

The Shared Island Tourism
Brand Collaboration Project

The Shared Island Coast-to-Coast Capital Investment Scheme 2024 Toolkit



Shared Island
Initiative



The **Wild Atlantic Way** and the **Causeway Coastal Route** are hugely important in attracting visitors to the island of Ireland.

The Coast-to-Coast Capital Investment Scheme will enhance a visitor's opportunity to travel and experience both routes together, whilst doing so in either direction by enhancing visitor experiences at **existing visitor attractions**.

This Toolkit can help your business benefit from new investment funding under the Coast-to-Coast Capital Investment Scheme by providing you with guidance on creating the best possible application.

Mussenden Temple, County Derry~Londonderry



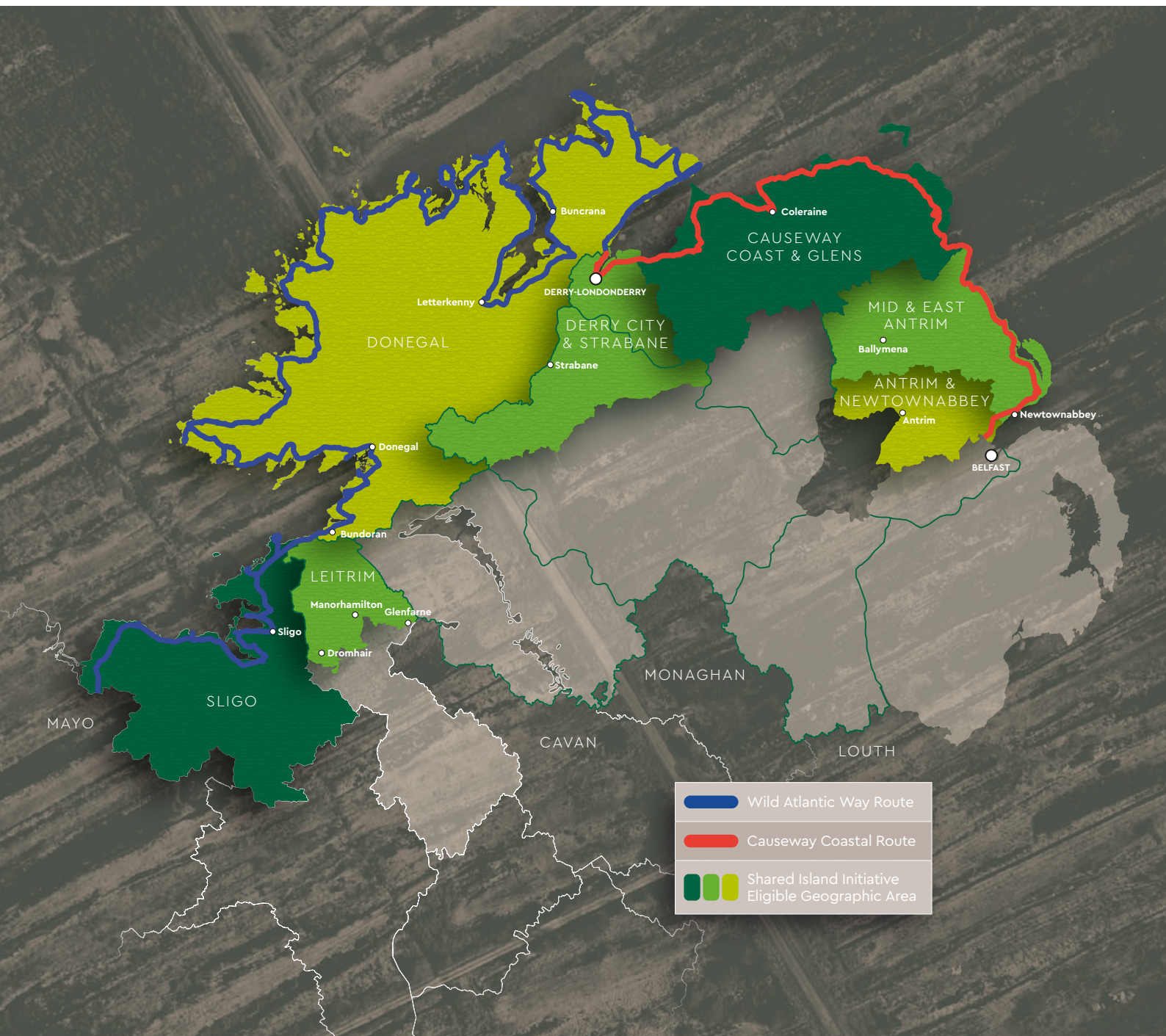
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Benbulbin, County Sligo

Shared Island Coast-to-Coast Experience Development

Both the Wild Atlantic Way and the Causeway Coastal Route focus on telling authentic stories of place and using high quality, imaginative storytelling to make a place unforgettable.





