

Greenway

WELCOME TO THE ROYAL CANAL GREENWAY

Welcome to the Royal Canal Greenway, a long-distance, off-road walking and cycling trail connecting Maynooth with Longford Town. The 130km trail passes through the lush green landscapes of Ireland's Ancient East towards the mighty River Shannon in Ireland's Hidden Heartlands.

For more information visit www.royalcanalgreenway.org



HISTORY OF THE ROYAL CANAL

Work commenced to build the Royal Canal in 1790. For three decades the canal was the main mode of transport for cargo and passengers through midlands Ireland. In 1845 the entire canal was purchased by the Midlands Great Western Railway Company and officially closed to navigation by 1961.

In 1974 a body of enthusiasts formed the Royal Canal Amenity Group to first protect and then restore and develop the canal as a public amenity. Today Waterways Ireland is responsible for the canal, and it was under their stewardship, in association with the Royal Canal Amenity Group, that the Royal Canal was officially reopened from Dublin to the Shannon in 2010. This led to extensive work on the towpaths and the development of the Royal Canal Greenway by Local Authorities, Public Bodies and local communities.

Along the Greenway you'll also discover the National Famine Way, a digitally and physically waymarked 167km walking trail that connects Strokestown Park, Co. Roscommon with Custom House Quay in Dublin. For more information visit www.nationalfamineway.ie

Whether you are planning a car-free weekend or want to get away from the hustle and bustle of city life for a day, the Royal Canal Greenway has something for everyone. The choice is yours whether to explore the Greenway on foot or cover more ground on two wheels. We suggest that to make the most of your visit to the Greenway you explore this long-distance trail in shorter sections from the towns of Maynooth, Enfield, Mullingar, Longford & Cloondara. These sections offer a wide range of accommodation options as well as restaurants and cafes to refuel after a day on the Greenway.

In this guide we have suggested sections to explore for a day or afternoon on the Greenway. Pedal your way along tranquil paths bursting with wildlife and birdsong, or watch barge boats pass by as you explore the Greenway on foot.

EASY ACCESS TO THE GREENWAY

The Royal Canal Greenway is generally level and surfaced. Gradients are kept to a minimum and you'll find plenty of places to rest along the way.

ENJOY A SAFE GREENWAY JOURNEY

Shared Paths - Be aware of and considerate to other path users you meet. Cyclists, please give way to walkers, slow down and warn of your approach. Please ensure dogs are kept on a lead at all times.

Be Seen! - You should wear appropriate clothing for your activity and the weather.

Road Crossings and Road Safety - On the Royal Canal Greenway you will be away from traffic as the trail is mostly off road. However at some locations, the greenway crosses a main road. Please use crossing points provided and where there isn't an official crossing point, please cross with care.

LOCAL VISITOR INFORMATION

Mullingar Tourist Office - Market House, Market Square, Mullingar
Tel: +353 (0)44 934 8650 | Email: info@mullingar.ie | Web: www.mullingar.ie

Longford Tourism Office - Market Square, Longford
Tel: +353 (0)43 334 3509 | Email: tourism@longfordco.ie | Web: www.visitlongford.ie

Visit Kildare - Level 7, Aras Chill Dara, Devoy Park, Naas
Tel: +353 (0)45 898 888 | Email: info@intokildare.ie | Web: www.intokildare.ie



