



# Ancient and Sacred Sites of the Linguan Valley

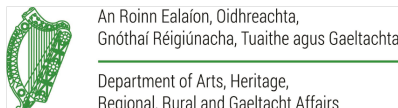


THE HIDDEN STORY

*Developing Tourism Destinations*

## Consultants

*Turtle Bunbury – Jacqui Doyle – Siobhan Geoghegan*



"This project was part funded by Kilkenny LEADER Partnership through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development Europe investing in rural areas"

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## Executive Summary

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This study explores the potential for the development of a heritage tourism destination along the Linguan river corridor from Knockroe to Owing in County Kilkenny. *The Hidden Story* consultants were engaged by County Kilkenny LEADER Partnership to guide and manage this exploratory process. They visited all local heritage sites, researched their stories and facilitated a series of workshops in the area from Dec 2016 to April 2017. A high response level with strong participation and engagement from both the local business and community sector in collaboration with key stakeholders emerged from the outset. A clear vision and wealth of stories was evident throughout this engagement.

An audit of the product and resources revealed a cluster of religious and ancient heritage sites, established walking routes and a good supply of shops, pubs, restaurants and accommodation in the area. A situation analysis, further identified the key destination strength to be the uniqueness of the sites, for instance, Knockroe Passage Tomb is older than Newgrange, Stonehenge and the pyramids in Egypt. Furthermore, the clustering and close proximity of key sites was identified as a key strength in any future development.

Fáilte Ireland's umbrella brand 'Ireland's Ancient East' (IAE) was identified as timely, presenting significant opportunities for heritage tourism development in the area. Strong potential was identified from within the current market to the region, specifically focusing on the culturally curious segment. The IAE storylines are divided into nine signature themes and the attractions in Linguan fit well into the Sacred Ireland and Ancient Ireland genres. The geographic dispersion of the cluster naturally inclines towards trail development. The uniqueness of the equinox at Knockroe, which currently draws several hundred visitors and the established national heritage week activities were identified for further development. The following key objectives were identified as a result of this process.

### Objectives

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1. Develop Ancient Sacred Linguan in line with IAE brand
  2. Develop appropriate walking and driving routes
  3. Prepare Mapping and Interpretation material to support these trails
  4. Organise training for local guides to ensure a story-filled experience
  5. Focus on Solstice Festival
  6. Organise events in line with Heritage Week
- 

Benefits accruing from increased visitor numbers, coupled with the multiplier effect are considered to be integral to sustaining a vibrant rural economy in the Linguan valley area. Positioning the Linguan Valley heritage tourism experience as a discreet 'rural' IAE product offering, collaborating and complementing the current offering in Kilkenny city was identified as a key driver.

For the purpose of this report the working title of 'Ancient Sacred Linguan' is used and an interim proposition statement has also been formulated.

***"Ancient Linguan – as old as the land itself...  
ritual stones, tombs and high crosses **sacred** to the people who lived here, 5,000 years ago ... with  
stories treasured and told by those who inhabit that same **ancient space** today"***



## Introduction

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The Linguan River is situated in south west Kilkenny and forms part of the border with Tipperary. It meanders through the townlands and villages of Kilamery, Knockroe, Tullahought, Ahenny, Kilmacoliver, Faugheen and Kilkiernan to enter the Suir river just past Carrick on Suir. A wealth of ancient and historic sites, are scattered along this path. The region is extremely rural in nature with a dispersed population and a strong tradition of farming and is under-developed in terms of tourism activity compared to other areas of the county.

## The Terms of Reference

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County Kilkenny LEADER Partnership engaged *The Hidden Story* to work with communities and businesses across the Linguan valley region. This involved facilitating three exploratory workshops/meetings to establish the level of interest at local level and to identify their vision for the area, undertaking an in-depth audit, engaging a steering group and providing future direction for development through an action plan.

Specifically, the key deliverables/outcomes of this consultancy work were;

- Build capacity (IAE focus)
- Audit of area/sites (5 x A's)
- Identification of emerging stories and routes
- Identification of future training needs/etc.
- Establish Steering Committee
- Compile Action Plan – Roadmap
- Identification of appropriate - funding streams and supports



## The Process

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### *The Hidden Story* team

- Met with KLP to refine the project objectives and scope.
- Visited each of the historic sites in the area.
- Carried out relevant story and desk research
- Facilitated three community workshops at various locations in the region with the following objectives;

### Workshop 1: Tullahought Community Hall

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<b>Date</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> December 2016</b>
<b>Stakeholders</b>	Kilkenny LEADER Partnership, Fáilte Ireland South Tipperary Development CLG, Kilkenny County Council Communities and Businesses
<b>Attendance</b>	22

The purpose of this session was to

- Inform participants how this exploratory process will take place
- Inspire enthusiasm for the project by telling the stories of local sites
- Present the Ireland's Ancient East (IAE) brand proposition (Sarah Fitzpatrick, Fáilte Ireland)
- Gain an understanding of participant's vision for the area
- Secure commitment for collaboration on this project process

### Workshop 2: Owing Community Hall

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<b>Date</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> February 2017</b>
<b>Stakeholders</b>	Kilkenny LEADER Partnership Communities and Businesses
<b>Attendance</b>	16

The purpose of this session was to

- Provide an understanding of the 5 A's of destination development
- Deliver an overview of the Ireland's Ancient East (IAE) opportunities
- Undertake product and resource audit using participant's local knowledge
- Assess the potential of the area by identifying its strengths and opportunities
- Identify potential challenges for destination development in the Lingaun valley region

### Workshop 3: Kilkiernan Cottage Restaurant

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<b>Date</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> April 2017</b>
<b>Stakeholders</b>	Kilkenny LEADER Partnership, South Tipperary Development CLG Kilkenny County Council, Communities and Businesses
<b>Attendance</b>	18

The purpose of this session was to

- Present the vision, product and resource audit findings from workshops 1 and 2
- Demonstrate how the area fits within the IAE brand
- Identify the target market for this offering
- Formulate a story-filled heritage tourism proposition for the Lingaun valley
- Identify key stakeholders and assess the current ability to deliver this proposition
- Identify future required actions to progress the Lingaun valley tourism proposition
- Gain agreement, form core group and transfer ownership



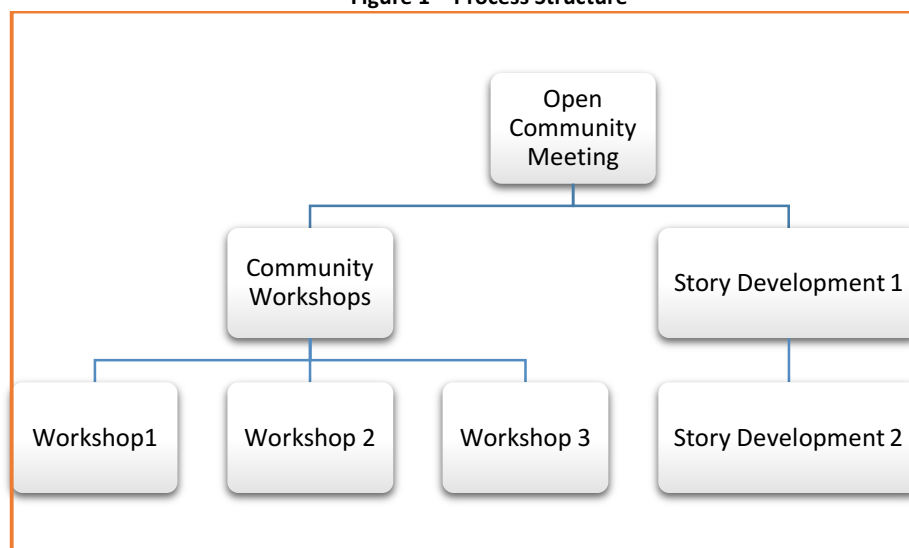
## Overview of Consultation Process

There was strong enthusiasm and engagement in this process from the outset. Representatives from both the community and business sector actively participated. They clearly articulated their vision for the area and spoke passionately about the rich heritage and uniqueness of the Lingaun valley at the first workshop.

The Hidden Story outlined the key stories of the area and subsequent story-sharing within the group unearthed a treasure trove of stories and a huge sense of pride of place. The IAE brand was explained and identified as a 'good fit' and one that holds significant potential for tourism development in the Linguan region. A product and resource audit by the group yielded a rich tapestry of heritage attractions ranging from the larger very important sites such as Knockroe, to other less know sites holding equally interesting and intriguing stories such as 'Fertility Stones' and 'Ogham Stones'. The SWOC analysis undertaken, ensured that the group was given time to stand back from the process and take an objective viewpoint in order to identify potential challenges and opportunities on the road ahead.

These processes culminated in the collation of a number of strategic actions identified by the group as a roadmap to move forward and progress the Lingaun valley heritage tourism product. Finally, the group assumed the transfer of ownership of the process going forward as they formed a core steering group.

Figure 1 - Process Structure



## Product and Resource Audit

A participant workshop was organized to identify the tourism potential in the Linguan Valley and address the current destination capabilities and challenges.

