

# Fáilte Ireland & Ireland's Hidden Heartlands



**Fáilte Ireland**

National Tourism Development Authority



**Ireland's Hidden  
HEARTLANDS**



Fáilte Ireland: responsible for development of the tourism product in the Republic of Ireland, and for its marketing and promotion to the domestic market

Tourism Ireland: responsible for the marketing and promotion of the whole island of Ireland to overseas, international markets and operators



# Fáilte Ireland

National Tourism Development Authority

Fáilte Ireland comprises a number of different departments: from Commercial Development through Marketing, International Publicity, Accommodation Development to Regional Development. The Regional Development section comprises of 4 teams that are focused on the regional brand propositions: Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland's Ancient East, Dublin and Ireland's Hidden Heartlands.



IRELAND'S  
ANCIENT EAST®

Dublin



**WILD ATLANTIC WAY**

SLÍ AN ATLANTAIGH FHIÁIN



Ireland's Hidden  
**HEARTLANDS**

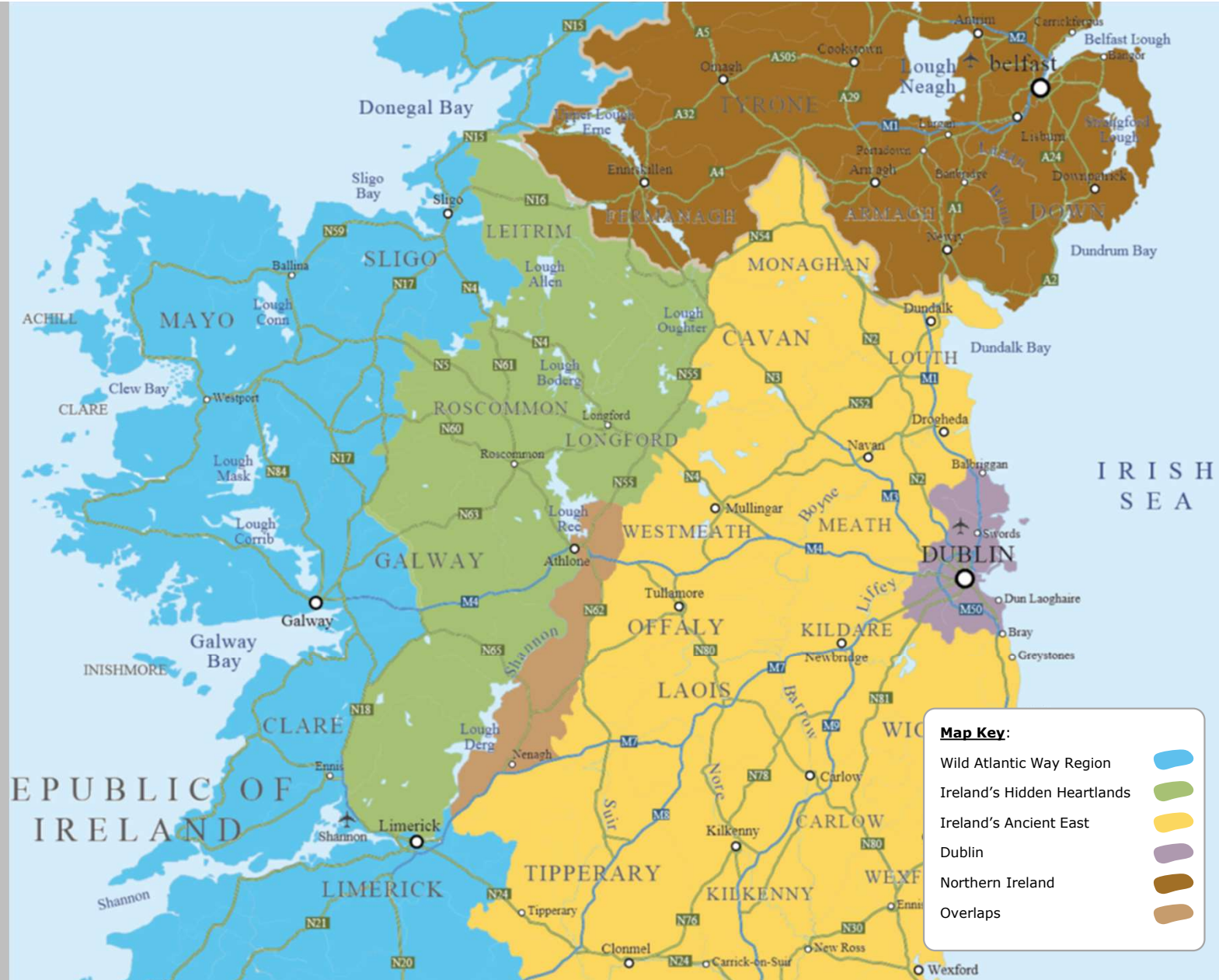
9 counties comprise  
Ireland's Hidden Heartlands

*full*  
ROSCOMMON  
LONGFORD

*majority*  
LEITRIM

*half*  
CAVAN  
GALWAY  
CLARE

*sections*  
WESTMEATH  
OFFALY  
TIPPERARY



## BRAND PROPOSITION

Explore the green heartlands of Ireland's natural rural beauty, where activity and relaxation are centred around rural communities and their lifestyles, and can be discovered across a latticework of land and water trails, showcased by the iconic River Shannon and the Beara Breifne Way.

“Active in Nature...  
Yours to Uncover.”





