5. CREATE EXPERIENCE ROUTES...</b> Create innovative ways to link the area by developing bespoke trails connecting the scenic rural routes with a variety of signature experiences off route, thus dispersing the visitor across the Munster Vales into the authentic Irish offering that it embodies/ encouraging visitors to travel more and stay longer.</li> </ol> <p>The Munster Vales Greenway aims to link the central elements of tourism across the Munster Vales, linking up of greenways to complete a full circle alongside the railway. The MVG has the potential to link the South East Greenway Region/ Ireland's Ancient East to the Western Region/Wild Atlantic Way. Cycling is rapidly growing in popularity, particularly in a Covid-19 context, and has the potential to make positive impacts on businesses along and near key cycle routes. It is recommended that a feasibility study be commissioned to extend the Waterford Greenway an additional 20km from Kilmeadan, Co Waterford to Carrick-on-Suir, Co Tipperary which would provide a link with Suir Blueway Tipperary. This amenity, developed on a phased basis, would maximise the recreational opportunity presented by the considerable public investment in similar initiatives. A range of packages, experiences and transportation connections could then be developed along the route which would link the Munster Vales as a destination and demonstrate inter-county partnership.</p> <p>The Munster Vales Walkway Walking, hiking and cycling .....are ideally placed to showcase the spectacular scenery throughout the Munster Vales. With the objective of encouraging more overnight visits, and identifying a collaborative initiative that can unite the mountain ranges that characterise the Munster Vales, it is recommended that a feasibility study is commissioned to create a Munster Vales Way that links Carrick-on-Suir, Co Tipperary to Kilfinane, Co Limerick.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.munstervales.com">www.munstervales.com</a></p> <p>MV Strategy suggests multiple routes – walking/ cycling – that will ultimately link each of the Vales across the 4 local authorities. Impacts expected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• deliver economic benefits;</li> <li>• » provide a valuable amenity to regional communities and visitors;</li> <li>• » reinforce the transport route hub function of rail stations;</li> <li>• » provide opportunities for local employment;</li> <li>• and</li> <li>• » encourage increased numbers of overnight visitors.</li> </ul> <p>Note that all routes are circumnavigational and not focused on N-S links inter-region via connected trails.</p> <p>No mention of linking northwards to <i>Great Southern Greenway</i> in Limerick</p> <p>No mention of plans for Thurles to Clonmel greenway (<i>Tipperary Greenway</i>)</p>



	<p>The route, which would be promoted as the Munster Vales Way, would incorporate the four counties, the mountain ranges, and the valleys in between with the advantage of combining stretches of existing walking routes.</p> <p>Munster Vales Heritage (Driveway) development of a branded Munster Vales Heritage Tour would pull together the best of the existing driving routes, allowing tourists to experience the entire Munster Vales in one go, with the aim of increasing length of stay and revenue.</p> <p>Marketing the route as one would mean the geographic extent and concept of Munster Vales could be promoted without the need for 'Welcome to...' style signage; indeed, signage may not be required with the trail promoted online only. There is additional potential for the development of multiple routes, rather than one defined route, and for this to be identified on an app, rather than fixed signage.</p>	<p>No mention of <i>St Declan's Way</i> or <i>Nire Valley Ways</i>— existing north-south links through heartlands of MV</p>
<p><b>Concept Development and Feasibility Study – Munster Peaks (TDI for Ballyhoura Development 2014)</b></p> <p><b>The options to be considered for the name of the study area</b></p> <p><b>1. Great Southern Mountain Park</b></p> <p><b>2. Great Munster Mountain Park</b></p> <p><b>Given the importance of the international tourist market for the future economic benefits to the study area, TDI proposes that it should be known as:</b></p> <p><b>GREAT SOUTHERN MOUNTAIN PARK</b></p> <p><b>'The guiding vision for the 'Great Southern Mountain Park' is the development of a coherent, differentiated and cohesive destination offering a diverse range of outdoor recreational activities, and living and built cultural heritage, a combination that will bring significant socioeconomic benefits to the people of the area.'</b></p>	<p><b>2.2.5.1 Demand for Adventure Tourism</b></p> <p>While adventure tourism can include 'hard adventure activities' such as bungee jumping, white-water rafting and skydiving, the majority of those undertaking an adventure activity are engaging in 'soft adventure' such as walking, cycling, angling, horse riding and water sports. The soft adventure category can even extend to activities such as archaeology and birdwatching.</p> <p>Fáilte Ireland research indicates that in 2011 overseas visitors who engaged in adventure related activities contributed €1.2 billion to the economy and their spending was 45% higher than the average visitor. In addition, visitors engaging in activity tourism stayed longer than the average overseas visitor – 10 days rather than 7. Adventure tourism has an important role to play in the visitor experience. The most popular activities amongst overseas visitors in 2011 were hiking/cross country walking; cycling; golf; angling and equestrian pursuits. While there is no county-specific data, national figures supplied by Fáilte Ireland give an indication of changing demand for adventure activities among overseas visitors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Hiking/ Cross-Country Walking:</b> Walking as an outdoor activity is increasingly popular. Around 743,000 overseas visitors claim to have gone hiking/crosscountry walking in 2011, more than a third of whom stated that walking was an important factor in their choice of Ireland as a holiday destination (225,000). However this remains a decline from the 830,000 walkers achieved in 2009 but an increase on the 700,000 recorded in 2010.</li> </ul> <p><i>15 The last year for which figures are currently available.</i></p> <p>Around a third of these visitors stated that walking was an important factor in their choice of Ireland as a holiday destination (225,000). Of this 740,000 visitors, 78% used walks which start and finish at the same location (in a loop), 79% walked for &lt;10km and only 10% were accompanied by guide. In 2011 Mainland Europe was the most popular market for walking with 44% of the market (11% France and 10% Germany) followed by Britain with 31% and North America with 18%. The decline in the number of walkers is likely to be result of the decline in the British market. There are no figures for domestic demand however outdoor activities in general are experiencing an increase in demand. These visitors spent €649m while in Ireland.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cycling:</b> An estimated 173,000 overseas visitors engaged in cycling while in Ireland during 2011, an increase of 9,000 on 2010. The main market for cycling is Mainland Europe with 54% (France 12%, Germany 9%) and Britain/North America with 18% each. These visitors spent €200m while in Ireland.</li> </ul>	<p>There is an impressive walking product offer in the study area that enables national and international comparison. The challenge is to package &amp; promote this and to capitalise on the popularity of walking festivals to encourage greater numbers of walkers into the area.</p> <p>This needs to be combined with measures to offer better services in towns &amp; villages and walker-friendly accommodation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The focus for the walking product is both on hard adventurers – those that are likely to arrive on day visits from the domestic market or walking holidays from the international markets but from whom the economic return might not be that significant; and on the Culturally Curious and the Great Escapers segments - who are more likely to engage in shorter walks as an additional activity to visiting heritage attractions, and from whom the economic return is likely to be greater.</li> </ul> <p>However the provision of facilities for the former is likely to make the area more attractive for the latter due to the existence value of recreational opportunities.</p> <p>The above applies for Cycling Infrastructure – lots there, but needs to be integrated and marketed.</p>

