



**A TOOLKIT
FOR BUSINESS**



**OUR LAND IS MADE
OF THE SACRED THREE.
WE INVOKE YOU SKY
AND LAND AND SEA.**

Abereiddy,
Pembrokeshire

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INTRODUCING CELTIC ROUTES

Celtic Routes is a joint project between Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion County Councils, Pembrokeshire Coast National Park in West Wales and Waterford, Wexford and Wicklow County Councils in South East Ireland.

Its purpose is to boost visitor numbers and spend in the less-explored areas that lie along the major transit routes between entry points and the well-known tourism 'honeypots' beyond.

The project is worth €1.99m and is being part-funded via the EU's Ireland Wales Cooperation Programme 2014-2020.

The Celtic Routes project was launched in October 2019 and the first phase will continue until March 2021.

This toolkit is an introduction to Celtic Routes for tourism businesses, destinations, stakeholders and the travel trade. It summarises the Celtic Routes proposition and is intended to be a foundation for future development and marketing activity.

Avoca Valley Foraging,
Co. Wicklow

What you'll read has been informed by visitor perception research, partner workshops to identify shared themes, audits of the natural, cultural and heritage assets in each of the 6 counties and market research to gather intelligence on target markets.

To help us develop a clear and compelling offer, we've also been speaking to potential stakeholders across the partnership counties. We're grateful to everyone who has taken the time so far to share their advice and experience with us, and we look forward to hosting more workshops to communicate opportunities to work together and to circulate project outcomes and learning.

In these pages, we describe our target visitor type, present the brand model that defines the Celtic Routes proposition and the brand narrative that captures the Celtic Routes spirit.

But this isn't just about the brand. We also include sample copy for a selection of the experiences nominated so far and some simple suggestions of how you can start your Celtic Routes journey with us.

WHY CELTIC ROUTES?

We have a tale to tell you.

A tale of two nations separated by sea yet sharing an indestructible bond.

Two nations with the same ancient blood coursing through our veins, whose histories have been shaped by the same influences.

Two nations that both still see the wonder of the natural world and use it to bring balance and harmony to our busy world.

Two nations that will meet in sporting rivalry, but celebrate each other's victories and commiserate each other's losses together.

Two nations that both love a good story, putting our own melodic lilts on the way we tell it.

And two nations that will welcome you as a stranger, but make sure we'll part as friends.

The Celtic Routes project has been developed to bring together and promote the similar natural, cultural and heritage assets common to each of the 6 partnership counties in order to increase visitor numbers and maximise income retention in the respective local economies. Although these counties are all successful tourism destinations in their own rights, the forming of this partnership is seen as key to encouraging existing and new visitors to explore much wider areas, away from the major transit routes and well-known tourism 'honeypots'.

Llansteffan,
Carmarthenshire

CELTIC ROUTES **WHAT IS IT?**

Celtic Routes is a branded collection of tourism experiences that encourages visitors to Ireland and Wales to discover their Celtic spirit by offering a number of immersive and authentic Celtic experiences in West Wales and South East Ireland.

Trá na mBó, Co. Waterford



Slieve Coillte,
Co. Wexford

WHO IS IT FOR?

OUR TARGET VISITORS AND PRIMARY MARKETS

It's important to know something about your potential visitors so that you can target your marketing effectively. You can also ensure that your offer fits with these visitor types. These are the visitor types Celtic Routes will be targeting:

CULTURAL EXPLORER

Couples, mainly 40+. Mostly middle class and higher income.

What are they looking for?

A good range of historical attractions, interesting towns and cities and beautiful scenery. Interested in the local way of life and culture and having authentic experiences.

New Quay, Ceredigion



Our market research shows that Celtic Routes is likely to be appealing to visitors from the UK, Ireland, France, Germany and the United States, who have already visited Ireland or Wales, or are currently visiting Ireland or Wales or are considering a visit to Ireland and Wales. These are our primary markets.

Of course, Celtic Routes is likely to attract visitors from around the world. But by focusing our promotional activity on the above markets, we'll make sure that we get the best possible return for our efforts and investment.

ACTIVE EXPLORERS

Couples, singles and groups of friends. Wide age range.

What are they looking for?

Looking to get off the beaten track and are motivated by activities, sightseeing and unspoilt coast and countryside.

Kilfarrassy Beach, Waterford



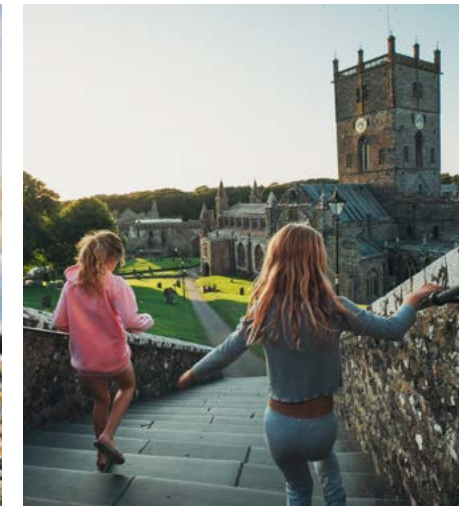
ACTIVE FAMILY EXPLORERS

Mostly middle class, with children under 15.

What are they looking for?

Looking for lots to do, fun, adventure and activity, exploration and discovery in order to make the most of their time together.

St David's Cathedral, Pembrokeshire



CELTIC ROUTES IN A NUTSHELL: OUR STORY

They say travel broadens the mind. But some journeys do much more. They let you see the world through different eyes. To see a living connection with nature. To see history and legend come together in spiritual places. To see balance and harmony in our busy world.

These journeys are Celtic Routes.

For the ancients, every mountain, river, tree and stone was imbued with a natural spirit. They lived in harmony with these spirits and created a way of life that goes with the natural grain.

This way of life lives on in West Wales and Ireland's Ancient East.

Follow Celtic Routes and you'll take roads less travelled to lands that still follow the pulse of the changing seasons. You'll discover ancient crosses, castaway chapels and sacred stones. You'll hear the rhythms of the natural world in the lilt of our voices as we tell tall tales of saints and sinners. You'll explore untamed landscapes that inspire everyday adventures. You'll find colourful villages where people have time for you and for each other.

Each of the Celtic Routes takes you closer to the coast and countryside, the people and the places, that shaped a rich culture still shared by two countries. A culture that has always valued a warm welcome for travellers and a fond farewell for new-found friends.

Sugarloaf,
Co. Wicklow

CELTIC ROUTES: OUR BRAND

At the heart of the Celtic Routes model is the brand idea: Discover the Celtic spirit.