# Ireland's Hidden HEARTLANDS

## » SIGNATURE ASSETS:

- Still Water (Lakes & Rivers)
- Lake Island Castles
- Nature (Forests & Bogs)
- Hidden Heritage Gems

## » SIGNATURE EXPERIENCES:

- Cruising on the Shannon
- Active in Nature (walking / water-based, etc))
- Family Fun in Nature and on the Water
- Uncovering Hidden Gems
- Angling & Golf

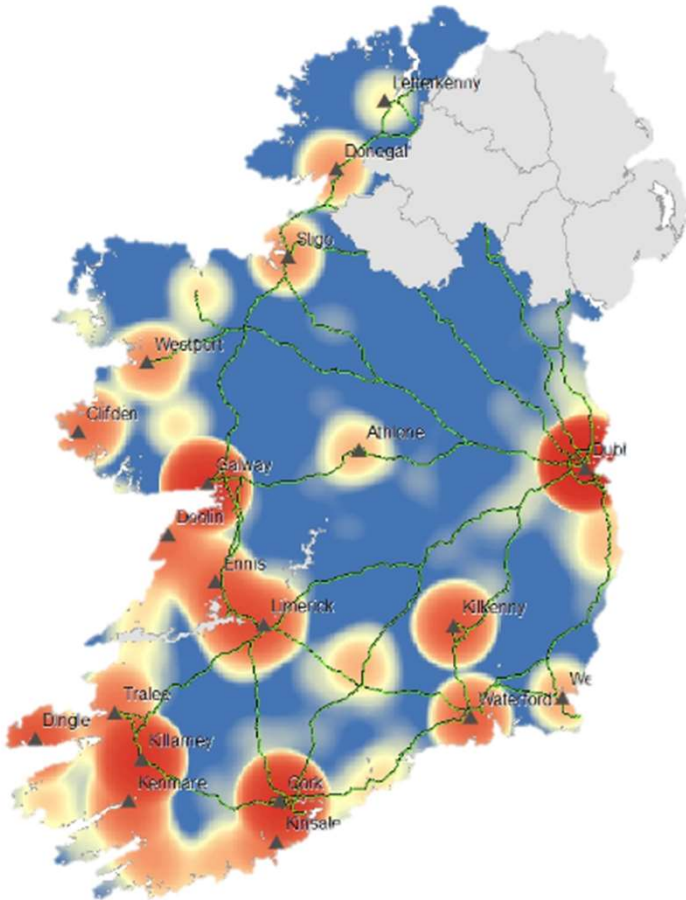


## Development of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands: *Reminder of business opportunity*

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### *Regional Distribution of Visitors*



70% of the action is in 30% of the landmass.

79% of overseas nights in 5 counties.

Sustainable growth demands greater regional spread.

Opportunity for Midlands.

