

Galway East Wayfinding

20th February 2008

Launch of the Galway East Wayfinding Project new driving trails and walking trails of towns in East Galway.

Galway East Wayfinding is a new and unique project designed to show-case 1000 years of built heritage in Galway East, bringing it to life through a series of audio discovery tours, available on CD, and for download from the Web.

Mayor of County Galway Cllr Sean Canney, who officially launched the project, says *"I am delighted that this new and innovative project is being launched in County Galway. Galway East is rich in architectural and ecclesiastical heritage, and this project will encourage people, both local and visiting, to discover more about this region, and the hidden gems to be found on our doorstep."*

Galway East Wayfinding consists of two distinct projects: Galway East Ecclesiastical Driving Tours and Galway East Architectural Walking Tours. Both of these tours will feature brochures, maps and web-based audio narratives; all of which will be provided free to the general public.

Ecclesiastical Driving Tour

Two Ecclesiastical Driving Trails which consist of two separate mapped trails of the main religious sites in the region, and feature visits to 21 renowned sites including *Kilmacduagh* near Gort, the magnificent *Ross Errilly Friary* near Headford and *Clonfert Cathedral* on the banks of the Shannon.

The first driving route, which comprises a 150 mile circuit that passes through, *Tuam, Gort, Kinvara* and *Athenry*, visits sites including *Kilmacduagh* near Gort, *Ross Errilly Friary* near Headford, and the magnificent old Friary at *Abbeyknockmoy*.

The 2nd route is a slightly shorter 100 mile circuit that takes in the towns of *Loughrea, Portumna* and *Ballinasloe*, and visits sites including *Clontuskert Abbey* outside *Ballinasloe*, *Kilconnell Church*, and *Clonfert Cathedral*.

As well as being available for free download from the web, the audio-narrative which accompanies these driving tours will be printed on CD; meaning they can be listened to in-car as the user drives between the various sites.

Architectural Walking Tour

The Architectural Walking Tours focus on the architectural histories of the six main towns in Galway East: *Athenry, Tuam, Loughrea, Portumna, Ballinasloe*, and *Gort*. The tours are self-guided and comprise a brochure with illustrated map, and an audio narrative which will be available for free download from the web.

General Information

The tour, through the use of illustrated maps and audio narrative - narrated by the renowned Irish historian Dr. Peter Harbison - is designed to be self-guided, meaning users can take themselves on the walking or driving tour of their choice 24/7.

The brochures will be available in tourist offices throughout Galway, as well as hotels and visitor centres in Galway East. A downloadable version of the brochure and map, as well as mp3 audio commentary will be available from www.galwayeast.com

The project is being funded by Failte Ireland and Galway County Council and developed by Galway East Tourism.

Neil Campbell, Manager of Galway East Tourism says of the Wayfinding Project *"This is a new and innovative way of highlighting some of the historical features of the region to both locals and visitors. It has been developed to be historically accurate while being presented in a format that will appeal to the general public. The towns of east Galway are rich in architectural and ecclesiastical heritage, and this project will help visitors to the region discover these hidden gems."*

.....'Start at the North Gate, or 'the Arch'. It has stood here at the junction with the Tuam road for over 400 years. A fortified town has fortified gates and Athenry had at least five others dating from around the early 1300s, when the walls first existed.....

For more information on this and other projects being developed in Galway East, you can contact Galway East Tourism on 091 850 687 or email info@galwayeast.com <http://www.galwayeast.com>



Photo of Launch of the Galway East Wayfinding Project new driving trails and walking trails of towns in East Galway.

Left to Right: Dr. Peter Harbison, Frank Dawson Director of Services Galway County Council, Madelyn Brody Chair Galway East Tourism; Neil Campbell Manager Galway East Tourism; Mayor of County of Galway Cllr. Sean Canney; Cllr Peter Feeney (Board Member Failte Ireland West Region); Cllr Bridie Willers; Cllr Michael Maher; Liz Murphy Kinvara, Director Galway East Tourism.