<p><i>Development and promotion of this area as a single destination will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seek to conserve, enhance and interpret the natural, built and cultural environment of the area,</li> <li>• provide a range of enhanced recreational opportunities and experiences for local people and visitors,</li> <li>• provide a range of opportunities for a high quality and authentic experience for visitors to the area,</li> <li>• generate local economic benefit, contributing to sustainable rural regeneration,</li> <li>• raise the profile of the study area as a premier outdoor activity destination, and</li> <li>• facilitate understanding, appreciation and protection of the natural environment.</li> </ul> <p><i>The development and promotion of the Great Southern Mountain Park as a single cohesive destination, combined with an activity and heritage enhancement programme, will drive participation in a range of activities with a focus on adventure and culture. This vision is pragmatic – the goal of this strategy is to increase visitor numbers and visitor revenue in the towns, villages and attractions within the study area supporting a sustainable rural economy based on low-impact activity tourism.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Angling: An estimated 113,000 overseas visitors engaged in angling while in Ireland during 2011. This is a decline from the 123,000 recorded in 2010. Britain was the most popular market for angling in 2010 with a 56% share but has now moved to second place (46%) behind Mainland Europe which is on 47% (France 12%, Germany 11%), North America remains low on 5%. These visitors spent €97m while in Ireland in 2011. Sea angling is the most popular form of angling, followed by game and coarse. Average spend of the overseas angling visitor was €858 in 2011 as against €470 by the overseas visitor. Angling visitors stayed an average of 12 days in 2011 against 8 days for overseas visitors. Overseas anglers tend to return to Ireland, 64% are repeat visitors compared to 35% of all holidaymakers; four in five of British holidaymakers who fish have Equestrian: An estimated 71,000 overseas visitors engaged in some form of equestrian pursuit in 2011; an increase of 11,000 on 2010's figure of 60,000 and 25,000 over 2009's figure of 46,000. This is clearly a growing market. The main markets are Mainland Europe with 52% (Germany 11%, France 8%), Britain with 15% (a 22% decline from the 37% of market share in 2010) and North America with 23%.<sup>19</sup> These visitors spent €76m while in Ireland.</li> <li>• Watersports: An estimated that 86,000 overseas visitors participated in water-sports while in Ireland in 2011, spending €65m.<sup>20</sup> Of these, surfing was the most popular activity followed by canoeing. Diving and windsurfing were also mentioned but only by a very small percentage.</li> </ul> <p><b>Arts &amp; Crafts / Visitors to artist studios:</b> There are many local food, craft and art producers who could be linked and promoted through use of a trail concept. However one of the issues with the establishment of similar food &amp; craft trails elsewhere is the degree to which producers are set up to cater for visitors on site. This needs to be investigated prior to the establishment of a trail. Increasing the linkage between food producers and accommodation could also be an opportunity so that accommodation producers stock and use local food and celebrate that in their marketing and menus – providing visitors with a distinctive local experience.</p> <p>Garden Trails As with Crafts and Food there is an opportunity to develop a Gardens trail in the study area. By their nature gardens are more likely to be able to cater for visitors so this may be a more achievable option.</p> <p><b>Festivals :</b> There are many festivals in the study area covering a wide range of areas including adventure, music, art and dance. Some attract very large numbers and there also many sporting events capitalising on the resources in the area such as the Ballyhoura mountain bike trails. Further coordination and promotion of these one an area wide basis is a marketing opportunity that will appeal to all target markets. There is an also an opportunity to develop a new festival to showcase the study area (Munster Peaks) as a unique destination of built, archaeological, cultural and activity excellence.</p> <p>Secondary Destination Gateways are those towns which offer a similar range of visitor facilities and services but not the same extent as those identified as Primary Destination Gateways. In addition they may be in close proximity to significant recreational resources or visitor attractions. These towns were also identified earlier in section 3.2 and are • Kilmallock • Kilfinane • Doneraile</p> <p>These should have 'Get Out There ' centres to promote activities</p>	<p>Angling – PROMOTE&lt; MANAGE&lt; BETTER ACCESS</p> <p>Orienteering &amp; Geo-caching</p> <p>Equestrian : The opportunity for boosting equestrian tourism is in increasing the linkages between the product and the market through the increased use of bundling with accommodation in the area.</p> <p>Birdwatching: opportunities to create bird hides, provide interpretation and to promote the product and associated accommodation to members of the RSPB in the UK and Birdwatch Ireland.</p> <p>Need a VISION – Peak District</p> <p>A spectacular landscape, its wildlife and cultural heritage – A landscape which provides an irreplaceable source of inspiration, whose benefits to people and wildlife are valued and improved. A landscape whose natural and cultural resources are assets to be managed and used wisely for future generations.</p>
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## APPENDIX 03

### Database of Recreational Amenities, Service Providers, Heritage Attractions Mague Rivers Catchment

MAIGUE RIVERS - RECREATION/ AMENITIES DATABASE								
No	Contact Name	Amenity	Address	Catchment	Description	Email	Web	
OUTDOOR/ WALKING/ RECREATION							-	
	Ballyhoura Fáilte	Ballyhoura Way	Kilfinane	Loobagh River catchment	90km linear trail - Beara Breifne Way segment	<a href="mailto:reception@ballyhoura.com">reception@ballyhoura.com</a>	<a href="http://www.visitballyhoura.com">www.visitballyhoura.com</a>	
		Slieve Felim Way	Murroe	Mulkear catchment	36km Murroe to Silvermines		<a href="https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/sports-recreation/activities/walking/county-limerick-trails/slieve-felim-way">https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/sports-recreation/activities/walking/county-limerick-trails/slieve-felim-way</a>	
		Great Southern Greenway	Gortboy, Newcastle West	Deel catchment to Feale	39km Rail-to-Trail from Rathkeale to Abbeyfeale - aim to extend to Tralee	<a href="mailto:mikemacd@eircom.net">mikemacd@eircom.net</a>	<a href="https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/sports-recreation/activities/walking/county-limerick-trails/great-southern">https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/sports-recreation/activities/walking/county-limerick-trails/great-southern</a>	
	Ballyhoura Fáilte	Ballyhoura multi-Trails & Loops	Kilfinane	Loobagh catchment	multiple trails & loops suited to all ages and grades. Ballyhoura APP shows all trails and grades/ lengths	<a href="mailto:reception@ballyhoura.org">reception@ballyhoura.org</a>	<b>Attychran Loop Walk</b> <a href="https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/nature-wildlife/walking-routes/attychraan-loop-walk">https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/nature-wildlife/walking-routes/attychraan-loop-walk</a> <b>Ballinaboola Loop Walk</b> <a href="https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/nature-wildlife/walking-routes/ballinaboola-loop">https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/nature-wildlife/walking-routes/ballinaboola-loop</a> <b>Ballyhoura Nature Trail</b> <a href="https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/sports-recreation/activities/walking/county-limerick-trails/ballyhoura-nature">https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/sports-recreation/activities/walking/county-limerick-trails/ballyhoura-nature</a> <b>Paradise Hill, Anglesborough</b> <a href="https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/nature-wildlife/walking-routes/paradise-hill-loop-walk">https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/nature-wildlife/walking-routes/paradise-hill-loop-walk</a> <b>Slieveveagh, Kilfinane Loop</b> <a href="https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/nature-wildlife/walking-routes/slieveveagh-kilfinane-loop-walk">https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/nature-wildlife/walking-routes/slieveveagh-kilfinane-loop-walk</a>	



		<b>Orienteering, Ballyhoura Forest Park</b>	Ardpatrick			<a href="mailto:reception@ballyhoura.org">reception@ballyhoura.org</a>	<a href="https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/sports-recreation/activities/adventure/orienteering-ballyhoura-forest-park">https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/sports-recreation/activities/adventure/orienteering-ballyhoura-forest-park</a>
		<b>Geocaching in the Ballyhours</b>	Kilfinane	<i>Loobagh catchment</i>	participants use a (GPS) receiver or mobile device and other navigational techniques to hide and seek containers, called "geocaches" or "caches". Log in at Ballyhoura reception.	<a href="mailto:reception@ballyhoura.org">reception@ballyhoura.org</a>	<a href="https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/sports-recreation/activities/adventure/geocaching-ballyhours">https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/sports-recreation/activities/adventure/geocaching-ballyhours</a>
		<b>Ballyhoura Trailriders</b>		<i>Loobagh catchment</i>			
		<b>Ballyhoura Mountain Bike Park</b>	Ardpatrick	<i>Loobagh catchment</i>	98km bike trails suited all grades. €5/car parking; annual access €40		<a href="https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/sports-recreation/activities/cycling/ballyhoura-mountain-bike-trail">https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/sports-recreation/activities/cycling/ballyhoura-mountain-bike-trail</a>
	Coillte	<b>Curraghchase Forest Park</b>	Kilcornan	<i>On watershed of Clonshire and Washing? Creek</i>	313 ha of walks, parkland, lakes. SAC for Lesser Horseshoe Bat; restoration of De Vere arboretum and native Yew woods. picnic sites, playground, caravan park; De Vere Café	<a href="mailto:izabela.witkowska@coillte.ie">izabela.witkowska@coillte.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.coillteoutdoors.ie">www.coillteoutdoors.ie</a>
		<b>Curraghchase Scout Centre</b>	Kilcornan				