## The Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Team



Paddy Mathews  
Head of Operations  
Paddy.Mathews@failteireland.ie



Mark McGovern  
Manager  
Mark.McGovern@failteireland.ie



Tony Dawson  
Programme Officer  
Tony.Dawson@failteireland.ie



Sarah McCarthy  
Programme Officer  
Sarah.McCarthy@failteireland.ie



Fiona Henshaw  
Administrative Support  
Fiona.Henshaw@failteireland.ie

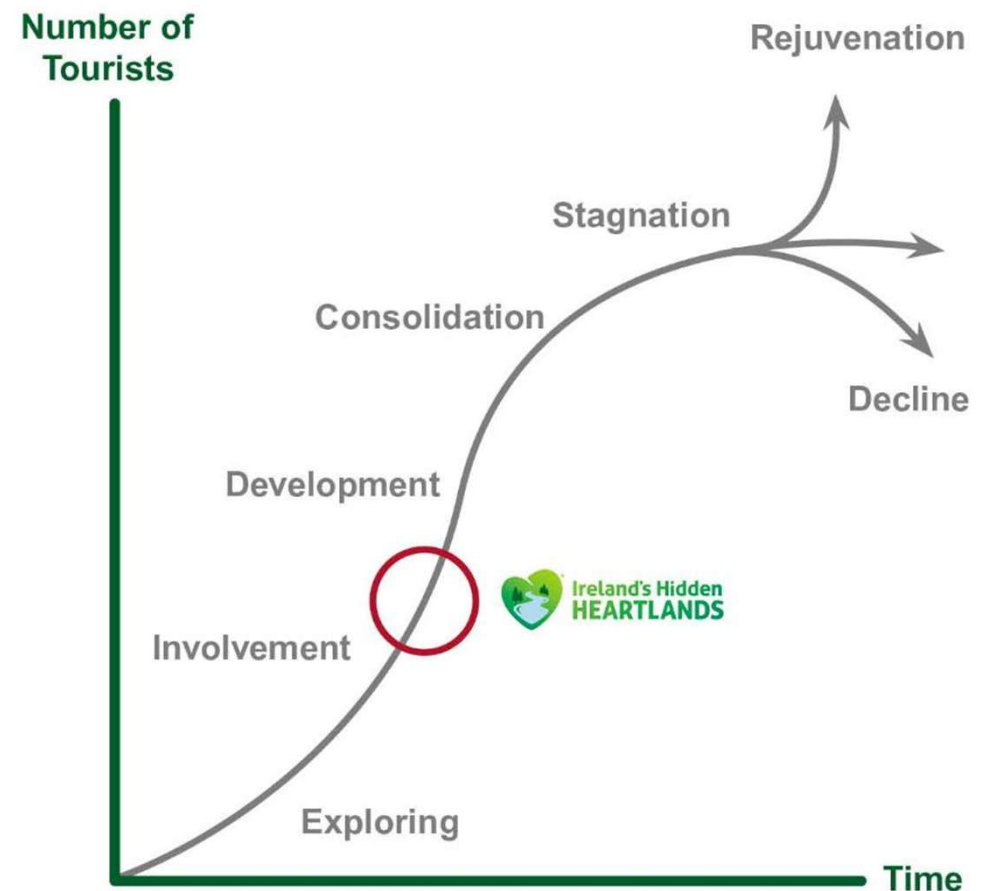


## Where we are



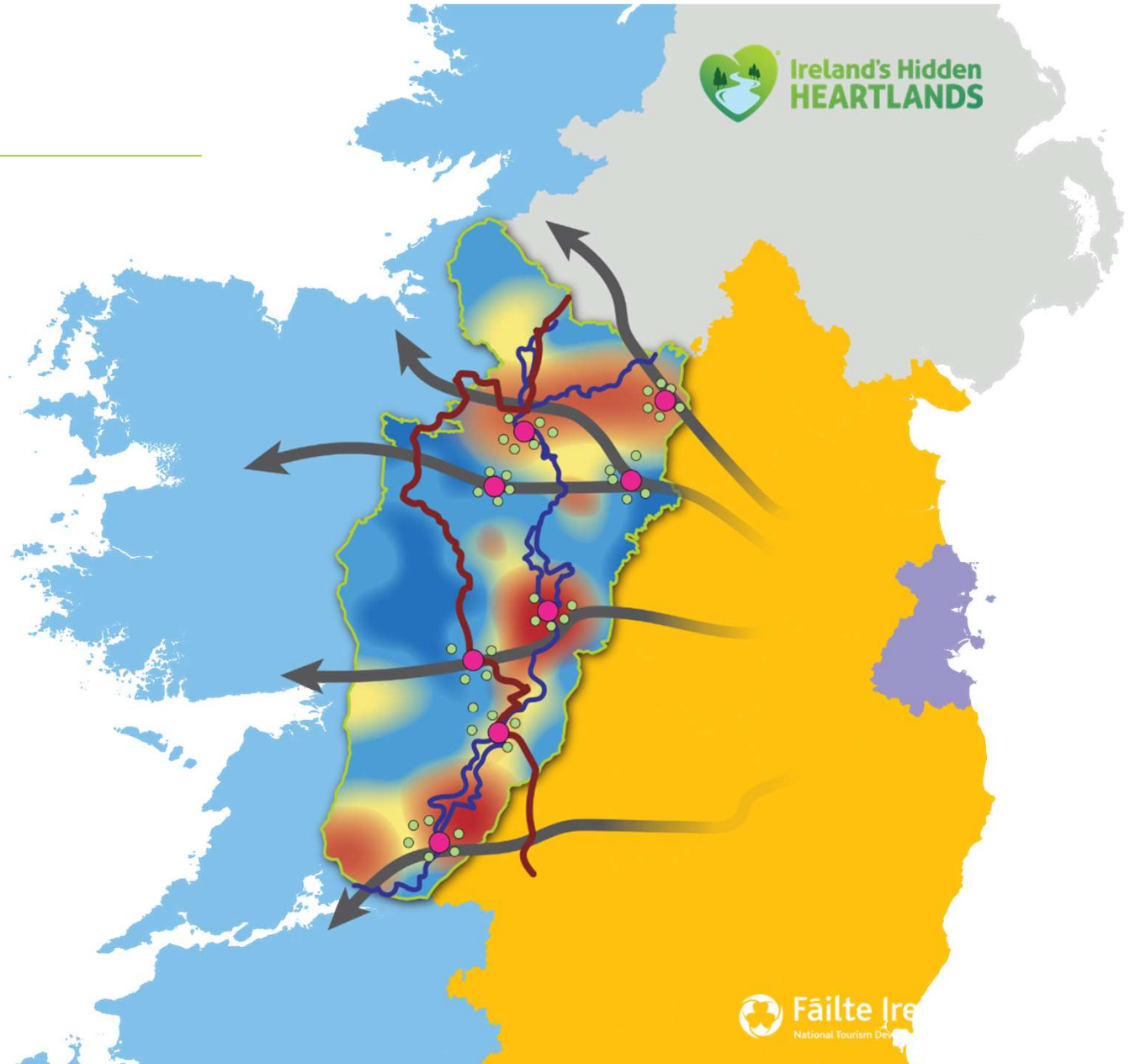
### Ireland's Hidden Heartlands is an emerging destination:

- » Not strongly identified as a tourism destination – a permeable transit zone.
- » 3.5% overseas overnights.  
3.5% domestic overnights.
- » Some very good accommodation, but only 4% of bedstock.
- » Some good hubs, but need more.
- » Some good industry networks and clusters, and these need improvement and more are needed.
- » Patchy range of visitor experiences across the region.
- » Weak packaging and promotion to meet consumer needs.



