

THE RING OF KERRY STORY



THE RING OF KERRY STORY

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THE THINKING BEHIND THE IDEA OF A SHARED STORY



The most successful places have a simple Shared Story to tell.

It's a commonly agreed way of describing the place, that everyone uses when they're planning how to invest in improvements or new experiences for visitors, and when they're talking to potential visitors.

It's a short and simple story that makes it clear what is special and different about the place. But it mustn't overpromise. It must go with the grain of the place, and be authentic and true.

The Shared Story tries to capture the essence of the place by focusing on that place's distinctive qualities: it isn't a comprehensive list of everything that's on offer.

If everyone uses the same broad ideas to develop the tourism product, and then 'sings from the same song sheet', the image of the Ring of Kerry will be much stronger and more positive. And that will mean more impact, and more visitors.

We're not suggesting that everyone's marketing has to be the same – far from it. Some people may want to use the Shared Story verbatim in their marketing. Others will draw on it for themes, ideas and inspiration.

We hope everyone will use components from it to bring out what is special and different about the Ring of Kerry – both in what they offer to visitors, and in their marketing. This will help to build a stronger, clearer picture in a very competitive marketplace.

THE SHARED STORY FOR THE RING OF KERRY



Out at the very edge of Europe, on South West Ireland's wild Atlantic seaboard, the Ring of Kerry circles the Iveragh Peninsula.

The Ring is one of Ireland's best-known attractions. And with good reason, for it takes visitors through magnificent natural beauty. But it's the lovely contrast between the warmth of the people and the elemental nature of the place that makes it so special, and worth slowing down to explore.

There's the human scale of small towns, little villages and *sráid bhaile* (tiny settlements) linked by the Ring, with a long history of welcoming visitors.

Then there's the scale of nature, across the Ring: at Iveragh's heart is Ireland's highest mountain range and highest peak, *Corrán Tuathail* – part of an ancient glacial landscape that ranks among the best in Europe.

Inland, the Ring crosses Killarney National Park – with heart-stopping views of lakes and peaks, waterfalls, ancient woods of oak and yew, and Ireland's only herd of wild native red deer. Rare white-tailed sea eagles drift overhead. To the west, seals 'pup' in sheltered Kenmare Bay. And on the shores of Valentia Island are the Tetrapod tracks – the earliest fossil footprints in the world.

Further west still, out to sea, is an extraordinary, far-flung place of pilgrimage: Skellig Michael – one of the wonders of the world. 1300 years ago, early Christian monks built a remarkable hermitage at the top of this jagged ocean crag – then at the furthest limits of the known world. This mysterious and awe-inspiring place – described by George Bernard Shaw as “part of our dream world” – is now a UNESCO World Heritage site. It can be reached (for a sometimes life-changing visit) by the adventurous on a small boat, only when the weather allows.

You can “do the Ring” within a day. But the Ring will truly reveal itself if you take the time to lose yourself down byways, to stand wind-buffed on clifftops, to watch the cloud shadows on distant mountains, to sit by a peat fire in a local pub, to wander on wide sandy beaches, to stride out on the long-distance Kerry Way walking route, to taste the local soda bread and fresh seafood, to soak up the traditional music, the ancient history, the stories, the gaeilge ... These are the things that make memories.

Iveragh and the Ring have a way of putting things into perspective. Of reminding us of how small we are ... in a good way. Of soothing the mind and touching the soul. At the Edge of the World.

WHY THESE WORDS AND PHRASES

Para 1 *Locates the Ring of Kerry and introduces the grand, large-scale and emotional concepts of **the very edge of Europe**, and **the wild Atlantic seaboard** – to counteract the feeling among some that this is a too-well-known (and “safe”) attraction. There’s an early mention of the **Iveragh Peninsula** – deliberately reintroducing this less well-known name to add to the story of an ancient place. **Circles** suggests movement and explains that this is a route (some don’t know), without referring to driving at this early stage.*

—● Out at **the very edge of Europe**, on South West Ireland’s **wild Atlantic seaboard**, the Ring of Kerry circles the **Iveragh Peninsula**.

The Ring is one of Ireland’s **best-known attractions**. And with good reason, for it takes visitors through **magnificent natural beauty**. But it’s the lovely contrast between the **warmth of the people** and the elemental nature of the place that makes it **so special**, and **worth slowing down to explore**.

