

into the blue...

Blueways
Ireland



The rivers, canals, loughs and coastline on the Island of Ireland provide a vast array of opportunities for exploration and enjoyment by visitors and locals alike.

The relatively recent development of Blueways in Ireland has sought to maximise this opportunity.

The Blueways Partnership driving this initiative is an all-island body comprising Waterways Ireland, Tourism Northern Ireland and Fáilte Ireland in conjunction with national governing bodies for sport, Sport Ireland and Sport Northern Ireland. All partners are committed to the development of Blueway sites across the island of Ireland in the coming years.

What is a Blueway?

A Blueway is defined as:

“A network of approved and branded multi-activity recreational trails and sites, based on, and closely linked with the water, together with providers facilitating access to activities and experiences”

The Blueways Ireland brand represents:

- Being active in nature
- Exploration of waterscapes
- Service providers enabling easy access for all
- Multi-activity trail options
- Set within the context of places to stay, eat and go
- Enriched by local culture, heritage, arts and visitor attractions
- Responsible recreation within the environment



Pictured at the launch of Blueways Initiative June 2019 L-R:

Cormac MacDonnell, Sport Ireland;
Marian Leydon, Fáilte Ireland;
Mike McClure, Sport Northern Ireland;
Norma Herron, Waterways Ireland;
Sheena Dickson, Tourism Northern Ireland.

For more information about becoming an accredited Blueway please contact:

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Further details are provided on www.bluewaydevelopment.org



Attracting visitors to a Blueway

As users range from experienced adventure activity enthusiasts to novices, a Blueway must offer:

FEATURES

- A mixture of land and water-based activities on developed trails or recreation sites.
- A rich opportunity to experience Irish culture, history and scenery.
- A safe experience.

PREFERRED LOCATIONS

- Inland Rivers, Lakes and Waterways.
- Sheltered Coastal Bays and Harbours.

WATER-BASED OPTIONS SHOULD:

- Only be developed on suitable water courses
- Focus on easier entry-level activities
- Provide a guided experience
- Follow high safety standards

OFFERING A COMPLETE EXPERIENCE

Water or land-based physical activities are not enough to differentiate Ireland from other destinations. Tourists will only be attracted by a full package of unique cultural and historical attractions and experiences.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Adding the Blueway brand to a local waterway should spark local initiatives from school, youth groups, clubs and sports partnerships.

Why become accredited?

● BENEFIT FROM THE BRAND

If accredited, you can use official Blueway branding on your information and signage.

For further information, see www.bluewaydevelopment.org

● REASSURE STAKEHOLDERS

Blueway accreditation reassures stakeholders that a best-practice approach is being implemented. These include decision makers in your organisation, key funders plus the local community and businesses.

● SUPPORT

Ongoing support is available from a Blueway Development Advisor. Best-practice knowledge sharing with other Blueway developers and managers also takes place at an annual Blueway Forum meeting.

● PROMOTION AND GROWTH

External accreditation boosts awareness of Blueways and awareness will further grow as more are established. Visitors (especially domestic visitors) that have a positive experience on an accredited Blueway will naturally be attracted to visit others.

● OPPORTUNITIES

The Blueway Partnership will continue to highlight the importance and benefits of Blueway accreditation to relevant funding bodies. Developers can also use accredited Blueways to attract funding for additional developments and services. Local and national tourism development plans acknowledge the importance of Blueways and quality, accredited facilities in attracting visitors to a location.

● CONSISTENCY

- Ensures a consistent offering on all Blueways developed in both ROI and NI.



THE BLUEWAY PARTNERSHIP COMPRISES:

