

Galway City Gaillimh

Destination & Experience Development Plan
2025-2030

August 2025
Draft

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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Executive Summary

The Galway City Destination & Experience Development Plan (DEDP) is a five-year sustainable tourism development plan for Galway City and Salthill (the 'destination'). It represents a multi-stakeholder approach focused on growing the economic value of tourism and increasing the length of stay in the city. At its core, the Galway City DEDP will be built on the authenticity of the city; What is 'uniquely Galway.' This will deliver the overarching Vision for the destination to be recognised as one of Ireland's signature visitor experiences and the tourism capital of the Wild Atlantic Way.

Galway is the third most visited city in the Republic of Ireland and operates as a visitor hub for county Galway and access point to the Wild Atlantic way. The city performs strongly all year round with consistently high occupancy levels. In addition to its year-round appeal in the leisure market, it also performs strongly as a business events destination. It is strongly associated as a home to a year long calendar of great festivals and events.

Under the Fáilte Ireland destination maturity model, Galway City is categorised as an enhancing¹ destination. This accounts for a high level of recognition in the international and domestic market and factors such as high year-round occupancy levels and its role as the accommodation base for the county.

Despite this level of tourism performance, the city experience is concentrated within a well-defined city centre area with low levels of visitor movement outside of this 'hotspot'. There is a limited choice of daytime activities that encourage the visitor to explore more of the city and stay for longer. Visitors' perception of Galway City is dominated by its vibrant nighttime economy and viewing the county as a base to explore the wider area.

The Galway City DEDP has been developed with the aim of dispersing Visitors across the city by increasing the range of things to do and see. It will provide Visitors with more reasons to stay longer in the city and increase visitor spend in the day and evening time. Future product development in areas such as activities and daytime experiences will strengthen the appeal of the city within the domestic visitor market. The international visitor focus will be on growing the value per visitor and growing their length of stay.

The approach within the Galway City DEDP recognises the important links between the Galway city and county experience and will work in tandem with other regional DEDP's. These include the Connemara Coast & Aran Islands DEDP, Burren DEDP and future DEDP's developed over the lifetime of this plan.

The objectives for the Galway City DEDP are;

- Grow annual revenues from international and domestic visitors to Galway City and increase the value of tourism for the destination.
- Progress projects that will disperse tourists across the city beyond the current city centre 'hotspot.'
- Motivate visitors to explore Galway's coastal and urban communities through increased levels of collaboration among existing tourism networks and develop the year-round appeal of Galway neighbourhoods.
- Growing the number of saleable visitor experiences available during the day while protecting the city's status as a vibrant night-time destination.
- Grow the appeal of Galway City in the domestic leisure and family markets by leveraging the investment in outdoor activities.
- Maximise the large-scale capital investment in visitor attractions and activities to broaden the appeal of Galway City among range of visitor segments.
- Pursue product development opportunities that build on the city's reputation for culture, arts, festivals, and events.
- Establish Galway as an international food destination and hub for major events and festivals.
- Enhance the role of Galway City as driver of tourism in county Galway and influencing visitor flows across the Wild Atlantic Way.

¹ Fáilte Ireland destination maturity framework

Four strategic destination development objectives have been identified for the next five years. These will address emerging destination opportunities and address tourism development challenges, including critical infrastructure. identified in the consultation and research process. The four destination strategic development pillars are;

1: Developing the Day Time Visitor Experiences

Capitalise on the large scale investment in the Galway Museum and examine opportunities for new indoor and outdoor day time visitor experiences.

2: Linking City, Village and Neighbourhoods

Disperse visitors throughout the city by linking the City, Salthill Village and Galway Neighbourhoods building on the uniqueness of Galway communities and City Neighbourhoods as part of the city experience.

3: Galway City of Tribes: Culture, Festivals & Events

Grow the number of visitor experiences and adopt the theme of the City of Tribes, **Culture and Creativity** to differentiate the Galway visitor experience and build on the Capital of Culture legacy.

4: Atlantic & Galway Waters

Build on the heritage of Galway as a maritime city to create opportunities for the visitor to engage with our Atlantic and Galway waters. These strategic development pillars will be activated by eight destination catalyst projects that include developing the Galway Museum experience as signature attraction in the city, developing vibrant Galway Neighbourhoods and improving visitor orientation across the city. It will examine the opportunity for the development of an indoor Food Market and incorporating the city's status as a Bilingual City into the visitor experience. Additional catalyst projects in the development of vision and masterplan for Leisureland, establishing Galway City as a national festivals and events hub and undertaking feasibility analysis to develop a Galway Municipal Arts and Culture venue.



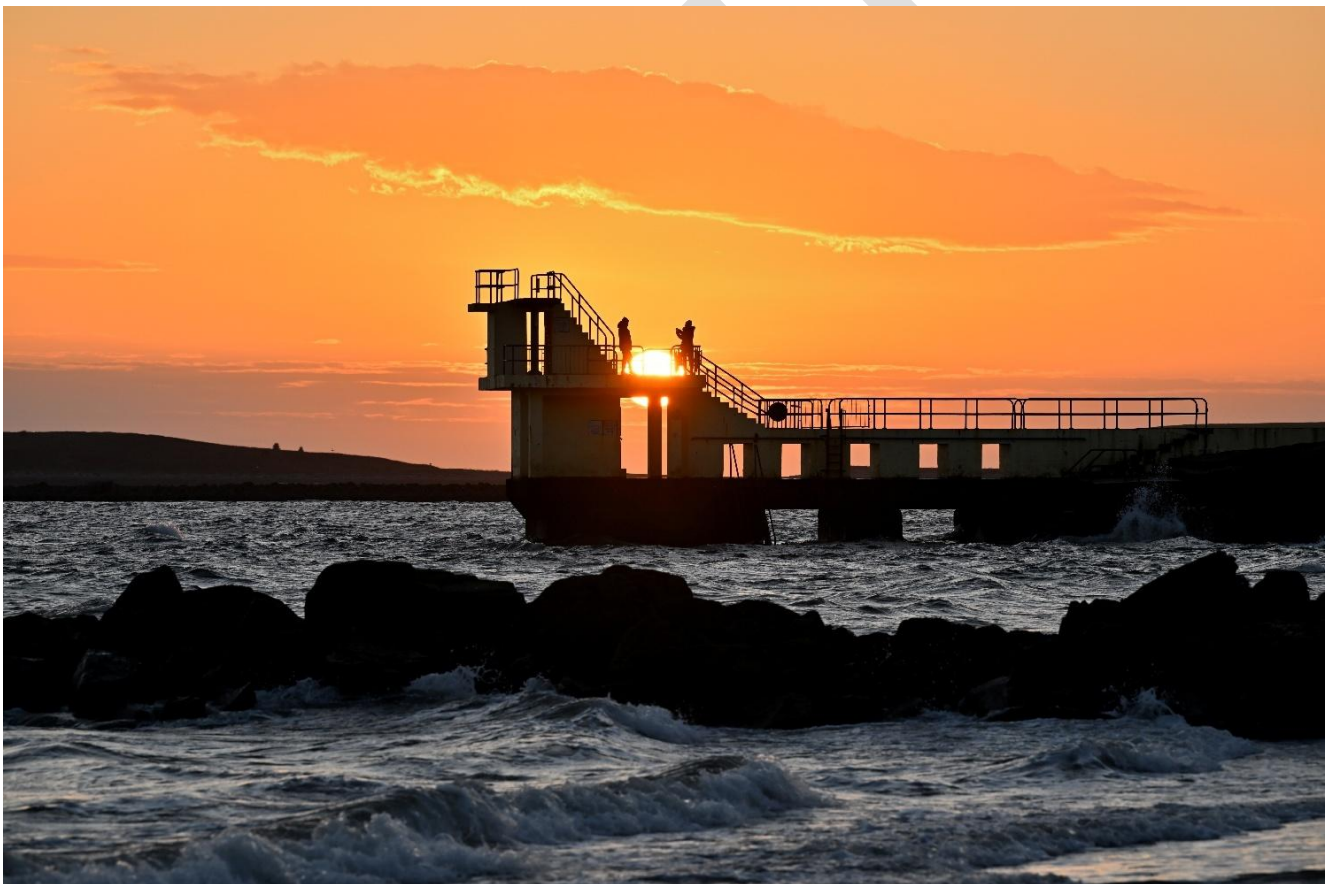
The Galway City DEDP is delivered over a five-year period through an action plan which also includes an additional number of projects that will build on the potential of the eight destination catalyst projects. These projects will work towards creating more saleable visitor experiences and building the skills and capabilities of the tourism industry and local networks. There will be a focus on developing Galway City as an international food destination. Investment in outdoor activities such as greenways and blueways with supporting visitor facilities will add to the range of attractors for the family and domestic market. There will be a collective focus on growing the accommodation base working with the public and private sector to expand accommodation options across Galway City.

The implementation of the Galway City DEDP will be overseen by the creation of a working group that will operate until 2029. The DEDP Working Group is tasked with ensuring stakeholder commitment to project delivery and implementing the DEDP as a five-year operational plan based on the agreed destination development focus for Galway City.

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A city that dances to its own rhythm, Galway blends the raw beauty of the Atlantic with a carnival-like atmosphere that makes every visit an adventure. From its cobbled streets to its vibrant neighbourhoods, visitors can partake in numerous indoor and outdoor experiences where they can engage with Galway's creativity, its colour, and its love of the unexpected. Festivals celebrating music, art, culture and food bring locals and visitors together in a place where bohemian spirit meets coastal charm. Galway is also deeply committed to protecting and enhancing its natural environment, embracing eco-tourism, sustainable practices, and initiatives that create net positive benefits for both nature and local communities. Galway effortlessly blends age old traditions with modern science and technology creating a constantly evolving energy that visitors love. Water continues to define how this city lives from the River Corrib to Galway Bay and the canals in between telling the story of our merchant past and our maritime future. Gaillimh proudly shares its bilingual identity where visitors will come away with cúpla focail and an understanding that Gaeilge is a living language here. Galway is not just a city, it's the beating heart of the West.



Galway City DEDP Target Outcomes

- ❖ Increased levels of visitor dispersion across the city.
- ❖ Growth in the number of day and evening time visitor experiences.
- ❖ Investment in visitor attractions and activities growing the appeal of the destination in international and domestic markets.
- ❖ Active tourism networks growing the profile and appeal of Galway City neighbourhoods.
- ❖ Growth in the city's activity base to strengthen the appeal in the family market.
- ❖ Elevated status as a Bilingual City and a point of differentiation in the Galway visitor experience.
- ❖ Development of the structures to support and sustain an authentic calendar of festivals and events.
- ❖ Galway City is a celebrated food destination for casual, locally sourced urban dining experiences.
- ❖ Agreed approach to sustainable tourism development embraced by our visitors, tourism industry and local community.

SECTION ONE: OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT



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1.1 Galway City Destination & Experience Development Plan Overview

The Galway City Destination & Experience Development Plan (DEDP) is a five-year sustainable tourism development plan for Galway City and Salthill (the 'destination'). It represents a multi-stakeholder approach to grow the economic value of tourism and increase the length of stay in the city.

The Galway City DEDP incorporates existing tourism projects while identifying new opportunities to consider, ensuring all destination development activity is delivered in a coherent manner. This includes projects currently underway, projects featured in existing plans and initiatives designed to disperse visitors across the city.

The approach within the plan recognises the important tourism linkages between the Galway city and county experience and will work in tandem with other regional DEDP's. These include the Connemara Coast & Aran Islands DEDP, Burren DEDP and future DEDP's that will be developed over the lifetime of this plan.

1.2 Galway City Destination & Experience Development Plan Objectives

The overarching vision for Galway City is to ensure the city is recognised as one of Ireland's signature visitor experiences and establish it as the tourism capital of the Wild Atlantic Way. The Galway City DEDP will build on what is 'uniquely Galway', capitalise on emerging product and experience development opportunities while addressing the strategic challenges identified in the consultation process.