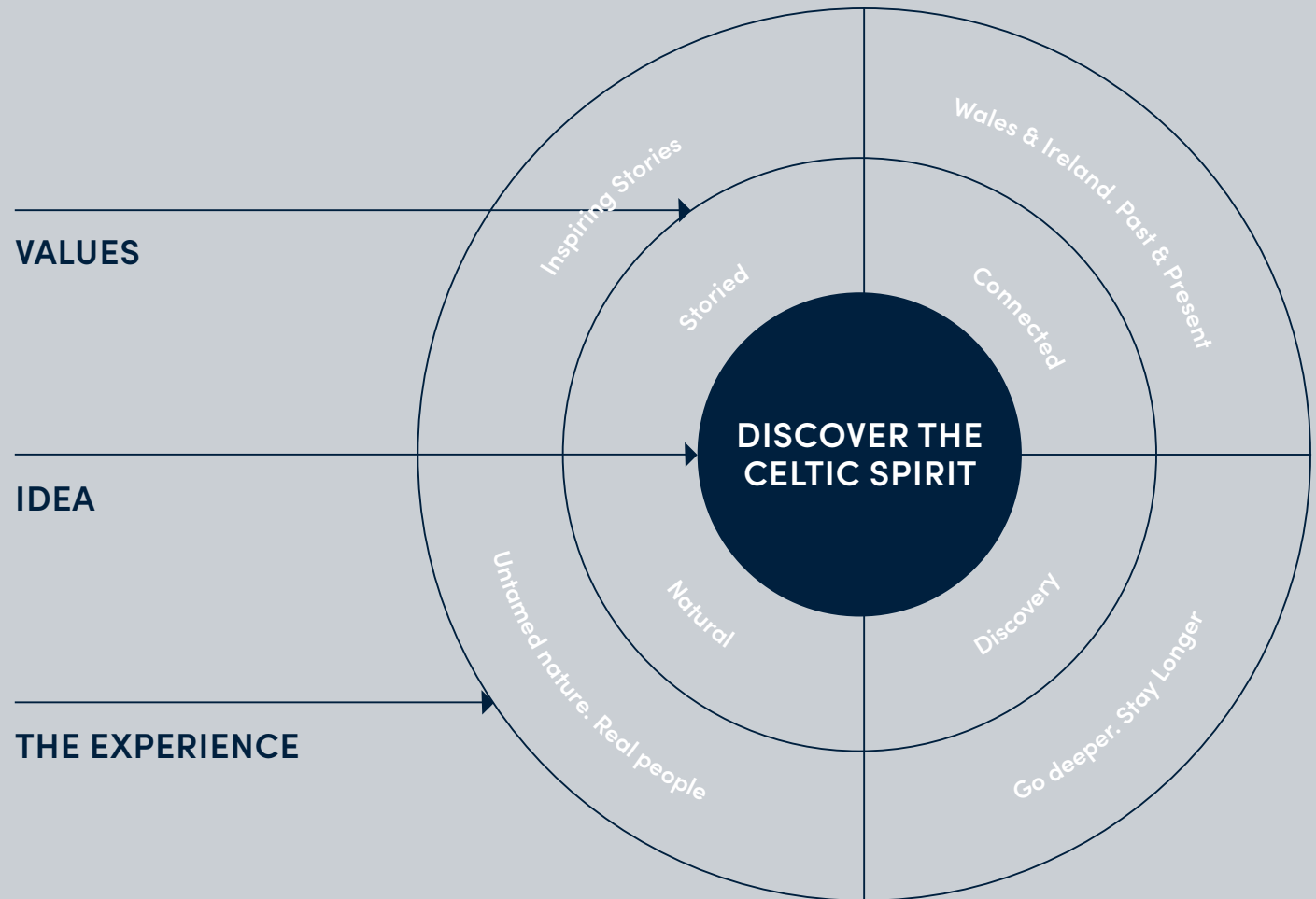
This is the big idea that brings everything together, but isn't a strapline and will never appear on our website or in a brochure (apart from here!). It will inspire all our communications, however.

The brand idea is supported by the brand values, which are the recurring themes that will guide all Celtic Routes marketing activity and any product development initiatives.

The brand experiences define the things that Celtic Routes needs to deliver to visitors. These help us to select the best-fitting products to build Celtic Routes on.



Wildfowl Reserve, Co. Wexford



CELTIC ROUTES

TONE OF VOICE

Our approach to language and messaging as well as our tone needs to speak to the explorer in all of us. We want to draw them in and pique their interest. To some extent our personality needs to reflect theirs – a tone and style that explorers are engaged with and inspired by.

Our tone and style are inspired by the pillars of the brand.

So, our tonal values are:

Contemporary, Informative, Authentic, Mystical, Engaging

CONTEMPORARY

The Celtic Routes is a new tourism experience bringing Celtic culture to a new audience. It will obviously cover the rich Celtic history of these six counties, but it should bring to life how this Celtic heritage has shaped how we are now, and how we will live in the future.

INFORMATIVE

The Celtic Routes is a curated travel experience. So, whilst we want travellers to discover it for themselves, we need to point them in the right direction.

AUTHENTIC

The Celtic people are grounded. Very real, earthy and honest. Ancient Celtic values of loyalty, justice and courage highlight these admirable traits. The Celtic Routes brand must speak the truth and must not use flamboyant language and should not exaggerate. Let the natural wonder of the Celtic Routes do the talking.

MYSTICAL

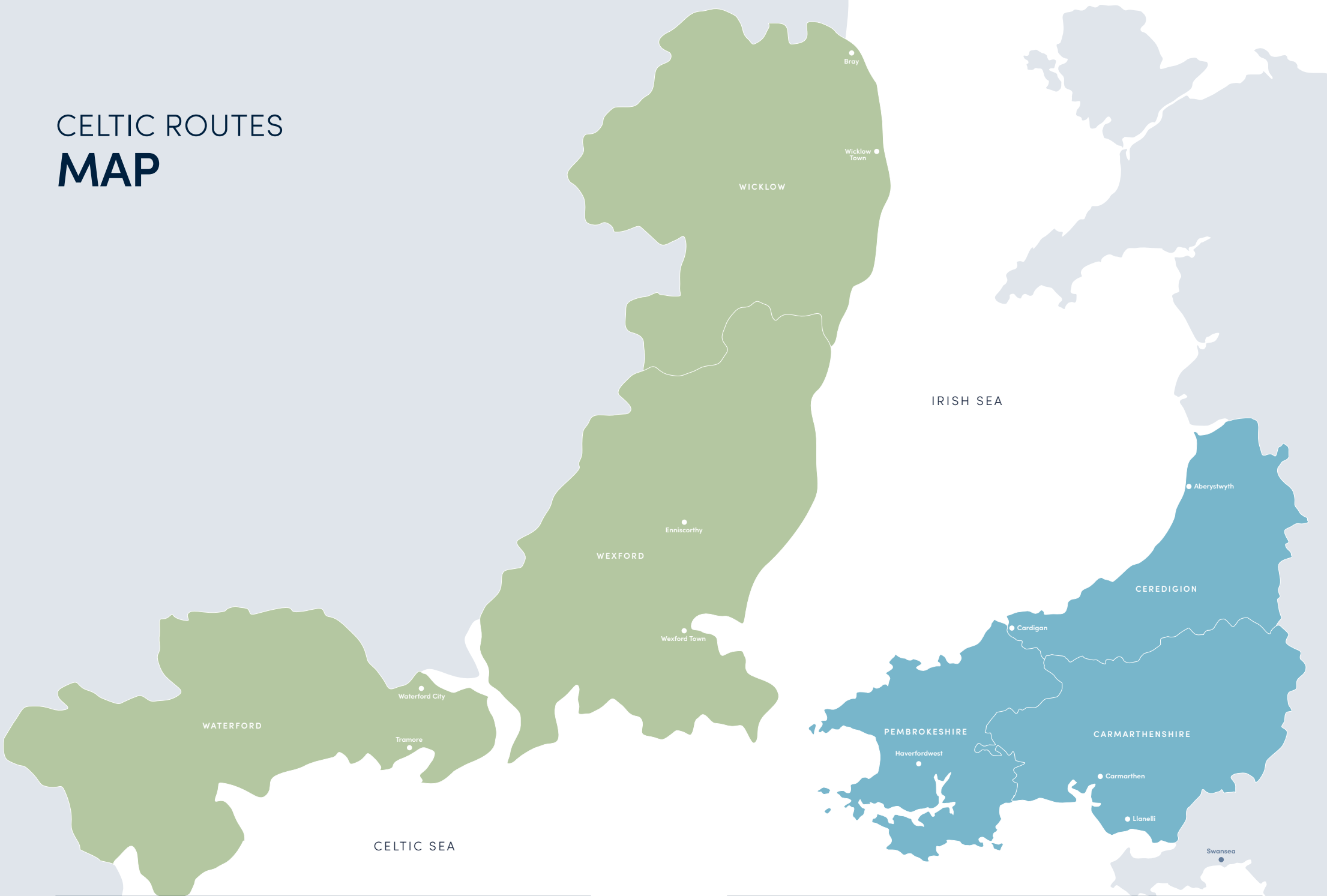
The Celts were very spiritual people. They had huge respect for their natural environment. They worshipped the gods of the land, of the seas and of the sky. The Celtic Routes brand needs to tap into this spiritual element, to tell the stories of the myths and legends of this part of the world and inspire the visitor to immerse themselves in these magical lands.

ENGAGING

A big part of the Celtic Routes experience is meeting the Celtic people. Our brand should speak like these people. Natural storytellers with a Celtic lilt. Our tone should be warm and natural and wherever possible our style should be conversational, creating a sense that we are telling stories directly to the reader not just using the usual tourism clichés.

Llyn y Fan,
Carmarthenshire

CELTIC ROUTES MAP



CELTIC ROUTES BEACONS

A 'Beacon' can be an attraction, activity, experience or event, but should meet at least 5 of the following criteria:

- Is immersive
- Involves the land, sea or nature
- Tells a story of the place
- Tells a Celtic story
- Has history or heritage
- Is authentic
- Enhances provenance
- Connects Wales and Ireland

The Celtic Beacons are the places where you'll find the sights, sounds and stories that shaped our parts of the world. Each Beacon will reveal a snapshot of a particular moment in our history, whether it was 2,000 years ago, 200 years ago or in living memory. But as you piece these together, you'll gradually build up a full picture of the regions and people we are today - and are likely to be in the future.

Naturally, some of these places are our tourism 'crown jewels'. But many of them you'll only find by taking roads less travelled, by switching off the sat-nav and relying on your own instincts (and maybe a good old-fashioned map). Because the more off the beaten track you go, the better you'll get to know us. You might even end up making your own Celtic Routes.

Glendalough,
Co. Wicklow

EXAMPLES OF BEACONS

LLYN Y FAN FACH AND THE BRECON BEACONS CARMARTHENSHIRE

You'll find the enchanting glacial lake of Llyn y Fan Fach at the western end of the Brecon Beacons National Park. The lake is associated with the 14th-century legend of the 'Lady of the Lake'. In this tale, a young farmer marries a beautiful woman who has emerged from the lake, with a promise that he would not strike her 3 times. Having been struck by him 3 times (though never in anger), she duly returns to the lake. She returns briefly to instruct her sons, who go on to become doctors, known today as the 'Physicians of Myddfai'.

Below the hills lies the picturesque market town of Llandovery. It's home to a 5-metre high stainless-steel statue of Llywelyn ap Gruffydd Fychan. Known as the 'Welsh Braveheart', he was executed here by Henry IV as punishment for his support of Owain Glyndŵr.

ABERYSTWYTH CEREDIGION

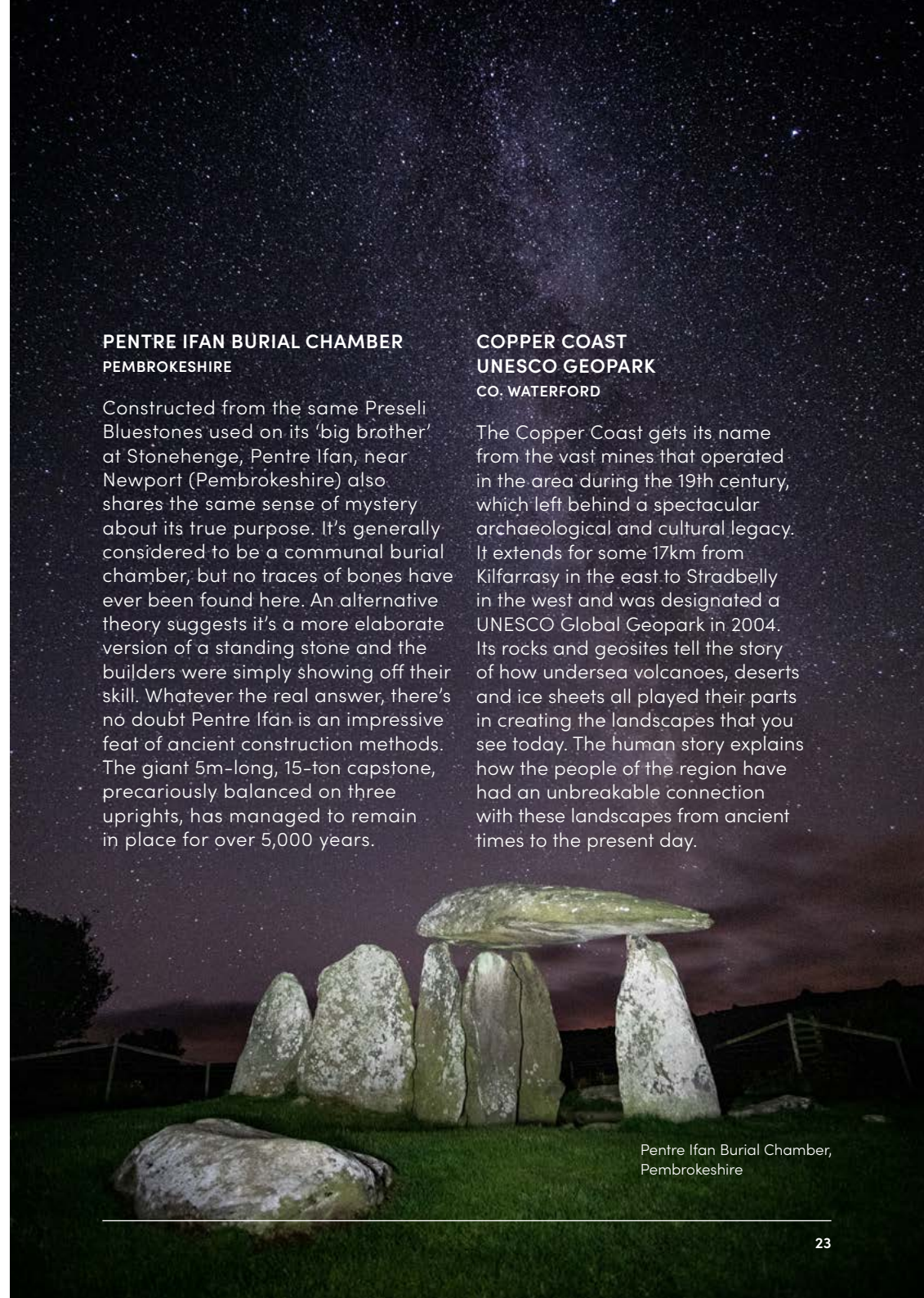
Aberystwyth, meaning 'The mouth of the River Ystwyth' and more affectionately known as 'Aber', has a valid claim to be the Celtic capital of culture in Wales. As well as being a university town, it's also home to the National Library of Wales, which sits in an impressive building overlooking the town's bay, ancient hillfort and castle ruins. The complex also houses the Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies and there are regular exhibitions, talks and tours to explore the vast archives and collections. Aberystwyth Arts Centre is a focal point for showcasing contemporary Welsh language and international culture across all art forms, including theatre, dance, music, the visual arts, storytelling and comedy.

PENTRE IFAN BURIAL CHAMBER PEMBROKESHIRE

Constructed from the same Preseli Bluestones used on its 'big brother' at Stonehenge, Pentre Ifan, near Newport (Pembrokeshire) also shares the same sense of mystery about its true purpose. It's generally considered to be a communal burial chamber, but no traces of bones have ever been found here. An alternative theory suggests it's a more elaborate version of a standing stone and the builders were simply showing off their skill. Whatever the real answer, there's no doubt Pentre Ifan is an impressive feat of ancient construction methods. The giant 5m-long, 15-ton capstone, precariously balanced on three uprights, has managed to remain in place for over 5,000 years.

COPPER COAST UNESCO GEOPARK CO. WATERFORD

The Copper Coast gets its name from the vast mines that operated in the area during the 19th century, which left behind a spectacular archaeological and cultural legacy. It extends for some 17km from Kilfarrasy in the east to Stradbally in the west and was designated a UNESCO Global Geopark in 2004. Its rocks and geosites tell the story of how undersea volcanoes, deserts and ice sheets all played their parts in creating the landscapes that you see today. The human story explains how the people of the region have had an unbreakable connection with these landscapes from ancient times to the present day.



Pentre Ifan Burial Chamber,
Pembrokeshire

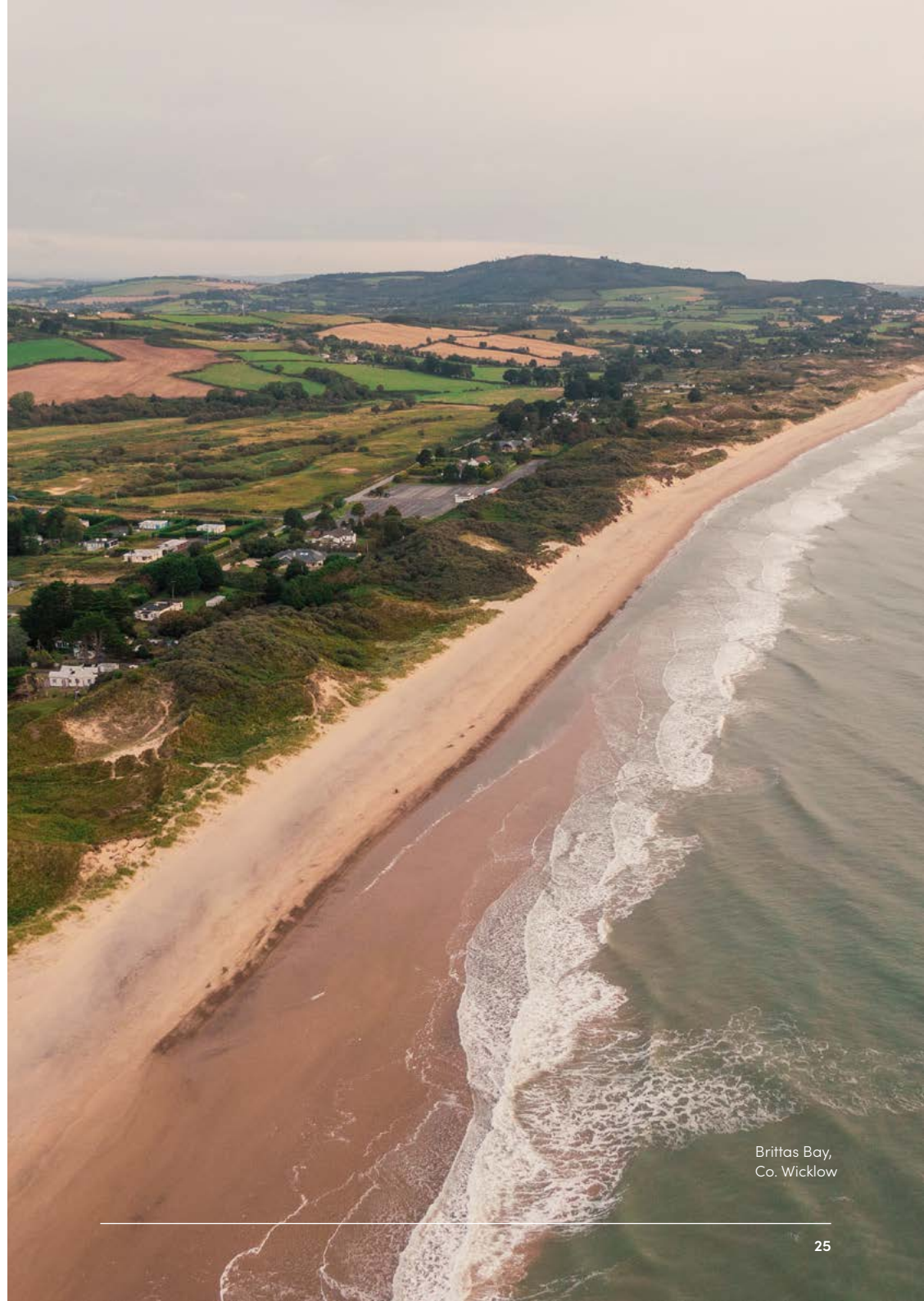
EXAMPLES OF BEACONS

IRISH NATIONAL HERITAGE PARK CO. WEXFORD

What better way to discover the heritage of Ireland than immersing yourself in the sights, sounds and stories that shaped the nation? Set in 40 acres of atmospheric woodland just outside Wexford town, the Irish National Heritage Park provides a unique opportunity to experience over 9,000 years of Irish history. Journey through prehistoric Ireland, early Christian Ireland and the age of invasions by the Vikings and later, the Normans. Explore careful recreations of buildings and settlements to see how Ireland's earliest settlers lived, worked and fought. Forage like a prehistoric farmer, throw an axe like a Viking and even spend a night in a medieval ringfort.

BRITTAS BAY CO. WICKLOW

One of the finest expanses of shoreline on the east coast, Three Mile Water at Brittas Bay is thought to have been the initial landing point of St Patrick in Ireland. With no headlands to disrupt the gentle rhythm of the waves breaking on the sand, this 5km stretch is perfect for bathing, sailing and walking. For six weeks of summer, Brittas Bay is nature's playground for children, who can race through the dunes and emerge straight onto the beach. But the rest of the year, the beach is, by and large, the ideal place for monkish solitude and contemplation.



Brittas Bay,
Co. Wicklow

CELTIC ROUTES MOMENTS

A 'Moment' really showcases the Celtic experience. There are places and times where the connection with the past, the land and the spirit is heightened. We want to share these moments with potential visitors. Moments should include a specific location or time of day/year so that visitors know they are experiencing the Celtic spirit at its peak.

The Celtic Moments are what you'll do to get even closer to our Celtic culture, by immersing yourself in the world in which its people lived – and still live. Perhaps you'll stand atop a mountain ridge that looks the same as when our ancestors stood there over 2,000 years before. Maybe you'll experience the ghostly apparition of a crying child as you hear tales of the brutality meted out to prisoners in an 18th-century prison. Or you might join townsfolk in marking the end of another prosperous fishing season with a mock fish funeral.

These are moments that won't just make you understand what it is to be a part of our Celtic culture, but make you feel it too.



Castell Henllys,
Pembrokeshire

EXAMPLES OF MOMENTS

FORAGING AT FERRYSIDE CARMARTHENSHIRE

The Celts had a spiritual bond with the natural world and believed that the sea is a source of healing and cleansing, of food and wealth. So what better way to immerse yourself in this world than by foraging? On a coastal foraging experience along the Carmarthenshire coastline, you'll learn how to find prawns, mussels, cockles, wild samphire, sea anemones and scarlet elf cup mushrooms. The reward for your efforts is your very own zero-waste, organic lunch on the beach.

Ferryside was historically a fishing village and although the industry there has largely died out, cockling and fishing by traditional 'seine' nets still continue. Beyond the village, it's possible to follow the coastline in either direction, taking in the 'lost' village of St Ishmael's to the south or the marshland wildlife to the north. In 2018, the new Glansteffan ferry service reconnected Ferryside with the village of Llansteffan for the first time in 60 years.

ABERAERON MACKEREL FIESTA CEREDIGION

There can't be many fiestas where a funeral is the focus of the celebrations. And probably none where that funeral is for a 20ft papier-mâché fish. But this is how the folk of the pretty harbour town of Aberaeron mark the end of mackerel season in late August each year. It's their way of giving thanks for the continued abundance of the scomber scombrus – the humble mackerel – whose arrival each summer provides food, income and the return of dolphins to Cardigan Bay.

The timetable for the day is generally thus. The cortège – complete with 'super-sized' mackerel effigy, carried by 6 bearers – meets outside The Harbourmaster Hotel. Mourners are invited to follow the funeral party across town to Aberaeron Yacht Club, where a blessing is given by the local rev. This is then followed by the obligatory wake (barbecue, live music and an ample bar) and at sunset our dearly-departed mackerel is carried onto the beach and cremated.

ST DAVIDS CATHEDRAL PEMBROKESHIRE

The westernmost peninsula of Pembrokeshire is dominated by the city and cathedral of St Davids. Resting place of Saint David, or 'Dewi Sant' in Welsh, patron saint of Wales, the cathedral has stood as a place of holiness and pilgrimage for over 800 years. In medieval times, it was said that two pilgrimages to St Davids were equal to one to Rome.

The present cathedral is built on the site of the 6th-century monastery Saint David founded to teach missionaries to spread Christianity. It's believed one of those missionaries was St Patrick. As Saint David's reputation spread, his monastery grew and a community developed. Unfortunately, it also drew the attention of the Vikings, who plundered it many times over the next few centuries. The Normans eventually took over the monastery and began building the current cathedral in 1181.

Having survived the collapse of its tower, an earthquake and the Reformation, the cathedral continues to enthral and inspire its visitors, even after 800 years.

ST DECLAN'S WELL, ARDMORE CO. WATERFORD

In the 5th century, St Declan came across the village of Ardmore – it's said he was guided there by a stone carried on the waves – and founded a monastery. Its ruins are Ireland's oldest Christian settlement. Today, a number of sites remain of his monastic city.

There's an 8th-century oratory beneath which it's believed the saint is buried and a 12th-century 29m-high round tower, which served as a belfry and place of refuge. There's also the 12th-century cathedral, with Romanesque arcading with figures depicting scenes from both Old and New Testaments – very unusual in Ireland. Inside the cathedral are two Ogham stones featuring the earliest form of writing in Ireland.

The 4km cliff walk that starts and ends in the village is well worth taking to visit St Declan's Well, where pilgrims have paid tribute for hundreds of years every 24th July, the saint's feast day.

Ardmore,
Co. Waterford

EXAMPLES OF MOMENTS

WHALES BREACHING AT HOOK HEAD CO. WEXFORD

November marks the beginning of whale watching season off the Hook Peninsula. Back in the winter of 2010, there were reports of a number of Fin whales and a Humpback spotted off the coast at Hook Head. The whales have made a welcome return every year since, the Humpback becoming particularly associated with our area.