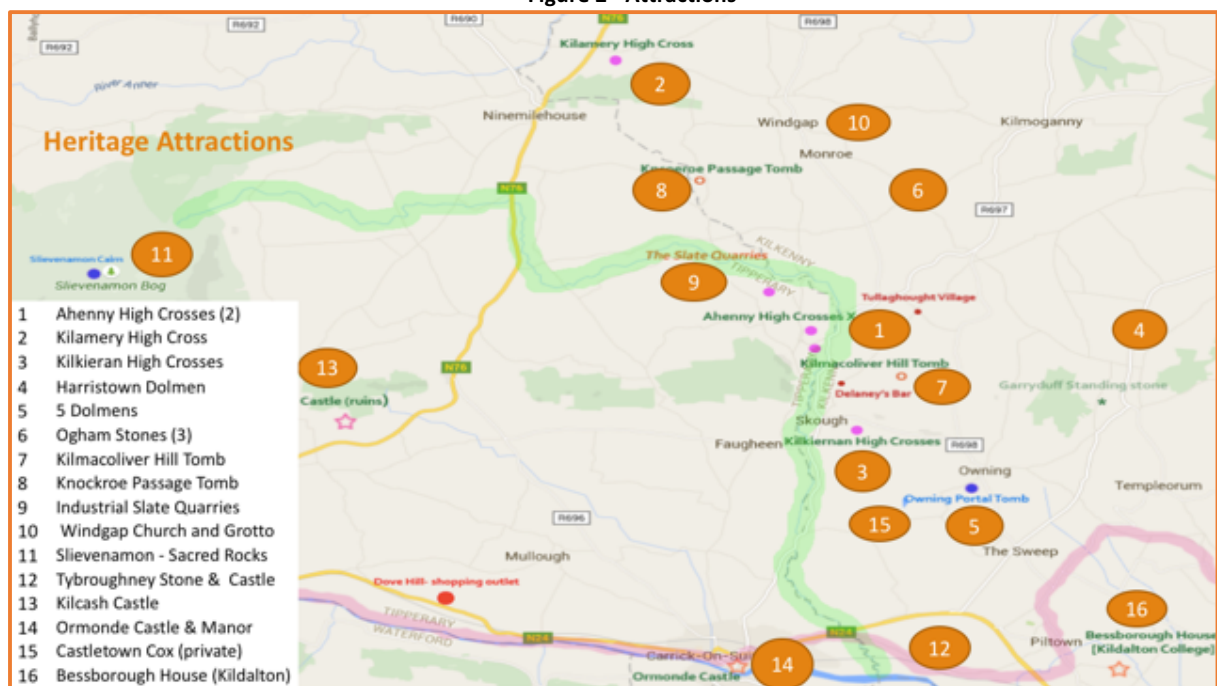
The audit focused on

- Attractions
- Activities
- Available Services
- Access
- Accommodation

### Attractions

Over 30 attractions were identified as being relevant to this study. Further analysis reduced these to 16 by combining particular items such as dolmens (5) and Ogham Stones (6). With the exception of Slievenamon (11) and Kilcash (13), the attractions are clustered along the river corridor.

Figure 2 - Attractions

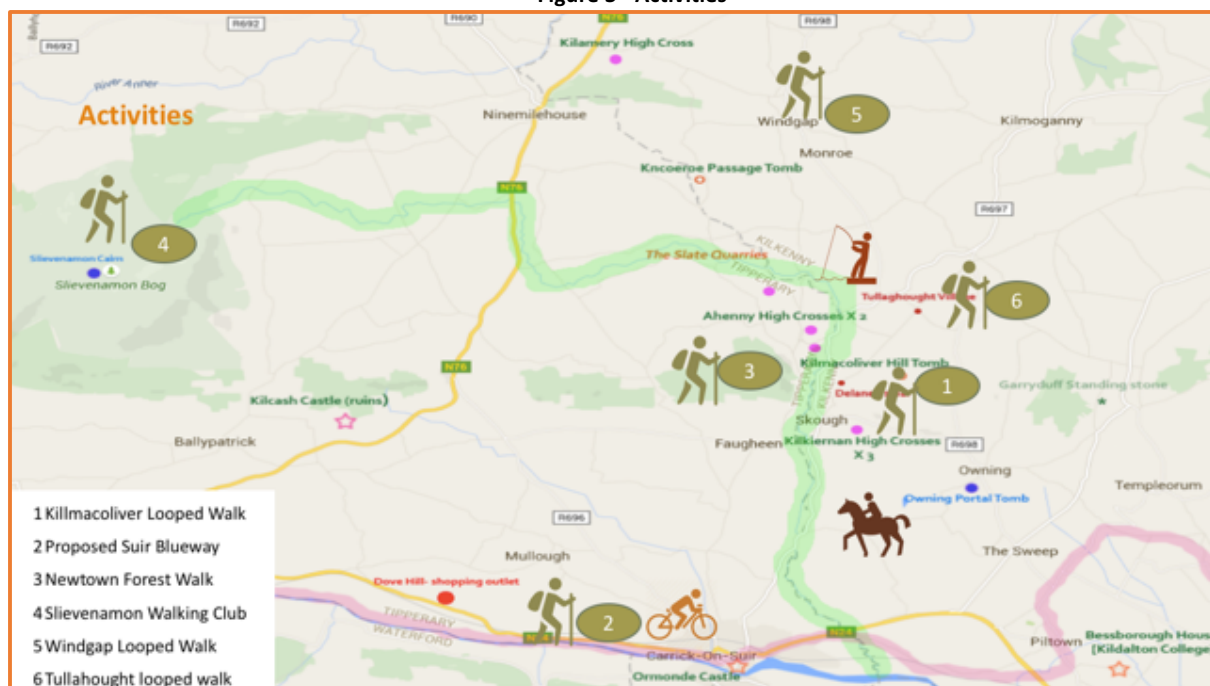




## Activities

Activity in the area are centered on the established walking trails with some fishing and horse riding also available.

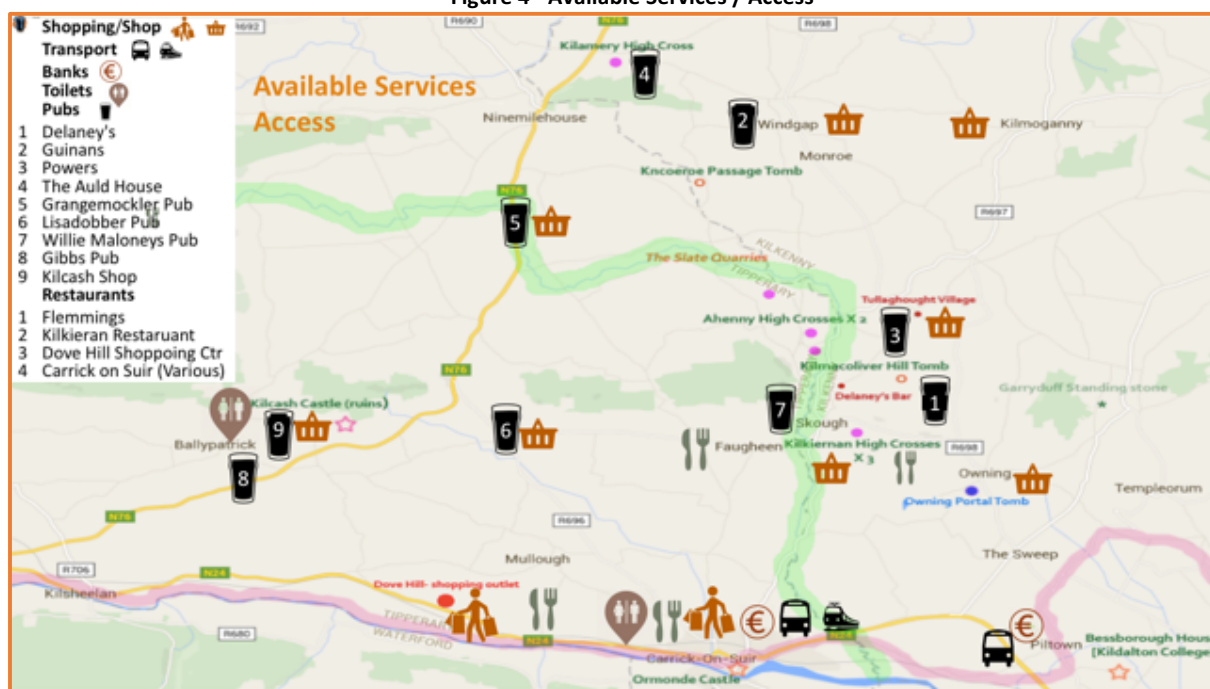
Figure 3 - Activities



## Available Services/Access

While the main services of shopping and banking are concentrated in the larger urban areas of Carrick on Suir and to a lesser extent Piltown, the valley area offers a good general spread of shops for general provisions. Nine pubs are well dispersed throughout the valley, however, only two restaurants are present.

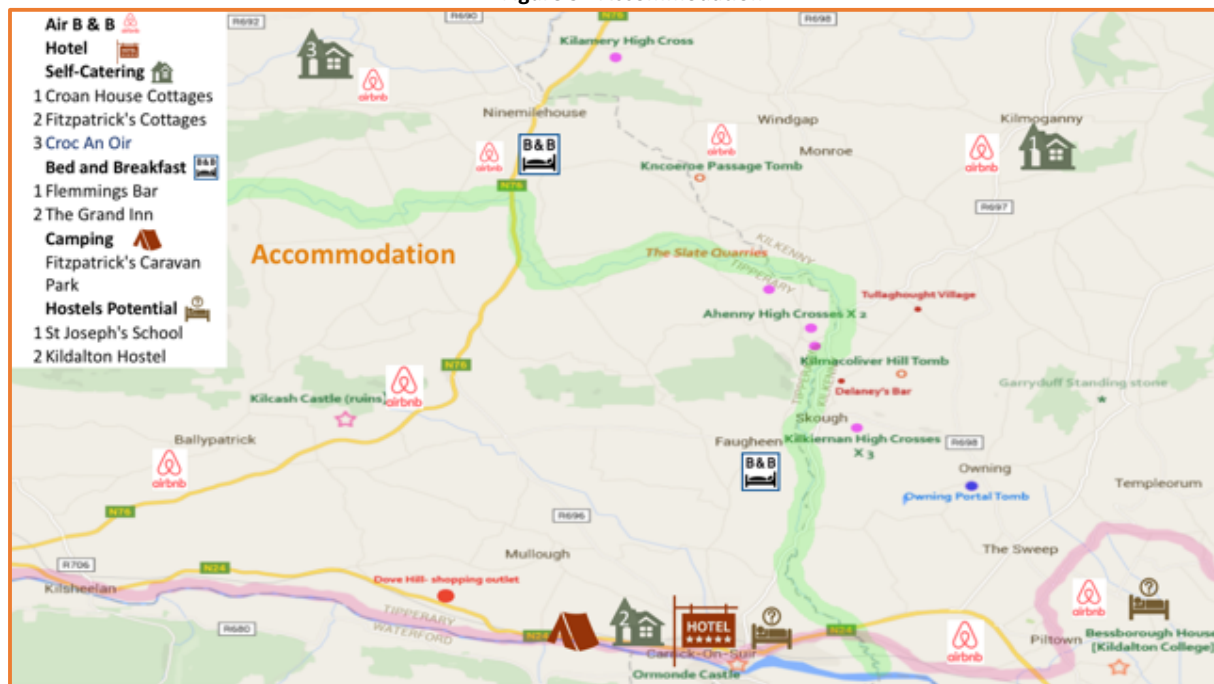
Figure 4 - Available Services / Access



## Accommodation

Only one accommodation provider situated within the catchment area (B&B Faugheen), however, the hinterland has a wide variety of accommodation types.

