



carlow garden trail



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introduction by dermot o'neill

Carlow is a treasure trove of wonderful gardens to visit. Some of the best in the country are here and the county also contains what is regarded as the best garden centre in the country – Arboretum Home and Garden Heaven, which has been continuously awarded a coveted five stars in the Bord Bia Garden Centre of the Year Awards.

This brochure will give you an insight into the special places you can visit in County Carlow. What makes this garden trail so unique is the range of large and small gardens which are lovingly cared for, with ideas to take home at every turn, and the amazing plants, shrubs and trees that grow here.



Premises featured on the front cover left to right: Altamont Gardens, Huntington Castle and Gardens, Delta Sensory Gardens, buying plants at one of the garden centres on the Carlow Garden Trail.

Premises featured on this page left to right: Snowdrop Week, Altamont Gardens and the Walled Gardens at Duckett's Grove.

Altamont is one of the jewels of the Carlow Garden Trail. The stunning borders in the walled garden are an inspiration to all who see them. Other inspiring locations to visit are the Delta Sensory Gardens, with 16 different gardens laid out by leading designers and the recently renovated walled gardens at Duckett's Grove.

You do not have to be a gardener to get pleasure and enjoyment from the Carlow Garden Trail. There is something for everyone, young and old. Plan your trip now by visiting www.carlowgardentrail.com For details on accommodation and other attractions for the whole family to enjoy, view www.carlowtourism.com

Dermot O'Neill

Broadcaster, writer, lecturer and gardening expert

The Carlow Garden Trail currently features 19 different gardening attractions. The trail includes great old gardens that have been lovingly restored and maintained throughout the years, and smaller gardens which are maturing beautifully with time. Award-winning garden centres and forest parks complement the joy of a visit here. The importance of biodiversity, the environment and green spaces in today's society is recognised by three community led initiatives.

The Carlow Garden Trail also offers visitors the opportunity to discover and enjoy some of the spectacular manor houses that once dominated the cultural and agricultural life of the county. Beyond the impressive facades of these ancestral homes, visitors can walk in the footsteps of fascinating historical figures and take in the sumptuous splendour of some of the most significant homes in Irish history. Whether you're strolling through beautifully landscaped historical gardens or marvelling at interiors that have survived for centuries, you'll be swept away by the magic of these very special Carlow treasures.



tips for driving the carlow garden trail

Identifiable road signs make the Carlow Garden Trail an easy-to-follow tour through one of the most beautiful inland counties of Ireland offering a unique insight into the plants and plants people that make each premises so individual.

- ✦ The trail can be joined at any gardening attraction and driven in either direction.
- ✦ Large map boards are located in the grounds of each participating centre providing further information.
- ✦ For ease of reference premises are listed in alphabetical order and colour coded as follows:



Gardens



Garden Centres & Plant Sales



Woodland



Community Members

how to enjoy the carlow garden trail



carlow
garden trail

Situated in the South East of Ireland, approximately 90kms from the ferry and airports of Dublin, Rosslare and Waterford, Carlow is the ideal location for a gardening break. Its central location also offers the perfect base to explore the bordering counties of Wexford, Kilkenny, Wicklow, Kildare and Laois.



Address: Tullow, Co. Carlow, R93 N882

t: +353 (0)59 915 9444

e: altamontgardens@opw.ie

w: www.carlowgardentrail.com

Facilities: Toilets, outdoor picnic tables, large car and coach park, restricted wheelchair access.

How to find us: From Dublin/Waterford exit the M9 at junction 5 for Rosslare. Continue along the N80 through the village of Ballon and the N80/N81 junction. Continue for 2km, turn left at the next cross road signed Altamont Gardens. Alternatively, visitors travelling directly from Carlow Town may follow the N80 Rosslare Road and continue as above.

GPS: 52.735129, -6.720966

Open: Jan: 9am-4pm; Feb: 9am-4.30pm,

Mar: 9am-5pm; April-September: 9am-6.30pm

Oct: 9am-5pm; Nov: 9am-4.30pm

Dec: 9am-4pm (7 days per week all year)

Closed Christmas Day

May also close due to adverse weather

conditions. Car park fee of €2 applies. Guided tours available for pre-booked groups by prior appointment - Adults €3



altamont gardens

With over 40 acres of lush gardens and riverside walks, Altamont Gardens is one of Ireland's most beautiful botanical attractions and a must-see for anyone who enjoys the greener things in life. The estate gains much of its character from the many mature trees, both natives in the avenues and woodland areas, and exotic specimens throughout the gardens including *Cedrus deodara* (Deodar Cedar), *Taxodium distichum* (Swamp Cypress), *Quercus rubra* (Red Oak) and *Sequoiadendron giganteum* (Giant Redwood). Lawns bisected by sculpted yews slope down to a lake surrounded by rare trees and rhododendrons and lead in turn to a very different garden featuring exotic shrubs and trees. A fascinating walk through the Arboretum, Bog Garden and Ice Age Glen with its canopy of ancient oaks and huge stone outcrops leads the visitor to the River Slaney.

The original Victorian layout was enhanced by Fielding Leckey Watson (and later by his daughter Corona North), following his purchase of Altamont in 1924. Corona travelled extensively in her search for plants, which continue to flourish throughout the gardens, including *Cornus kousa 'chinensis'* and *Liriodendron tulipifera* (Tulip Tree). When Corona North, who lovingly cared for the gardens for over 50 years died in 1999, the gardens were left to the State at her request. Ongoing restoration and maintenance continues under the careful stewardship of the Office of Public Works.

Altamont is a great experience at any time of year starting in spring with the wonderful snowdrop collection, one of the largest in Ireland and moving on to daffodils and other spring bulbs such as *Fritillaria meleagris* (Snake's Head Fritillary) and *Muscari armeniacum* (Grape hyacinths). Rhododendrons, azaleas and later on the rose collection is in full bloom in mid-summer, followed by contrasting autumnal colours and the beautiful silhouettes of the mighty trees in mid-winter.

"It was under Corona North's stewardship that Altamont really took off. It became not just one more gently interesting garden, but somewhere unique, with a very personal style and atmosphere." Tom Longville, Country Life, 12th January 2011



OPW Oifig na nOibreacha Poiblí
Office of Public Works



arboretum inspirational gardens

Arboretum Inspirational Gardens were designed by Arboretum founder and owner Rachel Doyle with the idea that colour affects mood; they are the perfect place to escape to if you're craving that moment of tranquility. As you stroll around, you'll find a number of seating areas where you can just escape from the mayhem of everyday life.



The gardens feature a stunning array of colourful plants, shrubs, fruit trees and ornamental features. Not forgetting the friendly koi who reside in the Arboretum pond.

Designed to inspire visitors on planting schemes and solutions, the garden offers endless ideas that can be easily recreated in gardeners own homes. Gardening for mindfulness is very relevant today and there is a very real sense of this as you stroll through the Inspirational Gardens taking in all the colours and fragrances on display.

Arboretum has recently opened a newly refurbished childrens' play area and the much loved adjoining maze is a popular feature for the young, and young at heart.

This play area is located within the patio area of Rachel's Garden Café where you can enjoy a tea or coffee and deliciously tempting treats, be it sweet or savoury. A visit to the Inspirational Gardens is a treat for the amateur or the enthusiast and pre-booked tours can be arranged.



Address: Arboretum Home and Garden Heaven, Old Kilkenny Road, Leighlinbridge, Co. Carlow, R93 P9F4

t: +353 (0)59 972 1558 Find us on [f](#) [t](#) [@](#)
e: info@arboretum.ie w: www.arboretum.ie

Facilities: Toilets, large car and coach park, wheelchair accessible, restaurant with wine licence, retail store, conference facilities.

How to find us: Travelling from Dublin or Waterford on the M9 motorway take exit at junction 6 and follow signs for Leighlinbridge. Arboretum Home and Garden Heaven is located 3km from exit 6.

GPS: 52.742832, -6.975890

Open: Monday – Saturday, 9.00am-6.00pm
Late opening Thursdays until 8.00pm
Sunday, 11.00am-6.00pm; Bank Holidays, 9.00am-6.00pm FREE admission.




the barrow experience garden - beam services

The Barrow Experience Garden is a wonderful and unique series of ten interconnecting gardens, which bring to life the history, folklore and heritage of the beautiful Barrow Valley. Situated in the grounds of BEAM Services, a training centre for people with disabilities the gardens are on a picturesque and peaceful site that bounds the canal off the River Barrow. The gardens have received many awards over the years, and holds an organic licence from the Irish Organic Farmers and Growers Association (IOFGA).



Address: BEAM Services, Regent Street,
Bagenalstown, Co. Carlow, R21 AH73.

m: +353 (0)87 122 3453 e: info@beamservices.ie
w: www.beamcarlow.wordpress.com Find us on 

Facilities: Toilets, wheelchair accessible, car &
coach park

GPS: 52.702973, – 6.963991

Open: June, July, August – Saturday/Sunday only
from 10.00am-4.00pm

Admission fee applies. Group discounts available.

The ten gardens that form the Barrow Experience are:

Mindfulness Garden, French Garden, Convent Garden, Monastic Courtyard, Potager Garden,
Druids' Wood, Dinn Righ, Reflective Garden, Cooperation Garden and the Water Garden.

*The gardens represent both an active, healthy environment
for members to work in, and a therapeutic environment
to relax in – along with the general public, who are
always welcome.*





borris house gardens and woodlands

Nestled in the stunning Barrow Valley, Borris House is surrounded by 650 acres of lush woodland and gardens, giving it a secluded, otherworldly feel that transports visitors back in time. Behind these grand walls lies a fascinating heritage; it's the ancestral home of the McMorrough-Kavanaghs, descendants of the original Celtic Kings of Leinster and one of Ireland's most ancient surviving royal families.



Borris became the Kavanagh's primary residence in 1570 and over that time the present-day demesne landscape slowly evolved from a formal Baroque landscape of axial approach avenues and formal gardens to a demesne parkland landscape, with serpentine avenues designed to capture views and prospects, lawns, tree plantations and a circular road around the perimeter.

Explore the grounds of the estate taking in Mount Leinster, the Blackstairs Mountains and the Barrow Valley; views that have been preserved by the family for centuries. Stroll along the woodland paths, enjoy some of the beautiful specimen trees, view the original Stew Pond and on your way take in the original Victorian laundry, the restored granary and the 18th century Ice House. The lace garden which is set within the walls of the original laundry green illustrates the fascinating story of the Borris Lace through its predominantly white colour palette, lace inspired flowers, sculptures and stylised planting.

Visitors on the house tour can expect lavish ceilings with ornate plasterwork, original furniture, porcelain and paintings. Discover hidden gems such as the Chapel of St. Moling and learn all about the not-for-profit lace industry run by the house during the famine and the family themselves.

Address: Borris, Co. Carlow, R95 Y2T1

t: + 353 (0)59 977 1884

e: info@borrishouse.com

w: www.borrishouse.com Find us on [f](#) [t](#) [@](#)

Facilities: Car park, toilets, guided tours of house, chapel and gardens, original Victorian laundry, short film of house and family, seasonal nature trails, restricted wheelchair & pram access, good walking shoes are advisable.

How to find us: In the centre of Borris Village, opposite the Step House Hotel.

GPS: 52.598644, -6.926618

Open: Most Wednesday, Thursdays and Fridays
May – September, check website for opening times. Admission fee applies.



burtown house & gardens

Once the centre of a 2,000 acre estate and built for the Quaker, Robert Power about 1710; Burtown is close to the village of Ballytore, one of Ireland's most prominent Quaker strongholds. Burtown House remains the only original Quaker House, open to the public in Ireland that is still lived in by the family that built it from this period.



Address: Ballytore, Athy, Co. Kildare, R14 AE67

t: +353 (0)59 862 3865

e: info@burtownhouse.ie

w: www.burtownhouse.ie Find us on   

Facilities: Car park, toilets and restaurant. The Green Barn is open every Wed-Sun serving coffee, tea, scones, cakes and lunches using fresh seasonal produce from the organic kitchen garden. Dinner every Sat. Farm walks, exhibitions, sculpture park and furniture and art shop.

How to find us: Exit M9 at junction 3, follow signs for Athy. Take the 2nd left turn signposted 'Irish Town'. Burtown House is the first entrance on the left.

GPS: 52.996672, -6.870744

Open: Feb – Dec 10am-4.30pm daily Wed-Sun and Bank Holidays. Tours of Burtown House May – Aug – see website for times. Admission fee applies.

Isabel Shackleton (married to the present owner's great grandfather and first cousin to the explorer Ernest Shackleton) is responsible for some of the original garden layout, but over the last 20 years it has been greatly enlarged and reclaimed by the present owner, artist Lesley Fennell, her son photographer James Fennell and the late Wendy Walsh, the well-known botanical artist.

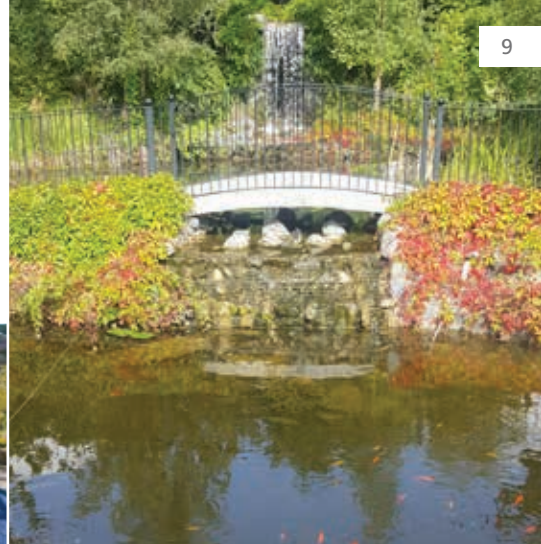
Burtown Gardens is made up of several areas including large herbaceous borders, shrubberies, a rock garden, a yew walk with dividing pergola, an old orchard, a more formal stable yard garden and a large woodland surrounded on all sides by water. This area hosts a collection of candelabra primulas, hostas, ferns and iris, amongst other plants. There are many old roses, peonies, clematis and a walled organic vegetable garden that has been in continuous production for 150 years. The Green Barn, a farm to fork restaurant facing the historic organic walled kitchen garden serving only the freshest seasonal produce, is open Wednesday – Sunday for brunch, lunch and dinner on Saturday night. With a gallery, sculpture park, garden café and shop selling interior accessories and artisan foods.