—● Para 2 *It’s important to use the Ring’s status as one of Ireland’s **best known attractions**: many find it reassuring; for some this makes it a ‘must-see’. There’s an early mention of the **beauty**. **Magnificent** again refers to the grand scale of the natural environment here – a theme that runs throughout. Here is our key proposition – that the scenery may be grand-scale and imposing, but the **warmth of the people** makes the difference – **so special**. And there’s an important message that will be returned to later – **it’s worth slowing down to explore**.*

Paras 3 & 4 *These 2 paras pick up on the theme of contrasting the **human scale** with the **scale of nature**. In Para 3 we have a reassurance of the settlements providing the **long history of the welcome**.*

—● There’s the **human scale** of small towns, little villages and *sráid bhaile* (tiny settlements) linked by the Ring, with a **long history of welcoming** visitors.

Then there’s **the scale of nature**, across the Ring: at Iveragh’s heart is Ireland’s **highest mountain range and highest peak**, *Corrán Tuathail* – part of **an ancient glacial landscape that ranks among the best in Europe**. Inland, the Ring crosses Killarney National Park – with **heart-stopping** views of lakes and peaks, waterfalls, **ancient** woods of oak and yew, and Ireland’s only herd of **wild native red deer**. Rare white-tailed sea eagles drift overhead. To the west, seals ‘pup’ in sheltered Kenmare Bay. And on the shores of Valentia Island are the **Tetrapod** tracks – the earliest fossil footprints in the **world**.

Para 4 *stakes Iveragh’s important claim to fame of **Ireland’s highest mountain range and highest peak**. (We use the gaeilge *Corrán Tuathail* to introduce the Irish language into the Story, giving a sense of cultural heritage and ‘otherness’. Para 4 also refers to the quality and importance of the geology – **an ancient glacial landscape that ranks among the best in Europe**. This is another grand-scale feature that it should lay claim to, helped by the Geopark initiative. We also have a reminder that the Ring is not just a coastal route. The views have stopped Queens and poets in their tracks – so it’s not hyperbole to say they’re **heart-stopping**. **Ancient** links back to the grand-sweep of history, and it’s important to pick up on unique points of national importance such as the **red deer** – a romantic image – and other near unique elements of wildlife: the **sea eagles** and **seal pups**. The **Tetrapods** are a fascinating and little-known detail, unique in the **world**.*

WHY THESE WORDS AND PHRASES *continued*

Para 5 A slab of text devoted to the Skelligs - **a place of pilgrimage and wonder of the world**. Both confirm that this is a unique place that is worth making a special journey (Ireland's Macu Picchu, perhaps). There are key words here that point to the unique and spiritual aspects - & the **Shaw** quote is apt & extraordinary (and gives it a historic and cultural endorsement). Its world status has the **UNESCO** stamp of authority. Again the scale of history is invoked using **1300 years ago, early Christian**. And we return to emotive ideas of the edge of the word: with **furthest limits of the known world**. The story doesn't shy away from the fact that it's a challenging trip - making it exclusive, special and intriguing, without raising false expectations.

— Further west still, out to sea, is an extraordinary, far-flung **place of pilgrimage**: Skellig Michael - one of the **wonders of the world**. **1300 years ago, early Christian** monks built a remarkable hermitage at the top of this jagged ocean crag - then **at the furthest limits of the known world**. This mysterious and awe-inspiring place - described by **George Bernard Shaw** as "part of our dream world" - is now a **UNESCO** World Heritage site. It can be reached (for a sometimes life-changing visit) by the adventurous on a small boat, only when the weather allows.

You can "do the Ring" within a day. But **the Ring will truly reveal itself** if you take the time to lose yourself down byways, to stand wind-buffed on clifftops, to watch the cloud shadows on distant mountains, to sit by a peat fire in a local pub, to wander on wide sandy beaches, to stride out on the long-distance Kerry Way walking route, to taste the local soda bread and fresh seafood, to soak up the traditional music, the ancient history, the stories, the gaeilge ... These are the things that **make memories**.

Para 7 Brings the story full circle, invoking the two images - of the grand majestic scale of nature, and the small-scale of the personal - to show how they work together to bring about long-lasting, refreshing inner change - **soothing the mind and touching the soul**. **At the edge of the world** is a strong image on which to end.

— Iveragh and the Ring have a way of **putting things into perspective**. Of reminding us of **how small we are** ... in a good way. Of **soothing the mind and touching the soul**. **At the Edge of the World**.

Para 6 An important concept - the idea of spending longer and getting under the skin of the place, and that there is more than you see on the surface: **the Ring will truly reveal itself**. All these small experiences are here to appeal to the personal, linking the natural world with the human welcome, as in para 2. The reader puts him/herself into the Story. The promise of memories to be made is compelling.

CONNECTED STORIES

The development of the shared story focuses on the international visitor. Initially we need to talk about the Ring of Kerry to drive awareness of the broader area and capture their interest. Once we have their interest we then use the local stories to engage them further.

