

Experience the Loop Head Peninsula through 14 looped walks



West Clare Trails is a project developed though partnership between local community members, Loop Head Tourism, its supporting partner Astoneco Management, Clare Local Development Company, Clare County Council and the Department of Rural Development under the Outdoor Infrastructure Scheme.

All feedback on your experience of the West Clare Trails is welcome. info@loopheadtourism.ie

Loop Head Tourism is a community-based voluntary group working to develop and market visitor experiences that contribute to sustainable community development on the Loop Head Peninsula.



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#### Wildlife & heritage on the Loop Head Peninsula...

Loop Head epitomises what the Wild Atlantic Way is all about; cliff views, vast skies, invigorating salt breezes, and plenty of quiet beauty spots where you can pause and wonder at this unforgettable part of the world...



A ramble along the West Clare Trails on the Loop Head Peninsula takes in wildlife, history, geology, heritage, scenery and of course the obligatory stops to chat with the locals and enjoy a meal or a coffee.

Along the way you can experience the essence of the Loop Head Peninsula, from ring forts to holy wells, from ancient grave yards to vernacular houses, cottages and remnants of our military and maritime history, as well as the peaceful, pastoral landscape.

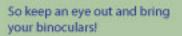




Year round, in all weather, you will experience the ever changing moods of the Loop Head Peninsula. Winter storms, slow moving clouds, dramatic seascapes,

all provide a backdrop to your meanderings along these quiet country trails. Springtime brings a multi-coloured hue to the fields and hedgerows.

Loop Head is famous for it's nesting seabirds, rare birds such as choughs, fascinating geology and a variety of wildlife, including Europe's largest group of Bottlenose Dolphins, grey seals, wild goats and otters.







There's a lot to see and do, Make sure to plan ahead. While much can be enjoyed as you go, some things require booking. Read on to find out about the many walks and activities that you can do in different areas of the peninsula.

So many ways to actively enjoy the countryside...

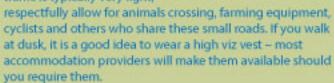
To make the most of your experience, you might like to try a guided walk led by a knowledgeable local chaperone. Martin Haugh of Loop Head Walking Tours offers a unique insight into the history and folklore behind many of the trails on the peninsula. There are a variety of activity packages which Martin can tailor to suit your needs. Contact: 086 826 0978 martin@łoopheadwalkingtours.ie



If you have less time and want to get around the peninsula a little faster, you might like to rent an electric bike.

Loop Head e-Bikes provides bespoke bicycle tours and eBike hire, with top quality Giant eBikes. These bikes can be collected in store or made available at designated collection points. All safety equipment is provided along with child seats and carriers if required. Contact: 065 9062486 loopheadbikehire.ie

Each walk is marked with coloured arrows on black recycled plastic way-markers and finger posts. For your safety, especially when walking in groups, walk on one side of the road. Although traffic is typically very light,





Or why not mix in with the locals and go for a community walk? Every Sunday at 12:15 sharp, Mags Keane organises a walk for those who want to lift their spirits and exercise their bodies, while meeting new people. Mags uses Carrigaholt, Co. Clare Facebook page to communicate the meeting spot every week.

## West Clare Trails Ilbaha

Rithuna village feels like a trip back in time; the peaceful remoteness, the clean air, the small picturesque 19th century fishing pier, the friendly people and ancient cliffs. Between Two Waters, a trail from the Shannon to the Atlantic ocean (2 km, easy walk), taps into the energy of two shores; one inhabited by humans and the other by a wonderful biodiversity. Or take St. Cuan's Way (5.7 km, easy walk) for a quieter farmland experience and stunning coastal walk.



### So much to see and do along the way..

Before you start your walk, have a look at the memorial to five local men who drowned piloting a ship along this coastline in 1873.



