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CHAPTER 13  
Tourism and Recreation

## 13 TOURISM AND RECREATION

### 13.1 Background

Tourism is one of the growth sectors in our economy. Kildare is rich in natural beauty, cultural heritage and archaeology, however it faces many challenges at present due to development pressure. The Council recognises that tourism development can make an important contribution to the economy of the county. In particular, it is recognised that tourism provides jobs and investment in parts of the county that might not otherwise benefit from economic development. The highly attractive nature of County Kildare's natural and physical environment and the richness of its cultural heritage and archaeology and its highly accessible location close to the Dublin metropolitan area, make Kildare very appealing.

### 13.2 Goal

To promote, protect, improve, encourage and facilitate the development of tourism and recreational facilities in the county in a manner that is sustainable.

### 13.3 Objectives

- (1) To work with relevant agencies and bodies, namely Fáilte Ireland, East Coast & Midlands Tourism, County Kildare Fáilte and the Kildare Tourism Strategy Group in the development and improvement of tourism infrastructure and facilities in the county.
- (2) To promote the development of tourism trails and regions within the county and with adjoining counties so as to provide coherent and integrated tourism products.
- (3) To promote public awareness and appreciation of archaeology, architecture and the natural heritage of County Kildare in a sustainable manner, for the benefit of the tourism industry.
- (4) To develop tourism literature relating to aspects of County Kildare's heritage.

### 13.4 Policy Statement

#### 13.4.1 It is the policy of the Council:

- TR 1 To direct tourism-based development where appropriate, into existing settlements where there is adequate infrastructure to service the development and where the development can contribute to the maintenance of essential rural services.
- TR 2 To encourage and facilitate in co-operation with voluntary bodies where appropriate, the improvement of the existing amenity and viewing areas and to facilitate the provision of additional areas where required.

- TR 3 To improve roads and to provide adequate car parking facilities and access in scenic areas, subject to the availability of resources.
- TR 4 To identify opportunities to improve the tourist product in County Kildare including the development of tourism literature.
- TR 5 To consider suitable sites for caravanning, camping and hostelling, in consultation with East Coast & Midlands Tourism. Development of sites will be subject to Fáilte Ireland's regulations and regulations laid down by the Council.
- TR 6 To encourage the development of the tourism industry by the provision and extension of existing amenities in co-operation with the appropriate statutory agencies, private tourism sector and community groups.
- TR 7 To promote and assist organisers in holding events throughout the county and where such events require an outdoor event licence to ensure that they comply with the provisions of Part XVI of the Planning and Development Act 2000-2004.
- TR 8 To promote County Kildare's cultural (including music & dance), literary, historical, genealogical, archaeological and architectural heritage.
- TR 9 To protect the amenities of the county from insensitive or inappropriate development, particularly any development that threatens the tourism resources of the county.
- TR 10 To facilitate the erection of standardised signage for tourism facilities and tourist attractions. Such signs require a licence and shall be sized and colour coded in accordance with the DoEHLG Memorandum, 'Criteria for the Provision of Tourist Attraction and Accommodation Signs' 1998.
- TR 11 To facilitate tourist related housing in 'Revitalising' and 'Strengthening' rural settlements identified in Chapter 6 of the Plan.
- TR 12 To assist local community groups and individuals in the tidy towns competitions, which make their settlements more attractive.
- TR 13 To assist in the achievement of the Key Themes for Future Development identified in 'A Framework for Action 2002- 2006', the report of the County Kildare Tourism Task Force.
- TR 14 To facilitate and encourage the re-use of redundant farm buildings of vernacular importance for appropriate owner-run agri-tourism enterprises subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
- TR 15 To maximise the branding and promotion potential of the county through hosting the Ryder Cup and to capitalise on this for the benefit of local tourism.

- TR 16 To recognise the importance of the Golf Industry to tourism in the county.
- TR 17 To support the provision of tourist facilities at large tourist sites in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development principles.
- TR 18 To identify the Pale and its boundaries within the county and work with adjoining Local Authorities & tourism bodies to develop its tourism potential.

#### 13.4.2 Inland Waterways and other watercourses

It is the policy of the Council;

- IW 1 To maximise opportunities for the use of canals and other waterways as tourism and recreational amenities. In this regard the Council will co-operate with Waterways Ireland, National Parks and Wildlife Service of the DoEHLG and community groups to develop the infrastructure, quality and amenity of these waterways.
- IW 2 To encourage the development of facilities for boating, canoeing, angling, cruising and other sustainable water based interests. The Council will endeavour to provide appropriate access including access for rescue services to existing water-based activities. It will consider all interests and conflicts that might arise between the various interests in conjunction with the Eastern Regional Fisheries Board, the Irish Canoe Union, Inland Waterways, and local communities and clubs.
- IW 3 To encourage local awareness and education of the value of inland waterways as a natural resource for conservation and sustainable development.
- IW 4 To prevent inappropriate new development along canal systems.
- IW 5 To encourage the development of amenity and recreational use of canal systems.
- IW 6 To seek to protect items of architectural or industrial archaeological interest associated with canal systems.
- IW 7 To develop, in conjunction with the relevant authorities, berthing and other ancillary infrastructure at key locations along the canal systems, particularly in areas where tourism is underdeveloped at present.

#### 13.4.3 Recreation

The range and quality of recreational and social facilities in Kildare have a key role to play in the social, economic and cultural life of the county.

It is the policy of the Council:

- RP 1 To protect and improve amenities and recreational assets in the interests of residents and tourists alike.
- RP 2 To cater for all age groups and abilities in the population through the facilitation of both active and passive recreational facilities.
- RP 3 To seek an extension of the proposed Special Amenity Area Order for the Liffey Valley from Lucan to Leixlip (which is envisaged by the Dublin Local Authorities) to other parts of the Valley within County Kildare.
- RP 4 To pursue the creation of a Liffey Valley Regional Park together with Fingal and South Dublin County Councils.
- RP 5 To undertake a feasibility study investigating the recreational use of disused railway track and the potential for establishing walking trails on parts of same.

#### **13.4.4 Countryside Recreation, the Bloodstock, Racing and Equine Industries**

It is recognised that the countryside has an important function in providing outdoor recreational facilities not only for the population of Kildare, but also for neighbouring counties.

Kildare is known locally and internationally as the ‘Thoroughbred County’ due to the county’s stud farms and involvement in equine activities. The Council recognises the importance of the equine industry to the county in terms of tourism potential and as an opportunity to showcase the county.

It is the policy of the Council:

- CR 1 To co-operate with the relevant agencies and bodies including local communities to secure the maintenance and development of appropriate facilities for the public.
- CR 2 To support the sustainable tourist related development of the Bloodstock and Equine industries.
- CR 3 To support ‘Horse Racing Ireland’ in the promotion and development of the racing industry.
- CR 4 To support the development of appropriate Integrated Tourism/Leisure facilities in Palmerstown Demesne.
- CR 5 To recognise the importance of Kildare Hotel and Country Club as a Tourism Facility of national and international significance. The Council will support and encourage

further appropriate development of the tourism and recreational facilities at the Kildare Hotel and Country Club.

- CR 6 To recognise the importance of Carton House as a Tourism Facility of national and international significance. The Council will support and encourage further appropriate development of the tourism and recreational facilities at Carton House.
- CR 7 To support the development of appropriate Integrated equine/leisure facilities at Littlerath House, Sallins.