We have developed sub stories for Killarney, The Skellig Coast and the Kenmare Sneem area. These short stories capture the essence of these individual locations. They distil down and focus on what is special and most likely to appeal to international visitors.

We know that there are lots of aspects that stakeholders would like to add to these stories – and of course you are free to embellish them with additional detail relevant to your business – and to add your own stories about individual experiences and businesses.



KILLARNEY STORY

People have been escaping to Killarney – in the ancient Kingdom of Kerry – for over 250 years.

They come for the legendary beauty: the lakes, waterfalls, mountain peaks and heart stopping views. And they come for the craic agus ceol: the good times and the banter, the pubs, live music, and easy Irish charm.

Queen Victoria visited and fell in love with it. Poets and songwriters have waxed lyrical about it. It's known as “the home of the traditional Irish welcome”, because this is where Irish tourism began.

“Beauty’s home, Killarney” (as the song goes) is in Ireland’s first great National Park, where Na Cruacha Dubha - the country’s highest mountains - ring three gorgeous glacial lakes. Ireland’s only herd of native red deer roam wild here in ancient woods of oak and yew. Rare white-tailed sea eagles drift overhead.

The town is on the north-east shore of the largest of the three Lakes of Killarney – Lough Leane, or Lake of Learning – where the medieval monks of Inisfallen recorded the earliest history of Ireland.

Killarney makes it easy to enjoy nature - to be as active or as laid-back as you choose. There are easy strolls and challenging hikes, trips and tours, bike hires and boat rides. Traditional horse-drawn jaunting cars – with their drivers known as “jarveys” – wait in the centre of town to take visitors into the National Park. You can take a jaunting car through the hauntingly beautiful mountain pass, the Gap of Dunloe. The boat trip across the three lakes is a magical experience.

And Killarney’s a great base for exploring South West Ireland’s three wild Atlantic peninsulas – Dingle, Beara and Iveragh – and the world-famous Ring of Kerry.

Back in town, the streets are a hive of activity, full of life ... Irish through and through. Everything’s geared towards making sure you have a great time.

No wonder, when you say “Killarney” to an Irish person, they’ll start to smile ...



SKELLIG COAST STORY

At the far west of the Iveragh Peninsula - half way round the famous Ring of Kerry - you feel like you're standing on the edge of the world. This is the Skellig Coast.

Out to sea, two jagged crags – *Oileáin na Scealaga* – rise out of the Atlantic: Little Skellig, home to one of the largest seabird colonies in the world, and Skellig Michael, an extraordinary, far-flung place of pilgrimage – one of the wonders of the world.

The whole Skellig Coast is inspiring and energising. The coastal route, the Skellig Ring, takes you off down narrow lanes into the *Gaeltacht* (Irish-speaking region), through tiny ports and villages. You may find yourself climbing steep cliff roads, wind-buffed above crashing seas. Or strolling along a wide sandy beach. In the distance, golden sunlight shines onto the rugged peaks of Iveragh and Dingle. The weather sweeps in off the Atlantic and through, followed by the widest of rainbows.

There's a wide arc of history too, from the Tetrapod tracks on the shores of Valentia Island – the earliest fossil footprints in the world, to the nearby site of the first Transatlantic Cable, and from Daniel O'Connell's birthplace at Cahersiveen and home at Derrynane National Park, to memories of Charlie Chaplin, who loved to holiday in Waterville.

You can really get to know people here. There are small family-run businesses: pubs with peat fires and traditional music sessions, bed and breakfasts, restaurants with rooms, and local food producers - from artisan chocolate to some of the best seafood in Ireland.

It's surprisingly easy to be drawn off-the-beaten track, and lose yourself down byways. But if you do get lost – no matter. You'll want to stay, take your time, and discover this place for yourself.



KENMARE AND SNEEM AREA STORY

Along Iveragh’s southernmost edge, the Ring of Kerry passes through Sneem and Kenmare, skimming the sheltered Kenmare Bay.

This richly wooded area, brushed by the Gulf Stream, has a tranquil feel. From the palms and grassy beach paths of Derrynane National Park, to the canopies of trees along the route, the hedgerows of monbretia, fuchsia and rhododendrons, and the green-forested islands just off shore – this is the Garden of Ireland.

It’s great walking country, with heather and gorse-covered mountains to the north, and dreamy views south to Beara’s blue peaks. Every walk here has a story – and ancient history is clearly seen in the stone circles, standing stones, *bullán* stones and ringforts.

Visitors take to the water to kayak, fish, swim, dive and sail, and on sea safaris exploring the Bay’s rich marine habitat, including one of Ireland’s largest seal colonies.