It is rare to find one of these houses still in the possession of the descendants of the family that built it. Burtown is one of these treasures, passed down through the generations and still very much a family home.” The Knight of Glin and James Peill – The Irish Country House.



delta sensory gardens & garden centre

Delta Sensory Gardens are an oasis of peace and tranquility, with 16 interconnecting gardens set on 2.5 acres close to Carlow Town. The Sensory Gardens are highly acclaimed and have received many awards over the years. They have been voted the best place to visit in Carlow by Trip Advisor several years running. The gardens are suitable for visitors of all abilities and age groups, with something to offer on every visit. Advance bookings advisable for groups.



The addition of a beautiful new café attached to the gardens has seen a huge growth in popularity with increasing visitor numbers from the general public, various groups and national and international visitors. The café has become a popular meeting place for individuals and small groups for a quiet chat, with many regulars now enjoying the beautiful food on offer. Coffee and snacks, lunches and afternoon teas are available in a relaxing atmosphere. Food classes and cookery demonstrations available throughout the year. Prior group bookings essential for café to avoid delays.

The garden centre has lots of seasonal colour all year round, especially during the summer months with plenty of pots, containers and bedding. A selection of seasonal gifts are available in the gift shop.

The Delta Centre and Sensory Gardens host many popular and well established events throughout the year, which include: Daffodil Weekend in March, Summer Sunday in June/ July, Carlow Garden Festival end of July, Halloween in October and Christmas Wonderland in December. Online booking now available for all events.

Address: Delta Sensory Gardens and Garden Centre, Strawhall Estate, Carlow, R93 Y959

t: +353 (0)59 914 3527 e: info@deltacentre.org
w: www.deltasensorygardens.com

Find us on [f](#) [t](#) [@](#)

Facilities: Car park, toilets, wheelchair accessible, restaurant.

How to find us: Exit 4 off M9, Strawhall Estate is located off Cannery Road, which serves Dr. Cullen Park GAA Grounds on the outskirts of Carlow Town close to the Athy Road roundabout. Follow brown tourist signs.

GPS: 52.844988, -6.924546

Open: Every day, except Christmas/New Year period (see website for further details). Admission fee applies.



©David Lawlor



duckett's grove historic house and walled gardens

Once a grand mansion, Duckett's Grove is now one of the most photographed ruins in the country. And it's not hard to see why; it's magnificent towers and turrets make for an impressive silhouette.



Address: Duckett's Grove, Carlow, R93 RF80

t: +353 (0)59 913 0411

e: info@carlowtourism.com

w: www.carlowgardentrail.com Find us on 

Facilities: Toilet facilities, car & coach parking, wheelchair access, dogs strictly on a leash. Guided tours for individuals and groups by appointment - contact Carlow Tourism.

How to find us: From Dublin/Waterford take exit 4 on M9 motorway. Follow signs for Castledermot, then take the R418 Castledermot – Tullow Road for 6km and turn right at the signed junction. From Carlow take the R726 Hacketstown Road for 10km to Killerig Cross Roads. Turn left at this junction onto the R418 for 2.5km, turn left again at the signed junction.

GPS: 52.858748, -6.812787

Open: Daily (daylight hours). Summer: 8.00am-8.30pm Winter: 8.00am-5.30pm FREE admission

Once the centre of a vast estate, Duckett's Grove was home to the Duckett family in the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries. In 1933, the interior of the mansion was sadly destroyed by a fire. What remains is a stunning Gothic exterior and two beautiful interconnecting walled gardens. In September 2005 during Heritage Week, Carlow County Council acquired Duckett's Grove.

In recent years the gardens have undergone an exciting restoration. The Upper Walled Garden, hedged with boxwood, is planted with historical varieties of shrub roses, a great range of hardy and tender perennials and choice flowering shrubs.

The Lower Walled Garden, once the site of the old orchard, contains a wide variety of fruits, including figs, a mulberry, red currants, blackcurrants, pears, plums and Irish historical varieties of apples. The borders also contain a variety of shrubs and perennials all echoing the past history of the garden and people associated with Duckett's Grove.

Restored paths and the repaired sunken bridge plus plantings of oak, lime, hazel, spindle and laurel rekindle the spirit of the Georgian Pleasure Grounds.

"Spectemur agendo – Let us be judged by our actions." Duckett Family Motto





hardymount gardens

One of the largest Spanish chestnuts in the country greets you on arrival to 2.5 acres of lawns and shrubs surrounded by magnificent beech and oak trees. A wonderful walled garden behind the house contains many unusual plants and flowers in the herbaceous border – lilac coloured Erysimum, yellow helianthus, beds of old roses, downy variegated mint, mimosa, blue agapanthus, California tree poppies, Chinese foxgloves and much, much more. The grass paths take you past the pond with lilies and fish to espaliered apple trees, *Lobelia tupa*, a pergola clothed with wisteria and underplanted with hollyhocks and foxgloves and on to a vegetable garden. A Summer House at the end of the garden in a sheltered corner provides a quiet area for rest and relaxation.



“This is a garden that will give pleasure for the length of the summer and into autumn. Trellis, espaliered apples and the wisteria tunnel all create a pleasing division of the space and structure in the walled garden. Each little area feels private and secluded. But the overall picture does not look contrived or “designed”. Hardymount is well cared for but not overly manicured, a relaxed country garden.”

O’ Brien Guide to Irish Gardens by Shirley Lanigan



Address: Tullow, Co. Carlow, R93 X524

Contact: Mark and Justina McKeever
t: +353 (0)59 915 1769 / +353 (0)86 124 2801
w: www.carlowgardentrail.com

Facilities: Wheelchair accessible

How to find us: From Dublin – through the town of Tullow onto the Bunclody road N81. Turn right after the Statoil petrol station, on the outskirts of the town. Turn right at next cross roads – the gardens are 550 metres on the right hand side.

GPS: 52.798787, -6.762269

Open: Daily, 2.00pm-6.00pm, May-August.
Other times by appointment. Admission fee applies. Groups very welcome.



herb gardens at kilgraney house

Kilgraney takes its name from the Irish 'cill gréine' which means 'sunny hill' or 'sunny wood'. These wooded and secluded grounds overlook the tranquil Barrow Valley and are situated halfway between Carlow Town and Kilkenny City.