# Future Development

- Hubs
- Clusters
- Beara Breifne Way
- Shannon River
- Major Roads
- High
- Low



# The River Shannon

360km long from source to the sea  
Navigable for the majority  
Slow and still – only falls 60 feet in the first 150 miles

Three of the largest lakes in Ireland:  
Lough Allen  
Lough Ree (Lake of the Kings)  
Lough Derg

Different habitats including  
Lake, bog and water meadows

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)  
Special Protection Areas (SPAs)

Characterful and colourful villages and towns



# Beara Breifne Way

500 km

Historic march undertaken in 1603

Beara in Cork to Breifne in Leitrim

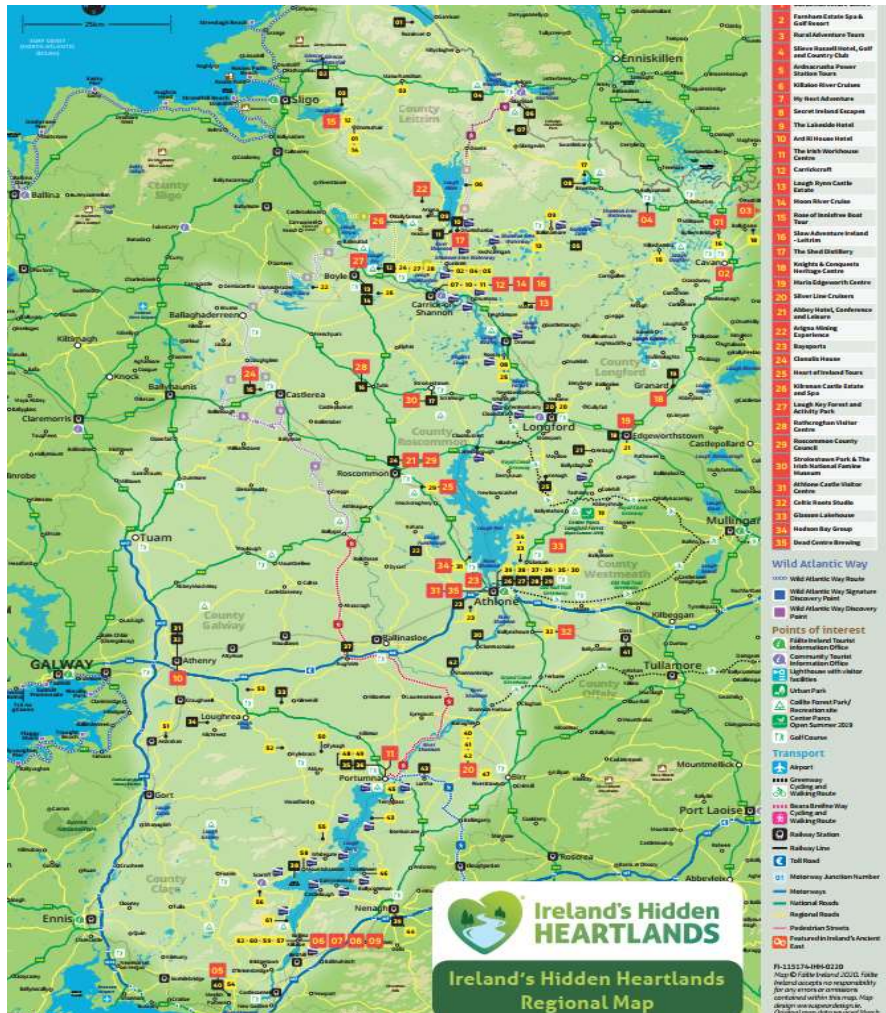
12 different trails

Intersects with the Shannon at several points

2<sup>nd</sup> North-South spine in Ireland's Hidden Heartlands



# Growing and promoting the inventory of experiences in Ireland's Hidden Heartlands: 2020



## Meitheal Attendees 2020

1	Cavan Adventure Centre	Butlersbridge	Co. Cavan
2	Farnham Estate Spa & Golf Resort	Cavan Town	Co. Cavan
3	Wild Adventure Tours	Co. Cavan	Co. Cavan
4	Slieve Donnell, Golf and Country Club	Ballyconnell	Co. Cavan
5	Ardara Power Station Tours	Ardara	Co. Clare
6	Killaloe River Cruises	Killaloe	Co. Clare
7	My Next Adventure	Killaloe	Co. Clare
8	Secret Ireland Escapes	Killaloe	Co. Clare
9	The Lakeside Hotel	Ballyvaughan	Co. Clare
10	Ard Ri House Hotel	Athlery	Co. Galway
11	The Irish Workhouse Centre	Portlanna	Co. Galway
12	Carbrook	Carbrook	Co. Leitrim
13	Lough Ryan Castle Estate	Mohill	Co. Leitrim
14	Moos River Cruises	Carraig on Shannon	Co. Leitrim
15	Boat of Inishree Boat Tour	Lough Gill	Co. Leitrim
16	Slow Adventure Ireland - Leitrim	Carraig on Shannon	Co. Leitrim
17	The Shod Distillery	Drumharbo	Co. Leitrim
18	Knights & Conquests Heritage Centre	Granard	Co. Longford
19	Maria Edgeworth Centre	Edgeworthstown	Co. Longford
20	Shane Line Cruises	Shanaghy	Co. Offaly
21	Albion Hotel, Conferences and Letours	Roscommon Town	Co. Roscommon
22	Albion Mining Experience	Arigna	Co. Roscommon
23	Baysports	Hoodon Bay	Co. Roscommon
24	Clonilla House	Castlerea	Co. Roscommon
25	Heart of Ireland Tours	Ballymurray	Co. Roscommon
26	Kilruman Castle Estate and Spa	Ballyfarnon	Co. Roscommon
27	Lough Key Forest and Activity Park	Boyle	Co. Roscommon
28	Blackdown Visitor Centre	Blackdown	Co. Roscommon
29	Roscommon County Centre	Roscommon Town	Co. Roscommon
30	Strokestown Park & The Irish National Famine Museum	Strokestown	Co. Roscommon
31	Alfama Castle Visitor Centre	Athlone	Co. Westmeath
32	Celtic Rafting	Ballymore	Co. Westmeath
33	Clonilla Lakehouse	Glasson, Athlone	Co. Westmeath
34	Hoodon Bay Group	Hillway	Co. Westmeath
35	Dead Centre Brewing	Athlone	Co. Westmeath

## Activities & Adventure

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## Visitor Attractions

101	The Organic Centre	Co. Wick
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# Growing the profile of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands: Press ads in 2020



Make a break for  
Ireland's Hidden  
Heartlands.