Halfway up the Bay, friendly little Sneem – whose Irish name “*An tSnaidhm*” means the Knot – is a village of colourful houses and two small squares. Here travellers stop for sustenance in pubs and cafes, and stay on in hotels and B&Bs. Sneem is proud of its famous guests - George Bernard Shaw, Princess Grace and Charles de Gaulle all holidayed here.

At the head of the Bay is Kenmare, an elegant 17th century market town – called “*An Neidin*” or “the Nest” in Irish. This lively place buzzes with hotels, B&Bs, restaurants, arty shops, cafes and dozens of pubs with traditional music sessions. There’s still a weekly market and annual traditional Fair Day, when farmers bring livestock into the middle of town.

From Kenmare there are choices to be made: north on the Ring through the National Park, south on the Ring of Beara, or over the Caha Mountains and on into West Cork.



USING IMAGES

By using consistent images, as well as a consistent story, we can create a uniform international message with potential visitors, that builds up a unique “Brand” for the Ring of Kerry, and a compelling reason to visit.

There are so many stunning images of the Ring of Kerry available online, on Flickr, in photo libraries etc., that everyone marketing to visitors should be able to use pictures that:

Bring the shared story to life - illustrating the story’s key words and phrases



Visualising the Shared Story – Ancient.



Visualising the Shared Story – Ireland’s wild Atlantic seaboard.

Show what is different and special about the Ring of Kerry – pictures that could only be the Ring of Kerry



Visualising the Shared Story – One of Ireland’s best-known attractions.



Visualising the Shared Story – Early Christian monks.

Feature real people – not models. Aim for natural shots that look as though it’s a genuine moment captured in time, a memory



Visualising the Shared Story – A weekly market and annual traditional Fair Day.



Visualising the Shared Story – Soak up the ancient history, the stories and the gaeilge.

Show activity, movement and life – people being active in a relaxed way



Visualising the Shared Story – Every walk here has a story.



Visualising the Shared Story – Be as active or as laid-back as you choose.

Include fresh natural faces, blushed and full of excitement



Visualising the Shared Story – Be as active or as laid-back as you like.



Visualising the Shared Story – The human scale of small towns.

USING IMAGES

The pictures should appeal to our overseas target markets. The 4 core markets are the US, UK, Germany and France. And within these markets the core sectors of culture seekers, soft adventurers and active families.

The key motivators for these potential visitors are Nature, Outdoor Activities and Irish Culture so ensure you use images that bring these to life. The following pages are a selection of the types of images that you can use to bring your area to life for the potential international visitor.

Use 'found objects' (e.g. local wood, stones) to create a 'scrapbook' feel and bring in the natural world



Visualising the Shared Story – Ancient woods of oak and yew.



Visualising the Shared Story – Soothing the mind and touching the soul.

Use old pictures and posters to illustrate the enduring, timeless nature of the Ring of Kerry



Visualising the Shared Story – Proud of its famous guests - Charles de Gaulle holidayed here.



Visualising the Shared Story – History.

Use work by the Ring of Kerry's arts and crafts people to add a cultural, creative element



Visualising the Shared Story – This lively place buzzes with arty shops.



Visualising the Shared Story – Small family-run businesses.

Use cropped close-ups of objects, colours, shapes and textures – man made & natural – that convey the distinctive feel



Visualising the Shared Story – This is where Irish tourism begins. (The Full Irish Breakfast)



Visualising the Shared Story – Irish through and through. (Fresh cut Turf)

KILLARNEY

They come for the legendary beauty of the three gorgeous glacial Lakes of Killarney

KILLARNEY

Visualising the Shared Story

1. The legendary beauty: the waterfalls.
2. Full of life.
3. Rare white-tailed sea eagles drift overhead.
4. Ireland's only herd of red deer roam wild.
5. Traditional horse-drawn jaunting cars.
6. Challenging hikes, trips and tours, bike hires and boat rides.
7. The elemental nature of the place that makes it so special.
8. They come for the live music.
9. Poets and songwriters have waxed lyrical about it.
10. A great base for exploring.
11. The boat trip across one of the three lakes is a magical experience.
12. Irish through and through.
13. There are small family-run B&Bs.
14. You can really get to know people here.
15. Be as active or as laid-back as you choose.
16. Killarney makes it easy to enjoy nature.
17. Queen Victoria visited and fell in love with it.
18. Everything's geared towards making sure you have a great time.



KILLORGLIN

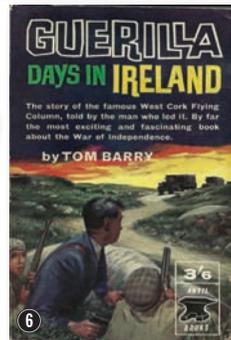
There's the human scale of small towns, little villages and sráid bhaile (tiny settlements).