2 Located in the church at Moneen, the Little Ark is a small wooden structure on wheels containing an altar. It was rolled onto the beach at low tide to facilitate the Catholics in the practice

of their faith in the 19th century, when the local landlords refused them permission to build a church.



Grave of the Yellow Men, unknown sailors who died in a shipwreck in Kilbaha Bay in the 19th century.



St. Cuan's Well was believed locally to have powers to cure skin and eyesight ailments.



At the Bridges of Ross, marvel at the unique natural sea arch and keep an eye out for the many rare seabirds that pass close to the shore on their southbound migration.







After your walk, enjoy some great coffee and delicious bakes at the Kilbaha Gallery, on the main road to the Loop Head lighthouse.
The Gallery sells a wide range of Irish contemporary

art along with local gifts and souvenirs. Open daily during the high season and weekends thereafter. Contact: 065 9058843 www.kilbahagallery.com

### ROSS

As their names suggest, the walks in Cross offer many opportunities to experience the beauty of the landscape; panoramas of the entire peninsula from the Shannon to the Atlantic side and views of Kerry (on a good day). Enjoy the big skies and sense of wide open space as you walk through the quiet pastoral landscape. Stop at the heritage sites along the way and be sure to partake of our local hospitality on your return to the village. Tullig Golean View (7.89 km) is an easy-moderate walk with a little rise in the terrain; and Rehy View (9.93 km) is an easy walk on flat terrain.



### So much to see and do along the way...



There are many fascinating engravings on the old stone crosses in the Killballyowen Medieval Church graveyard.



Along our small roads you will see a variety of vibrant native wildflowers. The hedgerows are home to many small creatures and birds.



Tullig Famine Village: 1850 https://wildatlanticway.omeka.net/items/show/6



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Loop Head resident in the wild flower meadow.

Turby An Tuhnigh



Cloonconeen

The 19th century lighthouse at Kilcredaun was decommissioned in March 2011.

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Warning Spot

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For your salety, be missiful:

Leave only your

placement by to clifts I make no notice much the full of presents with decid obtains.

**Bild Watching** 

Wild Atlantic Way Discovery Point

Asse of Heritage Interest



Drop into Foley's Bar for refreshments and the experience of a genuine local Irish publicant act 086 0858153

The scenic fishing village of Carrigabolt is a hub for nature, wildlife and heritage. Walk up the Kilcredaun Heights (6.23 km, easy-moderate walk), enjoy fantastic views of the Shannon estuary and enter a land rich in heritage. Follow the Meadow of the Rabbits route (7.25 km, easy walk) and tune into the amazing bird life in the salty marshlands and the spirit of long-gone forests submerged in the Shannon waters. On your return, stop in the village and have a chowder. You might even get to hear some local stories!





#### o much to see and do along the way...



Rinevella sunken forest. Note that access to the beach is not marked and only possible in a few areas, when the ground is fairly dry.

The archaeological sites at Kilcredaun, such as St Credaun's well, are mostly on private land but some can be spotted along the trail.

Take the award-winning **Eco-Adventure** boat trip around the peninsula and meet the largest resident group of bottlenose dolphins in Europe. The dramatic view of the coastline from the water is stunning

(trip guided by Geoff and Sue Magee).



Get snacks and supplies for your walk from Keane's Bar, an old style pub and grocery shop dating back 200 years. In the evening you might encounter some local banter, impromptu sing songs & music, and of course, the perfect pint of Guinness.

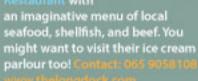


the last Gaelic Chieftains to rule this peninsula. Strategically located at the Mouth of the Shannon, the castle's story reflects the turbulence of European politics.

Stop halfway through the Meadow of Rabbits and enjoy some freshly baked scones, cake and a hot cuppa at

> You might be tempted to take one of Mary's baking workshops.





Enjoy the experience of an authenti-Irish Pub at



Sitting outside in the sun, you can look down the street to the harbour.