Ireland's Hidden  
**HEARTLANDS**

Lough Doughter, Co Cavan

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK, AWAY FROM CROWDS, IRELAND'S HIDDEN HEARTLANDS OFFERS TREATS FOR THE SENSES THAT ARE YOURS TO DISCOVER

You can be active and explore heritage anywhere, but in Ireland's Hidden Heartlands, it's different. Here, you set the pace. Stop, breathe in deeply and listen to the ripples along one of its many lakes (Cavan alone has over 350!), venture out onto the magical waterways of the River Shannon on a canoe or your own cruiser, ramble through forests and open countryside, and be enthralled by the lives and stories of the people – past and present – that you meet along the way. And, as dusk blankets this tapestry of fields, bogs and wonderful waterways, count the twinkling stars in the night sky – you'll never want to leave.

CAVAN

CAVAN ADVENTURE CENTRE

Set out on an epic adventure in Cavan's lakelands when you hire a kayak, canoe, bike and/or a guide from Cavan Adventure Centre. Fantastic fun for kids and adults. 049 4893630 [www.cavanadventure.com](http://www.cavanadventure.com)



CLARE



MCKERNAN WOOLLEN MILLS

Meet the makers on a guided tour of McKernan Woollen Mills. Witness the historic skills of talented hands that create beautiful designer scarves. 061 921527 [www.scarves.ie](http://www.scarves.ie)

WILDE IRISH CHOCOLATES

Wilde Irish Chocolates are artisan chocolatiers in County Clare producing an array of delicious delights. Take a free tour and perhaps even a free tasting. 061 922080 [www.wildeirishchocolates.com](http://www.wildeirishchocolates.com)

MY NEXT ADVENTURE

Experience thrilling kayaking tours of beautiful Lough Derg. Hear the history of Killaloe and make memories along the River Shannon to last a lifetime. 087 3952777 [www.mynextadventure.ie](http://www.mynextadventure.ie)

GALWAY



PORTUNNA CASTLE AND GARDENS

Enjoy a captivating tour of historic Portunna Castle and experience what it was like to live during the 17th century in the West of Ireland. 090 974658 [www.heritageireland.ie](http://www.heritageireland.ie)

LEITRIM

MOON RIVER CRUISES

Go on a relaxing cruise with Moon River Cruises and enjoy panoramic views of the local countryside and the magnificent River Shannon. 071 9621777 [www.moonriver.ie](http://www.moonriver.ie)



CLOUGHAN FARM COOKERY SCHOOL

Fiona and Michael Egan's farm cookery school is the perfect place to hone your cooking skills while enjoying fresh air and some hearty farm produce. 087 1457741 [www.fionaegan.com](http://www.fionaegan.com)

OFFALY

SILVERLINE CRUISERS

Cruise the Hidden Heartlands by setting sail from Banagher on the River Shannon, one of the finest waterways in Europe, with Silverline Cruisers. 057 9151132 [www.silverlinecruisers.com](http://www.silverlinecruisers.com)

ROSCOMMON

RATHCROGHAN VISITOR CENTRE

Explore the fascinating site of Rathcroghan, the ancient capital of Connacht, and home of the Warrior Queen Medb of the Táin Bó Cúailnge. 071 963 92168 [www.rathcroghan.ie](http://www.rathcroghan.ie)



TIPPERARY

BROOKFIELD FARM

Visitors to Brookfield Farm will enjoy a talk on beekeeping and honey tasting. Experience a farm walk through acres of flower meadows on the shores of Lough Derg. 086 8551309 [www.brookfieldfarm.com](http://www.brookfieldfarm.com)

KILLALOE RIVER CRUISES

Relax and enjoy a sightseeing cruise on the River Shannon and Lough Derg from the twin towns of Killaloe and Ballina, nestled in Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. 086 8140559 [www.killaloeivercruises.com](http://www.killaloeivercruises.com)

WESTMEATH



DEAD CENTRE BREWING

Visit Dead Centre Brewing where you can enjoy one of Ireland's leading craft beers, fresh pizza and epic views of the Shannon. 090 6420883 [www.deadcentrebrewing.com](http://www.deadcentrebrewing.com)

VIKING TOURS IRELAND

Combine history with fresh air by taking a trip downriver with Viking Mike on a replica Viking longship on the River Shannon from the centre of Athlone. 086 2621136 [www.vikingtoursireland.ie](http://www.vikingtoursireland.ie)

LONGFORD

MARIA EDGEWORTH CENTRE

Hear the Edgeworth story at the Visitor Centre where history comes alive. Learn about literary creation to benevolence, education and religious conviction. 043 6671801 [www.edgeworthstown.net](http://www.edgeworthstown.net)

STROKESTOWN PARK HOUSE, GARDENS & NATIONAL FAMINE MUSEUM

Experience a fascinating retelling of the story of the Great Irish Famine within the Georgian grandeur of Strokestown Park House. 071 9633013 [www.strokestownpark.ie](http://www.strokestownpark.ie)

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Ireland's never felt bigger | DiscoverIreland.ie

# Growing the profile of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands: Articles in 2020

## Ireland unlocks

Unravelling through a lock your along the River Shannon, freshwater boundaries... **HEART OF IRELAND** In our new staycation series, **Thomas Breathnach** explores Ireland's Hidden Heartlands