		<b>Lough Gur Heritage Park</b>	Grange, Bruff	<i>Camoge River catchment</i>	Occupation from Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age, Early Christian to modern age	<a href="mailto:info@loughgur.com">info@loughgur.com</a>	<a href="http://www.loughgur.com">www.loughgur.com</a>
	Gerard O'Connor	<b>Kilmeedy/ Feenagh Walks</b>	Kilmeedy Co Limerick	<i>Deel/ Clonshire</i>	Community walking trail in Ballinruane Woods	<a href="mailto:goconnor@ballyhouraruralservices.org">goconnor@ballyhouraruralservices.org</a>	
		<b>Knockfierna</b>	Knockfierna, Ballingarry	<i>upper reaches of Clonshire</i>	9km walk to Donn's Cave and Cairn		<a href="https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/sports-recreation/activities/walking/county-limerick-trails/knockfierna">https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/sports-recreation/activities/walking/county-limerick-trails/knockfierna</a>
	<b>WATER BASED ACTIVITIES</b>					-	
	Adare Community Council	<b>Adare Canoe Trail</b>	Adare Village	<i>Maigue River</i>	<b>POTENTIAL</b> Canoe Trail on River Maigue - advanced TOR developed	<a href="mailto:mof@bittmap.com">mof@bittmap.com</a>	
		<b>Aughinish Diving Club</b>	Aughinish	<i>Shannon Estuary</i>	Snorkling and scuba diving for all ages, beginners to instructor levels	<a href="mailto:secretary@aughinishdivingclub.com">secretary@aughinishdivingclub.com</a>	
		<b>Foynes Yacht Club</b>	Foynes	<i>Shannon Estuary</i>			<a href="http://www.foynesyachtclub.com/">http://www.foynesyachtclub.com/</a>
	Clark Clifford	<b>Ribtours</b>	Killard, Ardagh	<i>Deel catchment</i>	Shannon Estuary Tours/ guided heritage wildlife tours	<a href="mailto:clark@ribtours.ie">clark@ribtours.ie</a>	
	<b>SLI NA SLAINTE/ VILLAGE WALKS</b>					-	
		<b>Sli na Sláinte</b>	Bruff	<i>Morningstar</i>	3.5km loop, north to Holycross		
		<b>Sli na Sláinte</b>	Knocklong	<i>Camoge</i>	2.7km loop of village		
		<b>Adare Town Park</b>		<i>Maigue</i>			
		<b>Adare Riverside walk</b>		<i>Maigue</i>			
		<b>Croom Riverside Walk</b>		<i>Maigue</i>			
	<b>WALKING &amp; CLIMBING CLUBS</b>					-	
		<b>Walking Club</b>	Ballyhoura Bears				<a href="http://www.ballyhourabears.com">www.ballyhourabears.com</a>

		<b>Walking &amp; Climbing Club</b>	Limerick Climbing Club			<a href="http://www.limerickclimbingclub.ie">www.limerickclimbingclub.ie</a>	
		<b>Walking &amp; Climbing Club</b>	Carrig Dubh Climbing Club				
		<b>Walking Club</b>	Mullaghareirk Ramblers				
		<b>Walking Club</b>	Mallow Walking Club				
		<b>Walking Club</b>	Galtee Walking Club			<a href="http://www.galteewalkingclub.ie">www.galteewalkingclub.ie</a>	
		<b>Croom Abu Walking Club</b>	Croom				
		<b>Mullaghareirk Ramblers</b>	Dually, Newcastle West				
<b>ACTIVITY PROVIDERS/ OUTDOOR EDUCATION</b>							
		<b>Kilfinane Outdoor Education Centre</b>	Kilfinane OEC	<i>Loobagh</i>	OEC offers water, land and activity courses to Schools, Youths & Adults. We are administered by Limerick & Clare Education & Training Board. Professional & qualified instructors, excellent food & comfortable modern accommodation	<a href="mailto:info@kilfinaneoeec.com">info@kilfinaneoeec.com</a>	<a href="http://www.kilfinaneoeec.com">www.kilfinaneoeec.com</a>
<b>Chris O'Callaghan / Liam Sheehy</b>		<b>Ballyhoura Trailriders</b>	Kilfinane & Ardpatrik	<i>Loobagh</i>	Bike Rental/Guiding/ Shop - trailhead of Ballyhoura Bike Trails in Ardpatrik.	<a href="mailto:ballyhouratrailriders@gmail.com">ballyhouratrailriders@gmail.com</a>	<a href="http://www.trailriders.ie">www.trailriders.ie</a>
<b>Mark Britton</b>		<b>Britton Outdoors</b>			certified Mountain Skills training, guided hikes and family orienteering	<a href="mailto:brittonoutdoors@gmail.com">brittonoutdoors@gmail.com</a>	<a href="https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/sports-recreation/activities/adventure/britton-outdoors">https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/sports-recreation/activities/adventure/britton-outdoors</a>

	Denis McAuliffe	Guide / Great Southern Trail	Newcastle West	Deel	Guided walk/cycle along GST with tourism focus	<a href="mailto:tulligwoodoak@gmail.com">tulligwoodoak@gmail.com</a>	
	Anthony Sheehy	Tour Guide	the Quay, Askeaton	Deel	Guided tours by appointment		
	Pat Lynch	Nature Trails of Aughinish	Askeaton	Shannon Estuary	Butterfly sanctuary, meadowland and heath.	<a href="mailto:Pat.Lynch@augh.com">Pat.Lynch@augh.com</a>	
	James Cavanagh	Adare Walking Tours		Maigue			facebook.com/adarewalkingtours
		Adare Walks			€10/adult; €25/family	<a href="mailto:adarewalks@icloud.com">adarewalks@icloud.com</a>	facebook.com/adarewalks
	Paddy Dunworth	Antiquities/Heritage & Treking/Hillwalking Tours	Ballingarry, Adare,	Maigue	Range of prices depending on the type of tour		<a href="http://www.celticangling.com/ireland-tours.html">http://www.celticangling.com/ireland-tours.html</a>
<b>ACTIVITY/ AMENITY</b>							
No	Contact Name	Org/ Business	Address, Co Limerick		Description	Email	Web
		Adare Camping & Caravan	Droihidtrasna, Adare	Maigue	Caravan & camping site -	<a href="mailto:dohertycampingadare@eircom.net">dohertycampingadare@eircom.net</a>	
	Adare Pitch and Putt	Adare Pitch and Putt	Killarney Road, Adare	Maigue	Junior and Adult memberships available,	<a href="mailto:info@adarepitchandputt.com">info@adarepitchandputt.com</a>	<a href="http://www.adarepitchandputt.com/contact.html">http://www.adarepitchandputt.com/contact.html</a>
	Adare Manor	Adare Manor Archery	Adare Village	Maigue	suited to all ages		<a href="http://www.adaremanor.com/activities-archery.html#">http://www.adaremanor.com/activities-archery.html#</a>
		Ballyhoura Falconry/ Animal Magic	Deebert Cottage Kilmallock V35 V212	Loobagh	Animal Magic was set up to fund the Rescue and Rehabilitation of our Native Wildlife. Falconry exhibitions for family & groups		<a href="http://www.animalmagic.ie/">http://www.animalmagic.ie/</a>
	De Bucket Pub/ Ferry Pub	De Bank Walk	Clarina	Maigue	recreational amenities beside pubs - kayaking/ walk De Bank	<a href="mailto:debucketbar@eircom.net">debucketbar@eircom.net</a>	
	Kilcornan Karting	Kilcornan Karting	Kilcornan	Barnakyle	Karting for all levels, various	<a href="mailto:info@limerickkarting.com">info@limerickkarting.com</a>	<a href="http://www.limerickkarting.com/index.php">http://www.limerickkarting.com/index.php</a>



