

## LOUGH DERG BLUEWAY

The Lough Derg Blueway links counties Clare, Galway and Tipperary and forms part of the 'Ireland's Hidden Heartlands'. The 160 km shoreline of the lake includes a number of lakeside communities such as Portumna, Mountshannon, Terryglass, Dromineer and Killaloe.

A series of paddling and walking trails are supplemented by extensive heritage, craft and dining/retail experiences in the locality.



# BLUEWAY PROFILES

## DEVELOPMENT

The Blueway was developed and is managed through a partnership between Waterways Ireland and the Clare, Galway and Tipperary County Councils. These partners and the county tourism officers formed a steering group to realise the initial project with the support of the Rural Economic Development Zone (REDZ) funding.

REDZ funding financed a consultation process with the local communities and the commercial sector which identified and then profiled the various local activity, heritage, craft, dining, accommodation and retail Blueway resources of the area. This consultation process also initiated networking between local commercial providers which lead to the bundling of complementary services such as activities, dining and accommodation under the Lough Derg Blueway brand. A photograph and video repository were also created and used as part of the Blueways promotional resources.

A profile of resources, such as the land and water trails, activity providers, heritage locations hospitality businesses and others, were presented in a series of printed 'Lough Derg Blueway Experience' maps and online interactive maps.

Waterways Ireland developed and continues to manage a Lough Derg Blueway profile on their Blueways Ireland website <https://www.bluewaysireland.org/> and their Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram accounts.



## COLLABORATION ON PROMOTION

Each county tourism office was closely involved in the development and the promotion of the Blueway and they along with Waterways Ireland continue to promote the Lough Derg Blueway Experience. The Lough Derg Blueway proposition encourages cross-selling across a vast geography. Four zones were identified, one at each side of the lake, Lough Derg North, South, East and West. By bringing a focus to these zones of activity, visitors can identify more clearly with that place and plan a visit within the geography.

## PRODUCT POSITIONING

The four geographical zones have a distinct offer, with a range of paddling trails associated with each. With over 160km of paddling trails in total to choose from around the lakeshore, these have been presented as a series of 21 individual paddling experiences, categorized according to suitability. Trails are aimed at all levels of capability from those who are **“New to the Blue”**, to competent paddlers seeking a more challenging experience. **“Stay and Play paddle areas”** such as at Portumna and Twomilegate, are positioned towards basic entry-level enjoyment of the water environment with sheltered water, little motorized craft and beach-like facilities.