KILLORGLIN

Visualising the Shared Story

1. Be as active or as laid-back as you choose.
2. One of Ireland's best-known attractions.
3. Stride out on the long-distance Kerry Way walking route.
4. Magnificent natural beauty.
5. Worth slowing down to explore.
6. Soak up the stories.
7. Ireland's wild Atlantic seaboard.
8. There's the human scale of small towns.
9. Stay on in hotels and B&Bs.
10. Irish through and through.
11. Soothing the mind and touching the soul.
12. Taste the local soda bread.
13. Sit by a peat fire in a local pub.



GLENBEIGH

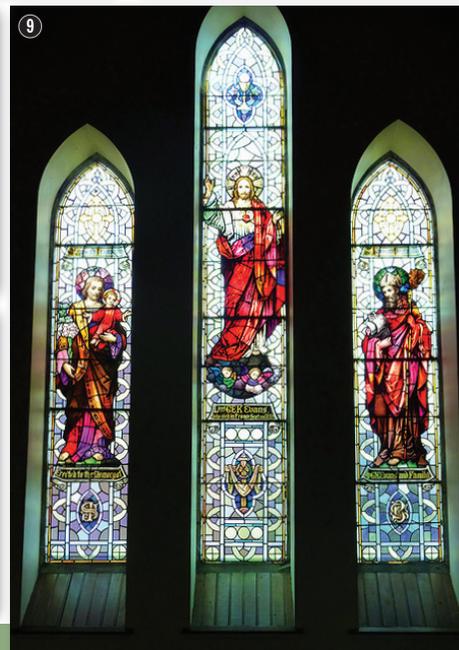
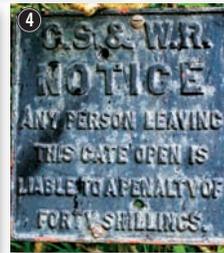
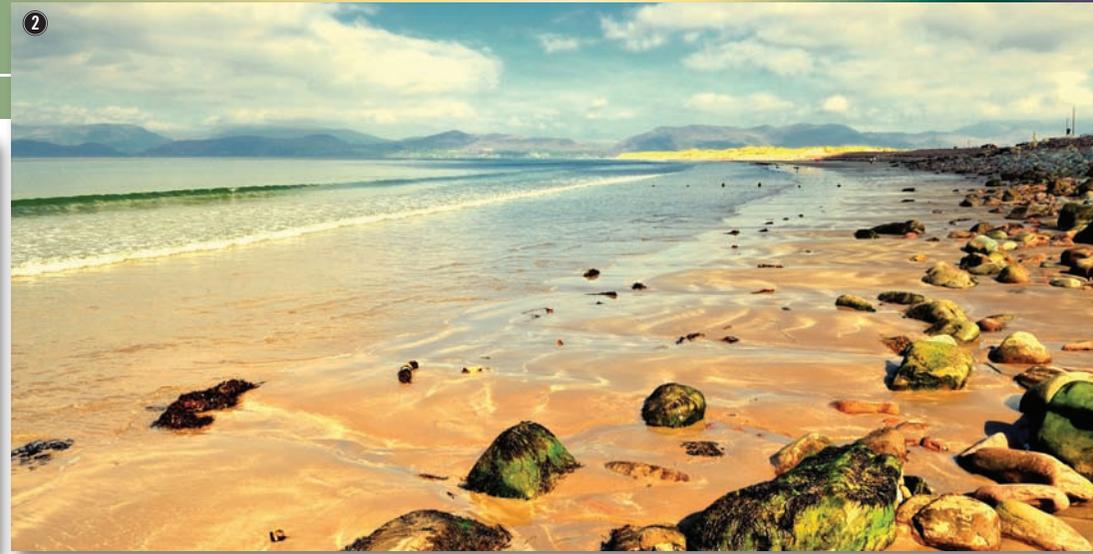
These are the things that make memories.



GLENBEIGH

Visualising the Shared Story

1. It's great walking country, with heather and gorse-covered mountains.
2. It takes visitors through magnificent natural beauty.
3. Visitors take to the water to fish.
4. There's the human scale of small towns.
5. There's a wide arc of history.
6. You can really get to know people here.
7. Sit by a peat fire in a local pub.
8. The Ring has a way of putting things into perspective.
9. The ancient history.
10. The warmth of the people and the elemental nature of the place.
11. Be as active or as laid-back as you choose.
12. Wander on wide sandy beaches.
13. Travellers stop for sustenance in pubs and cafes.
14. Soak up the traditional music.



CAHERSIVEEN

The lovely contrast between the warmth of the people and the elemental nature of the place that makes it so special.



