

Blueways: Ireland's most exciting new destination opportunity...

Blueways are a new tourism and outdoor recreation offering that encourage more people to enjoy outdoor activities.

Blueways offer a range of experiences and reasons to explore different destinations across Ireland. What unites them is water in all forms: rivers, canals, lakes and the coast. Blueways offer experiences in, on and alongside the water that everyone can enjoy.

Creating a Blueway gives visitors compelling reasons to visit a destination. This guide explains more about the type of experience visitors are looking for from a Blueway and the factors to consider when developing one.



What are Blueways?

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

What Blueway Users want...

Recent consumer research unlocked important insights into Blueway users and what they're looking for. The following consumer proposition sums up the holistic experience Blueways should offer:

Blueways are Ireland's best kept secret...

Fun and adventure by boot, boat or bike on and alongside Ireland's scenic waterways, enjoyed entirely at your own pace.



Stretch yourself or take it easy...

Try kayaking or cycling to the nearest town for a tasty lunch.

Or a hiking loop, through forest, hills or shoreline with stunning water views.



Equally, choose to take it slow...

...losing yourself in a lazy canoe ride, the tranquil waters your guiding force.

If you're new to Blueways, our experienced guides will help you make the most of nature's playground.



After the day's activities...

...relax, swap stories over a delicious meal and enjoy the local craic before a well-earned sleep and the promise of a new adventure the next day.

Do it your way

Central to Blueway concept is the availability of a water trail or site (hence the term 'BLUEway').

Land-based trails (i.e. walking and cycling) with strong connectivity to water must also complement the water trails. (With activity providers facilitating access to the on-water activities).

With a strapline 'Blueway, do it your way!'; the ethos of the Blueways Ireland brand is to encourage active participation in outdoor recreation. This is done by offering a range of activity options and making it as easy as possible for all ages and abilities to engage in visitor experiences in a suitable environment.



Combine and Create

A successful Blueway combines complementary experiences into a compelling reason to visit.

This requires cooperation across a network of local businesses – food and beverage providers, attractions, accommodation and activity operators all working together to make their Blueway an exciting and attractive destination for visitors.

A location's history, culture, food, accommodation and night-time economy all have a part to play.

By combining these, visitor itineraries and packages can be created which increase dwell time and offer something for everyone.

Who is the target audience?

While people want different things at different stages of life, what unites our audiences is that they are all novices or '**dabblers**'. Here's what's important to know about them:

- Dabblers are enthusiastic but they're not experts. They want fun and enjoyable experiences rather than challenging ones.
- The activity isn't the focus of their holiday. Instead, it's a means of experiencing and exploring the destination.
- The supporting experiences that are available play a much more significant role in the choice of destination than the activity alone.

What's their stage of life?



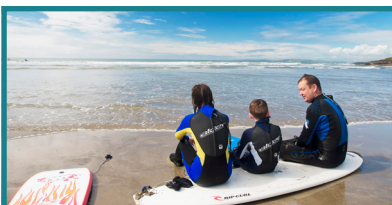
UNDER 30s

Blueway experiences and activities are among the many options open to this free and easy group. Generally speaking, Blueways appeal more to domestic visitors aged under 30 than international visitors.



YOUNGER FAMILIES

While some activities in and around water will appeal to this group, managing small children around water creates challenges.



OLDER FAMILIES

For families with kids in their early teens, Blueways are a godsend. They offer excitement, new experiences and surroundings – and the chance to spend time together as a family, away from screens.



ADULTS 55+

People with more time and fewer responsibilities are especially enthusiastic about Blueways. They can set their own pace, explore and enjoy a wide variety of experiences – and if they're feeling daring, they can dial up the excitement levels.

Research would indicate that the Older Families and Adults 55+ segments present THE GREATEST OPPORTUNITIES FOR BOTH DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL VISITORS.

A winning proposition must speak directly to the needs of Dabblers

When presenting activities to them, remember that Dabblers are:



**ENTHUSIASTIC NOT
HIGHLY ACCOMPLISHED!**



**SEEKING FUN NOT LOOKING
FOR SOMETHING STRENUOUS**



**LIGHT-HEARTED NOT
SERIOUS AND FOCUSED**

REMEMBER:

Activities are an aspect of the holiday. As they're not the whole focus, it's important to ensure the social aspect is dialled up.

A Successful Blueway...

Has **water at its heart** – but goes far beyond this

Offers a **holistic experience** with its history, culture, food, accommodation and night-time economy

Offers an **interesting and varied** mix of activities

Has **on-site Activity Operators** and **Experienced Guides**

How much time?

As participants are dabblers, activities are the means of exploring or uncovering a destination.

The average length of time people will spend on various activities is outlined below. Activity operators need to know this when planning trips and creating visitor itineraries and packages.



CANOEING

Average speed
3k per hour
travelling
3–6 kilometres



WALKING

Average speed
5k per hour
travelling
5–10 kilometres



CYCLING

Average speed
10–15k per hour
travelling
10–25 kilometres



SAILING & WINDSURFING

Introductory
sessions typically
last 2–3 hours

THE BLUEWAY PARTNERSHIP COMPRISES: