



WILD ATLANTIC WAY
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Loop Head Heritage Trail

Our past in your pocket

The Loop Head Peninsula, on the Wild Atlantic Way, is nestled between the busy Shannon river on one side and the vast Atlantic Ocean on the other. Drive, cycle or walk around Loop Head, immerse yourself in our archaeological sites, rich maritime and military history, religious heritage and local folklore, all of which makes us who we are. Look out for the animals and birds that inhabit this Special Area of Conservation. Marvel at our cliffs, castles, lighthouses and scenery that has attracted visitors here for over 200 years. You will be blown away...



Legend

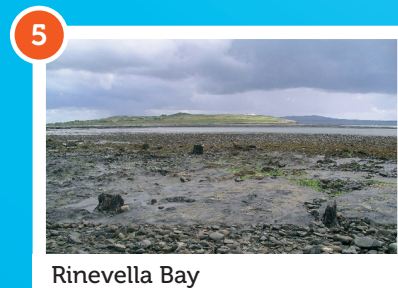
- Wild Atlantic Way Route
- Loop Head Heritage Trail
- Loop Head Heritage Trail Side Loop (suitable for motor traffic)
- Loop Head Heritage Trail Side Loop (Walking & Cycling only)
- Wild Atlantic Way Discovery Point
- Wild Atlantic Way Signature Discovery Point
- Heritage Trail Place of Interest
- Areas of Heritage Interest
- Walking
- Cycling
- Bird Watching
- Fishing
- Snorkelling
- Diving



Pilots Memorial & Kilbaha Bay



Grave of the Yellow Men



Rinevella Bay



Kilcredaun Church & Holy Well



Carrigaholt Castle & Bay



Querrin Pier



West Clare Railway



Dunlickey Castle



Kilkee Cliff Walk & Pollock Holes



Kilkee Victorian Town



Bridges of Ross



Bishop's Island



Church of the Little Ark



Loop Head

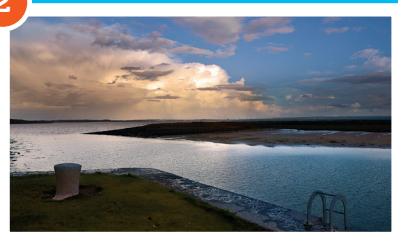




1

West Clare Railway

At Moyasta, the visitor can take a trip aboard the steam train 'Slieve Callan' and learn about the famous West Clare Railway which opened in 1893. By allowing for easier transportation of goods and services, the railway provided a gateway for tourism and commercial trade to the Loop Head Peninsula.



2

Querrin Pier

At Querrin Pier, the visitor can see Scatterry Island, home to a 6th century monastic site. The Shannon Estuary is a designated Special Area of Conservation containing many important habitats and is of international ecological importance. This was the route for boats and ships using Limerick Port since the 9th century.



3

Carrigaholt Castle & Bay

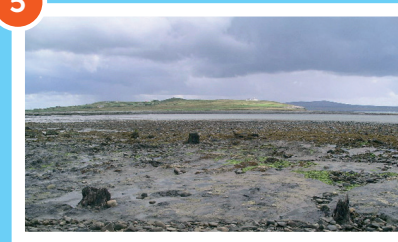
The village of Carrigaholt grew up around the castle, now in ruins, which was built by the MacMahon family in 1480. Visitors can take boat trips from Carrigaholt Pier around the peninsula to see the only resident group bottlenose dolphins in Ireland, as well as amazing views of the coastline, cliffs and geology around Loop Head.



4

Kilcredaun Church & Holy Well

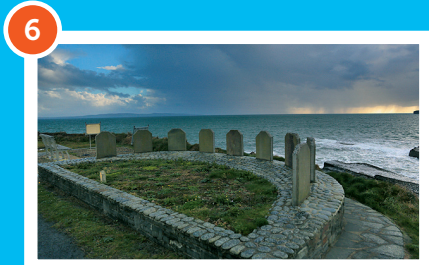
The townland of Kilcredaun contains a number of archaeological buildings including church ruins, a holy well, the 19th century coast guard station, a Napoleonic battery, World War 2 lookout post and Kilcredaun lighthouse. The sites at Kilcredaun are mostly on private land but can be accessed by taking a tour with a local guide.



5

Rinevella Bay

Rinevella Bay is a popular swimming and fishing bay. The remains of a submerged forest at Rinevella is one of a number of submerged scots pine forests found in the Shannon Estuary. Rinevella Beach, a sandy beach with stony shore is the closest point to County Kerry across the bay.