The red balcony at the top of Hook Lighthouse makes an ideal viewing point with binoculars or you can take a chartered whale watching boat trip.

Humpback whales are amongst the largest animals on earth, growing up to 16 metres in length and weighing up to 40 tons. Experts have recently located a breeding ground for the 'Irish' Humpback whales in the Cape Verde islands. This means they travel nearly 5,000km every year, through some of the world's busiest shipping lanes to get to our rich feeding grounds. Which makes the sight of one breaching the waters here even more remarkable.

WALKING ALONG THE WICKLOW WAY CO. WICKLOW

Just south of Dublin, County Wicklow – known as The Garden of Ireland – is a wild expanse of coastline, woodland and imposing mountains through which runs the country's most popular walking trail. The Wicklow Way is Ireland's oldest marked trail, the brain-child of famous hill-walker J B Malone, which opened in 1980. The Wicklow Way begins in Dublin's southern suburb of Rathfarnham and travels across the Dublin and Wicklow uplands, then through the rolling hills of southwest County Wicklow, to finish in the small Wicklow-Carlow border village of Clonegal, 127km later. A combination of suburban parkland, forest trails, mountain paths and finally rolling countryside offers a varied and, at times, demanding 7-10 day experience for walkers. En route you'll pass scenic lakes, spectacular gardens, elegant 18th-century mansions and the ruins of an early Christian monastic settlement.



Hook Head,
Co. Wexford

CELTIC ROUTES THEMES

Celtic Routes will promote a range of product themes reflecting the collective strengths of the 6 counties, these being: Celtic Adventures, Celtic Heritage, Celtic Land and Seas, Celtic Stories, Celtic Places and Celtic People.

Aberystwyth,
Ceredigion

CELTIC ADVENTURES

The Celts of Wales and Ireland experienced the world in Three Realms: Sky, Land and Sea.

And these realms still make for a perfect adventure playground:

SKY

What better way to seek a spiritual connection with a place than by looking to the stars at a Dark Sky Discovery Site?

LAND

The highest expression of the Realm of Land is the mountain. Take your pick of mountain ranges and find tranquillity there.

SEA

This is where all Three Realms meet, bringing great healing and cleansing. Head out on the water and let it soothe your soul.

Come and immerse yourself in the elements the Celts once worshipped.

Foel Eryr,
Pembrokeshire

EXAMPLES OF CELTIC ADVENTURES

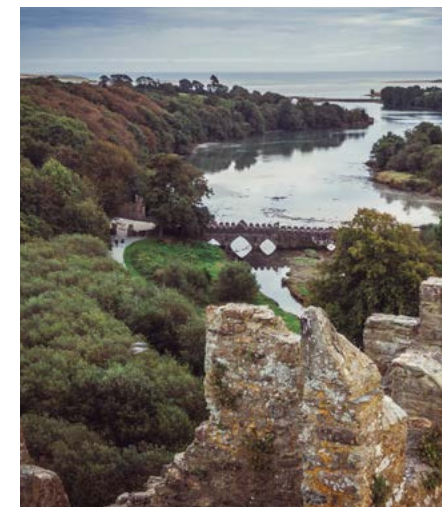
SURFING AT BORTH BEACH CEREDIGION

The coastline of Wales is known for its outstanding surfing spots, arguably some of the best in the UK. 3 miles of sand and shingle make Borth an uplifting, slightly wild place for a surf. It's best experienced at high tide, particularly if it's a stormy day with a large south-westerly swell. Keep an eye out for the remains of the ancient sunken forest of Cantre'r Gwaelod – at low tide you'll be able to see prehistoric tree stumps and peat in the sand.



TINTERN WALKING TRAILS CO. WEXFORD

These 4 looped walks start from the trailhead at Tintern Abbey, and offer a combination of quiet woodland and coastline walks. The trails, which range from a 20-minute walk to a 2-hour hike, take you past some of the Hook Peninsula's highlights: Tintern Abbey, Colcough Walled Garden and Saltmills Village. Wildlife lovers should look out for kingfishers, egrets, buzzards, red squirrels and bats on the inland trails and migratory sea birds like Brent Geese along the coastline.



CELTIC HERITAGE

Wales and Ireland have an unbreakable bond formed through their shared heritage of ancient crosses, chapel ruins and sacred stones. Irish migrants who settled in Wales in the 5th century left their mark through the Ogham stones that still line the Welsh coastline today. And in return, Wales gave St Patrick to Ireland – or so they say.

Come and see how the ancient influences the everyday in this corner of the world.

Gaeltacht na nDéise,
Co. Waterford

EXAMPLES OF CELTIC HERITAGE

DOLAUCOTHI GOLD MINES CARMARTHENSHIRE

What child (or grown-up, for that matter) wouldn't like a go at panning for gold? That's one of the experiences on offer at these gold mines, located in the beautiful Cothi Valley. The Romans began the search for the precious metal here 2,000 years ago, carving out hillsides and diverting rivers to find it. Mining continued until 1938. Guided tours will take you back in time to experience the harsh conditions underground in the Roman and Victorian workings.



KING OF THE VIKINGS CO. WATERFORD

Immerse yourself in the world of the Vikings like never before in Ireland's oldest city, Vádrárfjörð (Waterford). The King of the Vikings virtual reality experience is the first of its kind in the world and will transport you back 1,100 years, to bring you face-to-face with the legendary Viking leader Reginald, founder of the city. The adventure takes place in a handcrafted replica Viking house, seamlessly blending cutting edge with ancient Viking house-building techniques.



CELTIC LANDS AND SEAS

'Our land is made of the Sacred Three.
We invoke you Sky and Land and Sea.'
(From a Celtic Druid Blessing)

The ancient Celts believed that plants, animals and even inanimate objects possessed a spiritual essence. So they lived in harmony with nature. And this way of life continues today.

The landscapes of these corners of Wales and Ireland are almost mirror images of each other, with only sea dividing them. Both coastlines are characterised by long, unspoilt beaches, which then give way to lush, rolling countryside and, rising up in the distance, dramatic mountain ranges.

Come and feel the force of nature in every mountain, river, tree and rock.

Pendine,
Carmarthenshire

EXAMPLES OF LANDS AND SEAS

PRESELI HILLS PEMBROKESHIRE

Take a stroll along ancient tracks through one of the most captivating prehistoric landscapes – so mesmerising it's known in Welsh as Gwlad Hud a Lledrith, meaning 'Land of Magic and Enchantment'. The Preselis have a rich and dramatic past, not least being the fabled source for the Bluestones that make up the inner ring of Stonehenge. Dotted across the wild moorland, heath and grassland are prehistoric remains, burial cairns and Iron Age hill forts.