**What to eat and drink**

**COUNTRY CUISINE**  
Heven Maguire's MacNean Restaurant in Blacklion brought destination dining to the Carran peninsula. Dinner, tea or picnic chair and picnic basket will serve — just make sure to book ahead! You'll find outstanding gastronomy along the Shannon, like The Darg Inn in Terrygliss for its 12-hour slow-cooked lamb shanks, while Sabrina Amodeo's Tuscany Bistro serves an Italian menu showcasing local ingredients that puts the town's name in the spotlight. Try the homemade cannellini with creamy Cashel Blue sauce. [macnean-restaurant.com](#) @astrotripp\_haconry

**SHANNON SUNDOGOWNERS**  
Laker's of Shannonbridge is a traditional grocers bar that ranks as one of Ireland's greatest pubs. The Victorian freehouse is a great spot for a pint while enjoying tales of Shannon lore from owner John and Ryan. Dead Centre Brewery in Ashbone is a popular taproom whose flagship Marooned IPA is a fruity ale crafted with Killarney organic oats. Prefer a caffeine kick? Head to The Old Barracks Coffee Roastery, an adults-only coffee bar in Birr. [theoldbarracks.ie](#)

**Next Saturday, we're off to Cork. Let us know what you love about it at [irelandunlocks](#), by tweeting [@irelandunlocks](#), or email [travel@independent.ie](#)**

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**before heading up at their grass-roofed eco-cafe, with treats like aromatic chickpea tapine or zucchini and cheese muffins.** [theorganiccentre.ie](#)

**Woodland wander**  
Center Parcs has put Longford's pristine woodlands on the map, but you don't need to splash out for an executive lodge to enjoy them. Once part of the former demesne of the same name, Newcastle Woods (just adjacent to the resort) offers 28km of tracks and trails, from the Slam church walk to a 700m stretch of wheelchair-accessible forest pathways. Amid the flora and fauna, keep an eye out for the resident fallow deer!

**Three amazing stays**

Located in a former postmaster's residence, freshly refurbished rooms at The Olive Post Inn in Cloverhill offer a characterful base for exploring Cavan's highlights (the on-site restaurant being a star attraction). [theolivepostinn.com](#)

Lough Lene Farm in Terrygliss offers a rustic self-catering base for your explorations. Pick from the quaint Granary Cottage (left) to the spacious lodge, sleeping two to eight people. [loughlenufarm.com](#)

Lough Key Caravan and Campsite welcomes self-catering caravans and campers this summer. Limited tenting spots available in July. Families will love the adventure centre, too. [loughkeycamp.com](#)

**IRISH INDEPENDENT Weekend Magazine 11 July 2020**

## Irish Independent

# 25 BEST FAMILY FRIENDLY WALKS

Travel addict **Pól O'Connell** on the joys of Ireland's trails

**Wild at heart: Kalliryn Thomas on Kerry**

**Chef Catherine Fulvio falls for Wicklow's charms**

**Post-like places to eat**

**FROM TODDLERS TO TEENS AND BEYOND: ROUTES TO SUIT EVERY AGE**

## Wildlife fans will love

**20 BEST FOR NATURALISTS**

**MY FAVOURITE WALK**  
**ALISON CURTIS**  
**"I feel calmer in nature, it's something that really shaped me"**

Alison Curtis presents **Hickwood** breakfast on Tedy's Caravan and lives in Dublin with her husband and daughter, Joan.

"We love Devil's Glen in Wicklow. You pass waterfalls and all different types of scenery, which I think is great for kids, as it helps to keep them entertained. As a family..."

**IRISH INDEPENDENT Weekend Magazine 11 July 2020**

## Weekend Travel

For tips, deals and inspiration log on to [independent.ie/travel](#)

# Cruising in the time of Covid

What's it like to holiday on Ireland's waterways in a pandemic? **Cunor Power** finds out with a staycation on the River Shannon

**Get there**  
A seven-night self-catered holiday on the Elegance (pictured), sleeping up to six, ranges from €1,299 for a week in July. Three days off-peak from €679. Cunor was a guest of Emerald Star, 071 962 7633; [emeraldstar.ie](#)

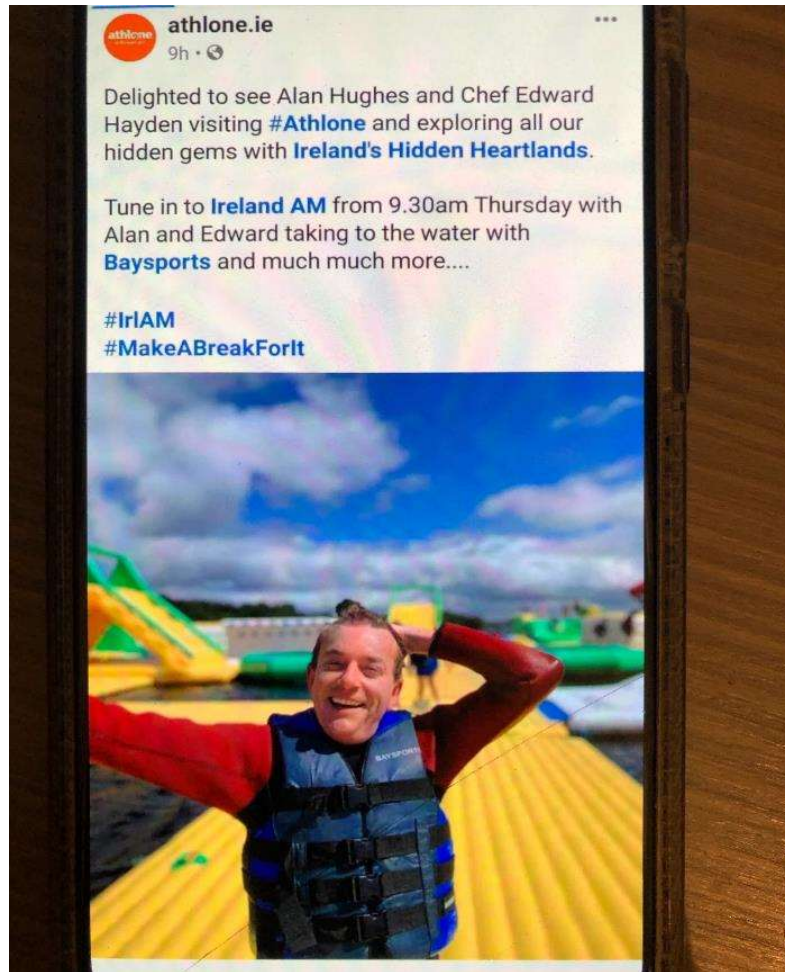
Normally, cruisers on the Shannon pay to get through locks with a pre-paid card system, but for the Covid period, all the charges have been waived to reduce the level of contact involved. In the locks, all the lock keepers wear gloves and masks — though we were a very safe distance from them, and it was sometimes difficult to hear what they were saying through the muffled effect of cloth over their mouths.