CAHERSIVEEN

Visualising the Shared Story

1. Local food producers.
2. You may find yourself climbing steep cliff roads.
3. Small family-run businesses.
4. History is clearly seen in the stone.
5. There's a wide arc of history.
6. Discover this place for yourself.
7. Daniel O'Connell's birthplace.
8. The weather sweeps in off the Atlantic.
9. You can really get to know people here.
10. Easy to enjoy nature.
11. In the distance, golden sunlight shines.
12. Early Christian monks.
13. Worth slowing down to explore.



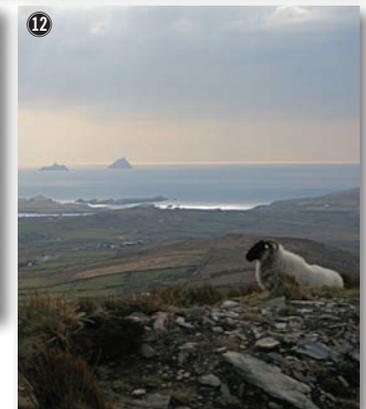
VALENTIA/PORTMAGEE

The coastal route takes you off through tiny ports and villages.

VALENTIA/PORTMAGEE

Visualising the Shared Story

1. You can really get to know people here.
2. Worth slowing down to explore.
3. You'll want to stay, take your time, and discover this place for yourself.
4. Some of the best seafood in Ireland.
5. Watch the cloud-shadows on distant mountains.
6. There are small family-run businesses.
7. Taste the fresh seafood.
8. Home to one of the largest seabird colonies in the world.
9. A wide arc of history.
10. Be as active or as laid-back as you choose.
11. You feel like you're standing on the edge of the world.
12. Out to sea, two jagged crags.
13. There's the human scale of small towns.
14. The earliest fossil footprints in the world.



WATERVILLE

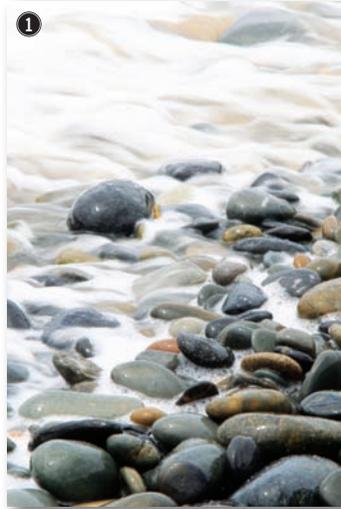
The lovely contrast between the warmth of the people and the elemental nature of the place