Figure 5 - Accommodation

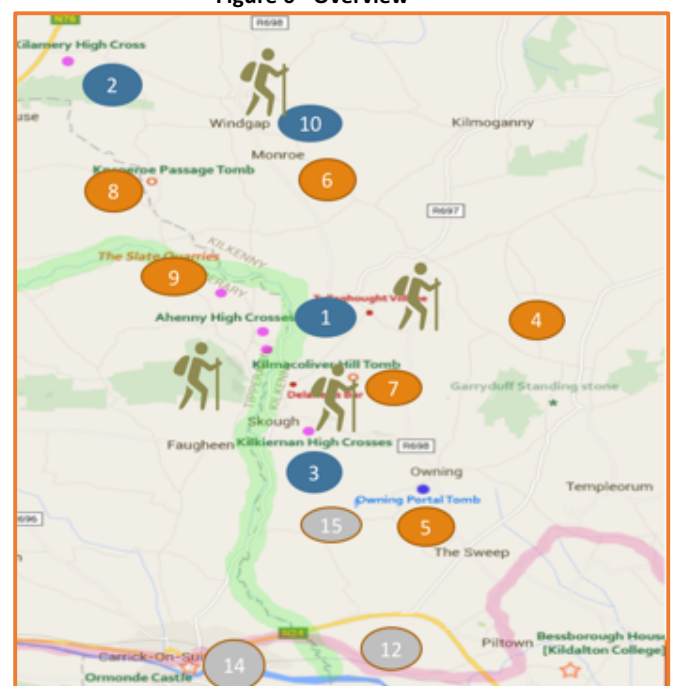


## Overview

The river valley itself demonstrates the rich potential for tourism. The heritage sites can be divided into two groups, (i) **religious heritage sites**(blue) and (ii) **ancient heritage sites**(orange). There is a good distribution of shops, pubs, restaurants and supporting services. Accommodation is limited within the river corridor, official fishing on the river is confined to one position and there are no guiding services available. There is ample scope for new business development to support the trail in terms of tourist services and activities.

There are four established walking routes in the area offering linkage opportunities for a walking heritage trail. Public transport access is limited to Piltown and Carrick on Suir, suggesting that a walking or driving route is the best option for this trail.

Figure 6 - Overview



## Situational Analysis

The process of undertaking a SWOC (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges) analysis challenged the group to robustly assess the existence of its strengths and to identify the potential opportunities arising from its assets. In addition, the group identified and examined possible challenges to be faced along the route. Overall this exercise yielded a very positive outcome.

The clustering of unique ancient and sacred heritage attractions is by far the greatest strength. Access and ownership of sites together with the practicalities of parking, signage and interpretation are key areas to be addressed. Opportunities exist for the development of new tourism businesses and to generate interest through events. The most significant threat is the competition for funding from other communities currently formulating similar plans to develop their area as an IAE destination.

**Table 1 - SWOC**

Strengths	Weaknesses
Variety of Product – Historical/Social/Cultural Unspoiled landscape Compact Area – Marketable Accessible (motorway) Strong Communities & People Off the beaten track is an attraction Rich in heritage and stories Involves two counties (more resources)	Parking at Knockroe Poor directional signage and interpretation Lack of Accommodation Lack of Services No branding or mapping Product not defined Some lands in private ownership Broadband coverage poor in some areas How to access local knowledge of sites
Opportunities	Challenges
Interpretation and mapping of sites Improved directional signage to sites Activities: Fishing, Equestrian (trekking), Walking product, Accommodation development Local traditional music Farm visits (rural experience) Promote legends Attract diaspora Slate Quarry (Vermont connection) Connection with Newfoundland IAE funding	Other areas are working on tourism initiatives and will be seeking Fáilte Ireland funding for same.

## Consumer Demand

Tourism is one of the key pillars of economic growth in Ireland. It is a **€7bn** industry with overseas tourists generating almost **€5bn**. For every **€1m** of tourist expenditure **29** jobs are supported. Ireland welcomed **8.8m** international tourists in 2016, that is almost two (1.7) overseas tourists for every member of our population and every **1,000** additional tourists support **14** jobs in the tourism sector. The impact of tourism is more pronounced and offers greater benefits in remote rural areas where traditional industries have declined and they are unable to attract the new industries of the knowledge economy. In these areas, tourism becomes not only a viable source of income but also a means of sustaining a viable rural community. The Linguan valley is one such area.

### Tourism to South East and Kilkenny

Kilkenny has always enjoyed a vibrant tourism industry. In 2015, a total of 267,000 overseas visitors came to Kilkenny and spent €45m. Similarly, 228,000 domestic tourists visited Kilkenny and spent €30m. These figures continue to increase annually.

*Regional tourism performance in 2015*

#### Overseas tourists (000s) to counties in 2015

County	Total	Britain	Mainland Europe	North America	Other Areas
Dublin	4,938	1,593	1,987	980	376
Carlow	62	31	23	7	1
Kilkenny	267	52	107	85	23
Tipperary (South)	133	46	45	29	12

*Regional tourism performance in 2015*

#### Overseas tourist revenue (€mn) by county in 2015

County	Total	Britain	Mainland Europe	North America	Other Areas
Dublin	1,726	323	657	457	289
Carlow	32	10	14	8	1
Kilkenny	45	14	14	12	5
Tipperary (South)	41	15	14	8	4
Waterford	75	23	24	16	12
Wexford	65	29	18	12	7

While there are no official figures, it is widely accepted that a large proportion of the Kilkenny visitors are to the city and rural tourism within the county has yet to capitalize on attracting tourist beyond the city limits. A similar situation exists in Waterford and within the main towns of Tipperary. The Linguan location has the potential to attract tourists from each of these destinations, initially for day trips building to longer stays.



## Tourist Profile

The statistical research available helps build a profile of the tourists to this region. The primary purpose of visitors to the South East is holiday making. An analysis reveals that 64% come on holiday, 38% were on their first visit, 45% were on a repeat visit. In addition, 38% travel alone, 35% travel as couples and 15% as a family. The largest proportion, 54% are over 45 years. 80% of visitors are white collar or above (socio economic grouping C1+). They come mainly in July and August, stay in hotels and guesthouses and enter the country by air and sea through Rosslare and other ports.

Month of departure (%)	South East	Accommodation used (%)	South East	Age (%)	South East	Route of entry (%)	South East
January-March	10						
April	8	Hotel	38	Under 19 years	7		
May	9	Guesthouse/B&B	17	19-24 years	8	Air from Britain	26
June	12	Rented	4	25-34 years	19	Air from Mainland Europe	27
July	16	Caravan & camping	3	35-44 years	13	Transatlantic Air	17
August	16	Hostel	1	45-54 years	16	Asia/Middle East Air	3
September	10	Friends/relatives	31	55-64 years	20	Sea from Britain	22
October-December	18	Other	5	65+ years	18	Sea from Mainland Europe	4

## Holidaymakers

Breaking this group down further and focusing on the 64% of holiday makers to the region it transpires that they are independent travellers who mainly travel in the summer, stay in serviced accommodation and have access to a car. Their characteristics suggest that this is an educated, older, adult market, who are free from family responsibilities. This profile fits well with the market research for international visitors to Ireland, especially the 'culturally curious' segment as outlined below.

### Research

62% on first visit, 33% repeat visits
56% travel as couple, 17% as other adult party
84% are white collar or above(ABC1)
59% are over 45 years
84% have no dependent children
49% hired a car, 24% brought car
75% arrange their holiday independently
57% consider the region good value for money
Highest national proportion of sea visitors from Britain 21%
77% travel May to September
49 % stay in hotel
29% in bed and breakfast

## Target Market - Culturally Curious

Failte Ireland's segmentation strategy identifies three segments for the Irish market as shown below. The profile identified in the statistics above match well with the overseas market segmentation strategy identified by Failte Ireland and in particular the culturally curious segment. This segment is most likely to be interested in the Linguan valley product.

### Culturally Curious

Tend to be slightly older, are very independently minded and are interested in places of historical or cultural interest

### Social Energisers

Tend to be young, looking for new experiences and excitement

### Great Escapers

Want to get away from it all, renewing family bonds and spending time together in a beautiful place



### Culturally Curious Characteristics (Full details appendix 1)

- They choose their holiday destinations carefully and are independent 'active sightseers' looking to visit new places. They want to 'do a place' and are unlikely to return for some time once they have visited it. They travel as couples or on their own.
- If they have children, they have grown up or have left home. Higher proportion of single adults and couples, fewer family groups, slightly biased towards females.
- Typically, Culturally Curious are out to broaden their minds and expand their experience by exploring new landscapes, history and culture. They are curious about everything and are delighted to discover the world for themselves once again.
- Most Culturally Curious are around 40 or over.
- They want it to be authentic. They won't follow the herd. This is their own exploration and they really want to cover everything, to 'do' a place.
- They love to discover history and always find ways of getting real insight. They are looking to encounter new places and experiences that are out of the ordinary.
- They like to feel that they have not only broadened their mind but also immersed themselves in a place, giving their senses a holiday too - the sights, the sounds, the smells, the tastes.
- They enjoy connecting with nature and getting off the beaten track. They like people to show an interest and educate them - to feel they've connected. They really appreciate personal guides.