Onboard our boat — a 131m Elegance craft sleeping six — we had everything we needed. The small kitchen (or galley, as we sailors say) comes with all the cutlery, ware and utensils you expect, an efficient fridge, an oven and a microwave. Also, the days of physically pumping water in and wastewater out in the toilets seem to be over in most boats — ours had the simple electric but our that you press to flush the toilet and all the freshly cleaned linen and bedding is provided. There is heating and air-conditioning too.

From Carrick-on-Shannon, we decided to head south on a three-hour cruise to Roskys. There's just one lock to negotiate on this part of the Shannon, which has a really nice view of variety about it in terms of the fauna and wildlife. Amid the forests of reeds along the flooded banks, you'll see glimpses of Redwing, Curlew and Sandpiper, while swallows, ducks and cranes abound.

**IRISH INDEPENDENT Weekend Magazine 11 July 2020**

## Growing the profile of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands: Influencers in 2020





## Growing the profile of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands: Media partnerships in 2020

**1** Ireland: **am**  
THE SIX O'CLOCK SHOW

Branded segment across Ireland AM / Ireland AM weekend and the Six O'clock Show

5-8min segments featuring station contributor providing information and inspiration to viewers

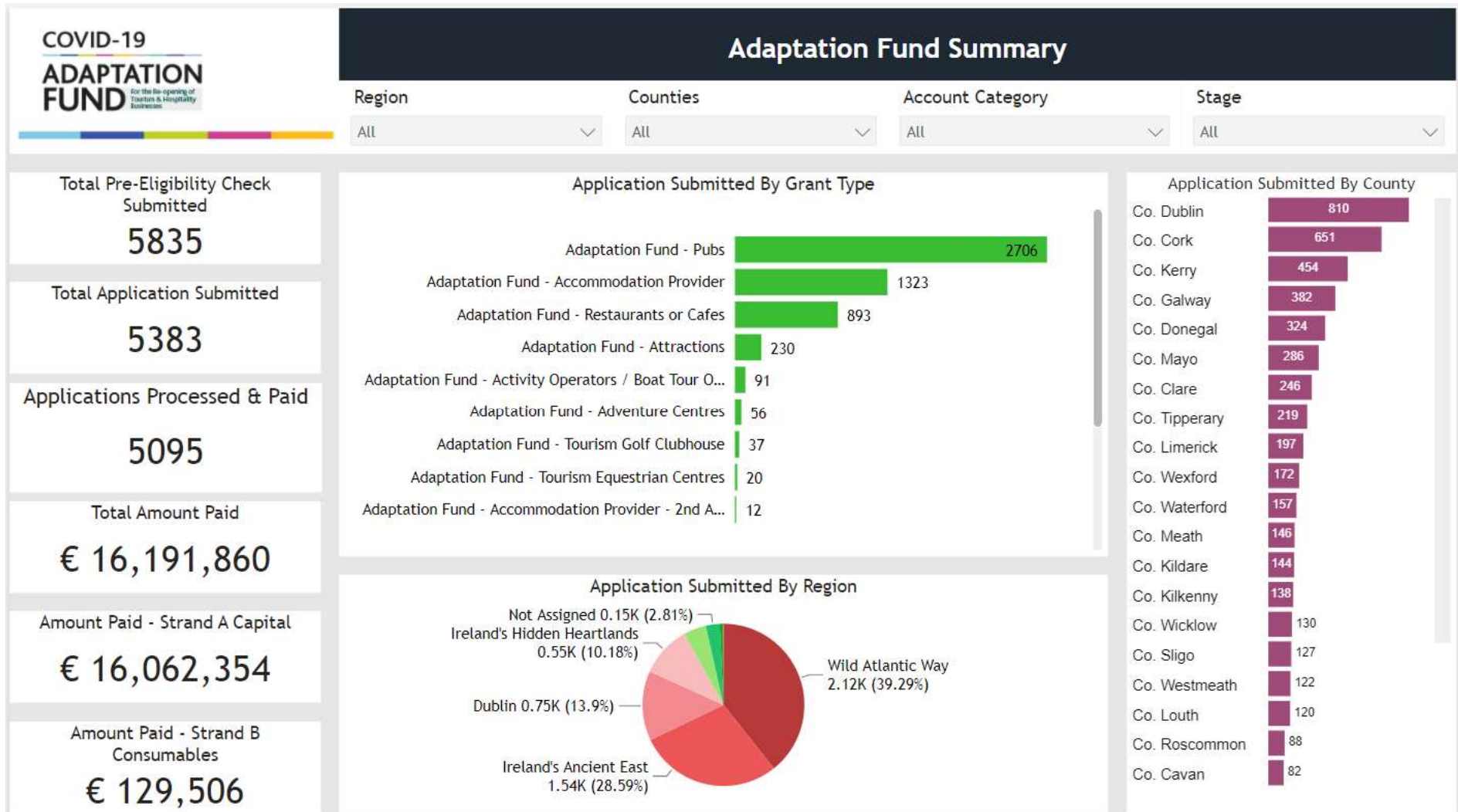
**2** Ireland: **am** THE SIX O'CLOCK SHOW

Presenters from the shows pave the way through pre-recorded VTs from different locations discovering something new

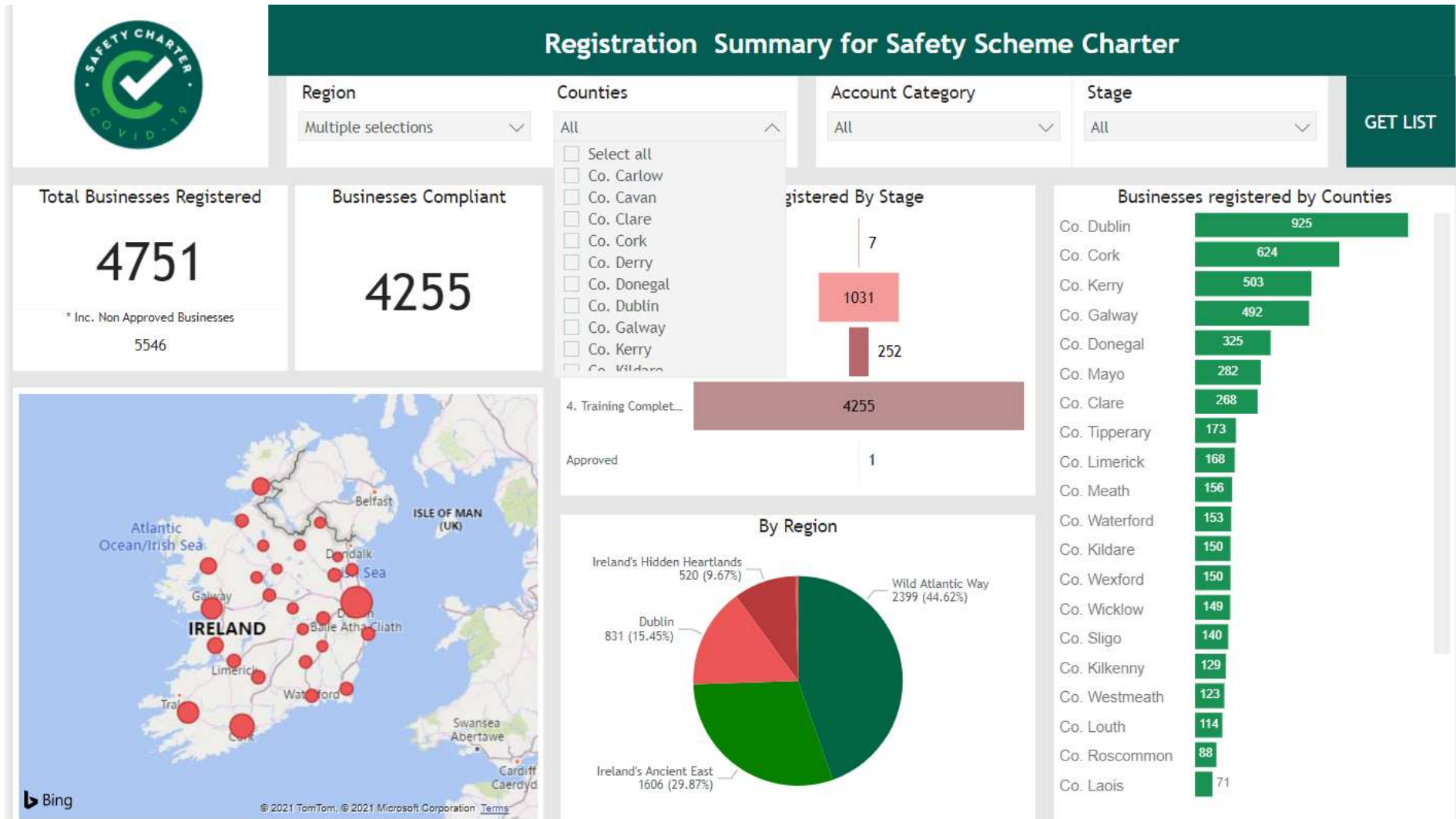
**3** one TWO THREE

30" Ad slot created using presenters VTs and aired across Virgin Media One, Two and Three

# Supporting businesses through Covid-19 in Ireland's Hidden Heartlands: e.g. The Adaptation Fund 2020



# Growing the profile of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands: Covid-19 Safety Charter certifications 30 March 2021



## Useful links

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Register on our Trade Portal

<https://tradeportal.failteireland.ie/>

Training and supports

<https://covid19.failteireland.ie/>

Research and insights

<https://www.failteireland.ie/Research-and-insights.aspx>

Go raibh mile maith agaibh!  
Thank you!