www.royalcanalgreenway.org

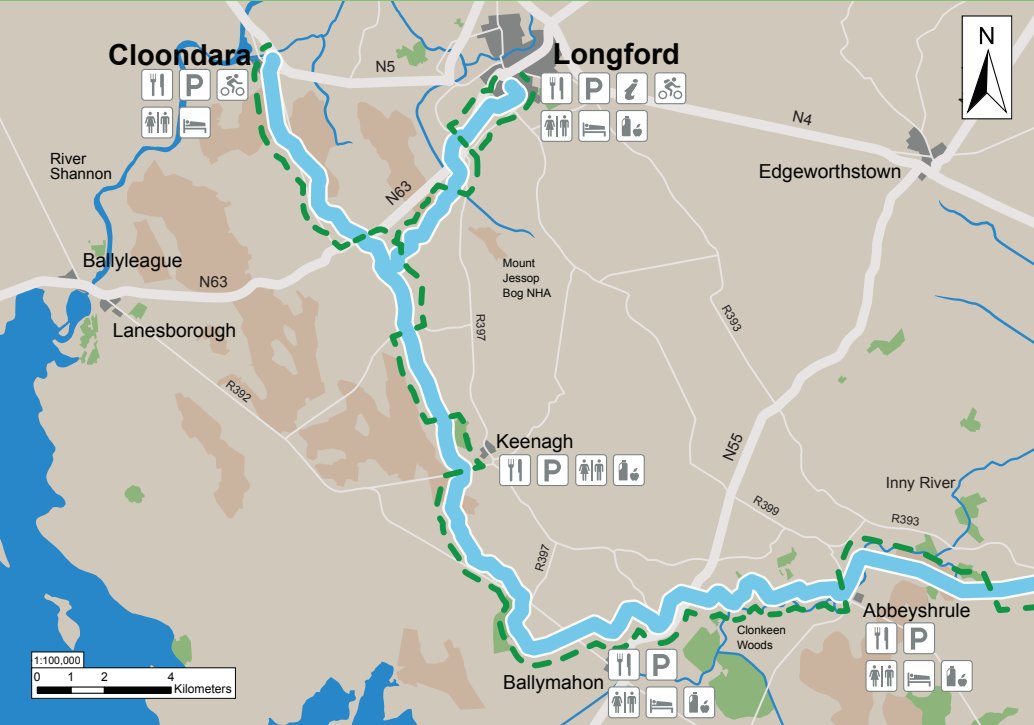


Supported by Longford, Westmeath, Meath and Kildare County Councils.





TRAVELLING FROM LONGFORD / CLOONDARA



A TRANQUIL JOURNEY...

One of the biggest towns along the Royal Canal Greenway, Longford is full of great accommodation options and places to eat and drink after a busy day walking or cycling along the Greenway. Located 122km from Dublin and 91km from Sligo, Longford lies on the Dublin to Sligo line of the Irish railway network so is easily accessed by train or by car.

Alternatively begin your journey from the tranquil harbour village of Cloondara. This picturesque village is home to plenty of barge boats and the final lock of the canal. From this location you can also explore the Shannon Blueway.

Follow the Greenway South from Longford Town

From Longford Town access the Greenway from Canal Walk and follow the 8km Longford Branch line of the Royal Canal. This completely flat route provides an excellent way to enjoy some of Longford's unspoilt landscape. As you reach the Royal Canal Greenway, the choice is yours whether to journey north along the canal towards Cloondara, or explore south along the canal towards Ballymahon and Keenagh.

Follow the Greenway North to Cloondara

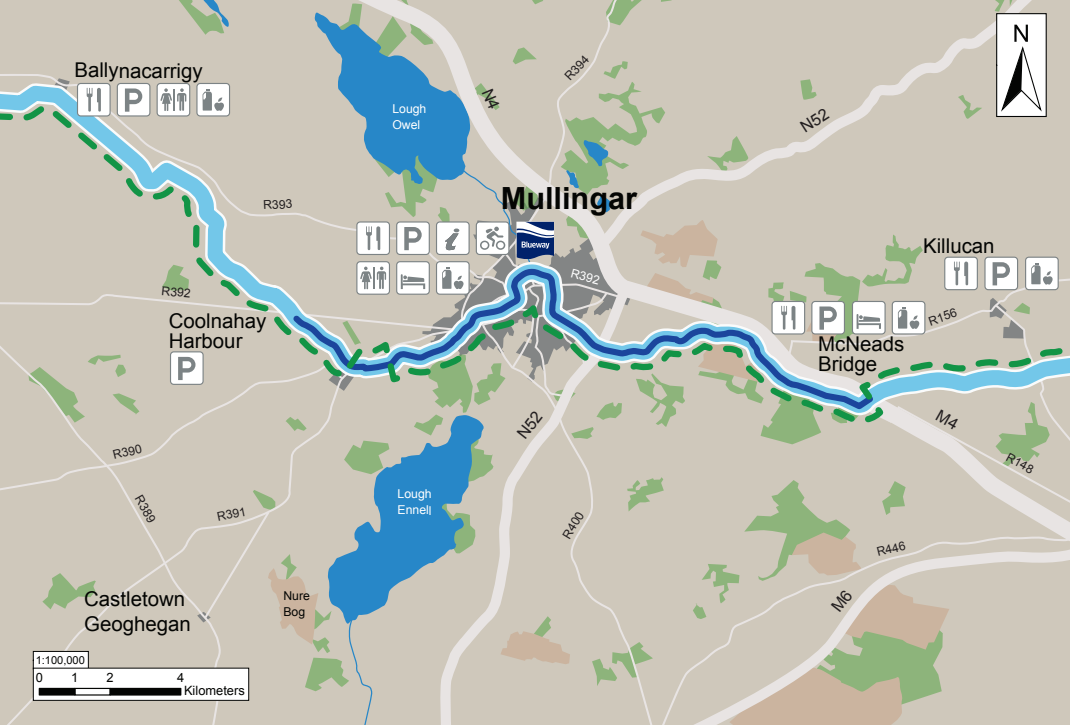
Once you reach the Royal Canal, follow it north for a further 8km to Cloondara village. This section provides a tranquil and safe environment along the quiet banks of the Royal Canal.