DUNMORE EAST CO. WATERFORD

Dunmore East is a picturesque little fishing village perched on the edge of a cliff, overlooking a number of sandy coves that are ideal for swimming, snorkelling, walking or simply relaxing. A favoured spot with Waterford folk, one of the popular things to do is to walk along the pier and watch the fishing boat crews unloading the daily catch. If you're lucky, you might spot a seal or two in the harbour, anticipating a throwaway fish from a kindly fisherman.



CELTIC PLACES

All roads in our particular corner of the world lead you to the land of the ancients.

Explore the relics of an Iron Age hill fort and get a glimpse into the everyday lives of the tribal Celts. Pay tribute at a stone burial chamber, reflecting the Celtic belief in the after-world. Hear the local legend of a giant who threw an Ogham stone down a hill – and see for yourself the scratches his fingernails left in the rock. Wander around monastic cities where saints founded the earliest Christian settlements.

Come and discover the places and the people that shaped the culture of Wales and Ireland.



Hafod,
Ceredigion

EXAMPLES OF PLACES

KIDWELLY CARMARTHENSHIRE

Kidwelly's Norman castle, set on the banks of the River Gwendraeth, is one of the finest preserved examples in Wales. Look out for the arches through which rocks could be thrown onto the unsuspecting enemy below. Monty Python fans will recognise the castle from the first scene of Monty Python and The Holy Grail. Kidwelly's Kymer Canal is the oldest in Wales, constructed in 1766. Originally built to transport coal out of the town, it's now a wildlife haven and pleasing walk.



AVOCA VALLEY CO. WICKLOW

An area associated with the copper mining industry, the valley was immortalised by Thomas Moore in the song 'The Meeting of the Waters'. The waters in question are the Avonmore and Avonbeg rivers, which meet about 2 miles from the village of Avoca. It also marks the start for a gentle walk along the valley bottom. As well as being famous for its hand-weaving, Avoca was the fictional village of 'Ballykissangel' in the late 90s BBC series of the same name.



CELTIC STORIES

A long time ago, the Celts dominated large parts of Europe – from the British Isles in the west to Turkey in the east. They passed on their vibrant tales of adventure, heroism, romance and magic by word of mouth. Then the Romans invaded and as their empire grew, much of this Celtic mythology was lost forever. But we, the Celts of Wales, and Ireland kept our traditions alive, and thanks to the efforts of the clever medieval monks who wrote down the tales, our mythologies endured too.

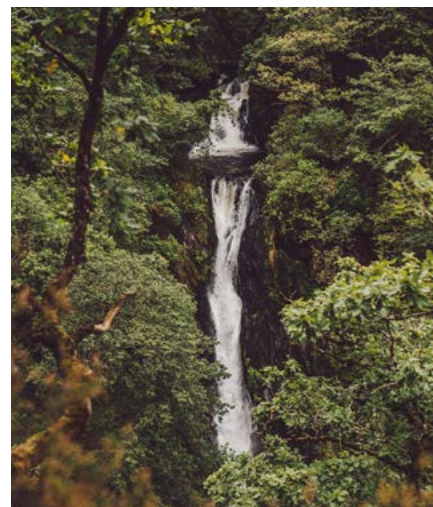
Come and hear our stories, the Celtic way. Face-to-face – and ideally, gathered round a roaring fire.

National Heritage Park,
Co. Wexford

EXAMPLES OF STORIES

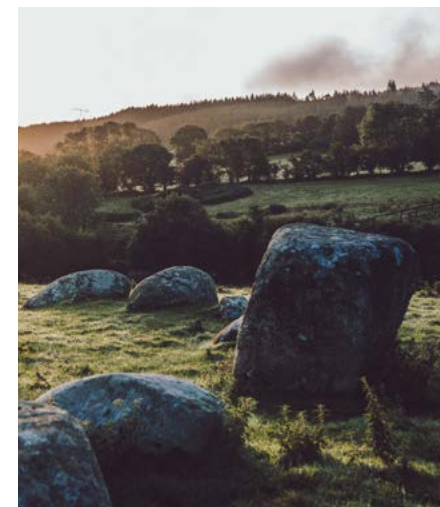
DEVIL'S BRIDGE CEREDIGION

Three separate bridges span the 90m waterfalls of the River Mynach – one built on top of the other between the 11th and 19th centuries. According to the legend, the original bridge was built by the Devil as it was too difficult a task for mortals. He agreed to build the bridge in exchange for the soul of the first being to cross the bridge. However, he was outwitted by a canny old woman and banished from the country forever.



THE PIPER'S STONES CO. WICKLOW

This Bronze Age stone circle sits on a hillock at Athgreany. Made up of 16 grey granite boulders, there is one larger outlying stone – the piper – with the remaining smaller stones forming a circle of about 22 metres in diameter. These are the dancers. According to a local fairy tale, this group of revellers were daring to dance to the piper's tune on the Sabbath when God turned them all to stone as punishment.



CELTIC PEOPLE

The Celts were fearsome warriors, although nowadays about the only place we do battle is on the rugby field. But just like our ancestors, we also enjoy celebrating a victory and when we do, everyone's invited. We might meet as strangers, but it's certain we'll part as friends.

Whichever side of the water you're on, you'll notice we put our individual melodic twists on the way we speak, as we tell tall tales of saints and sinners in English, Welsh or Irish.

Come and see how, though separated by sea, we're connected by ancient blood.



Annestown Beach,
Co. Waterford

EXAMPLES OF PEOPLE

CASTELL HENLLYS PEMBROKESHIRE

Wherever humans go, we make our mark. The ancient people of North Pembrokeshire were no exception to this, leaving no fewer than 8 prehistoric sites in the area. Castell Henllys is the only Iron Age village in Britain reconstructed on the exact site where our Celtic ancestors lived 2,000 years ago. Take the barefoot trail through flint gravel, squelching clay and tree stumps and you'll literally be walking in the footsteps of the Demetae tribe.



NORMAN WAY CO. WEXFORD

In 1169, Diarmuid MacMurrough, who'd been ousted as King of Leinster, brought Norman knights to Ireland to help him reclaim his kingdom. These forces first landed at Bannow Bay. After MacMurrough died, the Norman knight Richard de Clare – 'Strongbow' became de facto ruler of Leinster and after that, the Normans never really left. Travel along the Norman Way in Wexford and discover how their way of life influenced and, ultimately, changed Ireland.



PROMOTING THE CELTIC ROUTES

The Celtic Routes will benefit from a substantial marketing and public relation effort.

Activity will involve a significant digital advertising campaign specifically targeting potential travellers in our target markets of UK, USA, Germany, France and the Netherlands. There will be considerable out of home advertising at Cardiff, Dublin and Bristol airport as well as at selected sites as people travel to Wales and Ireland.