					competitions run all year		
		<b>Lazy Dog Clay Bird Shooting</b>	Ballanore, Knocklong	<i>Morningstar</i>	situated in Ballinatober Woods, Ballylanders	<a href="mailto:lazydogshooting@eircom.net">lazydogshooting@eircom.net</a>	<a href="http://www.lazydogshooting.ie">www.lazydogshooting.ie</a>
	<b>Field Archery Club</b>	<b>Limerick Archery</b>	Ashroe, Murroe	<i>Mulkear</i>		<a href="mailto:limerickarchery@gmail.com">limerickarchery@gmail.com</a>	
	<b>Stonehall Visitors Farm</b>	<b>Stonehall Visitor Farm</b>	Curraghchase, Kilcoran	<i>Clonshire</i>	pet farm, play area, tea rooms/ picnics, nature trails and walks	<a href="mailto:info@stonehallvisitorfarm.ie">info@stonehallvisitorfarm.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.stonehallvisitorfarm.ie/">http://www.stonehallvisitorfarm.ie/</a>
	<b>Caroline &amp; Joe Rigney</b>	<b>Rigney's Farm</b>	Kilcornan, Curraghchase	<i>Clonshire</i>	Farm B&B & artisan pork production / refocus and rebranding	<a href="mailto:info@rigneysfarm.com">info@rigneysfarm.com</a> / <a href="http://www.rigneysfarm.com">www.rigneysfarm.com</a>	
		<b>Palatine Museum</b>	The Old Railway Buildings, Rathkeale	<i>Deel</i>	Meet to discuss challenges - aging and burn- out of committee. Refocus or relocate or will decline	<a href="mailto:info@irishpalatines.org">info@irishpalatines.org</a> / <a href="http://www.irishpalatines.org">www.irishpalatines.org</a>	<a href="http://www.irishpalatines.org">www.irishpalatines.org</a>
		<b>Foynes Flying Boat</b>	Aras Ide, Foynes	<i>Shannon</i>	heritage centre - MD project?	<a href="mailto:info@flyingboatmuseum.com">info@flyingboatmuseum.com</a>	
<b>ANGLING</b>						-	
		<b>Bleach Lough Anglers</b>	Bleach Lough Anglers Ltd	<i>Bleach rivers</i>	Game and Coarse Fishing Shore / Boat Fishing/		<a href="mailto:chairman@bleachloughanglers.ie">chairman@bleachloughanglers.ie</a> / <a href="http://www.bleachloughanglers.ie/">http://www.bleachloughanglers.ie/</a>
	<b>Inland Fisheries of Ireland</b>	<b>Dromore Lough</b>	Kildimo	<i>Bleach rivers</i>	bank fishing of brown trout	<a href="mailto:limerick@fisheriesireland.ie">limerick@fisheriesireland.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.fisheriesireland.ie">www.fisheriesireland.ie</a>
	<b>Glasha Lake Fisheries</b>	<b>Glasha Lake</b>	Athea	<i>Deel</i>	brown trout / rainbow trout . from bank side and fly fishing - catch & release		<a href="http://www.glashalake.com">www.glashalake.com</a>
	<b>Inland Fisheries of Ireland</b>	<b>Lough Gur</b>	Bruff	<i>Morningstar / Camogue</i>	medium size shallow lake in historic	<a href="mailto:limerick@fisheriesireland.ie">limerick@fisheriesireland.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.fisheriesireland.ie">www.fisheriesireland.ie</a>

					surroundings - Good stock of pike and rudd		
	<b>Pat O'Connor</b>	<b>Castleconnell Fishery Association</b>	Castleconnell, Co Limerick	<i>Lower Shannon/ Maigue</i>	CFA restoration of Shannon spawning beds		
	<b>Paddy Dunworth</b>	<b>Caltic Angling</b>	Ballingarry, Adare,	<i>Maigue</i>	Fishing Tours - Rates and costs vary depending on type of tour wanted	<a href="mailto:info@celticangling.com">info@celticangling.com</a>	<a href="http://www.celticangling.com/ireland-tours.html">http://www.celticangling.com/ireland-tours.html</a>
	<b>Joseph McCarty</b>	<b>Askeaton Deel Anglers</b>	8 Mussel Lane, Askeaton	<i>Deel</i>			
	<b>John Scanlan</b>	<b>Irish Angling Tours</b>	Clonoughter, Glin	<i>Shannon</i>	Guided salmon, trout, sea trout, pike and bass fishing	<a href="mailto:info@irishanglingguide.ie">info@irishanglingguide.ie</a>	<a href="http://irishanglingguide.ie">http://irishanglingguide.ie</a>
	<b>Seamus Danagher</b>	<b>West Limerick Angling Services</b>	34 Daarwood, Newcastle West	<i>Deel</i>			
	<b>Micheal Dee</b>	<b>Deel Anglers</b>	Killarney Rd, Newcastle West,	<i>Deel</i>			
	<b>Richard and Eleanor Keays</b>	<b>Millbank House &amp; Angling Centre</b>	Murroe	<i>Mulcair, Maigue</i>	speciality fishing for Salmon, Wild Brown Trout, Pike and Coarse Fishing	<a href="mailto:info@milbankhouse.com">info@milbankhouse.com</a>	
	<b>Patsy O'Connell</b>	<b>Abha Bhan Fishing Club</b>	The Cross, Mountcollins, Abbyfeale	<i>Feale</i>			
	<b>Pat Danagher</b>	<b>Brosna Mountcollins Angling Club</b>	The Cross, Mountcollins, Abbyfeale	<i>Feale</i>			
<b>EQUESTRIAN</b>						-	
<b>32</b>	<b>Sue Foley</b>	<b>Clonshire Equestrian Centre</b>	Clonshire	<i>Clonshire</i>	Equestrian Trails	<a href="mailto:info@clonshire.iol.ie">info@clonshire.iol.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.clonshire.com/">http://www.clonshire.com/</a>
<b>36</b>	<b>Kathleen Fitzgerald</b>	<b>Fitzgerald Equestrian Centre</b>	The Hill Road, Abbyfeal	<i>Feale</i>	Equestrian trail		<a href="http://www.fitzgeraldsfarmhouse.com/">http://www.fitzgeraldsfarmhouse.com/</a>
<b>46</b>	<b>Crecora Equestrian Centre</b>	<b>Crecora Equestrian Centre</b>	Betteville, Crecora	<i>Barnakyle</i>		<a href="mailto:timangan@yahoo.com">timangan@yahoo.com</a>	
<b>52</b>	<b>Clarina Riding Centre</b>	<b>Clarina Riding Centre</b>	Clarina,	<i>Barnakyle</i>		<a href="mailto:clarinaequestrian@hotmail.com">clarinaequestrian@hotmail.com</a>	

34	Eugene Doherty	Woodview Riding School	Dually, Newcastle West	Deel			
43	Tommy Kelly	Stonehall Harriers	Friarstown Lodge, Grange, Kilmallock,	Loobagh	book of harriers (100yrs),	<a href="mailto:hunting@hai.ie">hunting@hai.ie</a>	
<b>MISCELLANEOUS AMENITY/ TOURISM</b>							
35	Dave McDonnell	Dunmoylan House	Shanagolden	Deel	EcoToursim business - anaerobic digestion plant, with wind turbines		
51	Boyce's Gardens	Boyce's Gardens	Mountrenchard, Foynes	Shannon	A Gardeners Paradise	<a href="mailto:dboyce.ias@eircom.net">dboyce.ias@eircom.net</a>	<a href="http://www.boycesgardens.com">www.boycesgardens.com</a>
50	Elaine	Heritage Sports Car Hire	Amiganbeg, Croagh	Deel	Self-drive classic car hire in the finest historic motorcars	<a href="mailto:elaine@heritagesportscars.com">elaine@heritagesportscars.com</a>	<a href="http://www.heritagesportscar.com">www.heritagesportscar.com</a>
		Cool Water Gardens	Cloughadoolarty, Fedamore	Camogue	Classic gardens		<a href="http://www.coolwatergarden.com">www.coolwatergarden.com</a>
<b>AMENITIES OUTSIDE ZONE</b>							
	William O Rourke	Abbeyspeedway	Mountmahon, Abbeyfeale	Feale			<a href="http://www.abbeyfealekarting.com/index.html">http://www.abbeyfealekarting.com/index.html</a>
	Combat Zone	Combat Zone, Paintball Adventure	Shanagolden woods, Cloonty	Deel catchment	Must be 15+ in age	<a href="mailto:sales@combatzone.ie">sales@combatzone.ie</a>	<a href="http://combatzonepaintballing.ie/home/">http://combatzonepaintballing.ie/home/</a>
	Westward Ho	Westward Ho Pitch and Putt	Mungret	Shannon	18 hole course. Club hire available. Light Snacks		
		Griston Bog	Glenahaglish, Ballylanders	Morningstar			
		Donkey Sanctuary	Liscarroll, Mallow				
		Doneraile Court & Wildlife Park	Doneraile, Co Cork				