### Ireland's Ancient East

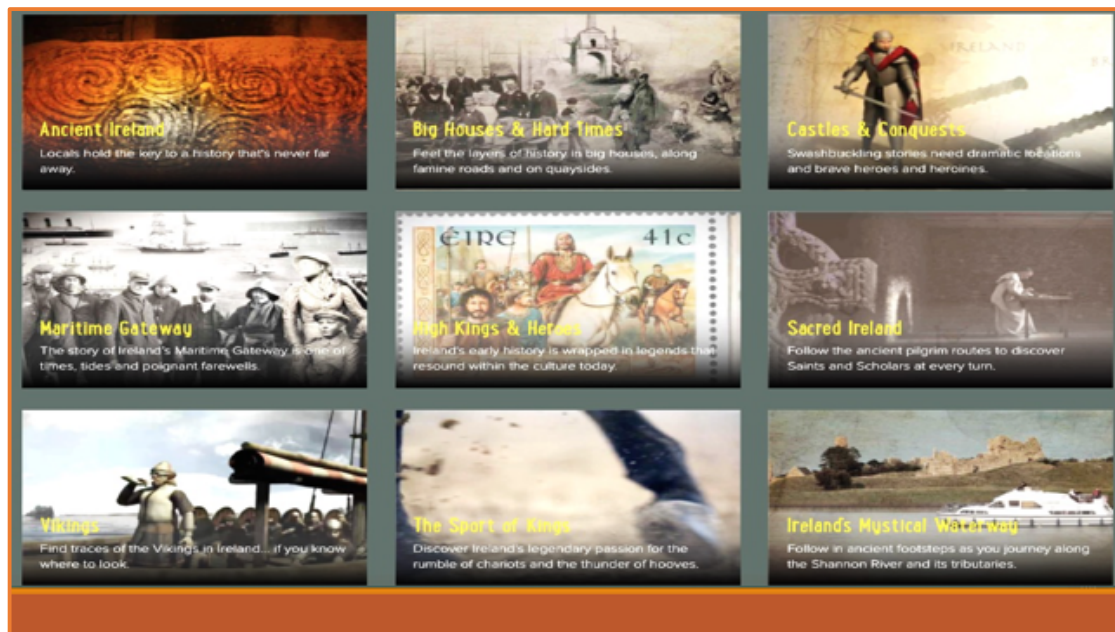
In 2015, Fáilte Ireland announced its new umbrella destination for the Eastern region of the country comprising of 17 counties titled 'Ireland's Ancient East (IAE)'. The IAE brand promise to the visitor is an experience of "5,000 years of history, in lush green landscapes with stories told by the best storytellers in the world" – storytelling is the DNA of the brand.



This new branding aims to ensure that all eastern counties (17) within the destination are presented in a cohesive and unified manner with the aim to create an emotional pull and inspire visitors to travel to this part of the country. The IAE brand has been developed to mirror the Wild Atlantic Way success story. It is anticipated that the IAE brand initiative has the potential to deliver an extra 600,000 overseas visitors to the region and increase visitor revenue by almost 25% to €950m by 2020.



Ireland's Ancient East has nine signature stories as outlined below. Destinations can align to one or more of these story themes to provide an unique and stimulating experience that takes the tourist off the beaten track to meet locals, connect with the past and feel that they have got 'under the skin of a place'.



The knowledge and commitment of the Linguan Valley Group indicates that locals are willing and able to engage in this story filled experience. The audit revealed a unique cluster of heritage sites and following sections show how they fit within the signature stories and how it's 5,000 years of history make it an ideal IAE tourist destination product.

## Stories

The attractions within Linguan have a natural 'fit' within the ancient and sacred signature stories. The anchor sites are outlined below and **all sites and their associated stories are detailed in appendix 2.**



### Ancient Ireland - Proposition Anchor Site - Knockroe Passage Tomb

Knockroe was identified as the most unique of all the sites. Overlooking the south bend in the Linguan it consists of 2 burial chambers of 30 decorated stones. Constructed around 3,000 BC, it fits well into the 5,000 years of history that anchors the IAE brand. Compared to other burial tombs which attract a high volume of tourists, it is as old as Newgrange, 600 years older than the Giza Pyramids in Egypt and 1000 years older than Stonehenge. In addition, it is the only passage tomb in the world with both a sunrise and a sunset solar alignment.

### Sacred Ireland - Proposition Anchor Site – High Crosses

At three different locations on the Linguan corridor, an impressive collection of iconic Celtic ecclesiastic art exists in the form of high crosses. These limestone treasures are themselves Ireland's greatest medieval sculptures. They are as old and important as the 9th century Book of Kells (the 5th Most Visited Fee-Charging Attraction in Ireland - 650,476 visitors, 2015). The rain-washed high cross at Killamery has been a model for many of the small high crosses sold across the world as an iconic Irish -Celtic symbol. High crosses are indicative of 'Golden Age of Saints and Scholars' and are recognizable as intrinsically Irish.

Within these two themes, there is an abundance of stories for the other attractions as detailed in appendix 2, under the following headings.

- Knockroe Passage Grave (The Caiseal)
- Kilmacoliver Hill Tomb
- Dolmens, Ogham stones and fertility stones
- Slievenamon and the sacred rocks
- The High Crosses at Kilamery
- The High Crosses at Kilkeirnan
- The High Crosses at Ahenny
- The Saints
- The Slate Quarries
- Norman Castles
- The Tudors
- Windgap
- Modern Twists

In a contemporary context, we tend to focus on county boundaries largely due to the administrative structure. However, as the Linguan straddles both Kilkenny and Tipperary, it is worth noting that in terms of Ireland's Ancient East, the area should arguably be looked at as the Kingdom of Ossory. The kingdom existed in various forms from the first or second century AD until the Norman invasion in the late twelfth century, but peaked during the reign of Cerball mac Dúnlainge (842-888), who is believed to have commissioned the various high crosses in the county. The name survives in the Catholic Diocese of Ossory, established in the 5th century, which continues to use approximately the same borders.

Alternatively, the Linguan area could feasibly be looked at as in terms of the Norman baronies of Kells (which includes Windgap, Tullahought), Iverk (Knocktopher, Piltown, Owing), Slieveardagh (Mullinahone), Iffa & Offa East (Carrick-on-Suir).

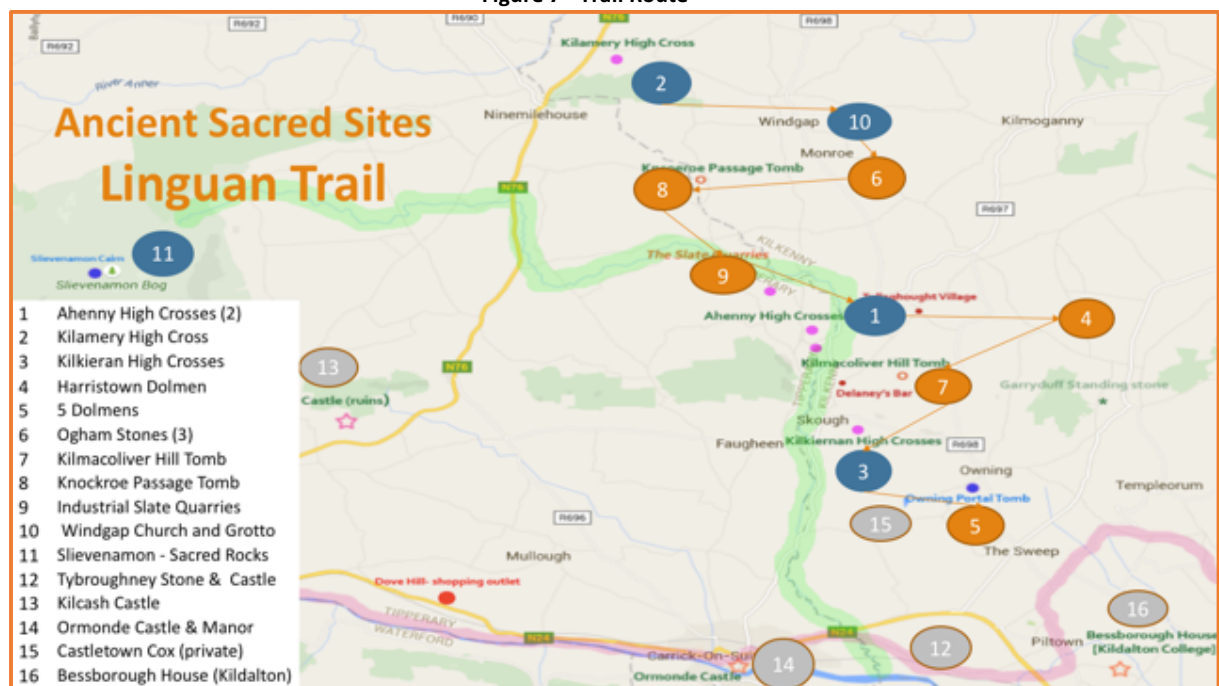
## Linguan Trail Route Proposition

Commencing at Kilamery high crosses and winding down the valley to terminate at the dolmens at Owinging a walking trail and driving route can be devised with the following stop off points. Easy navigation of the route will be facilitated through the close proximity and cluster nature of the heritage product in existence within this region. This combined with the wealth of attached stories and ancient traditions set within this beautiful unspoiled landscape under the shadow of Slievenamon will render Lingaun valley trail a very attractive and viable rural heritage tourism proposition.

**Table 2 - Trail Route**

Map No.	Location	Signature Story
2	Kilamery Graveyard and High Crosses	Sacred Ireland
10	Windgap Church and Grotto	Sacred Ireland
6	Ogham Stones	Ancient Ireland
8	Knockroe Passage Tomb	Ancient Ireland
9	Slate Quarries	Ancient Ireland (recent industrial heritage also)
1	Ahenny High Crosses	Sacred Ireland
4	Harristown Dolmen	Ancient Ireland
7	Kilmacoliver Hill Tomb	Ancient Ireland
3	Kilkeirnan High Crosses	Sacred Ireland
5	Dolmens/ Owinging Portal Tomb	Ancient Ireland

**Figure 7 - Trail Route**



The trail does not intend to exclude other important sites, it merely aims to provide a focus for tourists and identify a potential core route. For instance, the sacred stones on the top of slievenamon can be seen from Kilamery and Knockroe, they can be pointed out and their story told as part of the route narrative.

## Proposition Statement

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The proposed trail rests on the ancient and sacred sites and their stories told by locals. As this is an exploratory study, the name 'Ancient and Sacred Linguan' is used as a working title. Similarly, an interim proposition is suggested, both of which can be further developed as the trail evolves.