The Celtic Routes will have a presence at International and domestic travel shows and will feature in selected high profile travel publications including The Times travel supplement, Visit Britain magazine, the Aer Lingus in-flight magazine, Discover Britain and selected German, French and Dutch publications.

All this will be supported by a Public Relations campaign that will raise the profile of the Celtic Routes in our target markets.

Keep an eye on our social channels and the trade section of the Celtic Routes website on how to get involved in the promotional and public relations efforts of the Celtic Routes. We need your help we want you to benefit from this significant campaign. Please do get involved.

Bray Head Cliff Walk,
Co. Wicklow

LET'S GET PRACTICAL PETHAU BYCHAIN

In practical terms, there are 1,001 things you can do to get involved.

We'll be working hard with businesses across the 6 counties to create and promote authentically Celtic experiences. But please don't think it all has to be big stuff, requiring a huge marketing budget and a team of digital specialists.

In some of his last words to his followers, Wales' patron saint, St David, said:

"Gwnewch y pethau bychain mewn bywyd" – "Do the little things in life"

It's a principle many people still follow today. And we'd like to encourage businesses to develop small, local initiatives to enhance the Celtic Routes experience, because every small action becomes part of the whole. Be as imaginative as you want in giving us your take on Celtic Routes, there's thousands of years to inspire you.

HERE'S SOME IDEAS TO GET YOU STARTED...

- Check out some local coast and countryside walks and trails – and provide information on them to visitors
- Get together with some local activity providers and offer inclusive packages or special discounts
- Look for hidden talent within your own business. Do you have any traditional musicians, singers or dancers, wildlife enthusiasts or local history buffs on your team? Could they give demonstrations or talks to your visitors?
- Encourage your visitors to explore the area without a car, where possible, by walking, cycling or using public transport. Display information such as maps showing local footpaths, bike rental companies and bus timetables
- Learn some of the Celtic myths and legends associated with your area. Consider writing some up and printing them off for your visitors to read. You could display some copies of Celtic tales instead of newspapers (The tales are probably more credible!)
- Take time out to visit some of the heritage sites in your local area. Then you'll be able to recommend them to visitors using first-hand experience
- Wales and Ireland both have their own ancient, beautiful languages and encouraging visitors to engage in learning a little during their stay, even if it's the most basic of conversations, will make them feel like they're really connecting with the place and the people
- Seek out local artists that are influenced by Celtic art or local landscapes. Maybe they could provide some pieces to decorate your business with in exchange for a small area to display items for sale to visitors
- Do you have imagery you can use that fits well with the Celtic Routes brand and themes? Landscapes, coastline, nature, heritage, activities, people, etc. You don't need expensive photography, you can get some great results with your smartphone or digital camera.

Pumlumon,
Ceredigion

CELTIC ROUTES BRAND ASSETS

The Celtic Routes partnership has created a suite of brand assets that you can use to promote your involvement in the Celtic Routes initiative.

PHOTOGRAPHY

A stunning collection of the Celtic Routes Beacons, Moments and Discoveries are available to you to promote your involvement in the Celtic Routes initiative.

FILM

A 90 second film that tells the Celtic Routes story is available to you to promote your involvement in the Celtic Routes.

BRAND GUIDELINES

The Celtic Routes Brand Guidelines helps tell the world who we are and what we stand for. It's unique and distinctive and unites us in everything we do. Through our iconic marque, our visual style and our authentic tone of voice, we are able to tell the story of the Celtic Routes in a cohesive, engaging and compelling way. A copy is available that shows you how you can use the identity to support your own marketing efforts.

USING THE CELTIC ROUTES BRAND ASSETS

Join us in promoting Celtic Routes to the world. To use our brand assets to promote your Involvement in this initiative then send your request to one of the addresses below:

info@celticroutes.irish

info@celticroutes.wales

gwylbodaeth@lwybrauceltaidd.cymru

Minwear Woods,
Pembrokeshire

THE CELTIC PLEDGE

The ancient Celts believed that plants, animals and even inanimate objects possessed a spiritual essence. But they also recognised that they had to utilise nature to survive. They could only have done this by getting to know the natural environment intimately and building a respectful relationship with it, so they could live in harmony with it.

With this in mind, we would like to encourage all visitors to our ancient lands to show respect for this natural environment by taking our Celtic Pledge. This pledge is based on the 7 principles of 'Leave No Trace', minimum-impact practices for enjoying the outdoors responsibly.

This is something you can help us with by displaying the Pledge in a prominent area of your business. If you can commit to the pledge yourself as the partnership counties will be, by assisting visitors to meet the terms of the pledge, so much the better. That way everyone wins – especially our beautiful lands and seasons.

WHILE TRAVELLING ON CELTIC ROUTES:

I will seek out adventure,
And be prepared for all
weathers and eventualities.

I will use public transport where I can,
And be considerate to others when I
travel under my own steam.

I will explore nature,
And keep at a respectful
distance to protect it.

I will cherish the past,
And not take what is not mine.

I will conserve the present,
And not leave anything for
others to clean up.

I will follow in the footsteps
of the ancient Celts,
Leaving no trace of my own.

Laugharne,
Carmarthenshire.

CELTIC ROUTES CONTACTS

DISCOVER CARMARTHENSHIRE

www.discovercarmarthenshire.com

Castle House, Carmarthen Castle,
Castle Hill, Carmarthen, SA31 1AD

Tel: +44 (0)1267 231557

DISCOVER CEREDIGION

www.discoverceredigion.co.uk

Tourism Service, Canolfan Rheidol,
Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, SY23 3UE

Email: tourism@ceredigion.gov.uk

Tel: 01970 612125

PEMBROKESHIRE

COASTAL NATIONAL PARK

www.pembrokeshirecoast.wales

National Park Offices,
Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock,
Pembrokeshire, SA72 6DY

Email: info@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk

Tel: 01646 624800

WEXFORD

www.visitwexford.ie

Tourism Officer, Wexford County
Council, County Hall, Carricklawn,
Wexford, Y35 WY93

Email: Billy.Byrne@wexfordcoco.ie

Tel: 053 9196556

WICKLOW

www.visitwicklow.ie

Tourism Officer, Wicklow County
Council, County Buildings, Whitegates,
Wicklow, A67 FW96

Email: fred@visitwicklow.ie

Tel: 0404 200 70

WATERFORD

www.visitwaterford.com

Tourism Officer, Waterford City
& County Council, 35 The Mall,
Waterford, X91 DN23

Email: oholohan@waterfordcouncil.ie

Tel: 0761102687

This Business Toolkit and its content is available,
on request, in Irish / Irish Gaelic / Gaelic, with
the exception to place-names that are of Welsh
origin and use.



Black Castle,
Co. Wicklow