## MAIGUE RIVERS - MUSEUMS / HERITAGE/ ACCOMMODATION/ FOOD SERVICES DATABASE

Contact Name	Site/ Services	Address	Catchment	Comment	Email	Web
<b>HERITAGE / Museums</b>						
	<b>Old Irish Ways Museum</b>	Cahirguillamore, Bruff	Morningstar	memorabilia from the last 200 years of country life in Ireland: school, blacksmith's forge, cobblers, kitchen, pub		<a href="https://www.discoverireland.ie/limerick/old-irish-ways-museum">https://www.discoverireland.ie/limerick/old-irish-ways-museum</a>
	<b>Thomas Fitzgerald Centre</b>	Bruff	Morningstar	ancestral home of America's most famous dynasty: Fitzgerald Kennedys. The old Courthouse, dedicated in memory of Thomas Fitzgerald in 2013 by Caroline Kennedy, daughter of JFK.	<a href="mailto:thomasfitzgerald2013@yahoo.com">thomasfitzgerald2013@yahoo.com</a>	<a href="https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/history-heritage/visitor-heritage-centres/thomas-fitzgerald-centre">https://www.limerick.ie/discover/eat-see-do/history-heritage/visitor-heritage-centres/thomas-fitzgerald-centre</a>
	<b>De Valera Museum &amp; Bruree Heritage Centre</b>	1 Water St, Bruree, Co. Limerick, V35 X521	Maigue	Centre is dedicated to Eamon de Valera [1882-1975], former president of Ireland, it houses a unique collection of personal belongings, as well as a wide range of articles which record life in Bruree in the early 20th century.		<a href="https://www.discoverireland.ie/limerick/de-valera-museum-and-bruree-heritage-centre">https://www.discoverireland.ie/limerick/de-valera-museum-and-bruree-heritage-centre</a>
	<b>Cool Water Gardens</b>	Cloughadoolarty, Fedamore	Camogue	Classic garden plantings open to visitors; guided tours		<a href="http://www.coolwatergarden.com">www.coolwatergarden.com</a>
	<b>Terra Nova Fairy Garden</b>	Dromin, Kilmallock	Loobagh	Terra Nova is one of Ireland's best known small, privately owned gardens. A half acre of weaving pathways, imaginative features and an ingenious use of space.	<a href="mailto:terranovafairygarden@gmail.com">terranovafairygarden@gmail.com</a>	<a href="https://www.terranovagarden.com/cms/">https://www.terranovagarden.com/cms/</a>
	<b>Knockpatrick Gardens</b>	Knockpatrick, Foynes	Shannon	100-year old garden of plants, trees and shrubs, along Wild Atlantic Way/ Shannon Estuary - divided into different levels with pools and water features among the plants. Roses, clematis, perennials, an arboretum and a large collection of hydrangeas		<a href="https://myinfo.ie/my/listing/Knockpatrick-Gardens/">https://myinfo.ie/my/listing/Knockpatrick-Gardens/</a>
	<b>Cahernorry Church &amp; Gardens</b>	Cahernorry, Ballyneety V94EPY7	Camogue?	Restored Victorian church with classic cottage gardens		facebook: @cahernorrychurch



HERITAGE - Ecclesiastical						
		Adare Trinitarian Abbey	Adare	Maigue		
		Adare Franciscan Friary	Adare	Maigue		
		Adare Augustinian Abbey	Adare	Maigue		
		Church of Ireland, Kilfinane	Kilfinane	Loobagh		
		Collegiate Church, Kilmallock	Kilmallock	Loobagh		
		Moor Abbey	Galbally	Aherlow		
		St John's Church, Knockainey	Knockainey, Hospital	Camoge (Mahore Stream)	used for concerts/weddings/ events	
Askeaton Guided Tours		Askeaton Franciscan Friary	Askeaton	Deel	Tours are arranged by Askeaton Civic Trust, the tours are free	
ACCOMMODATION - HOTELS						
		Dunraven Arms Hotel	Adare	Maigue		
		Woodlands Hotel	Adare			
		Adare Manor Hotel & Golf Resort	Adare	Maigue		
		Deeber House Hotel	Kilmallock	Loobagh	Medieval Hotel in Kilmallock. Modern facilities and old world charm	<a href="mailto:info@deeberhousehotel.com">info@deeberhousehotel.com</a> <a href="http://www.deeberhousehotel.com">www.deeberhousehotel.com</a>
		Charleville Park Hotel	Charleville	Maigue upper		
		Aherlow House Hotel & Lodge	Aglen of Aherlow			
<b>B &amp; B /</b>	<b>SELF-CATERING ACCOMMODATION</b>					
		Mill Wheel Cottage	Old Mill, Bruree	Maigue		<a href="mailto:brurockie@gmail.com">brurockie@gmail.com</a>
Richard & Margaret Johnston		Ballyteigue House	Bruree	Maigue	B&B in Georgian House; maid & chef	<a href="mailto:ballyteigue@eircom.net">ballyteigue@eircom.net</a> <a href="http://www.ballyteigue.com">www.ballyteigue.com</a>
		Rusheen B&B	Bruff	Morningstar		
Mary Coffey		Glenroe Farm Cottage	Glenroe, Spittle, Kilfinane	Loobagh		<a href="mailto:mcoffey49@gmail.com">mcoffey49@gmail.com</a>