The objectives of the Galway City DEDP are;

- Grow annual revenues from international and domestic visitors to Galway City and increase the value of tourism for the destination.
- Progress projects that will disperse tourists across the city beyond the current city centre 'hotspot'.
- Motivate visitors to explore Galway's coastal and urban communities through increased levels of collaboration among existing tourism networks and develop the year-round appeal of Galway neighbourhoods.
- Growing the number of saleable visitor experiences available during the day while protecting the city's status as a vibrant night-time destination.
- Grow the appeal of Galway City in the domestic leisure and the family markets by leveraging the investment in outdoor activities.
- Maximise the large-scale capital investment in indoor and outdoor daytime visitor experiences to broaden the appeal of Galway City among range of visitor segments.
- Pursue product development opportunities that build on the city's reputation for culture, arts, festivals, and events.
- Establish Galway as an international food destination and hub for major events and festivals.
- Enhance the role of Galway City as driver of tourism in county Galway and influencing visitor flows across the Wild Atlantic Way.

1.3 Galway City Tourism Performance

Galway City has high annual domestic and overseas visitor numbers and has a well-established year-round tourism season. The city's strengths include its vibrant nighttime economy, international recognition for culture, food, arts, festivals and events, its use as a base for exploring the Wild Atlantic Way, and its positioning as a bilingual city with strong authenticity.

The county of Galway welcomed 969,000 overseas visitors and 1.2 million domestic visitors in 2023, generating €585 million and €236 million in revenue, respectively. It operates as a visitor hub for county Galway and access point to the Wild Atlantic Way. Almost half of visitors to the Wild Atlantic Way visit county Galway. Visitors from mainland Europe account for the largest proportion of international tourists (46%²). Over a quarter (27%) of visitors originate from North America with UK visitors responsible for 18% of overseas visits. Visitor spend from North American visitor's accounts for 41% of total international visitor revenue. Over one in five (22%) of domestic visitors to the Wild Atlantic Way visit county Galway.



The peak months of July, August and September attract 44% of international visitors and 35% of Irish residents to the Wild Atlantic Way. Despite this concentration of visitor numbers in the peak holiday period, Galway city is consistently recording high occupancy levels throughout the year. In addition to its year-round appeal in the leisure market, it performs strongly as a business events destination, reflecting the sectoral diversity of the Galway industrial base. The city destination is strongly associated with festivals and events animated by a calendar of events that appeals to a diverse range of visitor audiences.

The largest number of visitors to the city travel as a couple or with groups of friends³. The current family visitor base is low with limited awareness among visitors of things to do for families. Visitors predominantly associate the city with evening time activity, food, and a hub to explore other areas. There is low recognition for the city as a bilingual city. Meeting locals, quality of food and the atmosphere in the city are among the main highlights of the Galway City visitor experience.

² Source: Fáilte Ireland

³ Based on interviews with 170 visitors to Galway City as part of the DEDP research process

1.4 Developing a distinctive Galway City destination

Galway City is categorised an 'enhancing' destination⁴, based on high recognition levels in the international and domestic market. This categorisation accounts for factors such as the city's high levels of year-round occupancy and its role as an accommodation base for the county and neighbouring destinations.

Other considerations include the existence of established tourism networks, good tourism infrastructure and local services. The city's 'enhancing destination' classification also recognises the need to refresh elements of the tourism offering and grow the number of quality tourism products and experiences as a destination priority. At the industry level, there is a requirement to improve destination competitiveness, stimulate experience innovation and grow revenues from domestic and international visitors to the city. There is also a requirement to enhance the current low recognition for the city as a Gaeltacht or bilingual city.

The city experience is concentrated within a well-defined city centre area with low levels of visitor movement outside of this 'hotspot'. Evening time activity dominates the visitor's perception of Galway City. There is a limited range of daytime experiences in the city with a considerable proportion of visitors leaving the city during the day to explore neighbouring destinations. To address these challenges and grow the year-round value of tourism four strategic development pillars have been identified.



1: Developing the Day Time Visitor Experiences

Capitalise on the large scale investment in the Galway Museum and examine opportunities for new indoor and outdoor day time visitor experiences.

2: Linking City, Village and Neighbourhoods

Disperse visitors throughout the city by linking the City, Salthill Village and Galway Neighbourhoods building on the uniqueness of Galway communities and City Neighbourhoods as part of the city experience.

⁴ Fáilte Ireland destination maturity framework

3: Galway City of Tribes: Culture, Festivals & Events

Grow the number of visitor experiences and adopt the theme of the City of Tribes, **Culture and Creativity** to differentiate the Galway visitor experience and build on the Capital of Culture legacy.

4: Atlantic & Galway Waters

Build on the heritage of Galway as a maritime city to create opportunities for the visitor to engage with our Atlantic and Galway waters.

The strategic development pillars will be activated through eight destination catalyst projects supported by a range of additional projects. There will be an immediate focus on ensuring the investment in the Galway Museum will have an immediate impact on the city and become a catalyst in disrupting existing visitor flow patterns. Increasing the number of things to do during the day will be a priority. This will include both indoor and outdoor experiences.

The approach will ensure the city maximises future investment in the outdoor activity product and grow the number of urban green and blue activities i.e. Connemara Greenway, Galway City Blueway.

Galway neighbourhoods and the local tourism networks will be at the heart of the urban visitor experience and key to motivating visitors to explore more of the city. This will include investment in areas such as activities and saleable experiences that will encourage visitors to spend longer in the city. It includes linking the urban experience with Salthill's coastal village experience.

The city's status as a festivals and events city will focus on increasing their tourism value for the city. The city's profile for culture and creativity will form the basis for a new focus on experience development. This will be supported by building the capabilities of the tourism industry and local networks to ensure the collective delivery of the tourism vision for Galway City.

A SUSTAINABLE TOURISM APPROACH

Against the backdrop of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the Government's commitments under the Climate Action Plan 2021 and the Report of the Sustainable Tourism Working Group, 2021- 2023, tourism must adopt a much more sustainable approach. There are new expectations among emerging visitor markets with changes in how they value local experiences combined with increased levels of environmental awareness. The Galway City DEDP will focus on the following in meeting a commitment to sustainability and become a key element of future destination development.

- Position Galway City as a national and international leader in sustainable urban destination development; economically, socially, culturally, and environmentally.
- Sustainably manage visitor pressure to balance tourism growth and the protection of natural and cultural resources.
- Provide great visitor experiences highlighting the destinations sustainability values.
- Ensure a coherent approach to sustainability and enhance local capabilities to develop new sustainable visitor experiences.
- Support the development of more accessible and inclusive tourism experiences and employment opportunities.
- Connect visitors to destination sustainability at every stage of the visitor journey.
- Balance long term sustainability with economic value for Galway City.
- Highlight destination co-responsibility in addressing climate change and other sustainable challenges, and protection and enhancement of our biodiversity.
- Work with all stakeholders and industry partners to support the reduction of carbon emissions, increase the use of clean energy, and reduce waste.
- Ensure sustainable tourism growth contributes to the economic well-being and social fabric of the communities in Galway City.
- Engage our Galway City communities with tourism and build awareness of the benefits tourism brings to the city, county, and region.

WILD ATLANTIC WAY - REGIONAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (RTDS)

Regional Tourism Development Strategies - 2023- 2027 (RTDS) have been developed for each of Fáilte Ireland's four Regional Experience Brands (Wild Atlantic Way, Dublin, Ireland's Ancient East, and Ireland's Hidden Heartlands). These plans provide the strategic framework for other tourism development strategies, most notably, this Destination and Experience Development Plan (DEDPs) and County Tourism Strategies.

The Galway City DEDP has been developed to account for its role in achieving the overarching Wild Atlantic Way regional objectives. The six regional objectives that provide the basis for the strategic approach featured within the Galway City DEDP are as follows:

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

Grow the year-round appeal of the Wild Atlantic Way domestically and internationally ensuring the area attracts and disperses high value visitors into and throughout the region.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

Raise the international profile of the Northern half of the Wild Atlantic Way to increase visitation and revenue.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

Increase tourism revenue, visitor dispersion and season extension across the Southern half of the Wild Atlantic Way.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4

Protect the authenticity and "wildness" of the Wild Atlantic Way.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5

Enable and assist the industry to grow its capacity and capability so that it can thrive over the period of this plan.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6

Foster strong coalitions of industry and stakeholders with a common purpose in creating flourishing destinations and thriving communities.

SECTION TWO: WHAT THE PLAN IS ADDRESSING



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2.1 Opportunities to Consider

- Deliver new ways of orientating visitors across the city by linking the maritime heritage sites such as the Claddagh Basin with activities and the Blueway creating a dispersed water museum.
- Placemaking and orientation innovation becoming visitor attractors in their own right such as the outdoor museum and dispersed water activity locations.
- Building on international trends and demand for authentic local Neighbourhood experiences as a means of re-energising tourism networks.
- Maximise the urban regeneration investment to open up new community engagement opportunities and influence new visitor flows across the city e.g. Woodquay.
- Grow the connection and city / coastal Village experience leveraging the 'village' opportunity to be a key part of the city neighbourhoods experience.
- The development of outdoor activity experiences linked to the city's maritime heritage and opportunities for visitors to engage with water experiences.
- Strengthening the urban outdoor experience through a focus on Urban Blue and Green Activities and opportunities such as the Galway City Blueway, Connemara Greenway and the Platforms for Growth 2 Investment Scheme Terryland River Corrib- River Facilities.
- Engaging non tourism sectors to engage with the tourism experience blending the creative sector with the sciences delivering a new definition for a creative and cultural city experience.
- Develop the food in tourism opportunity and develop a distinctive food experience position through the food personalities in Galway creatives.
- Creating access to more bi-lingual experiences and increased visibility of the Irish language as part of the city experience.
- Capitalise on the city's international designation in the areas of Culture, Food and Film and how they contribute to attracting international visitors.
- Development of the urban outdoor activity base appealing to the family market e.g. urban adventures.
- Third level and tourism innovation partnerships providing access to the talent to develop Galway City as a leader for urban tourism sustainability.
- Night lime economy innovation building on the city's profile as a night time destination by expanding on the range of things to do in the evening time.
- Stronger inclusion of iconic Galway sites into the city's visitor experience with the development of the theme of the Galway Tribes as the basis for signature Galway City experiences.
- Greater use of water assets to tell the Galway maritime story and leveraging the significance of Galway Bay as part of the European Designated Natura Network of sites.
- Attract more business events and grow the value of business events, for tourism and ensure positive impacts on local communities with long-term legacy benefits.



2.2 Challenges to Address

- Limited number of daytime saleable experiences and limited indoor/ 'rainy day' activities in the city.
- Growing the value of the daytime tourism economy for city businesses.
- Visitor flows outside of the core city centre area not distributing the value of tourism across the city.
- Ensuring consistency in how the city is presented to the visitor and addressing the challenges of urban centre dereliction.
- Lack of sense of arrival and destination welcome at transport hubs.
- Sustainable festival support structures and access to permanent venues contributing to the city's profile as an international festival and event city.
- Range of motivational visitor attractions to appeal to domestic and international visitors.
- Traffic management affecting the reputation of the destination.
- Limited access to water and 'on water' activities.
- Developing a new enterprise focus on city based Urban Green and Blue Activities e.g. encouraging tourism businesses focused on water experiences.
- Attracting investment in new accommodation and associated critical infrastructure e.g. utilities, wastewater etc.
- The need to balance environmental objectives versus creating new visitor experiences and meeting visitor expectations around sustainable tourism practices.
- Industry digital presence and destination consistency in the delivery of online communications.
- Access and visibility of tourism information services in the city centre.



Destination Research Summary: V.I.C.E. Model for Sustainable Tourism

A programme of research and consultation was undertaken to inform the development of the Galway City DEDP. The research analysis is summarised through the V.I.C.E. model (Visitor, Industry, Community and Environment) for sustainable tourism.



Visitor

Visitor satisfaction is very high among visitors to Galway with a net promoter score of 88% (*based on an independent Galway City DEDP research).

- The friendliness of local people, food and atmosphere were the main highlights of visitors' stay in Galway.
- The evening time economy and range of things to do in the evening time generated the highest levels of visitor satisfaction.
- There is a very strong satisfaction ratings associated with the quality of food and drink experiences in Galway.
- Pre-visit associations with the destination are largely focused on the atmosphere and 'city buzz' anticipated by visitors.
- Food and drink tourism, evening time activities, heritage, history and culture are the areas with the highest levels of association with Galway as a city destination.
- Evidence and visibility of the Irish language, access to outdoor activities and awareness among international visitors of the scale and range of festivals and events in the city had low levels of association with the destination.
- Traffic and a greater variety of public transport options are the main areas for improvement.
- There are limited saleable experience options to consider during the day for visitors.



