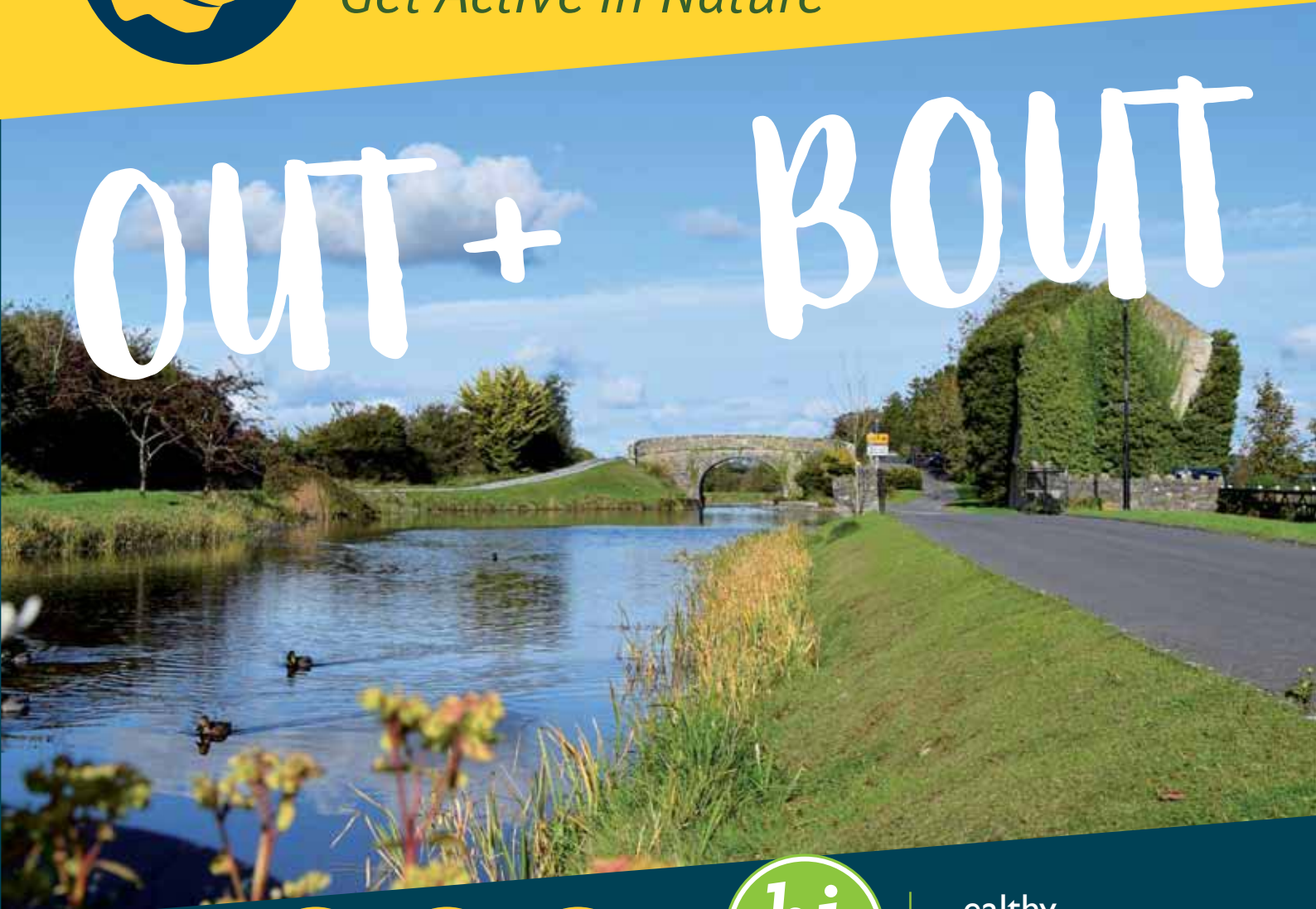




# County Longford

*Get Active in Nature*

# OUT + BOUT



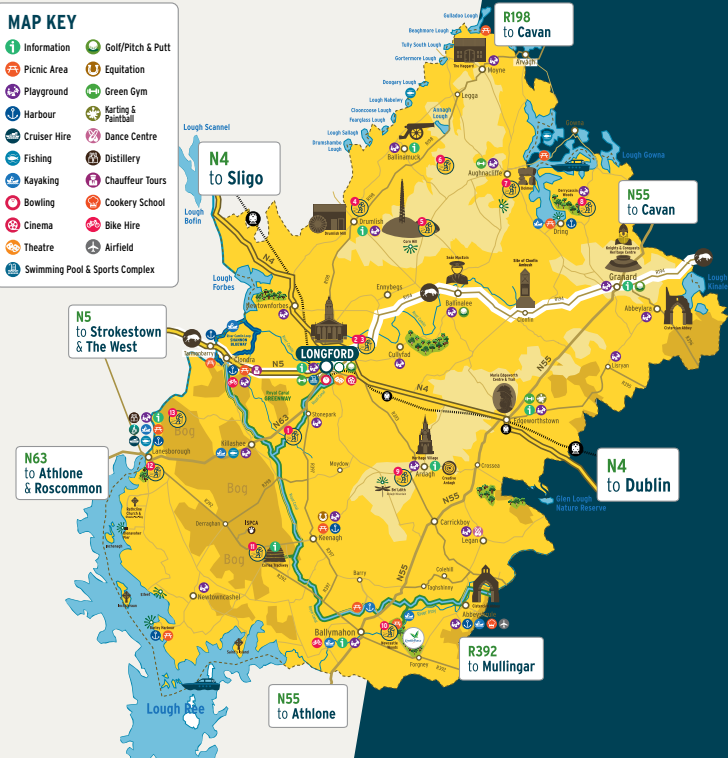
**MAPS**



Healthy  
**Longford**

## MAP KEY

- Information
- Golf/Pitch & Putt
- Picnic Area
- Equitation
- Playground
- Green Gym
- Harbour
- Karting & Paintball
- Cruiser Hire
- Dance Centre
- Fishing
- Distillery
- Kayaking
- Chauffeur Tours
- Bowling
- Cookery School
- Cinema
- Bike Hire
- Theatre
- Airfield
- Swimming Pool & Sports Complex



ealthy  
**ongford**

*LONGFORD is ideally located in the heart of Ireland, within easy reach of many stunning and historic tourist attractions.*

Ancestral home of the Farrell Clan, Longford is a tranquil and mainly low-lying county, renowned for its angling, boating and outdoor sporting activities. Steeped in ancient Irish mythology, the county has many impressive archaeological sites as well as a wealth of historical, literary and musical tradition. The only county in Ireland with three award-winning villages, its accessibility to many of Ireland's other main towns and cities make it a prime location as a holiday base. The true beauty of County Longford lies in its rural charm, the hospitality of its people and the breath-taking views of its quiet countryside of farmland, woodland, lakes, rivers and bogs.

This booklet contains information to help you actively explore, complete with maps of walking, cycling and driving trails.

The Healthy Ireland Fund supported by the Department of Health and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



government supporting communities



Local Community Development Council  
Local and Community Development



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This icon beside a trail heading/map indicates that there is a corresponding **Audio Guide** available on [longford.ie](http://longford.ie)

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# Bike Rental

## Midlands Cycle Hub

Based in Clondra, **Midlands Cycle Hub** provide bike hire for standard and e-bikes (electric) and some with baskets if you wish to take a picnic on your adventure—picnics available from the nearby Richmond Inn. Clondra is an ideal starting point for exploring the west of the county. It is at the start of the A1 South Loop, but also close to the NI North Loop.

**Phone:** +353 85 1125411 • **Email:** robert@midlandscyclehub.ie

**Web:** midlandscyclehub.ie • **Eircode:** N39 F438

## Ballymahon Greenway Cycles

**Ballymahon Greenway Cycles** specialise in bike sales, repairs and hire for the entire family, including e-bikes. They have a qualified bike mechanic on-site and stock a range of accessories. Ballymahon is an ideal starting point for exploring the Royal Canal Greenway or the A3 South Loop.

**Phone:** +353 90 643 8233 • **Email:** info@ballymahongreenwaycycles.ie

**Web:** ballymahongreenwaycycles.ie • **Eircode:** N39 W6HD

See page 10 & 12 for Longford Cycling Trails.



# Guided Tours

## Setanta Chauffeur Tours

**Setanta Chauffeur Tours** is a luxury tour specialist, based in County Longford, that offers bespoke tours throughout Ireland, focusing on Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. Enjoy a private chauffeur driven tour with an experienced, knowledgeable and friendly guide in the comfort of one of their Mercedes 6-seater mini-vans. Experience the beauty and tranquility of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands or use the opportunity to visit family members or trace family origin with a local historian. Your driver can also provide an airport pick up and drop off service.

**Phone:** +353 86 3409894 • **Email:** info@setantachauffeur.com

**Web:** setantachauffeur.com

See page 8 for themed Longford Driving Trails.

# Kayaking

Kayaking is an enjoyable and active way to explore the waterways and get active in nature. Longford is an ideal kayaking base with excellent locations on the Camlin Loop (Blueway), River Shannon and River Inny. The following provide kayaking sessions in Longford for all levels from beginners to experienced:

## Vertical Kayakers—Lanesborough

**Phone:** +353 87 6675275 or +353 87 2977769

**Email:** juniorkayak@gmail.com

## Inny Kayak Club—Ballymahon

**Email:** innykayakers@gmail.com • **Web:** innykayakclub.com

## Alan's Yippee Kayaking—Ballymahon

**Phone:** +353 86 0891126 • **Facebook:** Alans Yippee Kayaking

# Fishing & Cruising

## Access-for-All Boat Trips—Lanesborough

Fishing and boat trips are accessible for all, including wheelchair users on the roll-on, roll-off **Access-for-All Boat** based in the North Harbour in Lanesborough. The boat offers regular trips (weather permitting).

**Web:** loughreeboattrips.com

## Angling Across the County

Lough Ree and the rivers Shannon, Inny and Camlin along with Lough Gowna and the Royal Canal all offer great opportunities for catching pike, eel and brown trout and coarse angling—tench, roach and bream.

**Facebook:** Lough Ree Angling Hub • North Longford Angling Hub

• AM Pike Guiding

## Cruiser Boats Ireland—Shannon Boat Rental

**Shannon Boat Rental** provides safe, comfortable and competitively priced cruiser boats for exploring the River Shannon.

**Phone:** +353 85 1093 900 or +353 87 903 4077

**Email:** cruiserboatsireland@gmail.com

**Web:** cruiserboatsireland.com



# Exploring

## EZxploring Games

**EZxploring** is a series of games exploring towns in County Longford. The self-guided walking trails of Ardagh, Ballymahon, Edgeworthstown, Granard, Lanesborough and Longford Town are designed to help locals and visitors discover the county. Child-centred, the bite-sized pieces of information provide a fun activity for all ages and abilities. The **EZxploring Royal Canal Greenway & National Famine Way Map** helps you imagine life in the past. There is also a **EZxploring Playgrounds Passport**.

Phone: +353 43 3343509 • Mail: [tourism@longfordcoco.ie](mailto:tourism@longfordcoco.ie)  
Web: [longford.ie](http://longford.ie)



# Golfing

## County Longford Golf Club

The club, founded in 1894 and redesigned in May 2005, is now a fine mature parkland course, offering spectacular views over Longford Town and the surrounding countryside. Trolley and buggy hire are available and the pro shop is fully stocked. The clubhouse has an excellent bar and restaurant for lunch, light bites and dinners. Lessons are available from the club professional, Pete Duignan.

Phone: +353 43 3346310 • Mail: [countylonggolf@gmail.com](mailto:countylonggolf@gmail.com)  
Web: [countylongfordgolfclub.com](http://countylongfordgolfclub.com) • Eircode: N39 E8Y1



# Playgrounds

County Longford has the second highest ratio of playgrounds per person in the country, with 24 playgrounds in the county (see *Contents map*). The **Albert Reynolds Peace Park** has been awarded the An Taisce Green Flag for numerous years, which is a recognition of excellence. A great way to keep the kids entertained. Plenty of the playgrounds in the county are close to one of Longford's beautiful trails.

Phone: +353 43 3343509 • Mail: [tourism@longfordcoco.ie](mailto:tourism@longfordcoco.ie)  
Web: [longford.ie](http://longford.ie)



# Swim & Gym

## Longford Sports & Leisure Centre

Located in the **Albert Reynolds Peace Park**, which has ample parking and a walk/run trail with outdoor green gym equipment. The centre includes a 25m swimming pool, learner pool, sauna and steam room, gym, weights room, sportshall, astro turf and Muga facility and offers swimming lessons, fitness classes and circuit training.

Phone: +353 43 3346431 • Mail: [longford@coralleisure.ie](mailto:longford@coralleisure.ie)  
Web: [longford.coralleisure.ie](http://longford.coralleisure.ie) • Eircode: N39 KP30



# Karting & Paintball

## Midland Karting & Paintball

**Midland Karting** based in Cranalagh More, Edgeworthstown, consists of a 1,000m outdoor karting track — floodlit for racing all year-round. Beside the track, in 17 acres of natural woodland, **Midland Paintball** invites you to battle through four different game scenarios. Perfect for parties, corporate outings or a fun day out.

Phone: +353 43 6671308 • Mail: [info@midlandkarting.com](mailto:info@midlandkarting.com)  
Web: [actionsports.ie](http://actionsports.ie) • Eircode: N39 CF40

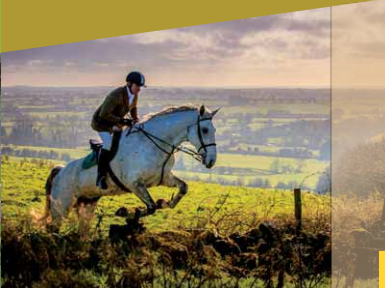


# Equitation

## Mosstown Riding Club

**Mosstown Riding Club** is based at Mosstown Stables in Kenagh. A friendly and enthusiastic club, it is open to both horse owners and non-horse owners. Horses can be provided by Mosstown Stables at a small extra charge for lessons, clinics and events. The range and quality of horses at Mosstown Stables ensures a suitable horse for all riders whatever their level and confidence.

Phone: +353 43 3322721 • Mail: [annbloomer2@gmail.com](mailto:annbloomer2@gmail.com)  
Facebook: Mosstown RC • Eircode: N39 WE12



# Drama & Dance

## Backstage Theatre

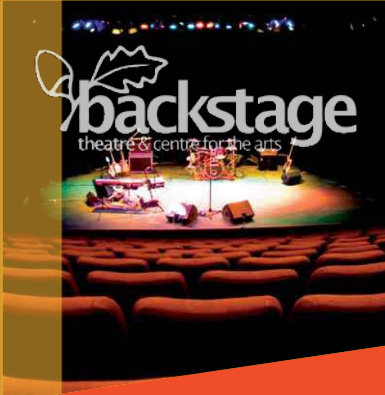
**Backstage Theatre** opened in 1995, is a purpose-built theatre and Arts Centre located just outside Longford Town. It is a leading arts venue offering the very best in drama, music, dance and comedy. It has a 212-seater auditorium as well as purpose-built studio perfect for workshops, dance classes, performances and conferences.

Phone: +353 43 3347888 • Mail: [admin@backstage.ie](mailto:admin@backstage.ie)  
Web: [backstage.ie](http://backstage.ie) Eircode: N39 FP46

## Shawbrook Dance

**Shawbrook** is a beautiful dance centre in Legan, set on a 18th century farm with a forest. The centre has studios, a theatre, outdoor studio, forest walks and a range of on-site accommodation. The annual programme includes a residential summer school, artists-in-residence programmes, workshops, performances and festivals.

Phone: +353 44 9357570 • Mail: [teamshawbrook@gmail.com](mailto:teamshawbrook@gmail.com)  
Web: [shawbrook.org](http://shawbrook.org) • Eircode: N39 RD74



# about Town

## Relaxation, Restaurants & Retail Therapy

The towns dotted across Longford county have plenty to recommend to help you unwind—from quiet country pubs and cafés, to late-night bars and restaurants in the larger towns of Longford, Ballymahon and Granard. The county hosts excellent eateries, such as the award-winning **VM Restaurant** in **Viewmount House**. Longford also has a number of successful micro producers—**Wide Street Brewery**, **St. Mel's Brewery** and **Lough Ree Distillery**. Longford Town especially presents great options for independent, locally-owned gift, fashion and food shopping along with **Longford Omniplex** 4-screen cinema and bowling in **Megabowl**. **House of Craft** in Ballymahon offers a range of locally-made crafts.

*For all information on shops, restaurants, accommodation and events, please check out—*

[longford.ie](http://longford.ie)

# Cookery & Cultivation

## Fiona Egan Cloughan Farm & Cookery School

Fiona together with her husband Michael run their cookery school and farm just outside Abbeyshrule village, giving you the opportunity to reconnect with food and the countryside. Fiona and Michael are excellent hosts and provide a wide variety of classes to suit all visitors, kids and adults alike. An excellent way to relax with family and friends.

Phone: +353 87 1457741 • Mail: [info@fionaegan.com](mailto:info@fionaegan.com)  
Web: [fionaegan.com](http://fionaegan.com) • Eircode: N39 XR65

# Center Parcs

## Center Parcs Longford Forest

Located just outside Ballymahon, the resort boasts Ireland's biggest water park, 470 lodges and 30 apartments on over 400 acres of woodland, ready for 2,500 guests at a time. There are plenty of family-friendly woodland lodges of varied capacity, luxury exclusive lodges, adapted lodges for wheelchair users and dog-friendly lodges. The Subtropical Swimming Paradise is the biggest water park in Ireland. Breaks include unlimited access to the 29.5C facility, with rides and slides, a family wave pool, wild water rapids, whirlpools and dedicated kids' areas. The park offers an extensive range of indoor and outdoors activities, such as archery, paintball, aerial adventure, kayaking, golf, tennis, soccer, and bike rental to explore the resort.

Phone: +353 818 818019 • Mail: [guestservices.uk@centerparcs.co.uk](mailto:guestservices.uk@centerparcs.co.uk)  
Web: [centerparcs.ie](http://centerparcs.ie) • Eircode: N39 RH95





# Driving Trails



This icon beside a trail heading/map indicates that there is a corresponding **Audio Guide** available on [longford.ie](http://longford.ie)

LONGFORD has a wonderful history of involvement in insurrections and rebellions, from the Normans up to the Irish War of Independence, which can be explored by following the **Rebel Trail**—locations of conflict chiefly in the north of the county. The **Literary Trail** allows you to explore locations of birth, death, living and inspiration for the work of Longford writers. Longford's literary tradition is very strong with authors such as 18th century poet, novelist

and playwright Oliver Goldsmith, 18th century novelist Maria Edgeworth, 19th century poet and patriot John Keegan (Leo) Casey and 20th century poet Padraic Colum as well as connections with Jane Austen and Oscar Wilde. The **Mid Shannon Trail** offers a chance to explore the renowned Longford Waterways—the rivers Shannon and Inny, the Royal Canal and everything the great Lough Ree has to offer as the location of early-Christian and medieval religious sites.



## Driving Trail Rebel

71km, 70mins non-stop

**Granard** has the extraordinary Gaelic and Norman Motte as well as being an important location in the 1798 rebellion. It was burnt by the 'Black & Tans' during the war of Independence 1919-21. Michael Collins was a frequent visitor to Granard as it was Kitty Kiernan's home, in the Greville Arms Hotel.

**Ballinalee** was the centre of the North Longford Flying column (1919-21) and you can see McKeon's Forge and Rose Cottage

which was the centre of operations. **Cionfin** is the site of the famous battle where General McKeon's Flying Column defeated the forces of the British Crown in an ambush carried out on 2 Feb 1921, in the Irish War of Independence.

**Connolly Barracks** in Longford Town was the centre of operations for the British Forces since its construction in the 1700s. Many Irish prisoners were held and executed here. **Drumlish** was the location of a renowned

eviction at the house of Thomas Rogers, a significant event in the Land War of 1881—the fight for the right to fair rent. Drumlish has commemorated the event with a large and detailed wall plaque. **Ballinamuck** was the site of the defeat of the joint Irish and French forces by the British in 1798. It has an amazing battlefield where you can still get a sense of history in the landscape. The return to Granard passes the ancient **Black Pig's Dyke**.



## Driving Trail Literary

73km, 80mins non-stop

Based in **Edgeworthstown**, Maria Edgeworth's story is well presented in the Old Rectory (Maria Edgeworth Centre). Follow the Edgeworthstown Literary Trail and get a real flavour of the past including the grave of Oscar Wilde's younger sister Isola Wilde.

Oliver Goldsmith was born in Longford and educated in Edgeworthstown. You can visit his birthplace at **Pallas** near Newcastle Woods. **Ardagh Village** is the location of his play *She*

**Stoops to Conquer**. Carry on into **Ballymahon** where Goldsmith lived for many years and visit the beautiful library in a former courthouse and enjoy a spot of lunch.

Leo Casey, the Irish Rebel poet and song writer was also closely connected with **Ballymahon** and **Shrule Bridge** in particular where the rebel song *At the Rising of the Moon* is based. Follow Leo's trail through the places associated with Casey and back to

**Longford Town** where the famous Irish poet Padraic Colum was born and died.

**Carriglass Manor** was the ancestral home of Thomas Langlois Lefroy. In 1796, he began a flirtation with the novelist Jane Austen. Austen wrote letters to her sister Cassandra mentioning Tom Lefroy, and it has been surmised that it may have been he whom Austen had in mind when she invented the character of Mr. Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*.



## Driving Trail Mid Shannon

98km, 110mins non-stop

South Longford, takes in the Royal Canal (part of the National Famine Way), the Shannon, the Inny and Lough Ree. **Lanesborough** at the north of Lough Ree offers plenty of facilities and is home to Lough Ree Distillery.

The lovely village of **Clondra** is a beautiful spot for dining. A visit to **Corlea Trackway Visitor Centre** offers a chance to observe the 18m preserved Iron Age trackway resurrected from the bog in 1984, and gives a fantastic

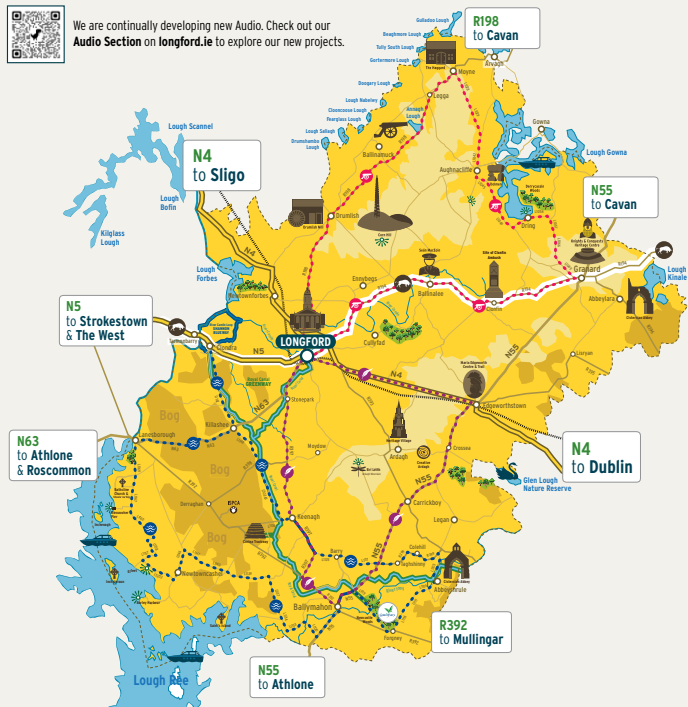
insight into the lives of our ancient ancestors and our raised bog. **Abbeyshrule** is home to a medieval Cistercian Abbey and Whitworth Aqueduct over the Inny.

**Saints' Island** is a stunning spot and a rich habitat for breeding birds. The ruins of the 13th century Augustinian Priory of *All Saints* is located on the northwest corner. The pretty village of **Newtowncashel** is close to the home to the renowned sculptors Michael Casey and

his son Kevin. Their workshop and studio are situated beside **Barley Harbour** which provides beautiful views of Lough Ree. On the return back towards Lanesborough is **Elfeet Bay** offering views of the lake island **Inchcleraun** which is the location of St. Diarmuid's a 6th century monastery. The medieval/17th century **Rathcline Castle** and medieval **Rathcline Church** with its *Sile-na-Gig* are accessible on the drive back to Lanesborough.



We are continually developing new Audio. Check out our **Audio Section** on [longford.ie](http://longford.ie) to explore our new projects.





# Cycling Trail—North

THE North Cycling Trail takes in the **Rebel Trail** (see page 8)—locations of conflict from the Norman conquest to the Irish War of Independence. Granard is home to the extraordinary Gaelic and Norman Motte and Knights & Conquests Visitor Centre. Granard and Ballinacuck were both important locations in the 1798 rebellion. Ballinalee was the centre of the infamous North Longford Flying column and Clonfin is the site of the famous battle where General McKeon's Flying Column defeated the British forces during the Irish War of Independence. Connolly Barracks in Longford was the centre of operations for the British Forces since the 1700s. These routes also offer ancient and early-Christian heritage, beautiful bog, wood and lake landscapes and stunning views of the county as you cross Corn Hill, the highest point in County Longford.

## National Trails Office: Cycling Trail Classification

**Easy:** Route uses cycle lanes or quiet, virtually traffic-free roads. The roads on route are flat with some gentle slopes. Suitable for all cyclists including those with a low level of fitness and family groups with children over 11 years under supervision. Any sort of bike is suitable.

**Moderate:** Some sections of the route or junctions may be on regional roads. The roads on route are undulating with some slopes requiring a reasonable level of effort to climb. Suitable for cyclists with a moderate level of fitness and experience cycling on public roads. Any sort of bike with a selection of gears would be suitable.

**Difficult:** The route may use national, regional or unclassified roads including mountain roads with steep gradients, both to be ascended and descended. Overall ascent or gradient is unlimited. A bike, well-maintained and equipped for long climbs and steep descents is recommended.

**N1**  
52km



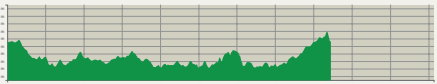
**Difficult**  
Longest route in North Longford, starting in Longford Town. The route crosses over Corn Hill which offers spectacular views over the county. There is a steep incline for about 5km. Approx. 3hrs.

**N2**  
39km



**Difficult**  
Starting in Ballinalee, home of General Sean MacEoin. There's an opportunity for Pitch & Putt before cycling on to Lough Gowra and Aughnaccliffe. There is an incline for about 8km. Approx. 2hrs 15mins.

**N3**  
42km



**Moderate**  
Starting in Granard, take in the history of Michael Collins or visit Knights & Conquests Heritage Centre. Enjoy the beautiful scenery of Lough Gowra and Derrycassin woods. Approx. 2hrs 20mins.

**N4**  
29km



**Difficult**  
Shortest cycle route in North Longford taking in some of Longford's Rebel Trail, Edenmore Bog Walk and the dolmens in Aughnaccliffe. There is a steep incline for about 5km. Approx. 1hr 50mins.



All routes and elevations represent a clockwise direction. Routes can be cycled in either direction. Incidences of crossing traffic can be reduced on all routes by cycling anti-clockwise.



# Cycling Trail — South

THE South Cycling Trail takes in the **Mid Shannon Trail** and part of the **Literary Trail** (see page 8). The route offers access and views of our waterways—the Royal Canal, River Shannon and Lough Ree—and the bog environment of the Mid-Shannon Wilderness Park which includes Corlea Trackway Visitor Centre. Lough Ree contains about 80 islands, one of the largest and most significant of which is Inchcleraun. It can be viewed from Efeet Bay and is the site of an early-Christian monastery founded by St. Diarmuid in the 6th century. Other sites include medieval church ruins at Saints' Island and Rathcline Church in Rathcline Graveyard along with the medieval/17th century Rathcline Castle. The area around Ballymahon has seen the birth of significant writers such as 18th century novelist, poet and playwright Oliver Goldsmith and 19th century poet and patriot John Keegan (Leo) Casey.

## National Trails Office: Cycling Trail Classification

**Easy:** Route uses cycle lanes or quiet, virtually traffic-free roads. The roads on route are flat with some gentle slopes. Suitable for all cyclists including those with a low level of fitness and family groups with children over 11 years under supervision. Any sort of bike is suitable.

**Moderate:** Some sections of the route or junctions may be on regional roads. The roads on route are undulating with some slopes requiring a reasonable level of effort to climb. Suitable for cyclists with a moderate level of fitness and experience cycling on public roads. Any sort of bike with a selection of gears would be suitable.

**Difficult:** The route may use national, regional or unclassified roads including mountain roads with steep gradients, both to be ascended and descended. Overall ascent or gradient is unlimited. A bike, well-maintained and equipped for long climbs and steep descents is recommended.

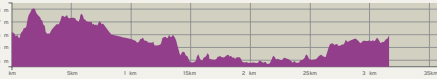
**A1**  
32km



### Easy/Moderate

Great, quiet and scenic family cycle following the Royal Canal and the National Famine Way with information boards on route. Care should be taken crossing the R398. Facilities at Clondra and Kenagh. Approx. 1 hr 50mins.

**A2**  
3 km



### Moderate

Starting in Kenagh which offers facilities, the route follows country roads and includes interesting bog views and an opportunity to visit Corlea Visitor Centre, home to an Iron Age bog trackway. Approx. 1 hr 50mins.

**A3**  
29km



### Moderate

Shortest route in South Longford, taking in Abbeyshrule, Newcastle Woods and Ballymahon Town. Care should be taken when crossing the R392 near Newcastle Woods. Approx. 1 hr 50mins.

**A4**  
36km



### Moderate

Longest route in South Longford, offering views of Lough Ree and its islands, with opportunities to visit Barley Harbour, Saints' Island and Rathcline Castle enroute. Facilities in Lanesborough. Approx. 2hrs



**i** All routes and elevations represent a clockwise direction. Routes can be cycled in either direction. Incidences of crossing traffic can be reduced on all routes by cycling anti-clockwise.



# Walking Trails



This icon beside a trail heading/map indicates that there is a corresponding **Audio Guide** available on [longford.ie](http://longford.ie)

**T**HERE are a range of walking trails of varied lengths dotted across the county. Half start from towns or villages, the other half are remote due to their objective of offering access to the environments of bog, wood, hills or waterways. Most have designated start points with parking. The trails are marked in red and blue or colour coded to the colours assigned at the point of development to match any boards on site. The following pages show dedicated maps and grading for 13 trails. All have the same scale except for **Longford Town**, the **Royal Canal Greenway** and **Newcastle Woods**.

## National Trails Office: Walking Trail Classification

**Multi-access:** Flat smooth trails, suitable for all users including people with reduced mobility, wheelchair users, people with a vision impairment, using crutches, with a buggy, with small children, older people and so on. Normal outdoor footwear can be worn.

**Easy:** Generally flat trails with a smooth surface and some gentle slopes or shallow steps. These trails are generally suitable for family groups including children and the elderly. Normal outdoor footwear can be worn.

**Moderate:** May have some climbs and an uneven surface where going is rough underfoot with some obstacles such as protruding roots, rocks etc. Appropriate for people with a moderate level of fitness and experience. Specific outdoor walking footwear and clothing is recommended.

**Strenuous:** These are physically demanding trails, which will typically have some sections with steep climbs for long periods and the going underfoot can be extremely rough including many obstacles. Suitable for users accustomed to walking on rough ground and with a high level of fitness. Specific outdoor walking footwear and clothing required.

## Raised Bog

There are three walks developed over former harvested bogs, that are now in a process of restoration — **Edenmore**, **Corlea** and **Derryaroge**. The raised bogs of the Midlands are some of Ireland's most important habitats. Formed over millennia by plants decomposing without oxygen, raised bogs provide a home for unique plants and wildlife. They also deliver a range of ecosystem services that benefit people. These include regulating services like carbon sequestration, water filtration and flood mitigation, and cultural services like aesthetic beauty and offering wonderful opportunities for spending time in nature. These bogs are home to heroic Spaghnum Mosses, Round-leafed Sundew, Orchids, Black Bogrush, Bog Cotton, Devil's-bit Scabious, Marsh Fritillary, Common Lizard, Curlew and Snipe.

## Woodland

There are three woodland walks. The woods are Coillte-managed and a mixture of native species of Ash, Oak, Birch and Hazel and non-native conifers. **Newcastle Woods** is a semi-mature mixed woodland of 325 hectares that extends both sides of the River Inny. **Derrycassin Woods** covers an area of 179 acres next to Lough Gowra. Characteristic of former demesne woodlands both contain exotic species or remnants of former conifer plantations. The principal deciduous tree in Derrycassin Woods is Beech, a survival from the old estate. The **Commons Woodland** consists of mixed woodland beyond a limestone quarry and next to reedbed systems grading into Lough Ree. The woods are a valuable habitat for Pine Marten, Red Squirrel, Woodmouse, birds (Chiffchaff, Chaffinch, Woodpecker), bats, fungi and the rare Silver-washed Fritillary.

## Waterways

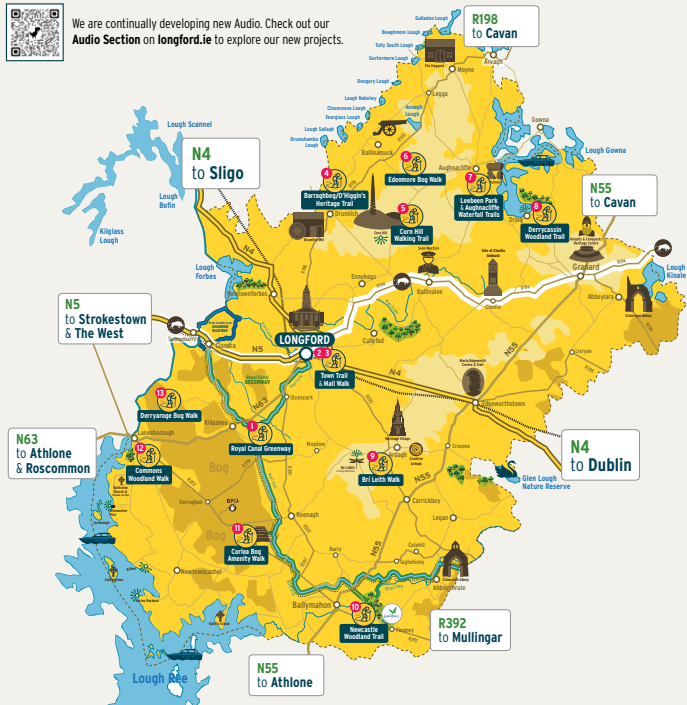
Many of the walks take in our waterways — the Royal Canal, River Shannon, River Inny, River Camlin, Lough Gowra and Lough Ree. Like a lot of inland Irish lakes **Lough Gowra** and **Lough Ree** are home to important early-Christian (6th century) monastic sites — that of St. Diarmuid on Inchcraun on Lough Ree and that of St. Colmcille on Inchmore on Lough Gowra. The Longford section of the **Royal Canal Greenway** is 35km from Clondra to Abbeyshrule, following the 200-year-old industrial waterway past working locks and historic landmarks. The River Shannon and River Inny are renowned for water activities of kayaking and boating. Our extensive waterways provide great fishing of Pike, Brown Trout and Eel and coarse angling of Bream, Rudd, Tench and Perch.

## Uplands

Our two hill walks are steeped in history and mythology. The views from the summit of **Corn Hill** are spectacular and at 278m tall it is the highest point in Longford. There are two cairns on the summit — stone passage tombs. Legend suggests that one of the cairns was the burial place of Furbuidhe, slain by the followers of Queen Meabh, after he slew her following the epic *Táin Bó Cuailgne*/Cattle Raid of Cooley. Local lore also states that the larger cairn was called **Carr Caille**, after an ancient witch who dropped stones from her apron as she flew over the hill. **Bri Leith** is a beautiful hill walk and named after the tragic love story of Bri who died having been told by her disapproving father, King Midir, that her lover Leith had been killed. Midir named it so they would always be together. The tradition of bilberry picking (Bilberry Sunday) is observed every July on Bri Leith.



We are continually developing new Audio. Check out our **Audio Section** on [longford.ie](http://longford.ie) to explore our new projects.





# Royal Canal Greenway

43km of County Longford Walkway • Heritage Sites • Flora & Fauna • Connected Walks

**TRAIL CLASS:** 2 **TRAIL GRADE:** EASY (Sections are multi-access but seating is limited and there are gates/stiles with slight slopes along the way). The enchanting Royal Canal Greenway is 130km of level towpath, ideal for walkers, runners and cyclists of all ages and stages. Starting in Maynooth, it follows the 200-year-old canal through Enfield and Mullingar to charming Clondra in County Longford, with cafés, picnic spots and attractions along the way. Rustic and industrial landscapes combine, with rolling fields, pretty waterside villages, working locks and historic landmarks. Walk or cycle between any of the main towns and return by train to where you started. Follow where once horse-drawn barges journeyed and keep an eye out for hidden wildlife wonders along the way.