6

Grave of the Yellow Men

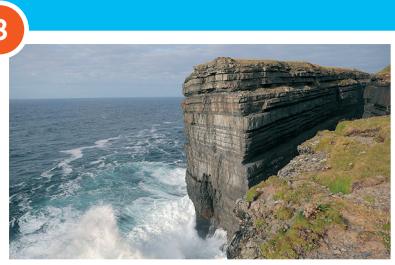
The Grave of the Yellow Men is a memorial at an idyllic spot outside the village of Kilbaha consisting of six stone slabs, representing each of six sailors who died in Kilbaha Bay in the 19th century. The name and nationality of the sailors were unknown and they were referred to locally as the yellow men.



7

Pilots Memorial & Kilbaha Bay

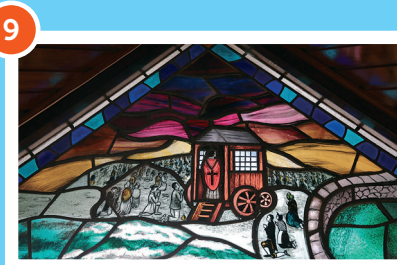
Kilbaha's small, picturesque pier was built in the early 19th century to cater for the large numbers of people making their living from fishing, seaweed gathering and piloting the large ships going up the Shannon to Limerick docks. There is a memorial to five local men, who drowned when piloting a ship along this coastline in 1873.



8

Loop Head

Visitors can take a guided tour up Loop Head Lighthouse and marvel at the contrast between the rugged Atlantic on one side and the sheltered Shannon Estuary on the other. At the edge of the peninsula, there is a sea stack known as Diarmuid & Grainne's rock, or Lover's Leap which is steeped in Irish mythology.



9

Church of the Little Ark

In the 19th century the landlords of Loop Head refused permission for the building of a Catholic Church on their land. The Little Ark, currently located in the church at Moneen is a wooden box, containing an altar which was rolled onto the beach at low tide, to allow the Catholics practice their faith.



10

Bridges of Ross

At the Bridges of Ross, marvel at the spectacular and unique natural sea arch and keep an eye out for the many rare seabirds that pass close to shore here on their southbound migration. The shoreline at Ross beach is home to many creatures and seaweeds that thrive in this undisturbed semi-sheltered shore.



11

Dunlickey Castle

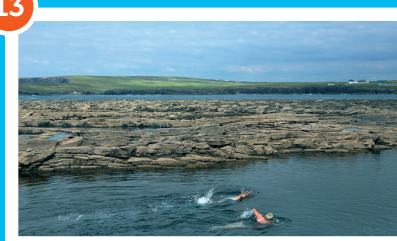
This exposed cliff edge was the location of Dunlickey Castle, a tower house built sometime before 1574 by the MacMahon family, although no remnants of the castle remain. The former site of Dunlickey Castle is a very popular spot for locals who fish for mainly mackerel off the cliff edge.



12

Bishop's Island

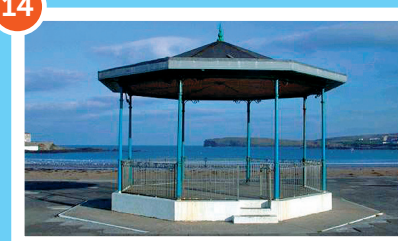
Bishop's Island is an example of a sea stack, separated from the mainland over the last thousand years. What makes this site unique is that there are the remains of a church, a beehive hut and other ruins on the sea stack, built there before it separated from the mainland.



13

Kilkee Cliff Walk & Pollock Holes

The Kilkee cliff walk can be accessed from the car park overlooking the world famous Pollock Holes at the west end of the town. The national loop walk follows a cliff path along the coastline, passing the truly breathtaking and varied coastline with five or eight kilometre loop options. The Pollock Holes are three large, natural rock pools that offer safe and sheltered swimming during low tide.



14

Kilkee Victorian Town

The town of Kilkee, with its unique climate, natural amenities and coveted bathing areas has been a popular tourist destination since the Victorian era. At its height, the railway carried nearly 250,000 people to Kilkee annually. The town retains some of its 19th-century Victorian feel, alongside with many modern facilities.

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Heritage Areas

- **Corbally and Coosheen**
Rich in heritage and tradition, this area has amazing views of the coastline.
- **Doonaha Forts**
With 12 ringforts in Doonaha, there are over 240 ringforts on Loop Head.
- **Tullig Famine Village**
Completely wiped out by the famine, over 200 people had once lived in the village.
- **Blackweir Bridge**
The sheltered bay at Poulmarsherry attracts large flocks of overwintering wild fowl and waders.
- **Cammogue**
Rich in heritage and history, Cammogue suffered a ferry disaster during the famine.
- **Cross**
With Loop Heads largest church, this attractive country village is centrally located on the peninsula.