Loop Head



## West Clare Trails Doonaha

The local area of Doo is steeped in ancient history. The famous historian and antiquarian, Eugene O'Curry, was born here in 1794. The O'Curry (5.7 km, easy-moderate walk) passes by his home. There are a large number of well-preserved earthen ring forts (fairy forts) along these trails (the Loop Head Peninsula has the highest density of such forts in Ireland). Try an Bóthar Uaigneach, The Lonely Road (4.5 km, easy walk) for a walk surrounded by farmland, with many small birds and beautiful wild flowers in the hedgerows. Bring along your binoculars and check them out!



### o much to see and do along the way.



Birth place and Eugene O'Curry, Irish philologist and antiquary.

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Across from the O'Curry monument is the largest doublering earthen fort in

the area. It is on private land and is difficult to see from the road but is interesting to view from a satellite image on Google maps on your phone.



ViewingSpot Swimming Spot **Bird Matching** 

White Atlantic Way Discovery Point

Bir Corregion Chebhaltolyk

Area of Heritage Interest

Parking

For your safety, be mindfull.

Built in 1808, Doonaha church is the oldest church in the Killaloe diocese.





Doonaha

Dilo Atha

Billy and Valerie are happy to welcome visitors to their alpaca farm - meet the animals and learn about wool and the art of weaving.

Booking is essential at 083 8476093 loopheadalpacas@gmail.com

Enjoy the peace and solitude of our small country roads.

**Eshenifuren** 



# West Clare Trails Querrin

There are many intriguing stories about Querrin; stories of theft, landlord battles and revenge, stories of famine and ferry disasters, others of fishing and saints, all contained in a small area rich in boglands and biodiversity.

Both walks give you the opportunity to stroll along a saltmarsh lagoon, a special sand dune/salt marsh habitat for flowers, seaweeds, razor fish and birdlife. Make sure you take the trail extensions to discover the various gems along the way. For a short walk, take the Querrin Shore Way (4.96 km, easy walk); or for a more in-depth discovery, take the Poulnasherry Way (11.1 km, easy-moderate walk).



### So much to see and do along the way.



Built in 1843/44, Querrin pier was used to transport turf to Limerick by boat. Herring and mackerel have been fished from here since the 9th century.



View of the Shannon estuary from Querrin.

Querrin House was built in the late 1600s, in the Dutch style of a three story thatched house by the Van Hogart family; and rebuilt after a fire in the 1800s by the Burrough family.





Ruins of the 18th century Mount Pleasant House.



St. Martin's Well is a natural spring well that is famous for sight. It was used locally for water up until the time when electricity brought water pumps to the area.



You can experience our beautiful walks on horseback too!

Carmen's Riding School has treks suitable for beginners as well as experienced riders. Contact: 086 2264447 www.carmensridingschool.ie

4 Need a good stretch and some relaxation at the end of your walk? Try yoga with Trea at Purecamping. Drop in classes or one-to-one sessions in a beautiful



yoga studio. On-site Glamping and woodland camping available. Booking essential: 086 3819 216 www.purecamping.ie

### West Clare Trails | IKE

The Victorian Town of Kilken is surrounded by majestic views. Take the The Iron Spa, (7.5 km, easy walk); and The Greedy Bishop (16.7 km, easy-moderate walk), for a breathtaking experience of rugged cliffs and rolling waves. On a windy day you might feel the mist of a reversing waterfall! Take Three Counties Lookout, (12.58 km easy-moderate walk); and Farmy leads; (16.5 km, easy walk), to ascend Corballagh Hill. The view from its summit is magnificent, embracing the rim of the Atlantic for 150 degrees: the Aran Islands, the Cliffs of Moher and the Connemara mountains.



### So much to see and do along the way...



The Pollock Holes are natural rock pools that have long been a traditional swimming spot for locals. They can be accessed when the tide is out, at the start of the Kilkee Cliff Walk (part of the Kilkee South looped walks), down the steps from the car park.