Ita Kiely	<b>Ballyhoura Mountain Lodges</b>	Ballyorgan, Kilfinane	Loobagh		<a href="mailto:info@ballyhouramountainlodges.ie">info@ballyhouramountainlodges.ie</a>	
	<b>Fitzgeralds B&amp;B &amp; Bar</b>	Kilmallock	Loobagh			<a href="https://visitballyhoura.com/explore/fitzgeralds-guesthouse">https://visitballyhoura.com/explore/fitzgeralds-guesthouse</a>
	<b>Flemington House B&amp;B and S/C</b>	Kilmallock	Loobagh		<a href="mailto:info@flemingstown.com">info@flemingstown.com</a>	<a href="https://flemingstownhouse.com">https://flemingstownhouse.com</a>
	<b>Grange Farmhouse B&amp;B</b>	Grange, Lough Gur	Camogue			
	<b>Cooga Cottage</b>	Doon, Cappaghmore	Mulkear			
Tom Cummins	<b>Carrigmore Farm</b>	Carrigmore, Doon	Mulkear		<a href="mailto:tom.j.cummins@gmail.com">tom.j.cummins@gmail.com</a>	
Liz Read	<b>Read's Park</b>	Galbally	Morningstar		<a href="mailto:info@readspark.com">info@readspark.com</a>	<a href="http://www.readspark.com">www.readspark.com</a>
	<b>Café /Eating Outdoors</b>					
<b>Darragh Hayes, Edel Cooke</b>	<b>Spruce &amp; Willow Café</b>	Ardpatrick	Loobagh	satisfy appetites with local, fresh, simple produce and supply from Irish Artisan Coffee Roasters, in a relaxed & friendly atmosphere	<a href="mailto:spruceandwillow@gmail.com">spruceandwillow@gmail.com</a>	<a href="https://visitballyhoura.com/explore/spruce-willow">https://visitballyhoura.com/explore/spruce-willow</a>
<b>Jack Clancy</b>	<b>Clancy's Bar &amp; Restaurant</b>	Main St. Bruff	Morningstar	good dining spot in heart of Bruff, close to Lough Gur		<a href="https://visitballyhoura.com/explore/clancys-bar-bruff">https://visitballyhoura.com/explore/clancys-bar-bruff</a>
	<b>Reardon's Bar &amp; Restaurant</b>	Bruff	Morningstar	8	<a href="mailto:reardonsbar1@hotmail.com">reardonsbar1@hotmail.com</a>	<a href="https://visitballyhoura.com/explore/reardons-bar">https://visitballyhoura.com/explore/reardons-bar</a>
	<b>The Yarn Café</b>	Ardykeohane, Bruff	Morningstar	offer a breakfast and lunch menu including salads, sandwiches, mains & sides all made fresh to order. They also cater for Vegetarians and Vegans	<a href="mailto:theyarncafe@carebright.ie">theyarncafe@carebright.ie</a>	<a href="https://visitballyhoura.com/explore/the-yarn-café">https://visitballyhoura.com/explore/the-yarn-café</a>
	<b>Molly's of Kilfinane</b>	Kilfinane	Loobagh	Restaurant has a simple charm, soft warm decor and extensive menu options including specials board.	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/mollysrestaurant/">facebook</a>	<a href="http://www.mollysrestaurant.ie/">http://www.mollysrestaurant.ie/</a>
<b>Conal &amp; Mark Kelly</b>	<b>Bulgaden Castle Country Inn</b>	Kilmallock (2 miles outside)	Loobagh	Originally an 18th century tavern, a delightedful Country Inn and Restaurant .	<a href="mailto:info@bulgadencastle.com">info@bulgadencastle.com</a>	<a href="http://bulgadencastle.com">http://bulgadencastle.com</a>
	<b>De Vere Café</b>	Curraghchase Forest Park, Kilcornan	Clonshire open June July August	Nestled in the heart of the beautiful forest park. freshly baked scones, desserts, ice-creams, giant cookies	<a href="mailto:info@curraghchasecaravanpark.ie">info@curraghchasecaravanpark.ie</a>	

	<b>Aunty Lena's Bar &amp; Café</b>	Old Courthouse, Adare	<i>Maigue</i>	Situated in Adare Courthouse - Established in 1806 by the Chawke family,		
	<b>Timmy Macs Bistro, Woodlands</b>		<i>Maigue</i>	Wide range of dishes prepared using locally produced seasonal ingredients, from own organic farm and Mary's Organic Garden	<a href="mailto:timmys@woodlands-hotel.ie">timmys@woodlands-hotel.ie</a>	<a href="https://www.woodlands-hotel.ie/timmy-macs-bistro/">https://www.woodlands-hotel.ie/timmy-macs-bistro/</a>
	<b>Stacpoole Coffee House</b>	Main St. Adare	<i>Maigue</i>	retail shop with gifts, fashion accessories, prints, antiques, with coffee house serving breakfast, light lunch. desserts, pastries	<a href="mailto:stacpooleretail@gmail.com">stacpooleretail@gmail.com</a>	<a href="http://www.stacpoole-retail.clickandcollection.com">www.stacpoole-retail.clickandcollection.com</a>
<b>FOOD MARKETS/ LOCAL SUPPLIERS</b> <a href="https://www.neighbourfood.ie/markets">https://www.neighbourfood.ie/markets</a>					-	
	<b>Attyflin</b>	Attyflin Estate, Patrickswell	<i>Maigue</i>	fruit beverages, preserves & chutneys	<a href="mailto:stephenleahy@attyflinestate.com">stephenleahy@attyflinestate.com</a>	<a href="https://www.neighbourfood.ie/markets/attyflin-estate/49">https://www.neighbourfood.ie/markets/attyflin-estate/49</a>
	<b>Ballyhoura Mushrooms</b>	Ballinalacken	<i>Loobagh</i>		<a href="mailto:ballyhouramushrooms@gmail.com">ballyhouramushrooms@gmail.com</a>	<a href="http://www.ballyhouramushrooms.com">www.ballyhouramushrooms.com</a>
Maurice Gilbert	<b>Ballyhoura Apple Farm</b>	Kilfinane	<i>Loobagh</i>		<a href="mailto:team@ballyhouraapplefarm.com">team@ballyhouraapplefarm.com</a>	<a href="https://ballyhouraapplefarm.com/">https://ballyhouraapplefarm.com/</a>
Caroline Rigney	<b>Rigney's Farm</b>	Curraghchase	<i>Clonshire</i>	free range pork and farmhouse products	<a href="mailto:info@rigneysfarm.com">info@rigneysfarm.com</a>	
Jeanie Mac	<b>Jay Farm</b>	Carrickerry, Newcastlewest	<i>Deel</i>	salads herbs, edible wildfoods	<a href="mailto:imjeaniemac@gmail.com">imjeaniemac@gmail.com</a>	
Jim & James O'Brien	<b>O'Brien's Artisan Cheese</b>	The Hill, Ballyhahill	<i>Feale</i>	farmhouse & artisan cheeses from own dairy farm	<a href="mailto:obrienscheese@gmail.com">obrienscheese@gmail.com</a>	
	<b>New Leaf Urban Farmers</b>	Ballinagarde, Ballyneety	<i>Mulkear</i>	chemical free vegetables and herbs, 10km from Limerick City	<a href="mailto:newleafurbanfarmers@gmail.com">newleafurbanfarmers@gmail.com</a>	
	<b>Mallow Neighbourhood</b>	Fair St. Mallow	<i>Blackwater</i>			

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