Consisting of a series of interconnecting herbal gardens there is a large kitchen garden, a tea walk, a medicinal herb courtyard, a medieval monastic herb garden and a garden of aromatic and fragrant herbs.

The enclosed kitchen garden supplies the guesthouse with fruit, vegetables and herbs and has been run on organic lines for almost ten years. It consists of gravel paths and eleven raised timber beds of varying sizes grouped to form a modern rectangular 'potager'. Here you will find unusual leafy plants such as mibuna, mizuna and komatsuna amongst more traditional salad varieties. Next to

the kitchen garden is the tea walk, a short gravel path lined on one side with plants suitable for infusions and herbal teas. The medicinal garden, set in a granite courtyard, consists of nine raised beds in Irish oak timber. Each bed is planted with herbs suitable for treating a particular part of the body. In a lower courtyard you will find an aromatic garden planted with herbs for fragrance and also for their usefulness in cosmetic preparations. In an adjoining courtyard there is a modern interpretation of a medieval monastic herb garden with four oak raised beds surrounded on two sides by an oak timber cloister. A circular cosmic garden helps to explain and facilitate our understanding of the ancient belief that there is a connection between people, plants, planets and constellations. There is a recently planted native tree garden based on Bretha Comaithchesa – an eight-century Irish law where trees were classified into four hierarchical categories with a series of laws governing their use.

“On warm days the scent of lavender, box, mint and marjoram fill the air. Boxed-in beds of sage and rosemary compete with their own perfumes and on a sunny day the place is heady with herby smells.” The 100 Best Gardens in Ireland by Shirley Lanigan

Address: Borris Road, Bagenalstown, Co. Carlow, R21 W527

t: +353 (0)59 977 5283

e: info@kilgraneyhouse.com

w: www.kilgraneyhouse.com Find us on [f](#) [t](#) [@](#)

Facilities: Car park, toilets, restricted access for wheelchairs. B&B and self-catering accommodation available. Unsuitable for children, no dogs allowed.

How to find us: Situated just off the R705, Kilgraney House is halfway between Bagenalstown (Muine Bheag) and Borris.

GPS: 52.653997, -6.958214

Open: Please check the website for opening times. Groups strictly by appointment. Admission fee applies. The main house is not open to garden visitors.



huntington castle & gardens

Huntington Castle was originally built as a garrison in the 17th century and was later turned into a family estate by the Lord Esmonde. A direct descendant of the castle's founders, current custodian Alexander Durdin Robertson and his family is keeping tradition alive in a decidedly hands-on fashion.



These gardens were mainly laid out in the 17th century by the Esmondess. They include the French limes on the Avenue, the 'parterre' or lawns to the side of the house, the fish ponds on either side of the centre walk through the wilderness and the majority of Yew trees which comprise the Yew Walk. Larger plantings have resulted in Huntington possessing a number of great Irish trees, including four varieties of hickory, a cut leaved oak, Siberian crab and buckeye chestnut.

Explore the kitchen gardens, with the Greenhouse and the recently restored Rose Gardens. Then stroll through the enchanting Italian Gardens and the ruins of the old Abbey before walking through to the 'Wilderness' woodland where formal walks and pathways will guide you past shrubs, flora and bamboo to the old turbine house which supplied electricity to Huntington as early as 1888. The bottom of the wilderness is marked by the delightful River Derry which flows as the boundary between County Carlow and Wexford. Then head back to the castle where a guided tour of the house provides a window into both its fascinating past, and the lives of the family who call the castle home today – or simply take a well earned break in the tea rooms. To get the full Huntington experience stay the night in one of their beautiful castle rooms.

Address: Clonegal Village, Co. Carlow, K21 K237

t: +353 (0)53 937 7160

e: info@huntingtoncastle.com

w: www.huntingtoncastle.com Find us on [f](#) [t](#) [i](#)

Facilities: Car and coach park, toilets, garden, wheelchair access, guided tours of Castle and gardens, tea room, gift shop and adventure playground, B&B castle accommodation.

How to find us: Entrance to the avenue is in the picturesque village of Clonegal, 5km from N80 turn off (signposted). Approx. 17.5km south of junction 5 on M9. Ten minute drive from Tullow Town via Ardattin village.

GPS: 52.690404, -6.649131

Open: May – Sept: Gardens & tearooms 10am-6pm daily, house tours at 2pm, 3pm, 4pm & 5pm daily. For other events Easter, Halloween and Christmas at the Castle please see website.



leighlinbridge – the garden village

The Leighlinbridge district is rich in history, favoured with fertile land and enhanced by the River Barrow which meanders slowly through the village. The foundation for its beauty lies directly with the residents who demonstrate a sense of pride and work tirelessly to preserve and enhance this unique area, evident by a range of gardens, which commemorate various aspects of village life over the years.



Address: Leighlinbridge, Co. Carlow.

Contact: Mary Meaney, Secretary,
Leighlinbridge Improvement Group
t: +353 (0)86 602 7751

w: www.carlowgardentrail.com Find us on 

Facilities: Award-winning Arboretum Home and Garden Heaven and Rachel's Garden Café, four star Lord Bagenal Hotel, pubs, castle, historic buildings, angling, Barrow Way walking route, picnic site.

How to find us: From Dublin/Waterford take exit 6 on M9 motorway and follow signs for Leighlinbridge which is clearly signposted off the R448, 3km from here. Alternatively visitors travelling from Carlow Town should follow the R448.

GPS: 52.735586, -6.973691

Open: During daylight hours. FREE admission.
Guided tours available for groups – fee applies.

The Millennium Garden consists of seven small individual gardens, each with its own theme represented by trees, shrubs and stones. Using materials indigenous to the local area, the garden tells the story of life through a series of themes. The Vivaldi Garden is based on Vivaldi's musical concerto *The Four Seasons* and comprises four formal gardens, each depicting a season of the year. The Garden of Remembrance straddling the River Barrow commemorates important occasions in the history of the village including the visit of the Canadian Prime Minister, Brian Mulrooney, a World War 1 Memorial and the Entente Florale Gold Medal Award.

The Sculpture Garden is dedicated to three of Leighlinbridge's most famous sons – Cardinal Patrick Francis Moran – Australia's first Cardinal, John Tyndall, the mountaineer and scientist and Captain Myles Keogh, second in command to General Custer.

"It is a place of infinite tranquility and restfulness, an inspired use of a simple setting in this village of special charm." Excerpt from the judging committee of the Barrow Awards Scheme on Leighlinbridge

Gold medal winner in the European Entente Florale competition 2001, Gold Medal Winner in Tidy Towns 2004 – 2018 inclusive, national winner Ireland's Tidiest Town 2015, winner of Carlow's inaugural Pride of Place Initiative 2004 and prize winner in the National Pride of Place Initiative 2003, overall winner in the Barrow Awards 2001, 2003 and 2014, Carlow's Floral Pride winner on a number of occasions.

the meadows

The Meadows is positioned in a small estate in Myshall Village with views extending to the Wicklow Mountains, the Carlow Ridge and Mount Leinster. The plot at No. 7 is about a third of an acre and slopes steeply into the hillside with the back shaded by sycamores.



Since developing a deep love of plants as a child, the garden has been integral to owner, Philippa Bayliss' work as a painter. The concept for this garden came from a garden in Gravesend on a wind swept pebble beach, the Lady and the Unicorn Tapestries, Persian miniatures, Chinese landscape scrolls and Capability Brown's integration of garden and landscape. Gravel over mypex is used as a foundation and the large granite boulders have been sourced from a local farmer. In front of the house there are plantings of pampas grass, miscanthus, dwarf and prostrate conifers, orange fennel, watsonia, kniphofia, fox gloves, heathers and catmint.

The back garden, which contains Philippa's summer studio, is planted with an informal hedge of shrub roses and some interesting trees interspersed with mostly herbaceous plants, set into gravel. This area has been designed with low maintenance in mind, needing no mechanical tools and only intermittent hard work to keep it in order.

A visit to The Meadows demonstrates what can be achieved with a small budget and limited time, and will certainly inspire others in a similar situation to create something of beauty.



Address: No.7 the Meadows, Myshall, Co. Carlow, R21 CF43

Contact: Philippa Bayliss
t: +353 (0)59 915 7530
e: philippabaylissart@gmail.com

Facilities: carpark, toilet, art gallery, garden studio.

How to find us: Immediately outside the village of Myshall on the Kildavin Road R724. Opposite the Garda Station.

GPS: 52.6870338, -6.777797

Open: March – September, 12pm-5pm daily with the exception of Thursday. Admission fee applies.



patthana gardens

Patthana is an award-winning small village garden set on over a third of an acre and is home to T.J. Maher and Simon Kirby. The garden comprises of a lower cobbled courtyard with its potting shed and a sunken meditation room leading to the main courtyard with a small wildlife pond.



Address: Kiltegan, Co. Wicklow, W91 X789

Contact: T.J. Maher

t: +353 (0)86 194 4547 Find us on [f](#) [©](#)

w: www.patthanagardenireland.com

Facilities: Car and coach park outside property, coffee/tea and homemade cakes by arrangement for groups. Garden course (3 hours one day per month March to Nov). Selection of plants, antique and vintage tableware for sale. Not wheelchair accessible. See website for events.

How to find us: Turn off the N81 in Baltinglass into the town centre and take the R727 to Kiltegan for 8km (approx. 10mins). Upon entering Kiltegan Village take the first left. Patthana (2 storey granite house) is on the right, opposite the village green.

GPS: 52.905082, -6.60151

Open: 1st Sunday in May to 1st Sunday in October from 12pm-5pm. Groups by appointment at other times. Admission fee applies.

Both these areas house an extensive collection of plants from the hardy to the tender and exotic. Circular granite steps lead to the upper terrace garden with its borders of herbaceous perennials, annuals and unusual shrubs and trees carefully chosen for a small garden such as *Euonymus Planipes* and *Cercidiphyllum Japonicum* 'Heronswood Globe'. Patthana is gardened organically with many plants chosen for their attraction to wildlife.

"Situated in Kiltegan Village, Patthana is one of the best small secret gardens in the country. It is the garden of an artist, the painter T.J. Maher, and it shows. Standing outside the old granite house, one gets no indication at all of the magical courtyard garden that lies behind the wooden gates. There are so many distractions here. Each time one looks in a certain direction something unnoticed only a little while before becomes apparent. Patthana is a garden I wish I had created."

The 100 Best Gardens in Ireland by Shirley Lanigan.



shankill castle and gardens

A visit to Shankill Castle offers a unique experience combining history, art and nature. The castle remains a family home and has been described as a living museum. Visitors can take a guided tour of the art-filled castle and a stroll around the gardens, before stopping for a delicious homemade lunch, tea, coffee and cake in the Coach House Café, with fresh produce locally sourced, and from the Victorian walled garden.



The castle was first built as a Butler tower house beside the ruins of a pre-reformation church. In 1708 it was rebuilt and set in a formal landscape. In the 19th century it was enlarged and castellated, adding a stable yard and castellated entrance to the demesne. In the garden, there are remnants of eighteenth-century lime allées, nineteenth-century laurel lawns, some Victorian favourites such as the now gigantic Sequoias, and twentieth century self-sown ash trees. The moated garden, once a rose garden, then forgotten and planted with Sitka spruces, is now a spring garden. The graveyard and ruined church bloom all year round, and are filled with snowdrops in winter. The Victorian walled garden has a charming apple tree arch under-planted with red tulips, and some antique goblet-shaped pear trees trained against a mellow brick wall. Shankill has been home and studio to the artist Elizabeth Cope since 1991. Her paintings and prints are on display on site.

“Elizabeth Cope’s wonderful, slightly gothic castle, Shankill in Paulstown, Co. Kilkenny has the hall, the reception rooms and the furniture, but instead of the usually sombre ancestors, her walls are covered in a riot of colourful paintings.”

The Sunday Independent, March 2018



Address: Paulstown, Co. Kilkenny, R95 T8X7

Contact: Elizabeth Cope

t: +353 (0)59 972 6145 m: +353 (0)87 3532761

e: info@shankillcastle.com

w: www.shankillcastle.com

Facilities: Café, car park, toilets (wheelchair access), guided tours of castle, exhibitions and art sales.

How to find us: Exit the M9 motorway at Junction 7. Follow signs to Paulstown and continue straight through the village. Pass the front gate of the castle on your left and continue out of Paulstown. Take the first left (at the Church of Ireland) and the entrance is first on the left.

GPS: 52.685280, -7.022845

Open: March – October, Thurs – Sun, 10am-5pm, castle tours at 3pm or by prior arrangement. Also open early February for snowdrops. Check website for events and booking details. Group bookings available. Admission fee applies.



altamont plant sales the walled garden at altamont

An unmissable highlight of a visit to Altamont Gardens, situated within the grounds of the estate and run privately by the gardener and nurseryman Robert Miller. The area consists of the Corona North Commemorative Border, Altamont Plant Sales and Nursery, the Corona North Gardening Room, the Garden Design Studio and the Walled Garden Café. The Corona North Commemorative Border was planted to honour the late Corona. Each border has its own individual theme and colour from striking reds to cool whites and blues, romantic pinks and warm yellow glows.



Altamont Plant Sales has earned a reputation as a place to acquire seriously good garden plants. Always renowned for its extensive range of herbaceous perennials, Altamont Plant Sales can also boast of having one of the largest collections of old shrub roses available for sale to the gardening public year round. Rare oaks, maples, cherry blossoms, dogwoods, magnolias, beech and smaller flowering trees and shrubs suitable for every sized garden are also available throughout the year.

Address: Altamont Gardens, Tullow, Co. Carlow,
R93 N882

t: +353 (0)87 982 2135 e:sales@altamontplants.com
w: www.altamontplants.com Find us on [f](#) [t](#) [@](#)

Facilities: Walled Garden Café with tea, coffee
and light refreshments. Open Feb – October.

How to find us: In the grounds of Altamont
Gardens (for directions see page 4).

GPS: 52.735129, -6.720966

Open: January – November, 7 days per week,
11am-6pm weekends. December 10am-5pm
weekdays, closed weekends.

The Corona North Gardening Room is home to the courses and events held regularly throughout the year by visiting tutors and speakers including Snowdrop Month in February, specialist talks by noted gardening experts, the Carlow Garden Festival and much more. The Garden Design Studio provides consultancy work for new and mature gardens with the in-house garden designer and Robert Miller providing design and planting services. The Walled Garden Café is run by 'Sugar and Spice' and serves tea, coffee and baked goods, seven days per week from February to October .

"This is the place to go to buy the choicest, healthiest roses (by his own admission, Miller is a rose fanatic), the most garden-worthy trees and shrubs and the loveliest of perennials and snowdrops (another of his great passions), the vast majority of them sourced from small-scale Irish growers. Fionnuala Fallon, The Irish Times 14th July 2018



arboretum home & garden heaven

Commitment to excellent customer service, quality products, unbeatable choice and value for money has earned the Arboretum Home and Garden Heaven the coveted title of Bord Bia Garden Centre of the Year and Best Customer Service Award on numerous occasions.

Arboretum Home and Garden Heaven is far more than a place for the gardening enthusiast. It's a complete shopping experience; a place to savour the myriad of interesting items dotted throughout the store. Arboretum added Ireland's largest covered outdoor garden area with retractable roof which opens during sunny weather and closes when conditions are less clement, as well as exciting new ventures including a kitchen store and fashion floor. An entire day can be devoted to the visit, wandering through the fantastic range of items available, seeking expert advice from friendly staff, visiting Arboretum Inspirational Gardens or enjoying a delicious meal or cup of coffee in the tranquil setting of Rachel's Garden Café. Year round the centre is a delight to visit reflecting the changing seasons of the gardener's world. In winter, the Arboretum becomes a Christmas wonderland with a multitude of decorations and gift ideas while in spring and summer brilliant colours burst from every area of the store. Also on this site Edinburgh Woollen Mill stock the finest woollen and cashmere products for ladies and gentlemen.

"A wonderful place to visit! First of all this is a vast garden centre with an amazing variety of shrubs and plants and expert advice from a very professional team of gardening experts. However when you visit you must allow time to sample the fare in the café. The food is all homemade and not at all what you would expect in a garden centre! The emphasis is on local produce and the owners' passion for food is clearly evident!"

Trip Advisor June 2019



Ireland's Premier
5 Star Garden Centre



Address: Old Kilkenny Road, Leighlinbridge, Co. Carlow, R93 P9F4

t: +353 (0)59 972 1558

e: info@arboretum.ie

w: www.arboretum.ie

Facilities: Toilets, large car and coach park, wheelchair accessible, restaurant with wine licence, retail store, conference facilities.

How to find us: Travelling from Dublin or Waterford on the M9 motorway take exit at junction 6 and follow signs for Leighlinbridge. Arboretum Home and Garden Heaven is located 3km from exit 6.

GPS: 52.742832, -6.975890

Open: Monday – Saturday, 9am-6pm

Late opening Thursdays until 8pm

Sunday, 11am-6pm; Bank Holidays, 9am-6pm



rathwood

Multi awarding-winning centre with over a quarter million visitors annually, Rathwood is the perfect place to spend a day out. This family owned spacious and well laid out centre houses an award-winning garden centre, exclusive ranges of ladies clothing and shoes, beautiful interior styled rooms, stylish gifts, family friendly Merry Tree Restaurant, a maze of Ireland and a woodland walk, newly named Fox's Park.



Address: Rath, Tullow, Co. Carlow, R93 X3F9

t +353 (0)59 915 6285

e: reception@rathwood.com

w: www.rathwood.com

Facilities: Gift & garden shop, furniture & interiors shop, excellent restaurant with wine licence, garden centre, ladies boutiques, train rides, children's outdoor play garden, Maze of Ireland, Fox's Park woodland walks, large coach & car park, toilets, wheelchair access, chocolate factory next door.

How to find us: 10km from Altamont Gardens through Tullow Town or from Castledermot (exit 4 off the M9 motorway) take the R418 into Tullow Town. At the top of the town, take the R725 Tullow to Shillelagh Road, Rathwood is 5km from here.

GPS: 52.796597, -6.660739

Open: Monday – Saturday (incl. Bank Holidays)
9.30am-6pm, Sundays 11am-6pm.

Lunch at Rathwood's Merry Tree Restaurant is pivotal to the Rathwood shopping experience, where customers can relax and enjoy impressive wholesome lunches and a delicious selection of home baking (function room/group menus available).

A ride on the Rathwood Train, woodland walk or the Christmas Wonderland all make Rathwood a delight to visit all year round. Rathwood is also perfect for a lunch stop on a trip to Altamont Gardens which are located nearby. Rathwood specialises in family events, Easter, Halloween and one of their most popular events, the Rathwood Santa Train Experience.

"Rathwood has something for everyone... all types of shopping from homeware to books, shoes, accessories, kitchenware, jewellery, candles and clothes... and a beauty salon. There is so much to keep the kids entertained too with train rides, the maze of Ireland, beautiful walks in woodland and open spaces, the lake and duck feeding. Then up to the Merry Tree Restaurant for food where there is an open air playground for the children. Brilliant place, highly recommend it. P.S. The Chocolate Garden of Ireland is right next door!!!"

Trip Advisor Review 2018 – Shelley, Cork, Ireland



oak park forest park

There are few locations which could rival the beauty and tranquility of Oak Park Forest Park. Ideal for leisurely strolls and walks, a visit here is a relaxing and pleasurable experience and a must for any visitor to County Carlow. Colour coded circular walkways of varying lengths with excellent accessible surfaces and easy gradients make a visit here an enjoyable experience for young and old alike.



The park is a mature, mixed species woodland of over 120 acres with a predominance of beech, oak, scots pine, silver fir, larch and sycamore. The proximity of the walkways to the extensive collection of ferns, mosses and woodland flora provides the visitor with an ideal opportunity to interact with nature. Boasting a rich diversity of wildlife, the lakes and their surrounds provide a habitat for swans and ducks, while the islands shelter many wild and game birds. The Woodland Looped walks extend over 4km. The walks include Butlers Wood Loop (700 metres), the Lake Path (800 metres), Fox Covert Track (1100 metres) and Sally Island Trail (1700 metres). All the walks are wheelchair accessible.