Follow the Greenway South from Cloondara

From Cloondara follow the Greenway south along quiet off-road trails past a series of lock gates towards Keenagh and Ballymahon. A great place to stop along this section of trail is the Corlea Trackway Visitor Centre located close to the Greenway at Keenagh.



ADVENTURE FROM MULLINGAR



BLUEWAY DO IT YOUR WAY...

Located at the heart of Ireland's Ancient East just 79km from Dublin, the busy market town of Mullingar in County Westmeath is the ideal location to base yourself for a day or weekend exploring the Royal Canal Greenway. Boasting excellent facilities, award-winning hotels, guest-houses and activities to suit every age, you will be spoilt for choice during your visit. The Royal Canal Greenway can be explored in either direction from Mullingar. Pick up a bike at the Activity Zone at Mullingar Harbour.

Follow the Greenway East

There's a lot to explore on your journey east from Mullingar towards Killucan. This section of Greenway will take you through open countryside. Bike hire is available at weekends and can be pre-booked for your return journey from Mullingar Bike Hire's Mobile Unit located at McNead's Bridge.

Follow the Greenway West

From Mullingar Harbour cycle or walk along the Royal Canal Greenway towards Coolnahay Harbour and Ballynacarrigy. The ideal place to stop and enjoy a picnic, spend some time in Coolnahay exploring the quaint historic Lock-keepers cottage and watching boats pass through the lock.

Old Rail Trail Greenway

In Mullingar at Newbrook and Ballinea, the Royal Canal Greenway seamlessly links with the Old Rail Trail, a 42km Greenway from Mullingar all the way to the River Shannon in Athlone. This Greenway traces the historic Midlands Great Western Railway track, past restored station houses, under pretty stone arched bridges and through areas of unique biodiversity and heritage.

MULLINGAR BLUEWAY TRAIL AND ACTIVITY ZONE



Unique to this section of Greenway is the 22km Royal Canal Blueway, developed by Waterways Ireland in 2018 with support from Westmeath County Council. The perfect addition to your Greenway journey, this paddling trail is ideal for experiencing the Royal Canal in a totally different way. You can find out more about the Royal Canal Blueway online: www.bluewaysireland.org

Located in Mullingar Harbour, the Blueway Activity Zone is the ideal location to hire a bike from Mullingar Bike Hire or begin your on-water Blueway Adventure. The zone also offers toilets, parking, shower and changing facilities.



EXPLORE FROM ENFIELD



THE YELLOW ROAD...

Situated on the main Dublin to Sligo rail line, and with hotels, self-catering and B&B's available, Enfield is a lovely location to overnight on your Royal Canal Adventure. In Irish the town is known as An Bóthar Buí (the yellow road) which came about due to the cattle markets that were traditionally held in the town. This often left the main street of the village covered in yellow hay. The historic River Boyne enters County Meath near Longwood, where you can also connect with the Boyne Blueway Trim.

Follow the Greenway East

Follow the Greenway east along the canal towards the historic university town of Maynooth. Look out for the aqueducts along this rural section of Greenway.

Follow the Greenway West

From Enfield follow the Greenway west through open countryside towards Longwood (Ribbontail Paddlers clubhouse), Hill of Down and Killucan. This quiet section of Greenway is ideal for those looking to immerse themselves in nature.



ONWARD FROM MAYNOOTH



TRAVEL THROUGH TIME...



Maynooth is a picturesque and bustling university town in north County Kildare, just 24km west of Central Dublin. Packed with great places to eat, shop and stay, Maynooth is the ideal location to begin your Royal Canal Greenway adventure. The town is also serviced by the Dublin to Sligo rail line which makes it a great starting point for those staying in Dublin looking to escape the city for an afternoon.

Maynooth to Dublin section of Greenway coming soon.

Follow the Greenway West

Pick up the Greenway and follow the canal west through open countryside towards Kilcock and Enfield. Stop for a rest and some refreshments at Kilcock or Enfield before returning to Maynooth or continuing to Longwood or Mullingar.