**MW Mid-Shannon Wilderness Park**

A rehabilitation project of local bogs post the cessation of peat harvesting. These bogs span thousands of acres from Lanesborough to Kenagh—Derryroe Bog, Lough Bannow Bog and Derryadd Bog. It is home to numerous wildlife including some of Ireland's rarest species—the red-listed Lapwing and the amber-listed wintering Whooper Swan. Corlea Trackway Visitor Centre is located within the park. It is planned to develop a network of greenways primarily following the former industrial bog railway routes.

**National Famine Way Longford**

A self-guided 165km trail—the journey taken by 1,490 famine emigrants on foot from Strokestown Park to ships in Dublin in 1847, at the height of the Irish Famine. The trail is centred around the walk of 12-year-old Daniel Tighe, who remarkably survived the horrific journey to Quebec in Canada—reimagined in vignettes written by award-winning author Marita Conlon-McKenna. These are connected to over 30 pairs of 19th-century bronze children's shoes interspersed along the route. Visit website [nationalfamineway.ie](http://nationalfamineway.ie)





## 7 Leebeen Park & Aughnaclyffe Waterfall Trails

1.5km Leebeen Park Walk with Playground & Boardwalk • 1.4km Aughnaclyffe Waterfall Walk • Megalithic Tombs/Dolmens



**i** **TRAIL CLASS: 2** **TRAIL GRADE: MULTI-ACCESS/EASY**  
Leebeen Park offers a multi-access path with a boardwalk over the lake. There is parking, a playground, green gym equipment and picnic benches. The blue branch of Aughnaclyffe Waterfall Trail leads to Pullinness Waterfall and orange loop takes you along the river. Paths are wide with a fine gravel surface, elevation is even. Two megalithic tombs or dolmens can be found nearby.

Leebeen Park Loop: 1.5km, 16mins. Multi-access path  
Blue Branch: 0.4km, 4mins  
Orange Loop: 1.4km, 15mins

## 8 Derrycassin Woodland Trail

1.25km — 3.5km Woodland Walks • Nature Trail • Walled Garden • Beautiful Views



**i** **TRAIL CLASS: 3** **TRAIL GRADE: MODERATE**  
The woods, once part of an estate belonging to the Dopping Heppenstall family, offer stunning views of Lough Gowna and the remains of a rath and a walled garden. Picnic benches and a playground make it ideal for a family spot. Surfaces vary, not all wheel-friendly, but with a fairly even elevation. Parking at start. The ruins of the 6th century monastery established by St. Columba (or Colmcille) are on Inchmore in Lough Gowna.

Main Avenue: 3.5km, 45mins  
Walled Garden: 2km, 20mins  
Nature Trail: 1.25km, 15mins







# Heritage & Visitor Centres

## Corlea Trackway Visitor Centre

Hidden away in the boglands of County Longford is an inspiring relic of prehistory; a tower—an Iron Age road, built in 148c, from oak planks. It is the largest of its kind to have been uncovered in Europe. Inside the interpretive centre, an 18-metre stretch of the ancient wooden structure is on permanent display in a hall specially designed to preserve it. **Open:** Spring-Late Autumn, 10am-6pm, 7 days. **FREE**. **Phone:** +353 43 332386 • **Mail:** corlea@opw.ie **Web:** [discoverireland.ie/longford](http://discoverireland.ie/longford) / [corlea-trackway-visitor-centre](http://corlea-trackway-visitor-centre)

## Saint Mel's Cathedral

The centre of Longford Town is home to the beautifully restored St. Mel's Cathedral which was extensively damaged in the Christmas Day fire of 2009 and reopened for services at midnight mass on Christmas Eve 2014. It has since become a significant tourist attraction. This beautiful Cathedral is a landmark building in Longford. **Open:** Year round. **FREE**. **Phone:** +353 43 3346465 **Mail:** [stmelscathedral@gmail.com](mailto:stmelscathedral@gmail.com) **Web:** [longfordparish.com](http://longfordparish.com)

## Saints' Island

Saints' Island is located on the south-eastern shore of Lough Ree, south of the village of Newtownacastel. A narrow causeway connects the island to the mainland. The island is a rich habitat and breeding ground for a diverse range of wildlife, and migrating birds in particular. The early-medieval ruins of the Augustinian Priory of All Saints is located on the northwest corner of the island. **Open:** Year round. **FREE**. **THE FRAGILE RUINS SHOULD NOT BE CLIMBED UPON** **Web:** [longford.ie](http://longford.ie)

## Maria Edgeworth Centre

Located in an 1840 school in Edgeworthstown, the centre offers wonderful stories of Edgeworthstown's past and its connections with historical figures such as Goldsmith, Scott, Wordsworth, Byron and Wilde and of course the 18th century enlightenment figure Maria Edgeworth. On display are many original artefacts. The centre provides information for the Edgeworth Heritage & Literary Trail in the town. **Open:** 9am-7pm, 7 days. **€5 to €15 (check site)** **Phone:** +353 43 6671801 **Mail:** [info@mariaedgeworthcenter.com](mailto:info@mariaedgeworthcenter.com) **Web:** [mariaedgeworthcenter.com](http://mariaedgeworthcenter.com)

## Aughnaciffe Dolmens

Aughnaciffe Dolmen is one of 4 portal tombs in the county and two in Aughnaciffe, along with that nearby at Cleenrath. The monument has a traditional connection with the ancient legend of Diarmaid and Gráinne—one of their resting spots on their flight from the legendary Fionn MacCumhail. **Open:** The monument is on private land, but is accessible by foot by an informal pathway. Cleenrath dolmen is located outside Aughnaciffe and is on private land and access is restricted. Dolmens are considered to be one of the earliest forms of megalithic construction. **Web:** [longford.ie](http://longford.ie)