Industry

The tourism industry feedback on the future destination development focus is as follows;

- Galway City requires an iconic indoor visitor attraction.
- There is a requirement for a cultural/performance space of scale to enhance the long term sustainability of the city's cultural and event programming and become a key attractor for the destination in its own right.
- Visitor dispersion across the destination must open up new opportunities for other parts of the city outside of the core commercial area.
- The City Neighbourhoods must be re-invigorated to become central to the Galway experience and how they motivate visitors to explore the wider city destination.
- The maritime heritage needs to be re-connected with the city experience, ensuring the water assets of the city become integral to the Galway visitor experience.
- Destination collaboration must be energised through a new collaborative brand activation programme.
- The city must maximise culture and creativity as an integral part of its positioning but deliver it at an international level.
- Future placemaking activity and public realm investments must consider their role in enhancing Galway as a visitor destination e.g. pedestrianisation, URDF programming, enhancing the presentation of city centre buildings.
- The connection between the City and Village (Salthill) must be developed to capitalise on the proximity of the coast and Salthill experience to the city.
- Future product development must account for visitor trends in engaging with the outdoors and developing more activity-based experiences e.g. Greenway, Blueway.
- Ensure Leisureland becomes a key attractor for Galway City and Salthill.
- New and enhanced facilities and attractions must be maximised to grow the business events potential of the city e.g. Connacht Rugby facilities, St. Nicholas' Church.



Community

The priorities for the community included the following;

- Create a city-wide neighbourhood approach to ensure a balanced distribution of the benefits of tourism in Galway.
- Ensure tourism development activity plays a key role in protecting the Irish language and profiling Galway as a Bilingual City.
- Develop a traffic and transport management approach to enhance Galway as a place to live.
- Address urban dereliction in the city centre and enhance the presentation of place for residents and visitors.
- Ensure sustainable tourism development adds to the liveability of the city and builds on the uniqueness of the core city centre as a vibrant residential area.
- Develop the night-time economy for visitors to be respectful of local residents and ensuring a safe night-time environment for all.
- Develop and enhance existing and new community assets with the capacity to transform how visitors and residents engage with the city and its surrounds e.g. Greenway, Active Travel, Blueway, Claddagh Basin and city parks.
- Sustain employment in the tourism sector and create new job opportunities through future investment in facilities for the arts and culture community.
- Ensure urban regeneration projects contribute to a city-wide vibrancy and how they will influence future visitor footfall across the city.



Environment

The environmental and sustainable destination focus included;

- Ensure a committed tourism industry wide approach to sustainability and cultural heritage.
- Develop Galway as an international visitor destination recognised for its approach to urban tourism sustainability.
- Examine how sustainable transport and personal mobility investment in the city (Active Travel) can contribute to climate action goals.
- Re-connect with the city's maritime and waterways heritage to examine ways of championing water resource stewardship and sustainability.
- Minimise the impact of tourism on issues such as litter ensuring visitors in the day and evening time adopt a LEAVE NO TRACE approach to visiting Galway City.
- Develop the cycling infrastructure across the city to support wider exploration of the city with future links to the Greenway.
- Appreciation for our natural environment, aiming to protect and responsibly promote our rich urban biodiversity through a variety of projects and partnerships.
- Develop awareness and protect the rich urban biodiversity through projects and partnerships aligned to the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030 and Galway City Biodiversity Action Plan 2025-2030, and through projects and partnerships including awareness through digital marketing.
- Ensure all visitor experience considerations for Galway Bay are aligned with its status as part of the European Designated Natura 2000 Network of sites.

SECTION THREE: GALWAY CITY DEDP APPROACH



VISION

Galway City is the tourism capital of the Wild Atlantic Way and recognised as one of Ireland's iconic visitor experiences.

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PILLARS



DAY TIME VISITOR EXPERIENCES



CITY, VILLAGE & NEIGHBOURHOODS



GALWAY CITY OF TRIBES: CULTURE, FESTIVALS & EVENTS



ATLANTIC & GALWAY WATERS

DESTINATION CATALYST PROJECTS



GALWAY MUSEUM & CITY ATTRACTIONS



VIBRANT GALWAY NEIGHBOURHOODS



DESTINATION VISITOR ORIENTATION



FOOD MARKET / HALL



BILINGUAL CITY



FESTIVAL & EVENTS



CULTURAL VENUE / ARTS FOCAL POINT



GALWAY WATERS EXPERIENCE

DESTINATION ENABLING PROJECTS



GALWAY TRIBES - SALEBALE EXPERIENCES



TOURISM INDUSTRY & NETWORK DEVELOPMENT



GALWAY FOOD DESTINATION



URBAN GREEN AND BLUE ACTIVITIES



ACCOMMODATION



REGIONAL DEDP COLLABORATION



BUSINESS EVENTS



SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

OUTCOMES



NEW DAY AND EVENING TIME VISITOR EXPERIENCES



GALWAY MUSEUM EXPERIENCE



GALWAY CITY NEIGHBOURHOODS



LAND AND WATER OUTDOOR ACTIVITY EXPERIENCES



BILINGUAL CITY EXPERIENCE



FESTIVALS AND EVENTS STRUCTURES



INTERNATIONAL FOOD DESTINATION



SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT



3.1 Galway City DEDP Framework

The Galway City DEDP is based on a strategic focus to grow the economic value of tourism and create new visitor flows across the city motivated by new visitor experiences and vibrant city neighbourhoods. The plan is delivered through a mix of destination catalyst projects and enablers aligned with this vision working towards a series of target outcomes. The catalyst projects within the plan are initiatives that have the potential to be transformational in how the destination grows its competitiveness in the domestic and international markets. Four strategic destination development objectives form the basis for the Galway City DEDP framework.

1: Day Time Visitor Experiences

Area of focus: Capitalise on the large-scale investment in the Galway Museum and examine opportunities for new indoor and outdoor day time visitor experiences to enhance the tourism offering in the city. This will include exploring opportunities for additional indoor attractions and growing the range of outdoor experiences available to visitors and the local community. This focus on Urban Blue and Green Activities will include maximising the opportunities such as the Galway City Blueway, Connemara Greenway and the PFG-2 Terryland River Corrib - River Facilities.

2: City, Village and Neighbourhoods

Area of focus: Increase the levels of collaboration and connectivity among the existing city neighbourhoods to influence greater levels of visitor flow across the city and links to the Salthill and the coastal village. It will include creative approaches to visitor orientation and wayfinding and develop Galway's neighbourhoods to become attractions in their own right. The approach will focus on ensuring great levels of industry collaboration to grow the appeal of the city as a destination and building distinctive neighbourhood and community experiences.

3: Galway City of Tribes: Culture, Festivals & Events

Area of focus: Differentiate the Galway visitor experience through how creativity is applied to every destination experience and build on the city's international profile as a Capital of Culture. The approach will build on the uniqueness of the Galway Tribes story as the basis for experience development. This will include the Irish language, maritime, food, arts I culture. working with the creative sector and delivering unique Galway neighbourhood experiences. We will work to establish Galway as Ireland's Festivals and Events City with the structures and resources required to achieve and sustain year-round programming. The target outcome is a calendar of authentic festivals and events celebrating the City of the Tribes and the delivery of a programme of unique events only Galway can deliver.

4: Atlantic & Galway Waters

Area of focus: Develop the opportunities for the visitor to experience Galway's rich maritime heritage and sample Galway Bay and the Wild Atlantic Way on the city's doorstep. The strategic focus is to ensure a co-ordinated approach to developing the water themed experience in Galway. It will include a focus on many of Galway's 'iconic' landmarks that include Salthill Promenade, Blackrock Tower, and Leisureland. The approach is designed to maximise the potential of Galway Port and its development plans, developing experiences on the city blueway to realising the opportunity for Leisureland & Salthill Park as driver of year-round visitor footfall. It will ensure Salthill continues to evolve a key Galway neighbourhood experience while growing the number of visitor experiences that have the potential to disperse visitors across the destination.

3.2 Destination Catalyst Projects

1. Galway Museum and City Attractions

OBJECTIVE: Maximise investment in the Galway Museum to become a key attraction for Galway



The Galway Museum is a major redevelopment and extension project funded by Fáilte Ireland and Galway City Council. The museum extension site is located in an area that is currently home to the existing Galway City Museum, Comerford House and the Spanish Arch. This significant investment will include the construction of a new three-story building contiguous to Comerford House, incorporating the Sea Gate archaeological site and the development of Comerford House. It will also provide a Spanish Arch experience allowing visitors to access the Arch to enjoy views over the River Corrib.

The newly extended Museum will include eleven exhibition spaces which will combine real historic artefacts with immersive technologies and experiences, designed to bring dramatic stories to life. The themes within the redeveloped Museum are directly aligned to the strategic development focus of the Galway City DEDP, including Creative Galway, Irish language and maritime heritage. The new Museum will play an important role in growing the range of indoor options for visitors and will contribute to growing the city's appeal to new visitor audiences.

2. Vibrant Galway Neighbourhoods

OBJECTIVE: Develop the capabilities of the Galway City tourism networks to build on the uniqueness and character of their neighbourhoods to deliver unique day and evening time city experiences.



The neighbourhood tourism focus builds on global trends with visitors increasingly seeking authentic community experiences and opportunities to 'live like a local'. The approach will build on the success of established networks such as the Latin Quarter, West End and Eyre Square. It will provide a new impetus for tourism industry and network collaboration. It will ensure a collective approach to grow the impact of 'brand Galway' and grow the economic value of tourism in the city.

The development of the neighbourhood tourism approach will prepare the tourism industry for

the opportunities presented by future product investment. This will ensure future projects will be key to influencing visitor flows across the city e.g. Wood Quay, Docklands, Augustine Hill. It will develop the potential and uniqueness of each of the neighbourhood networks and strengthen how they collectively contribute to enhancing the day and evening time city experience.

3. Destination Visitor Orientation

OBJECTIVE: Develop a destination wide approach to visitor orientation that motivates visitors to explore the city neighbourhoods, city attractions and disperse the economic benefits of tourism across the city.



The visitor orientation approach will build on the Fáilte Ireland and Galway City Council's Destination Town investment and create innovative ways of orientating visitors across the city. It will work in tandem with the neighbourhood tourism focus and ensure a coherent approach to visitor orientation and wayfinding. The approach will examine ways of influencing increased levels of visitor flows linking the various neighbourhoods and communities by connecting attractions, experiences and creative approaches to wayfinding.

4. Food Market/ Food Hall

OBJECTIVE: Develop an indoor food market in Galway City to contribute to its reputation as an international food destination.



The strength of association for Galway as a food destination among visitors highlights the opportunity to add to the food in tourism experience base and capitalise on global trends in urban tourism. The development of an indoor food market and food hall will add to the number of indoor experiences while providing a year-round platform for profiling food as a key part of the Galway city experience. The approach will include an assessment of a sustainable multipurpose day and evening food market model reflecting the needs of the community and becoming a destination attractor for the city.

5. Bilingual City

OBJECTIVE: Grow the visibility of the Irish language as part of the Galway city visitor experience and leverage the uniqueness of the Bilingual City status.



The integration of Irish into the city experience will build on existing Irish language programming activity to create more visibility for the city's two distinct official Gaeltacht areas. Galway City is the municipal capital of Ireland's largest Gaeltacht adding to its bilingual nature and underpinning Galway's status as a bilingual city for visitors. It will also include an assessment of a permanent Irish language experience in the city and developing the potential for an Irish language themed festival. The Bilingual City approach will result in tourism industry training and capability building focused on increasing the visibility of the Irish language across the hospitality industry.

6. Festivals and Events

OBJECTIVE: Establish Galway City as Ireland's Festivals and Events hub supported by the resources and infrastructure required to sustain year-round programming.



A strategic plan for Galway City Festivals and Events will be developed to ensure a sustainable pathway for city-based festivals and events. It will identify the requirements to grow the impact of annual programming and prioritise activity aligned to a collective festivals and events vision for Galway City. The approach will establish best practice approaches that will deliver a strong portfolio of Festivals and Participative Events that are rooted in the destination and unique to Galway City.

7. Cultural Venue / Arts Focal Point

OBJECTIVE: Undertake a site options assessment and feasibility analysis to develop a Galway Municipal Arts and Culture venue.



The project will appraise venue or site options in the city with the capacity to accommodate year-round programming and deliver a permanent home for major events and festivals such as Galway International Arts Festival. The venue will also have the capacity to grow the appeal of Galway City as a business events destination.

8. Galway Waters Experience

OBJECTIVE: Deliver a co-ordinated approach to enhance and develop Galway's water themed experiences and attractions.



The Galway DEDP contains a number of projects aligned with the theme of water that will leverage the city's maritime and coastal heritage. The delivery of the Galway Waters Experience will ensure an overall co-ordinated approach between all projects and elevate the theme of water as a key Galway experience. It will link the city water experience through projects such as the Platforms for Growth Facility Centre for Water Sport Activities, activating the city blueway to enhance the experience at 'iconic' sites in Salthill Village. The water theme will be an integral part of the overall city neighbourhood approach, linking the urban and coastal neighbourhoods.

The development of the docklands and inclusion of leisure tourism combined with the city blueway will introduce a new scale of water-based activities into the heart of the city. A Salthill Village and Seafront Framework Plan will establish a vision to guide planned and future projects and create the distinctive Salthill neighbourhood experience. This will include a focus on leveraging landmarks that include Salthill Promenade, Blackrock Tower and Leisureland to grow the value of tourism on a year-round basis.

Leisureland represents a key anchor site in Salthill with plans to re-imagine its role for the community and visitors. The potential of Leisureland & Salthill Park as driver of year-round visitor footfall will be assessed how they will contribute to the delivery of the DEDP objectives.

3.3 Destination Enablers

Destination enablers are a series of projects that are required to support destination development and prepare the destination for emerging opportunities that will occur following product investment in the city. The destination enabling projects include a focus on developing the capabilities of the tourism industry in areas such as digital, experience development and ensuring an international sales focus. It includes specific activity around the food in tourism opportunity for the city and enhancing the profile of the city's food network. Existing visitor attractions will be encouraged to consider new experience development opportunities and grow their appeal to new audiences.

A programme of training activity will prepare the tourism industry for opportunities presented by large scale investment in the city that has the potential to be transformational. These include Woodquay Urban Regeneration, Galway Docks, the Greenway, and Galway City Blueway.

Expanding the range and volume of accommodation options will be a key consideration over the coming years. Integrating creativity into the Galway visitor experience will be central to how Galway City experiences are delivered. This will include all facets of the visitor experience from how visitor orientation is developed to ensuring a differentiated approach to placemaking across the city. The eight enabler projects include;

City of Tribes Stories & Saleable Experiences

Increasing the number of saleable experiences available for visitors across the city to grow the value of the day and evening time tourism economy for Galway City.

Tourism Industry & Network Development

Develop the capabilities and skills of the tourism industry in the areas of embracing digital platforms, saleable experience development, cluster development and network development.

Galway Food Destination

Leverage Galway's reputation and profile for food and become recognised as a national food in tourism destination animated by great food experiences.

Urban Green and Blue Activities

Develop Galway's urban outdoor activity experience profile by maximising the investment in the PFG 2 - Facilities Centres for Water Sports Activities and Terryland River Corrib - River Facilities, the Greenway, and the Galway City Blueway.

Accommodation

Working with the public and private sector to grow the accommodation stock across Galway City to enhance its role as a hub for the wider county and regional destination.

Regional DEDP Collaboration

Ensure a consistent approach between all DEDP's and how they impact on the visitor experience. Regional DEDP collaboration will focus on increasing the value of tourism and the role of Galway City as an access point for neighbouring destinations.

Business Tourism

Continue to develop the appeal of Galway City as a business tourism destination working in partnership with local industry and the Galway Convention Bureau.

Sustainable Tourism

Develop a collective destination wide approach to sustainable tourism and ensure we protect the distinctive character of Galway City's urban natural heritage.

3.4 Alignment with the Wild Atlantic Way – Regional Tourism Strategy



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

Grow the year-round appeal of the Wild Atlantic Way domestically and internationally ensuring the area attracts and disperses high value visitors into and throughout the region.

- Deliver on the ambition to become the tourism capital of the Wild Atlantic Way.
- Grow the mix and range of saleable visitor experiences that appeal to domestic and international visitors on a year-round basis.
- Implement a creative approach to wayfinding and visitor orientation that motivates wider exploration of the city experience and Galway City neighbourhoods.
- Attract Business Events to Galway supporting tourism business sustainability and complementing the typical leisure patterns due to their off-peak and midweek patterns.
- Develop the indoor visitor attraction and permanent event infrastructure in Galway to sustain the year-round appeal of the destination.
- Maximise the investment in the Galway Museum to become a signature attraction for Galway City.
- Examine the feasibility of developing an additional signature attraction for Galway City.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

Increase tourism revenue, visitor dispersion and season extension across the Southern half of the Wild Atlantic Way.

- Develop Galway as an international festivals and events city, recognised for the quality of programming and diversity of events.
- Leverage the uniqueness of Galway's profile for creativity and culture into new placemaking projects and future urban regeneration investment.
- Develop Galway's profile for food in tourism by developing new food experiences and establishing an iconic focal point in the city for food experiences.

- Maximise the economic partnership opportunities to develop distinctive and creative visitor experiences that communicate Galway's status as an international economic destination e.g. Medtech, University City, Sciences.
- Grow the value of business events to Galway by maximising existing city infrastructure and ensuring future event infrastructure investment contributes to the international appeal of the city for the MICE sector.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

Protect the authenticity and "wildness" of the Wild Atlantic Way.

- Grow the inclusion of the Irish language into the Galway City visitor experience and develop the tourism opportunity presented by the city's Gaeltacht status.
- Continue to grow the appeal of the Galway Neighbourhoods to introduce visitors to the authenticity of the Galway people and community.
- Develop the visitor experience at iconic Galway sites throughout the city that convey the authentic Galway City story.
- Embrace the maritime heritage of the city and coastal community to deliver an innovative approach to water-based experiences.
- Maximise the uniqueness of the blended city, Galway Bay, and Atlantic coast and how the Salthill coastal Village experience is integrated into the city neighbourhoods approach.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

Enable and assist the industry to grow its capacity and capability so that it can thrive over the period of this plan.

- Develop sustainable tourism projects to showcase, protect, and enhance the special Character of Galway City's urban natural heritage, in partnership with local stakeholders and compliance with relevant European and National legislation, and local authority biodiversity action plans.
- Build the digital capabilities of the tourism industry as part of the destinations approach to sustained demand generation.
- Develop an industry wide approach to deliver a brand communications programme that resonates with the domestic and international market.
- Enhance the capabilities of tourism networks and industry groups to work together in developing Galway City as an international tourism destination.
- Develop new collaborative approaches around maximising the impact of festivals and events in the city.
- Collectively embrace sustainability as a destination priority and become recognised as a leader for sustainable urban tourism, creating better places to live and visit while ensuring our natural environment is protected and respected.
- Create new partnerships within the destination to package Galway cultural experiences with the city's accommodation network.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

Foster strong coalitions of industry and stakeholders with a common purpose in developing Galway City as a flourishing destination supporting thriving communities.

- Work with all stakeholders to ensure the tourism opportunity for Galway is reflected across future urban regeneration projects.
- Disperse the value of tourism across the city through a community and Galway City neighbourhood approach.
- Foster economic partnerships that highlight the depth of creativity across the city from its University status to being the home of a world class industry and innovation cluster.
- Embrace sustainability and creative approaches to climate action through a partnership approach ensuring a positive impact on our community and visitors.
- Maximise business events for the destination as a mechanism to deliver greater impact on local communities. Collectively position Galway as a thriving business hub that promotes knowledge sharing and innovation, driving enhanced networking, competitiveness, and productivity.

SECTION FOUR: GALWAY CITY DEDP IMPLEMENTATION



4.1 Plan implementation

The implementation of the Galway City DEDP is based on stakeholder commitment to project delivery. It represents a five-year operational plan based on an agreed destination development focus for Galway City. It builds on existing project plans and integrates all related activity for a coordinated series of outputs. These include projects currently being implemented, projects featured in existing plans and new concepts to build the destination's capacity to create new visitor experiences.

A list of actions relating to all proposed projects has been devised. All stakeholders will be consulted with in relation to the delivery of the identified actions. Each of the stakeholders listed below will be tasked with delivering on actions which will help to shape the plan and ultimately ensure the success of the plan delivery over the next five years.

The implementation of the Galway City DEDP will be overseen by the creation of a working group that will operate until 2030. The DEDP Working Group is tasked with supporting the following objectives:

- Support the delivery of the Galway City DEDP.
- Drive growth as per the agreed KPIs in the action plan.
- Lead and manage the action plan ensuring alignment around the prioritisation and delivery of key projects.
- Creation of a representative area wide body which ensures there is a mechanism in place that allows two-way communication between the implementation group and any subgroups which may be formed.
- Ensure that the catalyst and enabling projects support the delivery of experiences identified in the plan and are delivered within the 5-year timeframe.
- Provide a space where stakeholders can share new ideas with partners.
- Creation of a common tourism voice and a powerful tourism network that promotes each other's interests.

The Galway City DEDP Working Group form will represent key stakeholders and representatives from the area. It will be chaired by an independent chairperson with the ability to focus the group on the delivery of the actions required to implement the Galway City DEDP.



Guiding Principles

To ensure the successful implementation of the Galway City DEDP experiences, the following guiding principles have been established to guide certain recommendations and projects listed in this section.

- All projects are self-sustainable, meaning they have access to capital and are not relying solely on grant aid to be developed or maintained.
- All projects are on-message with the Galway City DEDP experiences and are aligned to the broader mission of the Wild Atlantic Way proposition and brand.
- All projects focus on setting the city apart from its competitors, contributing actively to creating a strong sense of place with a unique feel and ensuring visitor needs are catered for across the day and evening time.
- All projects add value to the area and provide a direct and demonstrable link to either extending visitor length of stay, extending the length of the tourist season or developing a new market.
- Principles of responsible and sustainable tourism development are embedded in each action, creating better places to live in and to visit.
- All stakeholders will demonstrate a strong and sustained willingness to working as a collaborative network.



Table of Acronyms	
AC	Arts Council
AGS	An Gardaí Síochána
AIPCO	Association of Irish Professional Conference Organisers
ATU	Atlantic Technological University
BNG	Blas na Gailimhe
CB	Corrib Beo
CGC	Claregalway Castle
CR	Connacht Rugby
CUG	Curam, University of Galway
FI	Fáilte Ireland
FOTE	Food on the Edge
GCB	Galway Convention Bureau
GCoFC	Galway Chamber of Commerce to table
GCV	Galway Cultural Venues
GHSC	Galway Hooker Sailing Club
GIAF	Galway International Arts Festival
CLG	Gaillimh le Gaeilge
GM	Galway Museum
GMETB	Galway Mayo Education and Training Board
GNN	Galway Neighbourhoods Networks
GPC	Galway Port Company
GR	Galway Racecourse
GTGA	Galway Tour Guides Association
GVP	Galway Volunteer Programme
IHF	Irish Hotels Federation
IR	Irish Rail
LEO	Local Enterprise Office
MAC	Macnas
MFG	Music for Galway
MI	Marine Institute
NTA	National Transport Authority
NTEO	Night Time Economy Officer
NTES	Night Time Economy Sector
PS	Private Sector
SNC	St. Nicholas Church
SV	Salthill Village
TII	Transport Infrastructure Ireland
TOTP	Trad on the Prom
UOG	University of Galway
WE	West End Traders

4.2 Galway City DEDP Action Plan

Catalyst Project 1 - Galway Museum & City Attractions					
	PROJECT	ACTION	Time	Lead	Partners
1.1	Galway Museum	Deliver sustainably a best-in-class visitor experience at Galway Museum to maximise the significant investment in the existing museum and the adjacent Comerford House, Spanish Arch experience and wall walk, and construction of a new three-storey building contiguous to Comerford House, incorporating the Sea Gate archaeological site.	2027/2029+	GM	FI, GCC
1.2	Galway Museum and public realm - iconic Galway sites	Deliver an iconic visitor experience at the Galway Museum by introducing the visitor to the many stories, heritage and 'tribes' of Galway.	2027/2029+	FI	GCC
1.3	Signature Visitor Experiences	Undertake an analysis of the opportunity for Galway to develop signature visitor attractions for the city centre linked to the themes of culture, creativity, and science. This will include concept and feasibility analysis of possible locations and future options to consider e.g. a Macnas visitor experience in Galway City.	2027/2028	GCC	FI
1.4	University of Galway Visitor Experience	Undertake a feasibility analysis on developing the visitor experience at the main University of Galway campus to ensure the campus is an integral part of the Galway city visitor experience. Undertake an assessment of the potential of existing displays and university department museums to create new on campus visitor experiences.	2026/2027	FI, UOG	