WATERVILLE

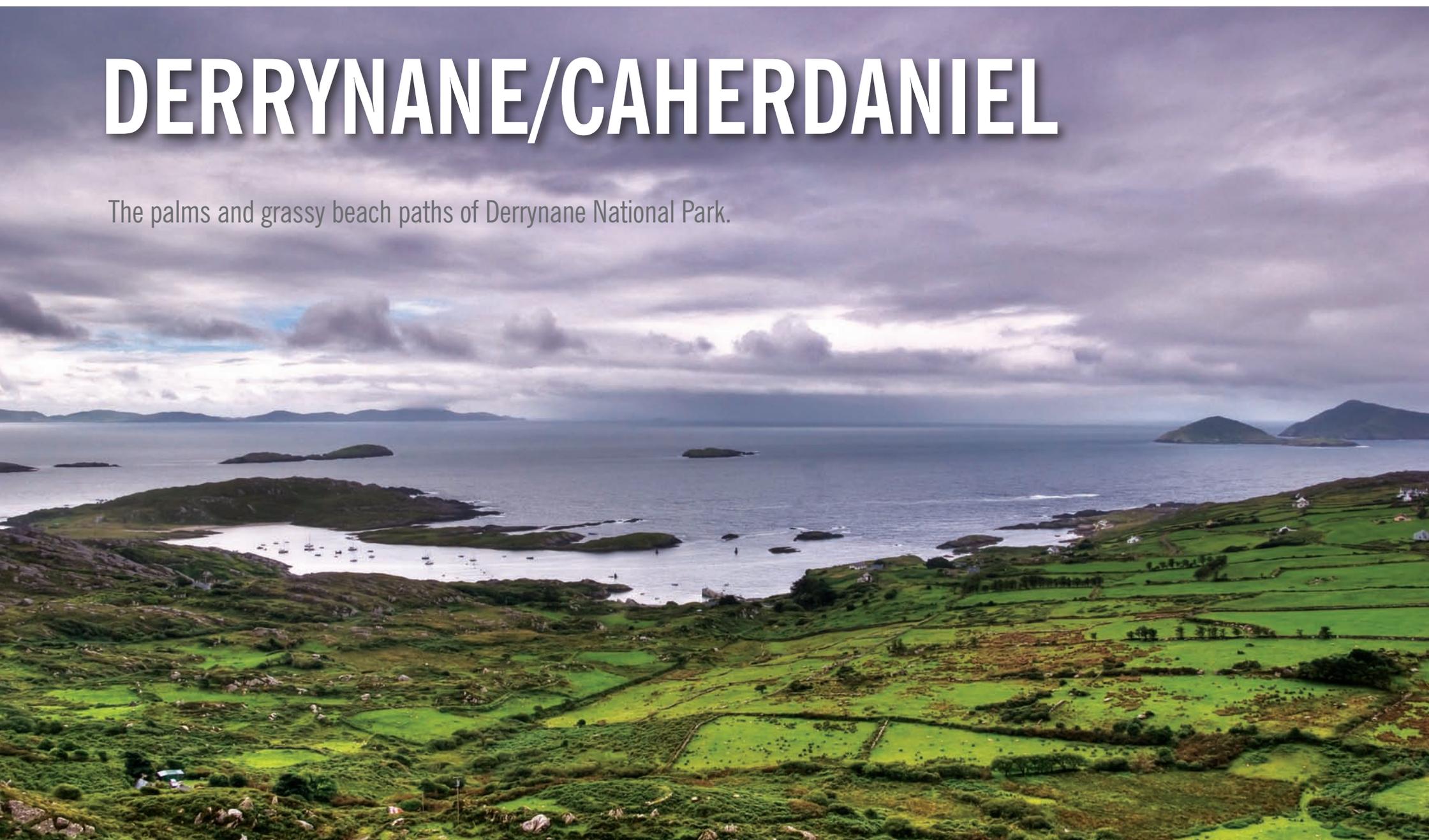
Visualising the Shared Story

1. Soothing the mind and touching the soul.
2. Charlie Chaplin, who loved to holiday in Waterville.
3. One of the wonders of the world.
4. It's great walking country.
5. You'll want to stay, take your time, and discover this place for yourself.
6. Taste the fresh seafood.
7. Soak up the traditional music.
8. Local food producers - artisan chocolate.
9. Buzzes with arty shops.
10. The weather sweeps in off the Atlantic.
11. Out to sea, two jagged crags.
12. Part of our dream world.
13. These are the things that make memories.



DERRYNANE/CAHERDANIEL

The palms and grassy beach paths of Derrynane National Park.



DERRYNANE/CAHERDANIEL

Visualising the Shared Story

1. Local food producers.
2. Has a tranquil feel.
3. Daniel O’Connell’s birthplace.
4. History.
5. Taste the fresh seafood.
6. One of Ireland’s best-known attractions.
7. Ancient history is clearly seen in the stone circles, standing stones, bullán stones and ringforts.
8. Green-forested islands just off shore.
9. It’s surprisingly easy to be drawn off-the-beaten track.
10. Be as active or as laid-back as you choose.
11. The canopies of trees along the route.
12. Hedgerows of monbretia.
13. Soak up the stories.



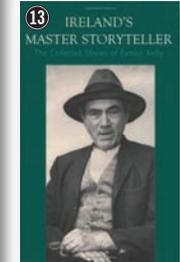
SNEEM

Halfway up the Bay, friendly little Sneem –
whose Irish name “An tSnaidhm” means the Knot.