## Knights & Conquests Centre

The centre is situated beside Ireland's tallest Norman Motte at 544ft, built in 1199 by Richard de Tulke. Full of surprises, a visit will leave you with plenty of interesting knowledge. Find out if you have a Norman name or dig for artefacts in the Norman CSI room. Find out more about Granard's history in the 1798 Rebellion and Kitty Kiernan's place in the Irish War of Independence. **Group booking essential.** **Open:** Seasonal; hours vary. **€5 to €7.50 (check site)** **Phone:** +353 86 7006715 **Mail:** [info@knightsandconquests.ie](mailto:info@knightsandconquests.ie) **Web:** [knightsandconquests.ie](http://knightsandconquests.ie)

## Ballinamuck Visitor Centre

Ballinamuck is one of Longford's most historic towns due to the 1798 battle fought between the Irish and French forces under General Humbert & General Blake against the English under Lord Cornwallis. Today, a memorial statue of a rebel pikeman dominates the centre of the village. The centre is located in the historic former Royal Irish Constabulary barracks and presents an exhibition of the Battle of Ballinamuck. **Open:** Varies (check by phone for times and bookings) **Phone:** +353 87 9613312 **Mail:** [ballinamuck1798@gmail.com](mailto:ballinamuck1798@gmail.com) **Web:** [ballinamuck.ie](http://ballinamuck.ie)

## Ardagh Heritage & Creative Centre

Learn about Irish mythology, early Christianity, local writers and life 100 years ago at Ardagh Heritage & Creativity Centre. The centre is in an old schoolhouse built in 1898 and hosts family events, creativity mornings, group classes and drop-in art days. Take in an exciting exhibition and discover the rich fabric of Ardagh life down through the ages, or browse in their craft shop for locally produced pieces. **Open:** Varies (check by phone for times and bookings) **Phone:** +353 86 3027602 **Mail:** [creativeardagh@gmail.com](mailto:creativeardagh@gmail.com) **Web:** [creativeardagh.blogspot.com](http://creativeardagh.blogspot.com)

## Clonfin Memorial

The Clonfin Memorial marks the site of an ambush which occurred in February 1921, during the Irish War of Independence, between the IRA's North Longford Flying Column, under the command of Seán MacEoin and an Auxiliary division of the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC). The Auxiliaries were ex-British soldiers who were deployed to Ireland to support the 'Black & Tans'. The memorial is located on the side of the R194, the road from Ballinallea to Granard. There is an annual ceremony commemorating the ambush on the first Sunday of February. **Web:** [longford.ie](http://longford.ie)



# Longford

*Ireland's Hidden Heartlands*

## Getting Here

County Longford is located in Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. Longford Town is located on the N4 Dublin to Sligo route and at the point where the N4 and the N5 converge, making it an important axis for traffic travelling from East to West and to the North of Ireland.

<b>Knock (Ireland West Airport)</b> – N17, N5 .....	84km
<b>Dublin Airport</b> – M50, M4, N4 .....	127km
<b>Shannon Airport</b> – M18, M6, N55 .....	185km
<b>Belfast Airport</b> – M1, A3, N55 .....	183km
<b>Dublin</b> – M4, N4 .....	120km
<b>Galway</b> – M6, N55 R397, N63 .....	128km
<b>Athlone</b> – N55 R397, N63 .....	43km
<b>Sligo</b> – N4 .....	92km

## By Air

Longford has easy access to four international airports – Knock, Dublin, Shannon and Belfast. County Longford also has an airfield at Abbeyshrule.

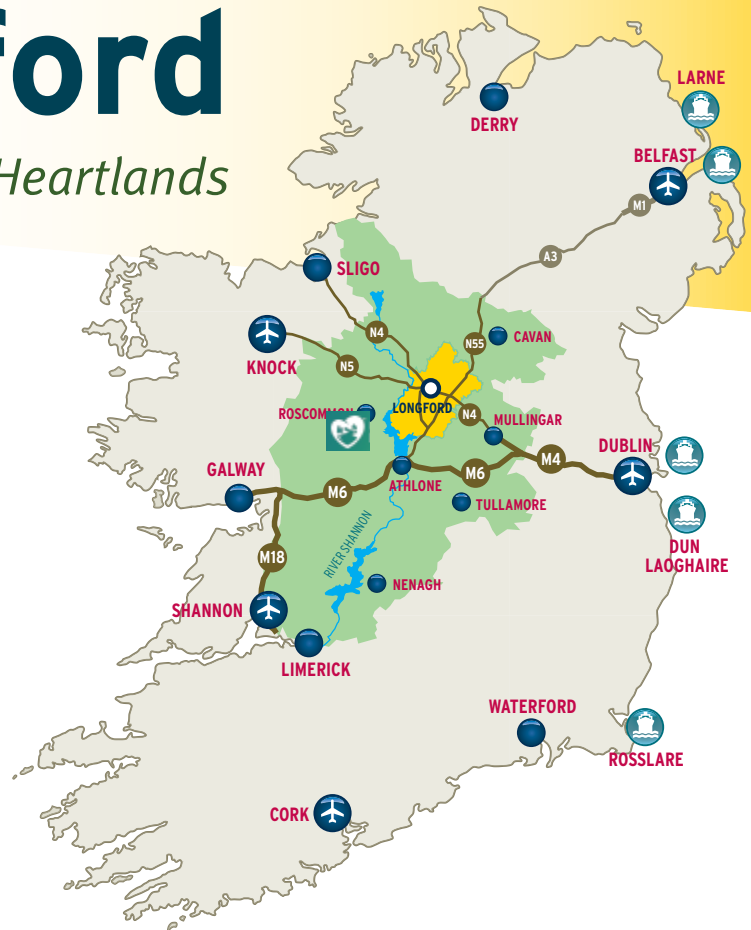
## By Rail: Irish Rail

The **Dublin–Sligo** train passes through County Longford, stopping at Edgeworthstown and Longford Town. Up to 12 trains travel daily, taking 1hr 50min to Dublin Connolly and 1hr 20mins to Sligo (MacDiarmada). **Information:** [www.irishrail.ie](http://www.irishrail.ie)

## By Bus: Bus Éireann

The Expressway services of **Ballina–Dublin** and **Sligo–Dublin** pass through Longford Town (direct to airport and city). There is also a **Longford–Cavan** service and a **Longford–Athlone** service with connections in Athlone to Limerick, Cork and Galway.

**Longford Station:** +353 (0)43 3345208



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