Catalyst Project 2 - Vibrant Galway Neighbourhoods					
	PROJECT	ACTION	Time	Lead	Partners
2.1	Vibrant Galway Neighbourhoods	Support the neighbourhood business communities to achieve their full tourism potential. This will include Eyre Square, West End, Latin Quarter, Docklands, Woodquay and Salthill.	2026/2027	FI	GNN, GCC
2.1a	Galway Tribes - Streets and Lanes	Undertake a review of the requirements to develop a Galway Tribes / Living City project on the streets and lanes to highlight the personalities of the local neighbourhoods and highlighting the character of the people living in Galway City. The story of City of the Tribes should be widely embraced across the neighbourhoods and by the tourism industry to bring the stories back to life.	2026/2027	PS	GNN, GCC, GTGA, FI
2.1b	Evening Time Innovation	Develop the evening time opportunity by developing distinctive neighbourhoods evening experiences to grow the city wide programme of evening time activity by supporting the Night Time Economy Officer.	2026/2027	NTEO, NTES	FI, PS, GNN

Catalyst Project 2 - Vibrant Galway Neighbourhoods					
2.1c	Evening Time and Venues	Assess the opportunity to develop a programme of evening time performances in iconic Galway venues and sites as part of the development of evening time economy linked to Galway's profile for culture and creativity.	2026/2027	NTEO, NTES	FI, PS, GNN
2.1d	Enhancement of place	Undertake an assessment of the requirements to enhance the presentation of city centre buildings and the rejuvenation of sites that contributes to the sense of vibrancy across the various neighbourhoods in Galway.	2025-2028	GCC	GNN
2.1e	Outdoor dining	Review the current outdoor dining opportunities in the city and review the current policies to identify new opportunities through the Galway Neighbourhoods initiative to strengthen the appeal of Galway as a dining and food destination.	2026/2027	GCC	GNN
2.2	City to Salthill Orientation	Enhance the orientation and visitor experience from the City to Salthill to encourage increased visitor footfall from the city to Salthill.	2026/2027	GCC	
2.3	Woodquay Urban Regeneration	Deliver the projects that will impact positively on the visitor experience to Galway through the Woodquay Urban Regeneration investment and PFG 2 - Facility Centres for Water Sports Activities Scheme. This will include access to the bus connects, Woodquay plaza, blueway, greenway, PFG 2 Facility Centres for Water Sports Activities, University campus, Nuns Island.	2026-2030+	GCC	
2.4	Augustine Hill Urban Regeneration	Examine the visitor experience and destination enhancement opportunities for tourism, culture, and food as part of any future urban regeneration of the Augustine Hill area and identify how it can contribute to the development of Galway City as a tourism destination. This will include the examination of a visitor attraction, food experiences and cultural facilities.	2027-2029+	PS	
2.5	Claddagh Ring Experience	Develop a Claddagh Ring experience telling visitors the story of the origin of the ring linked to the story of Galway City.	2026	FI	GTGA, PS
2.6	Outdoor Performance Spaces	Undertake a review of existing and new outdoor performance & event spaces across the city and develop a plan for year-round usage and understand associated opportunities and challenges to address. The assessment will also include the identification of potential new spaces and maximising the investment in urban regeneration funding delivering new outdoor performance space across the city.	2026/2027	GCC	

Catalyst Project 2 - Vibrant Galway Neighbourhoods					
2.7	Festival / Event Programme & Neighbourhoods	Host elements of Galway festivals and events programming across a mix of Galway neighbourhoods that will encourage attendees to explore more of the city e.g. mix of festival/event programmes linked to the neighbourhoods theme e.g. Ukulele, Oyster Festival, Blas festival	2026-2029	PS	GCC
2.8	Music in the City	Review the requirements to create a year-round Galway Trad Trail and Music City Trail.	2027/2028	PS	FI
2.9	Medieval Galway Experience	Examine the visitor experience potential of a trail linking the Medieval points of interest across the city e.g. Medieval Stones of Galway incorporating Browne's Door and the Medieval Stones of Galway story into future public realm projects.	2029+	GC	

Catalyst Project 3 - Destination Visitor Orientation					
	PROJECT	ACTION	Time	Lead	Partners
3.1	Destination Town Project	Complete the visitor orientation project under the Destination Town to create a Galway outdoor museum connecting with the Galway neighbourhoods.	2025/2026	GCC	FI
3.2	City Centre Orientation	Deliver a programme of public realm enhancements incorporating visitor orientation to ensure that the city centre visitor experience plays a role in visitor dispersion across the city.	2026-2030+	GCC	
3.3	City Pedestrianisation	Examine the short term to long term opportunities for the pedestrianisation of areas within the city that open up new visitor experiences and encourage greater dispersion of visitors across the city during the daytime and nighttime. This will include the pedestrianisation of Middle Street and Cross Street on a full-time basis and identify how they can contribute to the visitor experience in the city.	2026-2030+	GCC	
3.4	Night Time Economy Accessibility and Inclusivity	Explore collaboration opportunities with businesses within the Night Time Economy, and tourism and hospitality sectors generally, to raise awareness and encourage practical steps to be taken at business level to improve accessibility and inclusivity for all visitors.	2026/2027	NTEO, NTES	
3.5	Galway Welcome Sites	Develop a Galway Welcome programme to ensure a stronger sense of arrival and welcome to Galway at key arrival points and on the approach to the city. The project will identify key sites to create a sense of welcome to Galway City as an international visitor destination. The project will also link with future transport infrastructure e.g. Ceannt Station. The Galway Welcome initiative will also align with future city destination branding.	2025-2028	IR	FI, GCC

Catalyst Project 3 - Destination Visitor Orientation					
3.6	Galway Creative & Culture Route - Arts and Science Trail	Undertake an assessment of the requirements to create a creative culture city trail linked to the medtech profile and creative expertise in Galway to deliver a creative arts and science trail / visitor experience in Galway.	2026/2027	FI, PS, CUG	
3.7	Destination Visitor Orientation	Develop a city mapping approach linked to the Galway / Gaillimh brand and apply the branding to all future mapping and visitor orientation activity.	2026/2027	GCC, FI	PS
3.8	Tech & Smart City	Undertake a review of compatibility of current visitor wayfinding and orientation with Google Maps and identify how visitors are influenced pre-visit and while in the destination to explore the wider area.	2027/2028	GCC, FI, PS	
3.9	Galway City Tourist Information Office	Undertake an assessment of a suitable location in Eyre Square for a Discover Ireland tourist information office.	2026	FI	GCC, PS

Catalyst Project 4 - Food Market / Hall					
	PROJECT	ACTION	Time	Lead	Partners
4.1	Galway Food Market	Support the development of a year-round indoor food market for Galway that will accommodate a daytime and night market.	2026/2027	PS	GCC, FI

Catalyst Project 5 - Bilingual City					
	PROJECT	ACTION	Time	Lead	Partners
5.1	Gaeltacht City Experience Development	Develop a Bilingual City Gaeilge tourism experience toolkit that integrates the Irish language further into the Galway City visitor experience with a primary focus on assessing the viability of an Irish language festival to be hosted as part of the profiling of Galway as Ireland's Bilingual City with potential to incorporate living Irish culture aspects including traditional music, song and dance and language-based events.	2026/2027	GLG	FI
5.2	Urban Gaeltacht Experience	Develop an Irish language tourism itinerary for Galway City, and a programme of Irish language weekends to create the Urban Gaeltacht experience for visitors combining the Irish language, music, and other cultural activity e.g. Trad on the Prom.	2026/2027	FI	GLG, PS, TOTP
5.3	Ionad Gaeilge Visitor Experience	Undertake a feasibility analysis of the development of an Ionad Gaeilge and visitor experience focused on the Irish language in Galway City.	2027/2028	GLG	FI
5.4	Irish language Saleable Experiences	Develop a suite of saleable Irish language experiences, building on the Fáilte Ireland Gaeilge agus Fáilte project working on	2026/2027	GLG	FI

Catalyst Project 5 - Bilingual City

		experience development to bringing the experiences to market.			
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Catalyst Project 6 - Festivals & Events

	PROJECT	ACTION	Time	Lead	Partners
6.1	Galway's Festival and Event Strategy	Assess the Events and Festival offering of Galway City and identify potential areas for further growth by creating a Festival and Events team within City Hall. Adopt a strategic approach for existing festivals in Galway City that will deliver a strong portfolio of Festivals and Participative Events that are rooted in the destination and unique to Galway City. Thus creating an authentic year-round (excluding July and August) Festivals and Events calendar, with a few selected as Hero's to headline the City of Tribes.	2026/2027	GCC	PS
6.2	Festival Audit	Undertake an audit of all festivals in Galway to assess the capability, type, scale, and ambition of Festivals. Identify Festivals within this cohort that have the resources, capability, and ambition to grow. Identify the potential around ensuring festivals take place throughout the year to tackle seasonality challenges. A focus of this could be to also build on existing one day events to expand into two-day festivals or more.	2026/2027	GCC	FI
6.3	Year-Round Festival Venue	Maximise the opportunity of the Galway International Arts Festival for Galway City through the identification / development of a showcase venue suitable for the event as part of the scoping study on the current Cultural infrastructure in Galway City. Leverage the international and domestic tourism profile opportunity provided by the Galway International Arts Festival for Galway and establish the suitable venue as a proposition capable of hosting events year-round.	2027-2029+	GCC	FI, PS
6.4	Christmas in Galway	Develop the destination's capacity to grow the Christmas in Galway programme and maximise the value of the event by increasing the range of things to do and see in establishing Galway as Ireland's Christmas destination.	2026/2027	GCC	FI
6.5	Galway Races and City Engagement	Deliver an annual city / neighbourhoods engagement programme around the Galway Racing Festival to ensure a connection between the event and the city.	2026/2027	PS, GR	FI, AGS, GNN

Catalyst Project 6 - Festivals & Events					
6.6	Off-peak Events	Maximise the off-peak event opportunity for Galway through a packaging focus around Events in the shoulder season e.g. Connacht Rugby, Race Meetings, GAA, Galway United, Christmas Market, Comedy Festival, Blas, Tonnta.	2026/2027	GR, PS, CR	FI, GCC
6.7	Galway Bank Holidays	Devise a strategic approach to grow the destination's ownership of the bank holiday calendar where international and domestic visitors will consider Galway as Ireland's destination for bank holiday weekends. The bank holiday development approach will focus on protecting the reputation of Galway as a leading bank holiday destination by providing more things for visitors to do and see during these periods.	2027/2028	GNN	FI
6.8	Outdoor / Active Festivals	Develop Festivals within the Outdoor Active cohort – looking primarily at sea swimming, rowing, sailing, and kayaking. This will assist the natural landscape (e.g. coastline and waterways) in offering sustainable tourism products on a year-round basis.	2026/2027	PS	GCC, FI, CB

Catalyst Project 7 - Cultural Venue / Arts Focal Point					
	PROJECT	ACTION	Time	Lead	Partners
7.1	Municipal Cultural Venue	Undertake a scoping study on existing cultural infrastructure in Galway City followed by feasibility analysis of a Municipal and Cultural venue for Galway City.	2026/2027	GCC	
7.2	Merchant's Road	Deliver a new cultural experience in the venue proposed as part of the Merchants Road Lower development.	2025-2028	GCC	
7.3	Dominic Street	Integrate new cultural infrastructure into the proposed Galway Creative and Culture Route across the city to demonstrate the depth of cultural assets accessible by visitors during the day and evening.	2025-2028	GCC	
7.4	The 'Manse' Nuns Island Theatre	Deliver the cultural infrastructure at The Nuns Island Theatre on Nuns Island.	2027-2030+	GCC	
7.5	Galway Cultural Venues	Co-ordinate and promote the year-round programming across Galway's cultural venues and opportunities to package culture events and performances around the off-peak periods.	2026/2027	GCV, GCC	FI, PS

Catalyst Project 8 - Galway Waters Experience

	PROJECT	ACTION	Time	Lead	Partners
8.1	Leisureland	Deliver a framework for Leisureland & Salthill Park that will maximise its potential for the local community and attract visitors on a year-round basis to Galway and develop a Vision that provides the basis for future master planning.	2026/2027	GCC	SV
8.2	Leisureland Visioning	Develop a sustainable tourism vision for Leisureland & Salthill Park to maximise its potential for the local community and attract visitors on a year-round basis to Galway. This vision will contribute to the wider master planning and framework for Salthill and the Seafront Framework examining it in the context of its role in the Galway DEDP.	2026/2027	GCC	FI, SV
8.3	Salthill Village Visitor Experience	Undertake a Salthill Village and Seafront Masterplan that will set out a vision framework to guide planned and future projects and initiatives in Salthill including the promenade flood defence & improvements, traffic and parking management, tidal pools, Leisureland & Salthill Park redevelopment, Blackrock Tower maintenance and other potential projects to ensure an integrated and strategic approach that builds on the uniqueness of Salthill and contributes to an enhanced visitor experience.	2026/2027	GCC	
8.4	Galway Water Experience PFG 2 - Facility Centres for Water Sports Facilities	Maximise the opportunity through the <i>PFG 2 - Facility Centres for Water Sport Activities</i> scheme and the potential for year round activation of the Terryland River Corrib - River Facilities with the addition of the floating pontoon and access via tributary to the River Corrib as a catalyst for developing the Galway City Blueway water experiences.	2027/2028	GCC, PS	FI
8.5	Galway City Blueway	Commence the Blueway accreditation process for the Galway City Blueway based on the feasibility analysis and develop a number of Blueway pods / hubs along the waterways system in Galway City including the River Corrib, identified locations in Lough Corrib, Canal network, and Claddagh basin.	2026 /2028	GCC	
8.6	Galway Waterscapes & Blue Spaces	Examine the feasibility of a Galway Water Trail linking Salthill, Galway Bay, River Corrib, and the Galway City Blueway. This will include examination of an ecotourism interpretation trail that combines the Galway maritime story and building on the legends of the Corrib Trail experience.	2028	FI, GCC	

Catalyst Project 8 - Galway Waters Experience

8.7	Blue Flag Beaches	Protect the Blue Flag awards of the Salthill & Silverstrand beaches and deliver a programme of works to achieve Blue Flag status at Ballyloughane to help develop the international profile of Galway as a city with easy access to coastal activities.	2025/2026	GCC	
8.8	Salthill LIDO - Tidal Pool	Examine the requirements to develop a LIDO in Salthill based on project feasibility analysis.	2029+	GCC	



Enabling Project 1 - Saleable Galway Experiences					
	PROJECT	ACTION	Time	Lead	Partners
9.1	Saleable Experience Development	Deliver a saleable experience development programme for Galway City to grow the range of things to do and see across each of the strategic development pillars within the Galway City DEDP. The areas for immediate focus will include building on the uniqueness of the Galway Tribes story as the basis for experience development, Irish language, maritime, food, arts/culture, working with the creative sector and unique Galway neighbourhood experiences.	2026/2027	FI	PS
9.2	Accessible tourism experiences development	Undertake an assessment of current visitor experiences to improve the accessibility of Galway visitor experiences across attractions and activities. This will include recommendations for future experience development and ensuring accessibility is a core feature of all future destination and experience development.	2026/2027	PS	FI
9.3	Accessible tourism in the West End	Support the delivery of the West End Inclusive Tourism project in conjunction with the Galway Autism Partnership. Based on the learnings of the project examine ways to expand the reach of the project and other accessible tourism initiatives.	2026	WE	FI

Enabling Project 2 - Tourism Industry & Network Development					
	PROJECT	ACTION	Time	Lead	Partners
10.1	Industry Development	Undertake a programme of capability building focused on growing the online presence of Galway tourism industry and digital capabilities.	2026/2027	FI	
10.2	Tourism Creatives	Deliver a Tourism Entrepreneurship Programme for the arts and culture community to grow awareness of the tourism opportunity among the Galway cultural community.	2026/2027	FI	AC, GCC
10.3	Brand Gaillimh	Develop a brand activation programme to develop and implement a destination brand programme supported by content development, brand activation and investment in training.	2026/2027	GCC	FI, PS, GCT
10.4	Galway Family Experiences	Develop the capabilities of the tourism industry to develop family focused experiences and identify how the city and county can connect with each other in areas such as outdoor activities and opportunities presented by the blueway and greenway investment.	2025-2028	FI	PS
10.5	Increasing Value from Cruise Tourism	Prepare the tourism industry to maximise the opportunity from potential growth in cruise ship business and grow the economic value of cruise visits for the destination.	2027/2028	GP	FI

Enabling Project 3 - Galway Food Destination					
	PROJECT	ACTION	Time	Lead	Partners
11.1	Galway Food in Tourism Plan	Develop a food in tourism plan for Galway City with five-year action plan to grow the city's profile as a national food destination.	2026/2027	FI, BLAS	GCC, FI, PS
11.2	Food in Tourism - Seafood City	Examine the opportunity to develop Galway City as the Seafood Experience City animated by a programme of supporting initiatives from dining weeks, leveraging the Oyster Festival, dedicated food weekends and highlighting the food personalities of Galway.	2027/2028	FI, PS, BLAS, BIM	GCC, FI, PS
11.3	Region of Gastronomy	Examine the opportunity to leverage the European Region of Gastronomy designation for Galway and how to maximise this designation with future food in tourism activity.	2026/2027	GCofC, ATU	FI, GCC

Enabling Project 4 - Urban Green and Blue Activities					
	PROJECT	ACTION	Time	Lead	Partners
12.1	Connemara Greenway (Galway to Clifden)	Support the sustainable development of the Galway to Clifden Greenway and maximise the associated tourism opportunity for the city and communities on the route through capability building. The preferred / selected route to the city should take in the University of Galway Campus and the old railway bridges at Woodquay.	2027/2028	GCC	TII
12.2	Greenway Trails Heads	Support the sustainable development of the Galway Greenway Trail Head Experience Plan for Woodquay and future links to the Westend to ensure wider dispersion of Greenway users across the city.	2027/2028	FI	GCC
12.3	Galway Urban Green Spaces	Support the sustainable development of the Galway City Green Spaces Strategy developing the tourism potential of public parks and their future capacity to provide additional event or performance spaces and become part of the Galway City family experience.	2027/2028	GCC	
12.4	Public Realm Strategy	Support the sustainable development of the Galway City Public Realm Strategy to include visitor orientation and wayfinding in the city. Incorporate the Galway / Gaillimh Brand into any developments.	2026+	GCC	
12.5	Galway Cycleways & Active Travel	Support the sustainable development of the Urban Cycleway network leveraging the links to the Connemara Greenway (Galway to Clifden) and the proposed Athlone to Galway Greenway through Active Travel investment to grow the number of cycling routes in the city and improved access to the Eurovelo 1 route.	2029+	GCC	
12.6	Walking & Cycling Orientation	Undertake a study of existing walking and cycling orientation infrastructure in Galway City and Salthill. The outputs will include a recommended approach	2027	GCC	

Enabling Project 4 - Urban Green and Blue Activities					
		to improve visitor orientation around the city through walking and cycling options.			
12.7	Tourism Enterprise Development	Work with education and training agencies to stimulate tourism entrepreneurship in the activities sector that can animate future investment across the city e.g. blueways, greenways and new activity experiences for Galway City.	2027/2028	GCC, FI	
12.8	Galway Hooker Experience	Examine the requirements to develop a market ready visitor experience to tell the story of the Galway Hooker and their restoration as a community / sustainability project.	2026	GHSC	FI, GPC
12.9	Wild Atlantic Way Coastal Path	Assess how existing and planned Greenway, Blueway and walking / cycling infrastructure projects in Galway and Salthill will be integrated with the proposed Wild Atlantic Way Coastal Path.	2026	FI	
12.10	Trail Infrastructure	Assess the opportunity to develop land activity and trail infrastructure around the Waterworks building site linking it with the Castles (Menlo Castle and Terryland Castle). This assessment will also explore the linking of the proposed Terryland Forest Park with the City.	2027+	GCC	Coillte

Enabling Project 5 - Accommodation					
	PROJECT	ACTION	Time	Lead	Partners
13.1	Accommodation Development	Support the development of sustainable accommodation and associated critical infrastructure across the city and attracting private sector investment into Galway City to increase current accommodation levels.	2026-2030+	GCC	FI
13.2	Campervan Facilities	Undertake a feasibility assessment of delivering an Aire de Service in Galway City to accommodate campervan/RV parking. This assessment should examine short term to long term opportunities and the engagement with site owners across the city to identify short term opportunities.	2025-2028	GCC	

Enabling Project 6 - Business Events					
	PROJECT	ACTION	Time	Lead	Partners
14.1	Business Events Sectors	Develop the networks of industry partners sectoral clusters and platforms to attract conferences and facilitate knowledge sharing and innovation, and provide access to opinion leaders, speakers, and other engagement opportunities.	2026-2030+	FI	GCB
14.2	Dexcom Stadium at Connacht Rugby	Support the development and ongoing investment into Dexcom Stadium as a business events venue, to maximise its potential to attract and host impactful business events to the City.	2026+	CR	GCB, FI

Enabling Project 6 - Business Events					
14.3	Business Events - Beyond Tourism	Position Galway as a leader in hosting impactful business events, and deliver on the value of business events, for tourism and beyond, achieving benefits for Galway as a community, ensuring positive impacts on our local communities and long-term legacy benefits for the participating sectoral collectives. Connect local communities with business event delegates and organisers who seek opportunities for positive social contributions.	2026-2030+	FI	GCB
14.4	Gala Dining Venue / Business Events	Maximise the business tourism opportunity for Galway presented by future investment in gala dining venues such as Claregalway Castle & St. Nicholas Church, and the enhancement of Galway as a business events destination.	2027-2029+	CGC, SNC	GCB
14.5	Business Events Value	Leverage business events to achieve regionality and seasonality objectives. Grow the number of business events hosted in Galway, whilst prioritising a value over volume model and promoting extended delegate stays.	2026-2030+	FI	GCB
14.6	Business Events Showcase	Leverage the AIPCO Conference as showcase for business events development in Galway.	2026-2030+	GCB	FI

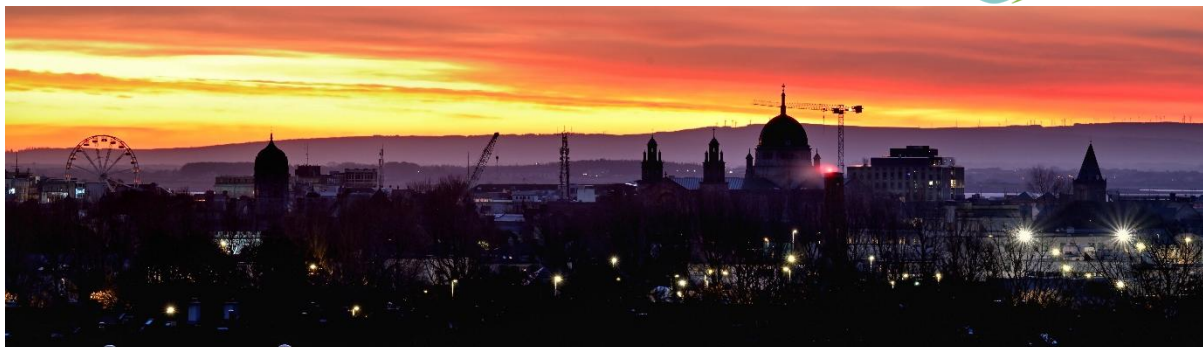
Enabling Project 7 - Sustainable Tourism					
	PROJECT	ACTION	Time	Lead	Partners
15.1	Sustainable Galway Destination	Deliver on the Galway City Climate Action Plan and collaborate with industry to collective commitment to developing Galway as a sustainable city destination and work with partners to roll out the All Ireland Certification Assurance Scheme.	2026/2027	GCC, FI, PS	GCT, GCofC
15.2	Salthill Environmental and Biodiversity Projects	Undertake a scoping exercise to explore potential projects to be included in a Salthill Environmental and Biodiversity project. This will include assessing the potential for projects such as Clean Coasts, Sand Dunes Projects, Land based biodiversity projects and partnering on projects such as the Aquarium, Galway Convention Bureau, and Marine Institute.	2026-2029	GCC	FI, GCB, MI
15.3	Sustainable tourism observatory partnership	Explore the opportunity to create a sustainable tourism observatory partnership working with third level colleges to develop a repository of visitor information that can inform sustainable tourism development.	2026-2029	GCC	UoG, ATU
15.4	Biodiversity Hub	Assess the feasibility study of delivering a Biodiversity Hub in the City or Salthill to	2026-2029	GCC	