SNEEM

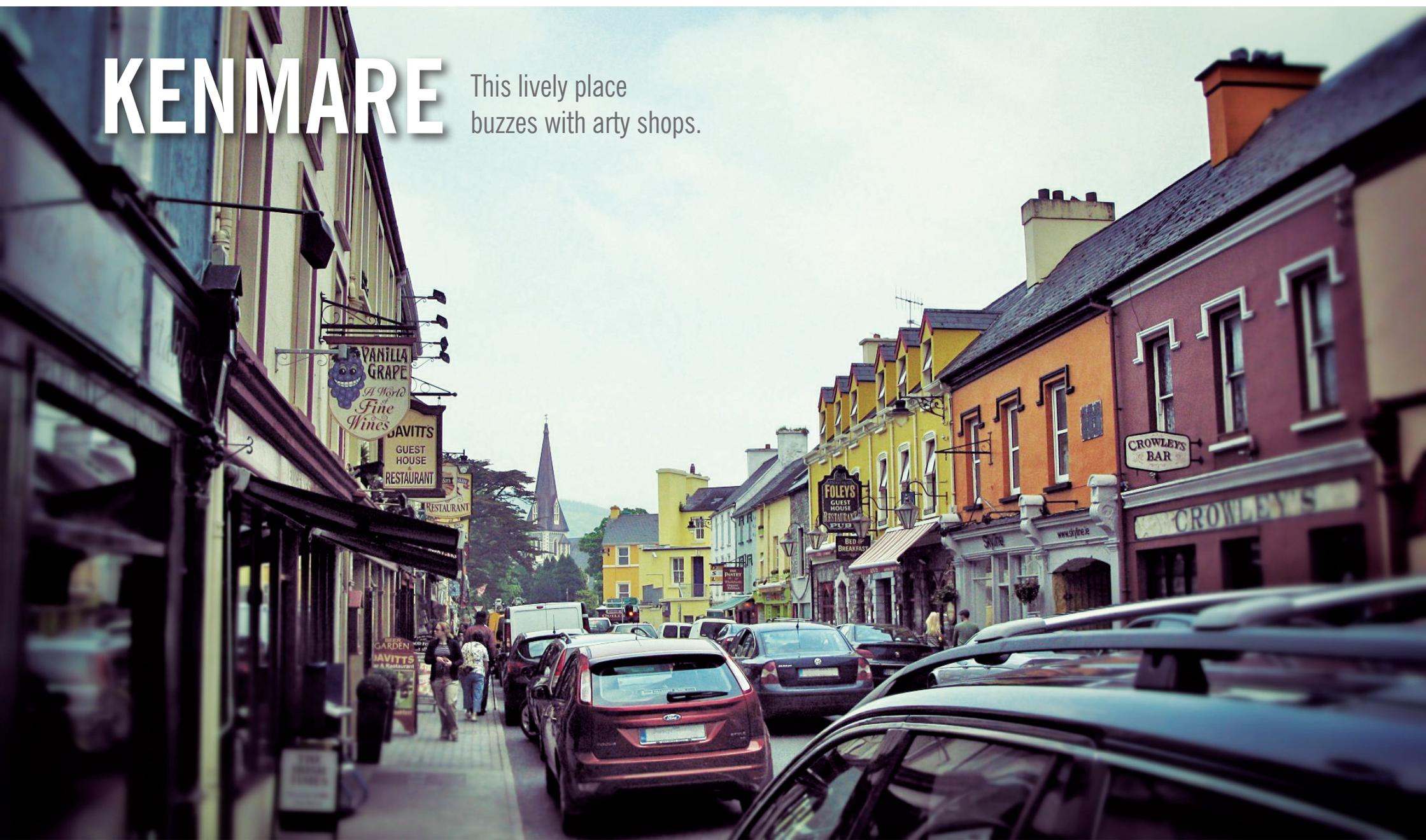
Visualising the Shared Story

1. Dreamy views south to Beara's blue peaks.
2. A village of colourful houses and two small squares.
3. Be as active or as laid-back as you choose.
4. Travellers stop for sustenance in pubs and cafes.
5. It takes visitors through magnificent natural beauty.
6. You can really get to know people here.
7. Soak up the ancient history, the stories and the gaeilge.
8. It's great walking country.
9. Ancient woods of oak and yew.
10. Ancient history is clearly seen in the stone circles, standing stones, bullán stones and ring forts.
11. Brushed by the Gulf Stream, it has a tranquil feel.
12. Proud of its famous guests - Charles de Gaulle holidayed here.
13. Poets and songwriters have waxed lyrical about it.
14. Discover this place for yourself.



KENMARE

This lively place buzzes with arty shops.



KENMARE

Visualising the Shared Story

1. Every walk here has a story.
2. Reminding us of how small we are ... in a good way.
3. The human scale of small towns.
4. Be as active or as laid-back as you choose.
5. The hedgerows of monbretia, fuchsia and rhododendrons.
6. Some of the best seafood in Ireland.
7. Seals 'pup' in sheltered Kenmare Bay.
8. Farmers bring livestock into the middle of town.
9. It's great walking country.
10. Stay on in hotels and B&Bs.
11. Soothing the mind and touching the soul.
12. Traditional music sessions.
13. A weekly market and annual traditional Fair Day.
14. Everything's geared towards making sure you have a great time.
15. Travellers stop for sustenance cafes.



CONTACT DETAILS



The Ring of Kerry Storyboard has been produced by Blue Sail in association with Fáilte Ireland and tourism businesses across the Ring of Kerry. The story has been translated into German and French for use in targeting the key overseas markets and into Irish for targeted use in the domestic market.

All the images on this Storyboard are rights free. High res copies of these images, as well as translated copy and a series of rights free videos are all available for download at www.failteireland.ie/businesssupports/salesconnect for your business to use in promoting the Ring of Kerry as a tourism destination.

If you have any questions or would like to provide images for the promotion of the Ring of Kerry please email: adminkerry@failteireland.ie

THE RING OF KERRY STORY