This exposed cliff edge was the location of Dunlickey Castle, a tower house built sometime before 1574 by the MacMahon family (although no remains of the castle are visible). This is a very popular spot for mackerel fishing off the cliff edge.





Situated off the coast about 3 km south-west of Kilkee, Bishop's Island is a sea stack with sheer sides rising 40m from the water. The presence of a dry stone church, beehive hut and other ruins make this a very unique site.

The cliff face exposures of the south-west and north sides of the Loop Head Peninsula have been the subject of intense study by geologists since the late 1950s. They illustrate the development of a large scale submarine fan delta which evolved over 7 or 8 million years, during the Upper Carboniferous Period, 320 million years ago.





### So much to do in the town of likee



Why not explore by sea? **Nevsail Watersports offers** kayaking, canoeing, and stand up paddle boarding. Contact: 086 3308236 www.nevsailwatersports.ie



After your walk, try relaxing in a natural seaweed bath at





Call into the warm and friendly, family run, vintage café The Irish House for tea and cake. Contact: 065 905 6766



Enjoy panoramic views of the Atlantic ocean at Lir Restaurant and top quality food all day.



Naughton's Kilkee specializes in fresh seafood, steak and an extensive list of gin and whiskey.

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multi award winning seafood restaurant.



Experience O'Maras Bar, a very traditional Irish pub with the perfect suntrap out front. Contact: 065 906 0967



The Strand Bistro looks out at the wild Atlantic ocean and specialises in seafood, steaks, and amazing sun sets!



The Bay View Bar and Restaurant serves food all day and has live music on Saturday nights. Also a Hotel with a wide variety of luxurious rooms.



Diamond Rocks Cafe has a delicious menu to be enjoyed while taking in the most stunning view of Kilkee Bay.



### Stay a few more days on the Loop...

Loop Head offers many accommodation options, including family run hotels, guesthouses, bespoke B&Bs, farmhouses, self-catering cottages/apartments, caravan sites and camping/glamping facilities. Each one has it's own unique story and charm. No matter where you choose to stay, our many attractions are never far away (maximum 30 minutes by car).



#### The Old School House B&B in

Cross village, once the original school, has been repurposed by lan & Teresa Glendining into a delightful B&B full of character and charm.

Contact: 086 1549402



Rosewood Cottage is a fourbedroom family owned B&B offering a quiet place to stay with secluded garden and a real turf fire, only two minutes walk from Kilkee's famous beach. Contact: 065 9056984



Situated on a farm just outside Cross village, Hilltop B&B has one of the best views on the peninsula, overlooking the Atlantic ocean to the west and the Shannon river to the south. Contact: 087 7744646



Situated in Kilkee town centre, just 2 minutes walk from the beach and restaurants, Lynch's 8&B is an ideal location to stay in while touring the peninsula. Contact: 085 7520588



#### Glencarrig Farmhouse B&B

is situated off the coast road just outside Carrigaholt. Well known for her baking, your host Mary will spoil you with delicious products on arrival and an extended breakfast menu. Contact: 086 0748131



Rich in character and charm, Kilkee Town House offers the experience of being right in the centre of town and has 16 guest rooms operating on a B&B basis. Contact: 065 908 3623



The Stella Maris Hotel, a quaint 19th century Victorian hotel run by the Haugh family since 1997, is conveniently located in the centre of Kilkee overlooking the beach. Contact: 065 9056455



Just four minutes' walk from the beach, Kilkee Bay hotel offers bright, spacious, fully-equipped modern rooms, Wi-Fi and plenty of parking.

Contact: 065 906 0020



#### Kilkee Thalassotherapy Centre & Guesthouse.

Award winning guesthouse and Spa in the heart of Kilkee.

Spa Treatments, ensuite guest rooms, off street parking, WIFI. Contact: 065 9056742 www.kilkeethalasso.com

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