Enabling Project 7 - Sustainable Tourism					
		educate and raise awareness of Nature Way Solutions in place in the destination.			
15.5	Biodiversity Walks	Expand and protect the suite of Biodiversity Walks available in the City, particularly along Eglinton Canals and Coastal locations, giving careful consideration for the non disturbance of wildlife and fauna.	2026-2029	GCC	
15.6	Sustainability Initiatives	Encourage buy in from tourism and hospitality business to the Coffee Cup deposit scheme in place in the City to enhance the City's reputation as a sustainable destination.	2026-2029	GCC	
15.7	Sustainable Initiatives for Business Events	Explore opportunities to mobilise programmes for business events delegates to the city to contribute to the environment/biodiversity of the destination through activities such as coastal clean ups, litter picks, tree planting, mapping of seagrass beds, swallow/swift box workshops etc.	2026-2029	GCC	GVB
15.8	City Transportation Strategy	Complete the City Transportation Review to maximise the future potential of increased public transport access e.g. Bus Connects, Ceannt Station, Coach Drop and sustainable transport options around the city e.g. cycle. The City Transportation Strategy will also examine the long-term requirements to alleviate traffic pressures around the city and the potential negative impact it has on the visitor experience.	2026-2029	GCC, NTA	
15.9	City park and ride	Undertake a review of the development of Park and Ride as a viable option for visitors and an alternative transport option for the local community.	2026-2029	GCC	
15.10	Sustainable Saleable Experiences	Deliver sustainable tourism and biodiversity related saleable experiences for Galway City.	2026+	PS	FI

Destination Projects					
	PROJECT	ACTION	Time	Lead	Partners
16.1	Visitor Mobility Assessment	Review current transport information systems to assess current gaps in how transportation information is presented to visitors. Deliver a legible transport information system where the visitor understands how local transport works together and promote the connectivity across the city linking rail access with new bus hubs throughout the destination.	2027/2028	NTA	
16.2	Galway Port Tourism Opportunity	Support the long-term tourism opportunity presented by Phases One to Four of the Galway Port Regeneration Project from the Inner Harbour to the Outer Harbour. Prepare for the short-term opportunity presented by the re-imagining of the Inner Docks to become a water activity basin and future plans to incorporate cultural and food market spaces. The planning application for the proposed New Port of Galway consists of 23.89 hectares of land reclamation. The development will extend 935m out to sea, providing 660m of quay berth to -12m Chart Datum (C.D.) depth, serviced by a -8m C.D. channel depth. The development is broken down into four stages Stage 1 Reclamation of 19.86ha of Quay areas and back-up land that will facilitate marine leisure activities. Stage 2 Formation of reclamation bund allowing for the reclamation of 3.21ha of additional back-up land. Stage 3 Reclamation of 3.21ha of back-up land, and 0.7ha as fishing pier and slipway areas. Stage 4 Delivery of the Western Marina with 216 berths and 12 Volvo scale berths.	2027-2029+	GP	
16.3	Tourism Opportunity Sites	Undertake a review of the potential opportunity sites in Galway City that have the capacity to become sites for potential tourism projects ranging from accommodation to visitor attractions.	2025-2028	GC	
16.4	Community Enabler for Tourism	Establish active citizenship / volunteerism programmes and initiatives to support tourism developments in Galway City.	2026+	GVP	FI

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⁵ Note: All actions set out in this section have been subject to relevant levels of environmental assessment. Refer to Appendix One for further information.



4.3 KPI's – V.I.C.E. Model

Visitor

KPI	How We Will Measure Success
Increase bed nights and length of stay in Galway City YoY ahead of regional average from year 3 of implementation of the GCDEDP.	Increase bed nights by average 3% per annum. Increase in length of stay
Increase in visitor numbers in off peak season.	In line with our seasonality growth ambitions to 2030, we will aim to grow average annual revenue for off-peak period by 1 % p.a. ahead of Peak.
Increase the value of visitors to Galway City over volume.	Fáilte Ireland's Destination Attitudes Survey.
Annual improvement in DAS satisfaction levels.	Fáilte Ireland's Destination Attitudes Survey.
Visitors will navigate the city easily, with best-in-class wayfinding and digital content.	Fáilte Ireland's Destination Attitudes Survey.
Visitors find ease of accessing high-quality information about what there is to see and do in the city prior to visiting.	Fáilte Ireland's Behaviour and Brand Tracker (BTT) / Survey of Overseas Travellers (SOT).

Industry

KPI	How We Will Measure Success
Increase Saleable Products	Deliver five new or improved saleable experiences per annum and a tailor-made distribution plan for the destination.
Season Extension: Progress towards extending annual opening hours across the destination.	In line with our seasonality growth ambitions to 2030, we will aim to grow average annual revenue for off-peak period by 1 % p.a. ahead of Peak.
Achieve 5-6% revenue growth in off season in the period October - June.	In line with our seasonality growth ambitions to 2030, we will aim to grow average annual revenue for off-peak period by 1 % p.a. ahead of Peak.
Galway City will be an attractive destination for domestic visitors, and day trippers will contribute significantly to overall domestic spend.	Fáilte Ireland's BTT; CSO data.
International visitors will stay longer and spend more.	Fáilte Ireland's SOT.
Optimum business mix will be achieved across the industry, as new segments (families/ outdoors) continue to grow.	Key Account Programme monitoring.
We will offer best-in-class experiences, fully optimised digital capability, world class storytelling and multi-lingual tour guides (in large/iconic attractions).	Fáilte Ireland Digital that Delivers metrics. Key account Management monitoring.

We will speak with one voice to sell and market Galway, with the brand proposition fully adopted, embraced, and activated.	Key Account Programme monitoring; industry adaptation of brand assets; DEDP KPIs.
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Community

KPI	How We Will Measure Success
Develop global recognition for Galway as a sustainable tourism destination differentiated by the opportunities for the visitor to immersive themselves in responsible tourism activity.	In line with our ambition to further the community appeal and social sustainability of tourism, we will deliver a 3 point growth in the Tourism Approval rating.
Maximise the tourism impact for local communities through the planned Greenway and Blueway projects.	Greenway and Blueway Developments.
Create a network of authentic community experiences linking the urban communities of Galway.	Fáilte Ireland's Community Survey.
Clusters and destination hubs to attract and retain visitors in the destination for longer.	Fáilte Ireland's Community Survey.
Build the capacity of the tourism industry and the local community to maximise the opportunity provided by the Galway City DEDP.	Fáilte Ireland data and/or CSO data.
Achieve a minimum Tourism Approval Rating result of 70%.	Fáilte Ireland's Community Survey. 3 point growth in the TAR Rating.
Year-on-year increase in employment in the sector.	Fáilte Ireland data and/or CSO data.
Character mapping will be complete, differentiating neighbourhoods, with full engagement of local communities, who are at the heart of the authentic experience.	Bespoke research to be developed as part of this DEDP.

Environment

KPI	How We Will Measure Success
Develop effective management of the environment. Including natural, cultural and heritage assets through the progression of a DEDP SEA. Environmental Monitoring.	Strategic Environmental Assessment. Appropriate Assessment & Fáilte Ireland's National Environmental Monitoring Programme 2021 - 2026.
Galway DEDP demonstrates full compliance with all relevant requirements arising from EU and Irish planning and environmental legislation.	Strategic Environmental Assessment. Appropriate Assessment & Fáilte Ireland's National Environmental Monitoring Programme 2021 - 2026.
Tourism businesses are on track to meet their carbon reduction targets as per the Carbon Budget and in line with the Climate Action Plan 2021.	Climate Action Programme
The outdoors will be fully optimised in sustainable way, from placemaking and animation of public realm in urban areas to maximising the opportunities for visitors to explore and experience the great outdoors., including walking and cycleways.	Consumer Sustainability Tracker (CST) which will track sustainability perceptions and engagement; ORIS Scheme; Greenway Interpretation Scheme.
Tourism activities are not contributing to environmental damage but are contributing to net gain of habitats and species.	Fáilte Ireland's National Environmental Monitoring Programme 2021 - 2026.
Year-on-year increase in the uptake by industry of sustainability/ environmental certification.	Certification schemes. Climate Action Programme.
Keep Cup Programme adoption	Seventy percent adoption by business - Industry survey.



Appendix One: Environmental



Environmental

This Plan provides an opportunity to ensure that all existing and future tourism projects and initiatives within the Galway City Destination and Experience Development Plan area are planned, developed and managed in a sustainable and integrated manner. The VICE (Visitor, Industry, Community and Environment) Model for Sustainable Tourism is the approach the WDEDP is developed from and strives to implement.

Fáilte Ireland recognises the need to integrate environmental considerations into this Plan in a way that responds to the sensitivities and requirements of the wider natural environment. Environmental considerations including inland and coastal water quality and amenity, climate change, traffic, biodiversity, built and cultural heritage, landscape, critical infrastructure and communities, all play a vital part in our tourism sector.

The protection, enhancement and promotion of our most important tourism asset - the natural environment has been an integral part of the formation of this Plan as is evidenced in the following:

- The environmental assessments (SEA and AA) undertaken to inform the development of the plan and resulting mitigation measures,
- The monitoring of significant environmental effects as a result of implementing this plan
- A firm commitment to ensuring sustainable and responsible tourism principles are practiced,
- Compliance with statutory decision making and consent granting at Plan implementation stage, and
- Integrating requirements for environmental protection and assessment.

Environmental Assessment

Consideration has been given to the requirement to undertake environmental assessment of this Plan in order to ensure full legal compliance and to further integrate sustainability, protection, enhancement, and promotion of the environment in developing and implementing the Plan. The environmental assessments undertaken to inform the development of this Plan include:

- **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**

The Plan was screened for the need to undertake SEA. The process established the need to undertake full SEA which was completed having regard to SEA Directive 2001/42/EU and to Statutory Instrument No. 435/2004 as amended. The outcome of this process can be reviewed in the SEA Environmental Report (ER) and the once the plan is finalised the SEA Statement that accompany this Plan.

- **Appropriate Assessment (AA)**

The Plan was examined for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment (**AA**). On initial examination of the Plan and in completing screening for AA, it was determined that Stage 2 **AA** would be required as the possibility of significant effects on European sites could not be excluded. The assessment process was undertaken having regard to the Council Directive 92/43/EEC and Directive 2009/14 7 /EC of the European Parliament and the Birds Directive. The outcome of this process is the AA Screening Report and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) that accompany this Plan.

Key findings of the SEA and AA Process for the Plan

Having completed full SEA and AA on the Galway City Destination and Experience Development Plan it is evident that these processes have had a positive influence on the evolution of the Plan and integrating environmental protection as part of the plan making process. The SEA process will also continue to have a positive environmental influence as the plan enters its implementation phase. The outcome of completing the above environmental assessments has resulted in the following:

- Identifying and mitigating where relevant potential environmental effects resulting from the Plan itself through making changes to the plan itself embedding the principles of sustainability into the plan text and projects;
- Identifying and promoting potential positive environmental effects arising from the Plan and promoting environmental protection, enhancement, and restoration of the natural and built environment through sustainable tourism development. For example, through the development of visitor management plans, project level environmental assessments and sustainable tourism education and training; and
- Developing mitigation measures to ensure that any potential negative environmental impacts are avoided, reduced, or mitigated at plan implementation stage.