Situated on the outskirts of Carlow Town, the park is an oasis of tranquility and a popular destination for walking and educational visits. The park also features a picnic area, informal leisure areas and seating at regular intervals. The Looped Board Walks have anti-slip surfacing, Ireland's only outdoor universally accessible playground and an adult fitness area looking onto the lake. The forest park is a recognised bat habitat and includes bird watching facilities.



WINNER
RDS Irish Forestry
Awards 2013

Address: Oak Park, Carlow,

Contact: Carlow Tourism, College Street, Carlow.

t: + 353 (0)59 913 0411

e: info@carlowtourism.com

w: www.carlowgardentrail.com

Facilities: Wheelchair accessible toilets, large car park, outdoor picnic tables, wheelchair accessible walkways, bird watch area, universally accessible playground and adult fitness area. Dogs strictly on a leash.

How to find us: From Dublin/Waterford take exit 4 on M9 motorway. Follow signs for Carlow taking the first right after Toughers Restaurant. Take a left at the next junction. Access also possible off Dr. Cullen Park Road on the outskirts of Carlow Town.

GPS: 52.864166, -6.894982

Open: End March – end Sept daily 8am-9pm, rest of year daily from 8am-4pm. Check for Christmas opening times. FREE admission.



fox's park at rathwood

Woodland Walk and train route through 170 acres of woodland. Serene, tranquil forest walks were carefully designed at Rathwood, to include a short leisurely wheelchair accessible 'Molloy Walk' to a pond and a 5km 'Fox's Park Trail' which is popular for both runs and walkers.



Address: Rath, Tullow, Co. Carlow, R93 X3F9
(with entrance via Rathwood's car park)

Facilities: Forest map guide, information board, car park located at Rathwood. Picnic benches available at the entrance to the forest. Toilets, restaurant and shopping available at Rathwood.

How to find us: 5km from Tullow Town or 9km from Shillelagh, on the R725 off the R448, N11 or N81 or exit 4 off the M9 from Dublin and take the R418 from Castledermot into Tullow Town. At the top of the town, take the R725 Tullow to Shillelagh Road. Rathwood is 5km from here.

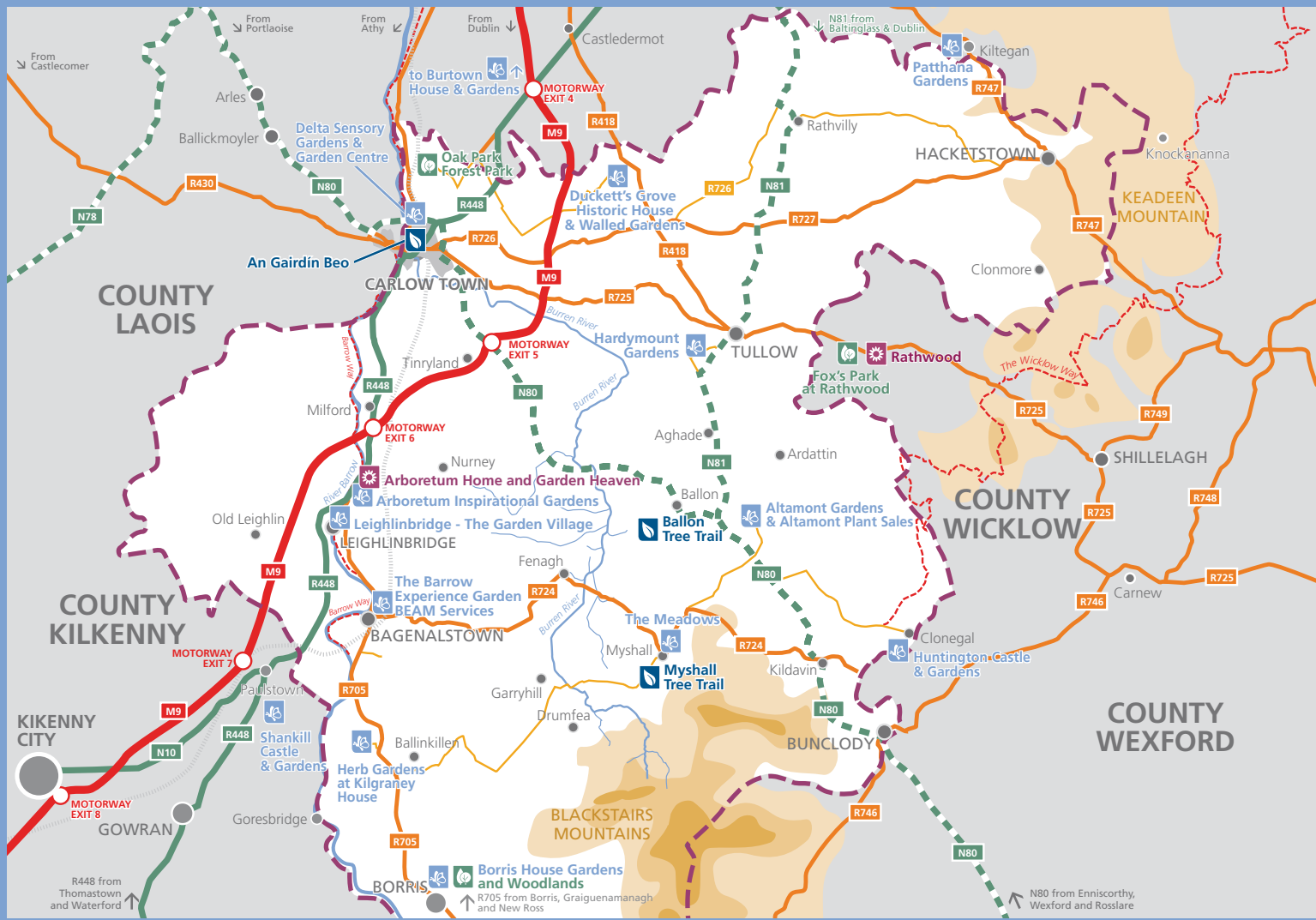
GPS: 52.796597, -6.660739

Car park open: Rathwood is open 7 days 9.30am to 6pm weekdays and 11am to 6pm on Sundays. FREE entry to Fox's Park at Rathwood Forest Walks. Admission fee applies to the Maze of Ireland.

This forest is a valuable and rewarding educational tool, given the vast ecological resources of flora, wildlife and tree species contained within its 170-acre boundaries.

Fox's Park offers a sanctuary for many mammals, birds and insect species. Expect to see deer, rabbits, mink, foxes, pheasants and dragonflies among others. The forest contains a great variety of tree species including beech, oak, Sitka spruce, Norway spruce, birch, Douglas fir and alder. Train rides around the forest are available from Rathwood.

Take a pleasant stroll across the natural beauty of Fox's Park at Rathwood and discover a landscape rich in geology, archaeology and wild life. Visitors can also enjoy a stroll through the Maze of Ireland. The historical feature of Rathgall Hillfort which dates back to 800 B.C. is located nearby.



COUNTY LAOIS

COUNTY WICKLOW

COUNTY KILKENNY

COUNTY WEXFORD

CARLOW TOWN

TULLOW

BAGENALSTOWN

BUNCLODY

HACKETSTOWN

Milford

LEIGHLINBRIDGE

BORRIS

Clonegal

SHILLELAGH

KIKENNY CITY

GOWRAN

BORRIS

Borris House Gardens and Woodlands

BLACKSTAIRS MOUNTAINS

KEADEEN MOUNTAIN

An Gairdin Beo

Duckett's Grove Historic House & Walled Gardens

Rathwood

Arboretum Home and Garden Heaven

Arboretum Inspirational Gardens

The Barrow Experience Garden

The Meadows

Myshall Tree Trail

Altamont Gardens & Altamont Plant Sales

Fox's Park at Rathwood

Leighlinbridge - The Garden Village

Arboretum Inspirational Gardens

Arboretum Inspirational Gardens

Arboretum Inspirational Gardens

Delta Sensory Gardens & Garden Centre

Oak Park Forest Park

to Burtown House & Gardens

Patthana Gardens

From Castlecomer

From Portlaoise

From Athy

From Dublin

N81 from Baltinglass & Dublin

R448 from Thomastown and Waterford

R705 from Borris, Graiuenamagh and New Ross

N80 from Enniscorthy, Wexford and Rosslare

The Carlow Garden Trail attaches great importance to community-led green spaces and the vital roles they play in supporting biodiversity, protecting the environment and promoting both the health of the planet and human wellbeing, and so, while not conventional gardens, their inclusion reflects the progressive attitudes to gardening in County Carlow.



ballon tree trail & heritage trail

This short tree trail through Ballon Village passes by twelve Irish trees, each denoted with a plaque including willow, wild plum, hawthorn, oak, elder and many more. A lovely route, the walk takes you past many heritage buildings and cultural attractions along the Ballon Heritage Trail including the Church of St. Peter and Paul, the old graveyard, Ballon Hill, one of the most important sites in Ireland during the early bronze age period, and the Bull Tree on Main Street. Although it is more usual to plant ornamental tree varieties in village centres and housing estates, native trees attract more native birds and insects, and so increase biodiversity within the village.



Address: Ballon Co.Carlow

t: +353 (0)87 242 4934 w: www.ballonvillage.com

Facilities: Ballon Village has a full range of visitor facilities including parking, shops and a café. Maps of the route available in An Siopa Glas and local shops.

How to find us: The walk starts outside the Old National School in Ballon. Group tours facilitated with prior notice.

Open: Daily.

Admission: Free

an gairdín beo

An Gairdín Beo is a two-acre community garden in the centre of Carlow Town where people work together and then reap the rewards together. The overall vision of the project is of a space in which diverse people can connect more to nature, to the growing and making of food and each other. The ethos of the garden is based on an ecological orientation, on valuing diversity, sustainability and indigenous species.



Address: Old Dublin Road, Carlow

w: www.angairdinbeo.org

Facilities: Car park

How to find us: In Carlow Town on the Old Dublin Road

Open: Monday-Friday 9.30am-4.30pm; Saturday and Sunday by arrangement.

Admission: Free

myshall tree trail

Myshall Tree Trail starts adjacent to Myshall Community Centre from where one can see two monkey puzzle trees and a high cross. While there are numerous trees along the trail, twenty five notable species have been chosen which are a mix of both native and non-native.



Address: Myshall, Co. Carlow

w: www.mysshalldrumpea.com

Facilities: Myshall Village has a range of facilities including two amenity parks, free parking, a children's playground and picnic facilities all within the confines of the tree trail, brochures for which are available in the local shops and Post Office.

How to find us: From N80 Carlow – Rosslare Road pass the Fighting Cocks Pub, then follow signs for Fenagh. Myshall is 6km from Fenagh village.

Open: Daily

Admission: Free



The Step House Hotel is four star, a family-run boutique hotel located in the picturesque village of Borris, Co. Carlow. The village of Borris is a one hour drive from Dublin and two hours from Cork. The warm and welcoming atmosphere of the hotel is designed to indulge, relax and unwind.

From the original Gothic detailing of the entrance to the restrained opulence of the interior, this is a place to soothe and inspire.

An eclectic collection of furniture and art, hand chosen over time, reflects the individual personality of the owners, Cait & James Coady. A stunning garden in which to relax features to the rear of the hotel.

Traditional Irish country hospitality is always evident, from delicious home-cooked breakfasts to freshly baked pastries and beautiful homemade scones.

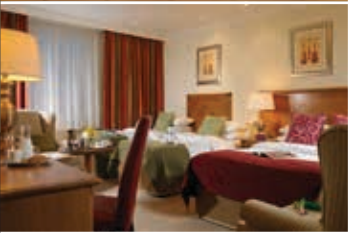
Food and wine are of course at the heart of the Step House experience. The exquisitely crafted menus are designed to benefit from local produce emphasising our commitment to organic food.

Staying and dining at the Step House Hotel is a truly unforgettable experience and the whole Step House family look forward to welcoming you.



MOUNT WOLSELEY

HOTEL, SPA & GOLF RESORT



Beautifully situated in the tranquil countryside of County Carlow, just one hour from Dublin City, the Mount Wolseley Luxury Hotel, Spa and Golf Resort is an exquisite location for your leisure break. Standing on its own 18-hole championship golf course and featuring the Wolseley Spa and Leisure Club, the hotel offers luxury accommodation matched with an elegant chic interior with ultra modern amenities and impeccable service.

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T: +353 (0)59 91 42002 E: info@woodforddolmenhotel.ie



www.woodforddolmenhotel.ie





Carlow County Museum

Carlow County Museum is located in Carlow Town's Cultural Quarter.

View the 19th century hand carved pulpit from Carlow Cathedral, among the top 100 objects to view in an Irish Museum.

See the original gallows trapdoor from the Carlow Gaol; the smoking pipe of Captain Myles Keogh, killed at the Battle of Little Big Horn & the Peadar Lamb 1916-2016 stained glass panel.

Visit & see what you're missing.



Carlow County Museum
College Street, Carlow Town, R93 E3T2
Tel: 059 913 1554
E-mail: museum@carlowcoco.ie
GPS: 52.836559, -6.928314



Free admission | Open all year round

June to August:
Monday-Saturday, 10.00am-5.00pm

Sundays & Bank Holidays:
2.00pm-4.30pm

September to May:
Monday-Saturday, 10.00am- 4.30pm

Last admission 30mins before closing

Pre-book a guided tour (10+)



[/CarlowCountyMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/CarlowCountyMuseum)



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Visit us online at: www.carlowgardentrail.com www.carlowtourism.com

For further information on County Carlow or to make an accommodation booking please contact:

Carlow Tourism, College Street, Carlow
 t: +353 (0)59 913 0411 e: info@carlowtourism.com

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