***"Ancient Linguan – as old as the land itself...  
ritual stones, tombs and high crosses **sacred** to the people who lived here,  
5,000 years ago ... with stories **treasured and told** by those who inhabit that  
same ancient space today"***

## Objectives and Action Plan

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### Vision of 7<sup>th</sup> December

1. Industrial Heritage Interpretation - Ahenny (people/traditions/stories)
2. Heritage Trail - Sacred Land –Heritage Tour (wealth of heritage sites)
3. Specialised Tours
4. Independent Traveller – (needs to be mapped/accessible and interpreted, local guides & storytellers)
5. Optional walking, cycling. Driving trails/routes (accommodation & food)
6. Build on Equinox festival as a hook event

### First Steps

1. Develop **Ancient Sacred Sites** in line with IAE
2. Develop appropriate **walking and driving route**
3. Prepare **Mapping and Interpretation** material and local guide **training**
4. Focus initially on **Solstice Festival** Development / Heritage Week

In order to take the first steps in realising this proposition, some short term objectives were identified in order to establish the trail and start developing events.

1. Develop Ancient Sacred Linguan in line with IAE brand
2. Develop appropriate walking and driving routes
3. Prepare Mapping and Interpretation material to support these trails
4. Organise training for local guides to ensure a story-filled experience
5. Focus on Solstice Festival
6. Organise events in line with Heritage Week

The actions to support these objectives are summarised below.

## Summary of Objectives and Actions

<b>1. Develop Lingaun Ancient/Sacred sites in line with IAE brand</b>	
Stakeholder Consultations Failte Ireland (FI), Kilkenny County Council (KCC), Office of Public Works(OPW), County Kilkenny Leader Partnership (KLP), Heritage Council (HC)	Actions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Research and compile stories for each site</li> <li>2. Develop a brand name and logo (Ancient Sacred Linguan is a working title)</li> <li>3. Develop an online web and social media presence</li> <li>4. Develop interpretative panels at each site</li> <li>5. Ensure adequate permissions, parking and access at sites</li> <li>6. Undertake Lingaun Valley IAE brand awareness at local level through guided familiarization trips</li> <li>7. Develop an overall promotional concept</li> </ol>
<b>2. Develop appropriate walking and driving routes</b>	
Stakeholder Consultations KCC, KLP, Trail Kilkenny, Coillte, local landowners	Actions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Map points of interest and develop walking/driving routes maps</li> <li>2. Indicate on maps - local guides, amenities, services and attractions</li> <li>3. Develop supporting heritage information to facilitate self-guiding</li> <li>4. Develop App/brochure/podcast content downloadable from web site</li> <li>5. Promote through all available channels</li> <li>6. Provide information on local guides, storytellers, events, services, attractions, amenities</li> <li>7. Create awareness among the all sectors within the industry</li> </ol>
<b>3. Prepare Mapping and Interpretation material to support these trails</b>	
Stakeholder Consultations FI, KCC, KLP, OPW, HC	Actions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collate information, images, stories and text for interpretative panels at sites</li> <li>2. Produce Information Leaflets (hard and soft copied)</li> <li>3. Identify key stories for each site consisting of facts/folklore and stories for oral delivery</li> <li>4. Organise appropriate road and site directional signage in association with KCC and relevant stakeholders</li> <li>5. Research possible funding streams</li> </ol>
<b>4. Organise training for local guides to ensure a story-filled experience</b>	
Stakeholder Consultations FI, KLP	Actions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish a list of individuals who are interested in providing this service in a paid/voluntary capacity</li> <li>2. Establish a panel of interested individuals to participate in this training</li> <li>3. Host story nights or events to develop a bank of local stories and traditions</li> <li>4. Invite Guest Speakers to sites to animate and deepen the learning</li> <li>5. Source appropriate training and funding for training of local guides</li> </ol>
<b>5. Focus on Solstice Festival</b>	
Stakeholder Consultations FI, KLP	Actions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Liaise with OPW as site managers and local landowners and community</li> <li>2. Develop a Lingaun/Knockroe - Winter Solstice Festival</li> <li>3. Create a package festival with fringe events (1-3 days), local music, arts, drama, light show</li> <li>4. Re-enactment of Pilgrim Route</li> <li>5. Celebrate and interpret the lighting up of the tomb with guest speaker</li> <li>6. Manage site access</li> <li>7. Pilgrimage to summit over 3-day weekend</li> <li>8. Promote widely through all available channels</li> </ol>
<b>6. Organise events in line with Heritage Week</b>	
Stakeholder Consultations HC, FI, KLP	Actions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Organise heritage events in Lingaun valley to coincide with National Heritage Week (19<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> August 2017)</li> <li>2. Undertake co-operative events with Tullaghought heritage week in August 2017</li> <li>3. Develop a programme of activities, events, talks and sharing our stories</li> <li>4. Develop a schedule of guided tours or taster events for Heritage Week 2017</li> <li>5. Involve local schools in events</li> <li>6. Promote festival</li> <li>7. Evaluate events and build future recommendations / plans</li> </ol>

### Other points to note

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- Use local businesses – shops, pubs, post office as information points/Hubs
- Create Linguan Valley Stamp programme similar to the Camino Stamps or Burren Passport
- Potential linkages from Medieval Mile to Ormonde Castle/High Crosses (urban to rural)
- Continue Linguan to existing Butler Trail
- Ensure WIFI hot spots, perhaps through the CLAR programme
- Define ownership and rights of way at each site i.e. Slate Quarries/etc

### Recommendations to Optimise Effectiveness

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**Strategy:** As the outcome of this preliminary research, the actions identified represent the first steps in the Linguan destination development process. Destination development is best adopted as a phased approach and further work is required to complete a strategy for the medium and long term to ensure a coordinated approach. IAE connects Linguan to the national strategy, however, it is imperative that plans developed for Linguan also link with the county tourism strategies/objectives of both Kilkenny and Tipperary as identified.

**Stakeholders:** The project is gaining momentum locally and it is essential to build the core group to involve all stakeholder groups. Particularly, it is important to ensure that all local tourism businesses ‘buy in’ to the process and participate in the collaborative development of the trail. Defining, interoperating and signposting the route is a challenge that will be best met through strong key stakeholder co-operation in conjunction with local knowledge and best practice.

**Ownership and Direction:** In order to maintain focus and collaborate effectively the group must clearly identify their terms of reference and their short and long term objectives. This will allow them to set their own direction and pace as they direct and shape their locality as a tourism destination. See sample Terms of Reference in Appendix 3

**Storytelling:** IAE promotes Ireland as having the best storytellers in the world and indeed that is the case with some people. However, for many, the art of storytelling is a learned skill and in this case, needs to be combined with the ability to guide and interpret local heritage sites and therefore training is required to allow Linguan deliver on the IAE promise.

### Potential Sources of Funding and Supports

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Additional sources of funding are required to achieve significant tourism destination development in the Linguan valley. In addition, effective and collaborative work by KLP, KCC, relevant stakeholder agencies, the private sector and communities will be required.

### Fáilte Ireland

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Fáilte Ireland as the national tourism development authority for Ireland plays a key role in developing brand propositions to support the tourism industry. FI works to sustain Ireland as a high-quality tourism destination to both the domestic and international markets. In recent years FI has developed the IAE branding and messaging to attract international visitors to the Eastern region of the country. Kilkenny is positioned alongside 16 other counties within the IAE umbrella destination.

FI has developed a support framework to help build this brand and deliver on the brand promise. It does this through capital and other grant types, advice, signage, guidance and management development training to help tourism businesses and groups to better manage and market their products and services under the IAE brand proposition.



Fáilte Ireland is committed to working with partners in the community, private business and public sectors to bring the IAE brand to life and deliver an overall visitor experience on the ground. To support this, Fáilte Ireland operates a number of grant schemes, 2015 saw the launch of the first phase of funding called 'New Ideas in Ancient Spaces Capital Grant Scheme' for projects with expenditure ranging from 10K to 200K which focused on the creation of;

- a destination that is easy and enjoyable to explore;
- where heritage experiences are memorable because they tell their story so well;
- where the stories told at individual heritage sites link to other sites across the region and to an overall timeline, building to a unique, fascinating and enriching journey through 5000 years of European history.

Funding under this scheme was approved as follows:

1. Lullymore Heritage & Discovery Park Ltd - County Kildare (€29k);
2. Titanic Connections, Cork (€50k);
3. Uisneach Interpretative Centre, County Westmeath (€65k);
4. Tholsel Visitor Centre, Fethard, County Tipperary (€198k);
5. Redevelopment of Powerscourt Visitor Interpretation Experience, County Wicklow (€80k);
6. Athlone Castle – Enhancing the Visitor Experience, County Westmeath (€76k);
7. Hook Lighthouse Guided Tour Experience, County Wexford (€80k);
8. Journeys of Exploration, Anglo Irish Heritage at Blackrock Castle, Cork (€160k);
9. Dunleckney Maltings, Carlow (€200k);
10. Birr's Anglo Irish & Early Christian Heritage, County Offaly (€84k);
11. Boyne Valley: Waterway through Time, Trim, County Meath (€86k);
12. Ancient Stones, Untold Stories – St Canice's Cathedral & Round Tower Interpretation Project, Kilkenny (€80k).

It is envisaged that there will be opportunities under future schemes within this funding threshold from Fáilte Ireland, however no specific details are available at present.

#### Kilkenny County Council

Kilkenny County Council has identified tourism as a significant driver of the local economy and as such has leveraged significant funding support into the county. KCC plays a vital role in public realm works which result in enhanced facilities, amenities and streetscapes for both locals and visitors to enjoy. County Kilkenny has a diverse range of tourist attractions which can be capitalised on to develop a strong, year-round, high quality sustainable tourism industry. KCC has been instrumental in planning the development of tourism infrastructure known as the 'Medieval Mile' within the city. Planned developments will involve a total investment of €15m by Fáilte Ireland under the Large Tourism Projects Funding Scheme covering six projects over the life of the 2014 to 2020 Plan as follows;

1. Public realm improvement from The Parade to Irishtown
2. A new museum of National and local attraction housed in a restored St. Mary's Hall
3. A great garden along both banks of the River Nore between Johns bridge and Greens bridge
4. The restoration of Evans home to include a new Butler Gallery
5. A new tourist office to be housed within the Tholsel
6. A vertical garden structure located at Irishtown adjacent to the entrance to the Smithwick's brewery site.

Other projects around the county include Castlecomer Demesne, Woodstock Gardens, the River Nore Walking Route and Mount Juliet Estate amongst others. It is recommended to work in partnership

with KCC to ensure added value and maximising of all available technical and compliance resources to support the work of the Langan Valley Tourism Group.

### The Office of Public Works (OPW)

The OPW's aim is to maintain a high standard in managing and conserving our buildings and heritage. In addition, the OPW works in a strategic partnership with Fáilte Ireland's to assist in the refurbishment and enhancement of key visitor attractions making them more accessible to visitors. Recent funding announcement included among others an investment of €585K for works at Ormond Castle, Co Tipperary. New sites are expected to receive funding in the future. The OPW believe that this partnership with Fáilte Ireland is critical to unlocking the full potential of our history and heritage and will contribute significantly to economic and employment growth across the regions. It is crucial that the Langan Tourism Group form close alliances with the OPW as an integral stakeholder and influence future funding applications to benefit the Langan valley Heritage Tourism product.

### Kilkenny LEADER Partnership (KLP)

KLP administer the LEADER Rural Development Programme funds, the current programme period will run to 2020. Local Objectives and Strategic Actions under this programme will be rolled out through the Kilkenny Local Development Strategy. The following relevant Strategic Action has been identified for development within the Kilkenny LDS.

#### *Strategic Action 1.1.3 River-based culture and heritage tourism initiative*

(source KLP -Local Development Strategy 2014- 2020)

**Description:** The River-based Culture and Heritage Tourism Initiative is a pilot project in the Langan River Valley to develop a low-cost culture and heritage tourism initiative by supporting a limited number of animation, training initiative and capital projects.

KLP will seek to utilise the interest in heritage among communities - with the relatively dense distribution of monuments in parts of the county to develop a model for low-cost river heritage tourism products. KLP will provide training on the principles of 'best practice' in heritage tourism to a network of community activists and commercial operators in the Langan River Valley (a microcosm of Fáilte Ireland's IAE that extends from Slievenamon's slopes to Carrick-on-Suir forming the Kilkenny-Tipperary border), in line with both IAE brand proposition concepts and The Heritage Council's guidelines on sustainability. KLP will then work with the community activist network to form a strategy, which they own, to drive tourism development focused on heritage and natural assets (scenery, hospitality, local knowledge, etc.) of the river valley. Through this pilot project, community and commercial operators will collaborate on a shared development and operational agenda, including capital projects.

**Primary Target Group(s):** Community groups and commercial operators Geographic Area: Langan River basin.

**Lead Stakeholder:** Kilkenny LEADER Partnership

**Collaborating Organisations:** Fáilte Ireland, NPWS, IFI, OPW, Kilkenny Tourism

LEADER Programme supports include:

- ✓ Capital support for new and existing tourism businesses

- ✓ Support for community based tourism groups
- ✓ Support for Feasibility Studies/Plans/Strategies
- ✓ Group Marketing initiatives
- ✓ Support for skills development and relevant training
- ✓ Inter-territorial and transnational funding to forge linkages and share expertise with other regions nationally or within Europe

KLP is also responsible for a number of social employment/income support schemes including the Tús Programme, the Rural Social Scheme and the Walks Scheme (Rural Recreation Officer) which can greatly assist in the operation of community tourism initiatives. See Hook Tourism [www.hookpeninsula.com](http://www.hookpeninsula.com)

### Local Enterprise Office (LEO)

Kilkenny LEO administers grant schemes and training programmes that are relevant to the private sector. There may be opportunities to leverage specific tourism related training and mentoring and on-line selling support to private tourism operators within the Langaun valley. In addition, the LEO runs regular training and information initiatives in the area of collaboration, marketing, and effective social media etc.

### Heritage Council

The Heritage Council based in Kilkenny city supports a wide range of heritage projects throughout the county through its annual grant programme. It works with individuals, heritage groups and Local Authorities to ensure appropriate management of Ireland's heritage. Currently the grant scheme is closed for applications, however close linkages should be forged with the Heritage Officer and the Council.

### CLÁR Funding

The CLÁR programme (Ceantair Laga Árd-Riachtanais) is funded by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. It is delivered, for the most part, by Local Authorities in consultation with local communities. The CLÁR programme is a targeted capital investment programme for rural areas which have experienced significant levels of depopulation. Following closure of the scheme in 2010, the scheme was re-opened by Minister Ring in 2016 to support the development of remote rural areas through small-scale capital projects involving collaboration between Local Authorities and communities. The CLÁR programme funded 651 projects across Ireland in 2016.

Areas targeted under the Programme include parts of county Kilkenny. A further 5 million was announced for CLÁR areas by Minister of State for Regional Economic Development, Michael Ring TD, in March 2017 with a relevant measure titled;

Measure 3: Targeted Community Infrastructure Needs

Recommended to research the potential for support towards WiFi hotspots in the Langaun valley region as a key support to enabling the visitor to maximise their tourism experience.

### Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport

In recent years, the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport have significantly invested in Greenways around Ireland which has reaped major economic benefits to the local economies along these routes. Developments in this area will increase visitor numbers and support the work of rural based tourism initiatives.

## Interreg Funding

The new EU inter-regional co-operation programme 'INTERREG' announced its third call for project proposals on March 1<sup>st</sup> with a closing date of June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

See Programme details on

[/www.interregeurope.eu/fileadmin/user\\_upload/documents/Call\\_related\\_documents/Interreg\\_Europe\\_Programme\\_manual.pdf](http://www.interregeurope.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/Call_related_documents/Interreg_Europe_Programme_manual.pdf)

## Conclusion

The Linguan river valley has a wealth of sacred and ancient heritage sites that can be organised into a heritage trail for the culturally curious tourist. The aim is to entice visitors from the cities of Kikenny and Waterford and develop a tourist destination under the IAE brand. The objectives and actions to achieve this are summarised below.

### Trail Outline Plan

Target Market	<b>Culturally Curious</b> international visitors
Unique Features	Cluster of <b>sacred burial grounds</b> older than any known to man Cluster of <b>ancient ritual stones</b> Cluster of <b>High Crosses</b> Quarries and Castles of subsequent centuries 5,000 years of history within a couple of miles
Signature Stories	<b>Ancient Ireland - Sacred Ireland</b>
Story Development	<b>Tombs, Stones and High Crosses</b> Knockroe Passage Tomb, Kilmacoliver Hill Tomb, Owing Portal Tomb, Dolmens, Ogham Stones, Slate Quarries, High Crosses at Ahenny, Kilkeirnan and Kilamery
Number of Stops	10

### Summary of Development Actions

Route Audit	Walk or drive the route as a tourist. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Examine where signage needs improving and where panels could be placed</li><li>▪ Assess the parking requirements and access permissions</li><li>▪ Identify key interesting features and stories associated with each site</li><li>▪ Identify best photographic vantage point to convey this site in promotional material</li><li>▪ Write directional instructions for the trail</li></ul>
Marketing Actions	Using the collated information <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Devise a logo and tag line for the destination</li><li>▪ Identify communications medium to be used – online and offline</li><li>▪ Write story content for adaption for each media</li><li>▪ Commission designer, photographer and writer to create images and text</li><li>▪ Test the product using these tools prior to printing or publishing online</li></ul>

## Appendices

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### Appendix 1 – Characteristics of the culturally curious

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#### **What they don't want!**

- To party, to see things they've seen before, to do packages or 'laid on' activities, to be told what to do.

#### **Most likely to be seen doing**

- Exploring landscapes - Megalithic or early Christian relics
- Castles, gardens, museums, country houses and art galleries
- Literary tour, UNESCO site, visitor centre, browsing for books to deepen their experience
- Enjoying good food and wine, particularly local specialities • Unique local festivals and events
- Gentle exploration of the place - walking, cycling, pleasure boating

#### **How long and where?**

- Most likely to stay in a hotel, self-catering accommodation or a B&B as long as there's a lot to see, access to scenery and good walks.
- They are three times more likely to take longer breaks than average but they also take more short breaks than average, both at home and overseas.
- They are unlikely to return for a while unless a destination is truly diverse, preferring to move on to new discoveries.

#### **What are they likely to pay more for?**

- Something that is out of the ordinary
- Superior service - "people recognise me by name"
- Interested - "knows me, knows what I want"
- A human guide that offers real insight into the history of a place
- Environmentally friendly features

#### **What makes a great food and drink experience?**

- Get the best table and be well looked after
- Peace and quiet with good wine and food
- Classic Irish menu with a twist
- Good quality food because "I'm looking after my health"
- Personalised service where people call me "Mr....."
- Mid-morning breakfast "so I can sleep in..."

#### **Media habits**

- Their use of social media is growing
- Medium to heavy TV which drives some online search
- Lighter internet usage - preference for search rather than social media
- Newspapers are prominent, Radio is important.

### **KNOCKROE PASSAGE GRAVE (aka The Caiseal)**

- 2 burial chambers, comprising c. 30 decorated stones, north of Ahenny.
- overlooks a south-swinging bend in the Lingaun.
- one of the best examples in Western Europe of a passage-grave or passage-tomb, like Newgrange.
- the southernmost passage grave aligned with the Solstice ... Baltinglass is the next one up.
- passage grave aligned to the Rising Sun on the Winter Solstice (21st December), the shortest day of the year, as with Knowth and Newgrange BUT Knockroe trumps both because the Western Tomb is also aligned with Sunset on the Winter Solstice, at which time the sunlight enters the roof-box and penetrates all the way up the passage of the tomb to shine upon the tall red-sandstone portal at the back, illuminating the entire chamber. And sunset is a much more sociable time of day! So not only does Knockroe have two tombs, but it is the only passage tomb in the world with both a sunrise and a sunset solar alignment.
- the face of one of the tombs is decorated with a frieze of quartz, like Newgrange.
- kerb-stones are richly decorated with rock art (spirals, hollow cup marks + zig-zags), like Newgrange and Knowth.
- excavated by Muiris O' Sullivan from Department of Archaeology at UCD, who produced a major report in it.
- weather beaten, eroded megalithic art on decorated stones forming the chamber is similar to designs at Gavrinis in Brittany, France.
- Excellent vantage point to view Slievenamon and surrounding lands!
- Knockroe is as old as Newgrange ... Constructed around 3000BC – 5000 years ago = 600 years older than the Giza Pyramids in Egypt, and 1000 years more ancient than Stonehenge.
- Knockroe is just one of an extraordinary cluster of tombs in this region and appears to be part of a much bigger Neolithic landscape, like the much wider Bru Na Boinne complex in Meath. This includes Baunfree on nearby Kilmacoliver Hill (Coonan's Hill) is aligned with the 2 unexcavated cairns on the summit of Slievenamon, a sacred mountain to the ancients. Perfect for Rob Duggan's concept of Game of Stones.
- The solstice should be a key event but maybe the LRV Committee could look at other starry nights because there are 365 starry nights a year ...
- LRV Committee to team up with an astronomer and consider building something much more interesting nearby ...
- LRV Committee to film an interview with Muiris O'Sullivan about his conclusions on what Knockroe was all about.
- MYSTERY: Essence of Megalithic Age is we know sod all about them aside from a large quantity of cremated human bones & pottery & pendants ... they were places of burial, but they were also shrines where the rituals of life and death were played out.
- Celebrate ingenuity of the people who created these passage graves. Those entrusted with the construction of Knockroe were extremely wise, and experienced, from the master builder and architect down to the team foremen. All without modern equipment!
- Staggering and unique to have relics 5000 years old; many contemporary works in Europe were destroyed by war and agriculture.
- Tour guides at Knockroe? A visit from the Nationwide team? A homemade film?

### **KILMACOLIVER HILL TOMB & OTHER LOCAL MEGALITHS**

- Baunfree stones on Coonan's Hill, nr Tullahought, aligned with 2 unexcavated cairns on the summit of Slievenamon, a sacred mountain to the ancients - Cooney's Hill Walk – ruins of famine house. Muiris O' Sullivan notes that the stones on Baunfree in the Lingaun group are



aligned towards the summit of Slievenamon, just as the grave at Shrough from a second group of passage tombs overlooking the Aherlow River ... makes humans a little like ants!

- Carrigadoon and Curraghdobbin, two of the largest hillforts in Ireland, in foothills of Slievenamon. Probably Bronze Age/Iron Age but I believe Muiris O' Sullivan thinks they may even go back to the Stone Age ... Curraghdobbin's hillfort is one of only a handful of stone-bank forts in Ireland; there are still walls and double banks a-plenty, as well as an elevated stone armchair throne in the side of the ditch by Colite.. ...
- **Gap of Rathclarish**, between hills of Carrigadoon and Curraghdobbin, said to include remains of a large univallate Bronze Age fort that once guarded a roadway called the Ford of the Chariots that ran through it from Ossory to Magh Feimhin, west of Callan, & on into the midlands.
- Record of a destroyed megalithic tomb in the townland of Frankfort near Windgap.
- A circular tumulus found in the townland of Mangan near Ninemilehouse;
- Ogham stones & dolmens (portal tombs) at Harristown and Owing ...

## SLIEVENAMON

- Links to the sagas of Oisín and the Fenians, and the race of the women = we have remaining and credible monuments in their natural setting as well as the residual folklore to go with it.
- Look to the Legends? Sliabh-na-mBan, or 'The Mountain of the Women', after Fionn Mac Cumhaill ... sought after by many young women, but he could only choose one wife. His wife would be whichever woman won a footrace to the top of the mountain. Fionn stood on the cairn atop the mountain and gave a signal to begin the race. The winner was Gráinne.
- Finn could access superhuman knowledge simply by sucking his thumb. According to one account, this gift came to him after he crushed his thumb between the door and jamb of the cairn on the summit of Slievenamon and then stuck his thumb in his mouth! The cairn was the dwelling of the otherworldly *Cúldubh*, whom Fionn had just killed at the entrance, and the thumb derived its special knowledge from its brief contact with the otherworld. Yes, they'll claim that story took place in the Boyne too, but the LRV has just as good a claim!
- Ancient track may have been the way to the summit as part of an endurance / initiation session.
- The Secretary stated that he had received a communication from Mr Dunne, bearing on the question of the extent of the district of Sliabh Dile, the ancient name of Sliabh-na-m –ban. Mr Dunne had taken down from the lips of old inhabitants of Killamory the Irish names of the "Gaps of Sliabh Dile" as follows: -
  1. *Bearna Choill a mheala* is among the hills of Sliabh-na-m-ban, on the Clonmel side, and bears some affinity to the Irish name of said city, for Cluain meala (Clonmel) means the glade or open plain of honey, while Coill a mheala signifies the wood of honey.
  2. Bearna Cill-Chaise, "the Gap of Kilcash" is at the foot or among the southern declivities of the mountain.
  3. Bearna Rath Claris is two or three miles south of Nine-mile-house. The ancient road, which may be still traced along Killamory Hill, passed through this gap where there are vestiges of it still to be seen.
  4. Bearna an-t-Sacsanaigh, about two miles from Windgap, on the direct road from thence to Templeorum.
  5. Bearna na Gaoithe, or Windgap.
  6. Bearna Bhreac, is on some part of Drom dearg, Killamory Hill.
  7. Bearna na Coille leithe, from Bearna, a gap; Coille, the genitive of Coill, a wood; and leithe, the genitive of liath, gray. This gap is the great dingle or open

between the hills at Nine-mile-house. The latter is quite a modern name; the ancient name was 'Cill cuilinn', "the church of holly."

[Proceedings and Transactions of the Kilkenny and South-east of Ireland Archaeological Society. 1856, p. 15-16]

## THE HIGH CROSSES

Killamerry x 1.

Ahenny x 2.

Kilkieran x 3 (plus holy well).

Pillar at Tibberaghny, where the Lingaun reaches the Suir, may belong to this group also + may be the remnants of another high cross.

- One of the most impressive collections of iconic Celtic ecclesiastic art in Ireland ... these limestone treasures are themselves Ireland's greatest medieval sculptures.
- Crosses are as old and important as the 9<sup>th</sup> century Book of Kells (the 5<sup>th</sup> Most Visited Fee-Charging Attraction in Ireland - 650,476 visitors, 2015).
- Splendid, rain-washed high cross at Killamerry has been a model for many of the small high crosses sold across the world as an iconic Irish / Celtic symbol. You'll see it on jewelry the world over, it towers over the graves of Irish people all over the world, it is the symbol of the GAA and the Irish Football Association - instantly recognisable as Irish, instantly appealing to the Irish diaspora who recognise it in their own graveyards etc.
- Tie it in with exhibits at Medieval Mile Museum.
- High crosses indicative of Golden Age of Saints and Scholars, recognizable as Celtic the world over + intrinsically Irish to us in Ireland and the diaspora abroad.
- Also known as the Sun Cross, the circle that connects the four arms of the cross represents Eternal Life + God's infinite love (& more pagan nod to the Sun itself.)
- When completed, high crosses were apparently painted, rendering the images into technicolour which was pure magic to the mediaeval mind = imagine if that was all brightly painted, the interlacing snakes and, above the boss, the open-mouthed dragon, that gives it the name of the Snake-Dragon Cross. It would give the Book of Kells a run for its money ...
- LRV Committee should consider having 3-D laser scans of the Ossory crosses (as they did with the ones at Durrow and Clonmacnois, which are a little more recent than the Ossory ones) as it might reveal further secrets plus attract press attention.
- Increasing belief that Ireland was home to a 10th century Michelangelo – that these crosses were the work of a prolific master sculptor who produced incredible works of art but remains anonymous.
- Sculptor provided 5 gems around the crossing of Ahenny high cross to recall the 5 wounds Christ received on the cross – the nails in his feet & hands, and the spear wound in his left side - and so to associate their cross with the body of Christ. It is covered in the complicated interlace patterns found in early metalwork and this would originally have been painted in bright colours – perhaps in brilliant blues, greens and reds - to look as if it were made of gold and covered in jewels – should that be redone!?
- On the base of the High Cross at Killamerry is the inscription OR DO MAELSECHNAILL, "a prayer for Máel Sechnaill". Many of the older High Crosses in Ireland constructed in late 9<sup>th</sup> century, being the reigns of Máel Sechnaill, High King of All Ireland (as the Annals of Ulster call him), from 850-862AD, & his son, Flann Sinna. So, look at Máel Sechnaill, to bring him to life a little more ... a cursory look at the Annals suggests he got to power by the time-honoured fashion of murdering his brother, his cousin & several other rivals ... & that he was constantly at war with Vikings & other kings. This was the age of Johannes Scotus, an

Irishman who spoke Greek so well that he blew the minds off the sons of Emperor Charlemagne's court.

- Put crosses in their European perspective. These crosses represent an age when Ireland was really flourishing and had a tremendous reputation all around Europe – Ireland was shining light - hints of Continental influence in the iconography alongside the much more Irish geometric patterns and metalwork patterns on the high crosses of Ireland
- Ossory crosses probably commissioned by Cerball mac Dúnlainge - King of Osraige for over 40 years. By his command over the river valleys, including the Liffey, during the 870's and 880's, Cerball became the most powerful king in Leinster and made Ossory one of the most powerful over-lordships in Ireland. He is well known in Icelandic lore + he also sent emissaries to establish international relations with the Carolingian Empire's western-third under Charles the Bald who was also dealing with Viking threat. Like his granddad Charlemagne, Charles was convinced he was Saint David reincarnated; note that St David is depicted on the Killamery Cross playing his harp.
- Cerball's descendants would later adopt the surname Mac Giolla Phádraig as their patronymic although the kingdom would go into gradual decline as the Norman age rolled on. Maybe you need to tap into the other septs that hailed from the ancient Kingdom of Ossory – I counted 16 including O'Faolain, O'Carroll, MacBreen, Dunphy and Delany.
- (Not only did Cerball marry Máel Sechnaill's daughter but Cerball's sister Land ingen Dúngaile, known as Flann, married Mael Sechnaill + she was mother to the formidable Flann Sinna, High King from 879 to 916, the man who commissioned much of the work at Clonmacnoise.)

## THE SAINTS

- Need to confirm that Kilkieran is named for St Kieran, the pre-Patrician saint. My whistlestop research tells me his father was Lugna (also Laighne), a nobleman of the Dál Birn rulers of Osraige, and that before he was conceived his mother had a dream that a star fell into her mouth. She related this dream to the druids who were knowledgeable of such things, and they told her that she would bear a son whose fame and virtues would be known as far as the world's end ... and indeed, after time in Tours and Rome, her son Kieran established a cell in a wood in Upper Ossory which became the chosen burial place for the Kings of Osraige [ask Rob where!]
- Kilkeiran's Well – tie in with story that he blessed a well so that "it had the taste of wine or honey for everyone who drank it got drunk as well as filled". Kilkeiran's well suddenly seems a whole lot more interesting!
- Killamery monastery established in early 7<sup>th</sup> century & evolved into a school for 1000 monks ... mud and wattle & embraced a holy well, still there & moss covered, that was probably much, much older ... attributed to St. Gobban who had earlier founded the monastery at Old Leighlin in Carlow.
- St Finbarr of Cork studied in Ossory in the 5<sup>th</sup> century.

## NORMAN CASTLES

- Ossory as the powerbase of the Butler family = Ormond Castle, Kilcash Castle, Dove Hill & Carrick-on-Suir & so on.
- Tie in with Butler Trail and the Butler Society (of which Turtle Bunbury is on committee).
- Piltown, only place on the island of Ireland where battle in the Wars of the Roses was fought. A bad day for the Butlers - 400 casualties & the river ran red with their blood, hence the names Pill River and Piltown (Baile an Phuill - Town of the blood).
- Lament for Kilcash.
- Dove Hill: Ivy-clad ruin, overlooking the Suir river valley, just opposite the Dove Hill Shopping Centre - four-storey tower house, also known as Ardcollum, possibly originally belonging to

the Wall family. Circa 14<sup>th</sup> century, was in the possession of Connel O'More, a native Irish Chieftain in 1348. He was left undisturbed by the Anglo-Norman conquerors due to services rendered in the field. 1542 it was garrisoned by Sir Thomas Butler of Cahir, but later taken back by the Earl of Ormond. Described in the Civil Survey (1654-6) as 'a small castle wanting repaire'. The Earl of Ormond is listed as the proprietor in 1640.

- Kilcash: 14th century Butler castle ruin on the slopes of Slievenamon was the inspiration for the great 15th century Gaelic poem, 'The Lament for Kilcash', lies close to ruin of a church, now empty and roofless, and large mausoleum where members of Butler family buried including Lady Iveagh, the wife of the Great Duke of Ormonde's nephew, plus her husband and sons.... An image found lately by Dr. John Flood shows that the house built onto the tower was once three times as big as it is now ... the Kilcash branch of the Butlers descended from the younger brother of a duke and who made important alliances.

### **THE TUDORS**

- Link in with Tudors – The TV series of 'The Tudors' ran for seven seasons, 38 episodes, & zillions of people watching it. Millions of copies of 'Wolf Hall' sold ... about Anne Boleyn whose granny lived in Ormond Castle in Carrick-on-Suir!! You live in Tudor central!
- Black Tom Butler, extremely interesting to study.

### **WINDGAP**

- Church and Grotto in Windgap (largest in Europe) ... other grottos in Kilsheelan, Kilcash.
- George Clooney
- Billy the Kid also reputedly from the neighbourhood.

### **MODERN TWISTS**

- The tale of Willy Maloney [sic] if Kilkieran whose pub used to be a mortuary where dead people, unknown to the parish, were laid out; they would be buried in Stranger's Corner on the right side of the graveyard in Kilkieran.
- Vanishing Ireland style interviews ... or the brilliant idea that Susan Chadwick had with Google maps.

## Draft Terms of Reference for the Group

- ☐ Committee/Group Name
- ☐ Purpose/Scope of Committee/Group
- ☐ Decision Making (decides/recommends/prioritises)
- ☐ Membership (sector/trade representation)
- ☐ Sub-committees (Action/Project focused)
- ☐ Arrangements/frequency of meetings
- ☐ Reporting (Minutes/Agendas/who/format)
- ☐ Resources to group (budget/human resource support)
- ☐ Deliverables/Output (Annual Action Plan?)
- ☐ Review (How often will you review your TOR/annually)

Once you have clearly identified your purpose and objectives this will feed into your Mission Statement

## Profile of Hidden Story Consultants

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### Jacqui Doyle

Jacqui holds a degree in marketing (8) and a masters degree (9) in business and tourism from the Michael Smurfit Graduate School of Business, and a masters degree (9) in historic houses from NUI Maynooth. She has a postgraduate diploma in strategy and innovation (9) from the Irish Management Institute and a postgraduate certificate in teaching & learning in higher education (9) from NUI Maynooth. In 2014, she combined her education, experience in the tourism industry and her passion for storytelling as value enhancing tool in tourism and commenced her doctorate study on *Co-creating the tourist experience through storytelling at historic house attractions in 'Ireland's Ancient East'*.

As a self-employed consultant, she undertakes short to medium term project and programme management of various initiatives. She has managed four projects for Failte Ireland (2004-09, 2013). She managed the Failte Ireland student placement programme from 2004-2006 and from 2006 – 2009 was National Co-ordinator of the Tourism Learning Networks. In this role, she managed 5 different service providers across Ireland providing training, networking and mentoring services to 33 networks with approximately 600 tourism based SME's per year. The aim was to up-skill and provide business development support to these network members by utilising a variety of skilled professionals. In 2009, she took on the role of network provider for the first professional learning network in the tourism business for HR Managers of 4-5 star hotels. She engaged trainers, speakers and mentors as required to provide a comprehensive programme for human resource development in this sector. In 2013, she managed the initial transition to an external provider of the Failte Ireland tour guiding programmes for the National Tour Guide and Dublin and Environs badges.

Other projects include, training under the Labour Market Activation Fund from the Department of Education to design, develop and deliver several tourism and guiding training programmes, which involved the recruitment of participant and management of each programme. In 2012, she undertook the role of rural enterprise animator for LEADER at County Wicklow Partnership. In 2013, she was contracted to LEADER at County Carlow Development Partnership, to develop heritage based training workshops aligned to the 'Ireland Reaching Out' project. She currently lectures part time on the tourism postgraduate courses and MBA at IT Carlow.

### Siobhán Geoghegan

Siobhán holds a first class honours degree (8) in Rural Development from UCD and has 15 years' experience working within the business and community sectors at local, regional and national level. She holds certificates in Guiding (6) and Advanced Facilitation Skills, and a Diploma in Executive and Management Coaching. Siobhán is also a qualified STEPS Trainer (Steps to Excellence for Personal Success).

Siobhán worked as the Community, Tourism & Enterprise Development Officer under the EU LEADER Programme in County Wicklow Partnership (2002/2014), where she gained an in-depth knowledge of working with communities and small and medium tourism enterprises. During this time, she worked in an advisory and supporting role with clients assisting them to develop and grow their businesses in line with industry best practice. Siobhán managed a large client base of tourism businesses including; Ballyknockan Cookery School, Wicklow Brewery, Hidden Valley Caravan & Camping, Glenroe Farm Wicklow Boat Charters, Kippure Estate and the Blessington Greenway. She is highly experienced in organising targeted training courses, seminar and conference events in the area of heritage, tourism and business development.

Siobhán is currently a self-employed consultant in tourism product development, business development and strategic planning. Based on in-depth consultative methods across a wide range of stakeholders, Siobhán developed the Local Development Strategy Plan for Wicklow, Kildare and Rural



Dublin and is currently delivering LAG and IEC training in counties; Wicklow, Kildare, Dublin, Louth and Cavan. Recent clients include, Celbridge Integrated Services Programme. Irish Uplands Forum, Wicklow County Council, South Dublin Partnership, Kilkenny LEADER Partnership, Wexford County Council, North Wexford Tourism Group, St Peter's Cork, Tinahely Farm Shop, Ballybeg House and Wicklow County Tourism.

### **Turtle Bunbury**

Turtle is a best-selling author and award-winning historian, whose roles include International public speaking and frequent contributions to television and radio, print & online media. including National Geographic Traveler, Vogue Living, The World of Interiors, The Australian, The Irish Times and The Irish Daily Mail. Turtle's forthcoming book, 1847 - A Chronicle of Genius, Generosity & Savagery, was published in September 2016. He is also the founder of historical blogs, [facebook.com/Wistorical](https://facebook.com/Wistorical) and [facebook.com/Vanishing Ireland](https://facebook.com/VanishingIreland).

### **Published Books**

- 1847 - A Chronicle of Genius, Generosity and Savagery (Gill, 2016)
- Easter Dawn (Mercier, 2015)
- The 1916 Rising (Rowman & Littlefield, 2015)
- The Glorious Madness (Gill & MacMillan, 2014)
- Vanishing Ireland, Friendship & Community (Hachette, 2013)
- Vanishing Ireland, Recollections of Changing Times (Hachette, 2011)
- Sporting Legends of Ireland (Mainstream, 2010)
- Vanishing Ireland, Further Chronicles of a Disappearing World (Hachette, 2009)
- Dublin Docklands, An Urban Voyage (MPG & DDDA, 2009)
- The Irish Pub (Thames & Hudson, 2008)
- Vanishing Ireland (Hodder Headline, 2006)
- Living in Sri Lanka (Thames & Hudson, 2006)
- The Landed Gentry & Aristocracy of Co. Wicklow (IFN, 2005)
- The Landed Gentry & Aristocracy of Co. Kildare (IFN, 2004)

### **Praise for Turtle's books**

#### **1847**

*"I've always loved Turtle's writing, the wit and heartbeat in his history. 1847 is, for me, the best thing he has done so far. It is vivid, surprising, hugely entertaining; an unforgettable encounter with an extraordinary year."* **Lenny Abrahamson**, 2016 Academy Award Nominated Director, Room

#### **The Glorious Madness**

*'A historian's eye, but a humanitarian heart', the lovely line that you originally proposed using ... you'll recall that comes from a longer quote: 'He goes back with his historian's eye, but also his humanitarian heart, and gathers together a host of tiny epics, larger epics, the strange stories and the sometimes bizarre happenstances that occurred around the conflict.' So you could feasibly put all that up ... or incorporate it with 'clear-sighted and finely written ... a veritable banner of wonderful stories'* **Sebastian Barry**, author.

*'Turtle continues the wonderful listening and yarn-spinning he has honed in the Vanishing Ireland series ... poignant, whimsical and bleakly funny.'* **John Grenham**, The Irish Times

*'An absolutely brilliant book.'* **Patrick Geoghegan**, Talking History, Newstalk

*'A most magnificent book and beautifully done. A superb production, superb photos.'* **Gay Byrne**