These mitigation measures include:

- The requirement to comply with all relevant planning and environmental legislation and policy as part of the statutory decision making process and/ or consent process. Particular emphasis is placed on the following:
 - Requirements for undertaking environmental assessments at project level including but not limited to: Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Appropriate Assessment (AA) or site specific flood risk assessment (SSFRA).
 - Compliance with the policies and objectives of the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 and Galway County Development Plan 2022- 2028;
 - The Climate Action Plan 2024 and subsequent updates;
 - Preparation of Visitor management plans, as appropriate;
 - Consideration for critical infrastructural capacity at tourism sites; and
 - Promotion of blue and green infrastructure including integration of nature-based solutions that can also provide eco system services.
- Development and execution of an Environmental Monitoring Programme for the Plan during implementation and operation

The SEA Directive requires that the significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans and programmes are monitored. The table below details the measures that have been selected in order to monitor the likely significant effects of implementing this Plan.

Monitoring can demonstrate the positive effects facilitated by the Plan and can enable, at an early stage, the identification of unforeseen adverse effects and the undertaking of appropriate remedial action. The occurrence of persistent significant adverse environmental effects which are directly attributable to this plan would necessitate consideration of the effects in the context of the Plan and a possible review of part(s) of the Plan.

The environmental monitoring programme targets and indicators that allow for a quantitative measurement of trends and progress over time relating to the Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) developed during the SEA process. A variety of sources of information will be used to undertake the Environmental Monitoring. The responsibility for monitoring is with Fáilte Ireland. Monitoring will be undertaken at key stages as part of the implementation phase of the Plan. It will be reported on to the Plan's implementation group and where relevant information sources allow, and the findings of the monitoring will influence the actions of the plan as it progresses. Separately, monitoring of the Plan KPI's, including monitoring of visitor numbers where relevant will also be undertaken.

Refer to Chapter 10 of the accompanying SEA Environmental Report for details on a proposed monitoring programme.

Sustainable and Responsible Tourism

This Plan conforms and commits to sustainable growth of tourism in Galway City and, in completing the above-mentioned assessments, demonstrates the strong commitment to the VICE Model for Sustainable Tourism Development. The implementation of guiding principles is key to the success of the Plan.

Guiding Principles for Sustainable and Responsible Tourism

Sustainable tourism development guidelines and management practices are applicable to all forms of tourism in all types of destinations, including mass tourism and the various niche tourism segments. Sustainability principles refer to the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development, and a suitable balance must be established between these three dimensions to guarantee its long-term sustainability.

Thus, sustainable tourism should:

1. Make optimal use of environmental resources that constitute a key element in tourism development, maintaining essential ecological processes and helping to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity.
2. Respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance.
3. Ensure viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities, and contributing to poverty alleviation.

Sustainable tourism development requires the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders, as well as strong political leadership to ensure wide participation and consensus building. Achieving sustainable tourism is a continuous process and it requires constant monitoring of impacts, introducing the necessary preventive and/or corrective measures whenever necessary.

Sustainable tourism is also required to maintain a high level of tourist satisfaction and ensure a meaningful experience to the tourists, raising their awareness about sustainability issues and promoting sustainable tourism practices amongst them.

Implementation and Consent

This DEDP is a non-statutory tourism plan, it does not provide consent and/ or establish a framework for granting consent.

Fáilte Ireland provides funding for sustainable tourism projects that emerge as part of specific, competitive, themed, and time-bound grant schemes or as part of wider strategic partnerships.

This Plan has been informed by and is situated alongside a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management. These include (but is not limited to) the National Planning Framework (NPF), the Water Action Plan 2024, Climate Action Plan (CAP), Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for the Northern & Western Regional Assembly, and the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 and Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028.

Implementing the DEDP will involve Fáilte Ireland working collaboratively to facilitate, promote, support and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other government agencies, Tourism operators, communities, and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans.

In order to be realised, projects included in this Plan will have to comply, as relevant, with the various provisions of legislation, policies, plans and programmes. (including requirements for project level Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form part of the statutory decision-making and consent granting framework, of which this Plan is not part and does not contribute towards.

Such legislation, policies, plans, and programmes include:

- Compliance with statutory higher level plans and policies including the NPF, RSES, Climate Action Plan, etc.
- Compliance with statutory land use plans that form part of the statutory decision making and consent granting framework (e.g. Development Plans, such as the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 and Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028) as appropriate,
- Requirements for project level environmental assessment, including EIA, AA & SSFRA, as required.

Integrating Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management into the Plan

The SEA and AA team worked with the Plan preparation team at Fáilte Ireland to integrate requirements for environmental protection and management into the Plan. This process included changes to text in the plan and inclusion of new actions/projects in order to embed sustainability into the plan itself. Projects are varied and relating to land use, infrastructural development and land use activities and attractions. Reference made to such projects included in the Plan does not guarantee funding. While funding is provided to certain projects, Fáilte Ireland is not the developer.

The SEA and AA identified the potential significant effects as a result of implementing the Plan. Key considerations for the sustainable development of the tourism sector include ensuring there is sufficient infrastructure capacity; visitor management plans are developed for sites experiencing high demand; and that developers/promoters protect and provide opportunities for the sustainable development of green and blue infrastructure while also delivering ecosystem services. These areas of focus are discussed in the sections below.

Infrastructure Capacity

With respect to infrastructural capacity (including drinking water, wastewater, waste, and transport) the potential environmental impacts associated with increase visitor numbers and increase pressure on capacities of existing infrastructure (including accommodation) will require careful planning and assessment. The potential environmental effects of the likely increase in tourism volumes resulting from the relevant projects in this plan will need to be considered at project level and mitigated as appropriate. This aspect should be linked to the development of visitor management plans as appropriate.

The promotion of developing visitor friendly supporting infrastructure where it is required will also be encouraged.

Visitor Management

Partners tasked with progressing actions and projects shall seek to sustainably manage existing and any increase in Visitor numbers and/or any change in visitor behaviour to avoid significant effects on the environment including loss of habitat and/or disturbance to sensitive species (including human beings and biodiversity) where relevant. This shall include for example, ensuring that new projects are a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities. Visitor management plans will be required for proposed plans, programmes and projects that are to receive funding as relevant and appropriate.

Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services

Blue and Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services Those receiving funding shall contribute towards the maintenance and enhancement of existing blue and green infrastructure and its ecosystem services. Proposals for the development of any blue and green infrastructure or activities in these areas should demonstrate the synergies that can be achieved with regard to the: provision of open space amenities; sustainable management of water; protection and management of biodiversity; protection of cultural heritage; and protected landscape sensitivities.



Appendix Two – Supporting Current Policy and Planning

In order to support the ambition around sustainable destination growth, the Galway City DEDP is designed to guide the destination and its stakeholders through a five year development focus through continuous improvement and experience innovation. The Galway City DEDP is aligned with a number of existing strategies, policy, and industry reports. They include;

- Fáilte Ireland Corporate Plan
- Wild Atlantic Way Regional Tourism Development Strategies - 2023-2027
- 'People, Place and Policy: Growing Tourism to 2025' Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
- Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021 – 2025
- The National Planning Framework
- Tourism Action Plan 2019 - 2021 (or any update of same)
- Actions to Promote Sustainable Tourism Practices 2021 - 2023 (or any update of same)
- The Northern and Western Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (2020-2032)
- Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways
- Galway Tourism Strategy (2020-2025)

The following provides an overview of the key actions identified within the reports that directly relate to tourism development with implications for the destination.

FÁILTE IRELAND CORPORATE PLAN AND REGIONAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES (2023- 2027)

Fáilte Ireland's Corporate Plan is the basis for national tourism development supported by Regional Tourism Development Strategies (2023-2027) for each of the four regional brands.

TOURISM POLICY FRAMEWORK, 2030

The Tourism Policy Framework policy is formulated to balance economic development with environmental and social considerations. It was developed through extensive engagement with tourism stakeholders, the tourism sector, and a public consultation process. The Policy Framework includes a total of sixty-one policy proposals.

Amongst the guiding principles set out in the Policy Framework are:

- protect and enhance Ireland's natural assets and environmental quality
- ensure that tourism contributes to meeting commitments on climate change.
- ensure that tourism contributes to meeting commitments on climate change
- support balanced economic development and employment

- prioritise the economic value per visitor over volume of tourists visiting
- minimise any negative impacts of tourism on host communities
- encourage innovation within the tourism sector to ensure improved visitor satisfaction

OUR RURAL FUTURE: RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY 2021-2025

The policy provides a framework for the development of rural Ireland over a five year period. The role of tourism in local and regional economies is recognised as being of an importance that 'cannot be understated'. The aim of growing tile tourism offering and developing outdoor activity tourism are highlighted in the policy. articular relevant policy measures include:

- Maximising resources and strengths in the Green Economy to support employment opportunities for rural communities across a range of areas including sustainable tourism (Policy Measure 26)
- Further development of the Fáilte Ireland Experience Brands including the Wild Atlantic Way by strengthening Ireland's image as an outdoor activity holiday destination for both domestic and international markets (32)
- Investment in greenways, blueways, walking trails and other outdoor recreation infrastructure to support the growth in outdoor recreation tourism (36)
- Expansion of the Walks Scheme to achieve a target of at least eighty trails (38)
- Explore the potential for the development of further tourist trails, including cross-border trails and initiatives (39).

TOURISM ACTION PLAN 2019-2021

The action plan developed by the Irish government's Sustainable Tourism Working Group sets out the ambition that 'Ireland will seek to be amongst the world-leaders in sustainable tourism practices', setting out eight guiding principles for sustainable tourism development in Ireland.

1. All of government will work together with industry towards achieving a sustainable tourism sector.
2. Sustainable tourism growth will be achieved in a manner that focuses on overall economic benefit ahead of the number of tourists.
3. Tourism will support economic growth in communities throughout the country and with a greater spread of demand across the year.
4. In delivering high quality tourism experiences that exceed our visitors' expectations, we will do so in a manner that minimises any negative environmental or community impacts.
5. As custodians of our natural landscape and of our historic and cultural assets, we will protect them for the next generation.
6. Responsible behaviour by our visitors will be encouraged to maximise the mutual benefit of tourism to Ireland's people and place.
7. The tourism sector will support and promote efforts to move to more sustainable forms of transport to, and around Ireland.
8. The tourism sector must play its part to help deliver Ireland's commitments under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

ACTIONS TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRACTICES 2021 - 2023

The objectives of this plan are to identify actions which promote sustainable tourism practices, establish new research methods and form a clear narrative for communication about the sustainability agenda. Actions are grouped under the seven themes of policy, evidence base, environmental impact, awareness and education, business planning, destination management, and sales and marketing. As per Action 23 of the plan, the guiding principles for sustainable development are embedded in this DEDP. It is also a further action of this DEDP that

local stakeholders are aware of opportunities to maximise the potential of nature-based solutions identified by Action 27 of the plan, which highlights the need to organise workshops with local stakeholders including community groups/ farmers etc.

STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF GREENWAYS

The objective of the Greenway strategy is to assist in the strategic development of nationally and regionally significant Greenways in appropriate locations constructed to an appropriate standard in order to deliver a quality experience for all Greenway users. It also aims to increase the number and geographical spread of Greenways of scale and quality around the country over a 10-year period with a consequent significant increase in the number of people using Greenways as a visitor experience and as a recreational amenity.

NATIONAL PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PLAN (2013-2025)

The NPAP (Get Ireland Active) aims to increase physical activity levels across the population thereby improving the health and wellbeing of people living in the country. The Plan sets targets for annual increases in the level of daily physical activity across a range of ages and abilities to achieve the National Guidelines on Physical Activity for the country supported by eight action areas developed to encourage greater participation in physical activity. Key relevant actions in the Plan include:

- Action 32: Develop and promote walking and cycling strategies in each Local Authority area.
- Action 36: Prioritise the planning and development of walking and cycling and general recreational/ physical activity infrastructure.
- Action 37: Explore opportunities to maximise physical activity and recreation amenities in the natural environment.

GALWAY TOURISM PLAN (2020-2025)

The purpose of this strategy is to ensure Galway sustains and develops itself as one of Ireland's leading destinations for domestic and international visitors. The key objectives of the plan are to increase visitor numbers, successfully manage Galway's reputation, support expanding or emerging tourism businesses to create excellent products and experiences, guide, develop and provide sustainable world-class tourism experiences, support communities as the ambassadors for the region, and work in partnership with stakeholders to engage with the industry.

LOCAL PLANS

In developing the Galway City DEDP a range of local tourism development plans were examined. Including Local Economic and Community Plan and Local Area Plans (City and County).