Building on our success

The Wild Atlantic Way - a decade of success

The Wild Atlantic Way was launched in 2014.

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| The goal | ▶ To re-imagine and unify the west coast. |
| | ▶ To designate a continuous, defined route. |
| | ▶ To create a package to motivate visitors to holiday on the coast. |
| | ▶ To provide an economic engine for the west. |
| The impact | The brand resonated immediately with local communities, businesses and visitors alike, leading to great success. In the first ten years: |
| | ▶ Two million more visitors came to the Wild Atlantic Way in 2023 compared with 2013. |
| | ▶ Tourism is now worth €3 billion per year on the Wild Atlantic Way, an increase of 59% on 2013. |
| | ▶ Creation of an additional 35,000 jobs, with tourism on Wild Atlantic Way now supporting 121,000 jobs. |
| The future | The Wild Atlantic Way remains a young brand with plenty of opportunity for further economic growth, particularly in the northern half. |



You can find more information on the [Wild Atlantic Way brand here](#)



Building on our success

The Causeway Coastal Route – global recognition and appeal

The Causeway Coastal Route was launched in 2012. In 2019 it became a vital part of the 'Embrace a Giant Spirit' tourism brand for Northern Ireland that emphasises the spirit of the people, the warmth of the welcome and the authenticity of the visitor experience.

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| The goal | ▶ To enhance Northern Ireland's international appeal. |
| | ▶ To create a 120-mile driving route along the coast. |
| | ▶ To link leading attractions. |
| | ▶ To forge partnerships between Tourism NI, councils and local stakeholders. |
| The impact | ▶ Lonely Planet's number one 'must see' global destination in 2018. |
| | ▶ Strong appeal to domestic and overseas markets, increasing their likelihood to visit and to stay longer. |
| The future | The route still has significant opportunities for investment and growth, through: |
| | ▶ enhancing the breadth of visitor experiences. |
| | ▶ increasing awareness and building appeal. |
| | ▶ increasing the benefits from positioning on the Causeway Coastal Route across the various regions of Northern Ireland. |



Read more about the brand at
[Northern Ireland's Embrace a Giant Spirit Brand | Tourism NI](#)

How to use this Toolkit

This Toolkit should help you to make your best possible application for Investment Funding to be part of this exciting new initiative.

The Coast-to-Coast Capital Investment Scheme will provide funding to enable **existing visitor attractions** to deliver enhanced visitor experiences.

This Toolkit introduces a process for developing the experience that visitors have with you. It focuses on using storytelling and interpretation to reveal the special character of our coasts, landscapes and communities and help visitors experience a stronger sense of place.

The new investment funding for attractions

The Coast-to-Coast Capital Investment Scheme is available for existing visitor attractions in eligible geographic areas on the Wild Atlantic Way comprising **Counties Sligo, Donegal and parts of Leitrim**, and on the Causeway Coastal Route comprising the **Local Authority Areas of Derry City and Strabane District Council, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, and Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council.**

For further information on the Shared Island Coast-to-Coast Capital Investment Scheme including details on eligibility and how to apply, please refer to the Scheme [Guidelines \(Fáilte Ireland\)](#) or [Guidelines \(Tourism NI\)](#). You will need to demonstrate good practice in interpretation planning and visitor experience development in your application. The step-by-step exercises in this Toolkit will help you do that.



Dunluce Castle, County Antrim

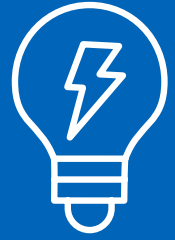
Seven Steps to improving your interpretation and visitor experience

This Toolkit focuses on how you can best share your stories and how visitors will experience them while you are hosting them.

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>STEP 1</p>  | <p>Think about existing and potential visitors</p> <p>The best attractions offer a variety of experiences designed to appeal to diverse audiences.</p> |
| <p>STEP 2</p>  | <p>Focus on one Big Idea</p> <p>Clarify your Big Idea and what you want people to remember about your attraction.</p> |
| <p>STEP 3</p>  | <p>Examine your visitor journey</p> <p>Walking through your experience on the ground as a visitor will help you and your team to review each stage in the visitor journey.</p> |
| <p>STEP 4</p>  | <p>Work on your stories</p> <p>Great stories contain characters and dramas that can bring the experience of your attraction to life.</p> |
| <p>STEP 5</p>  | <p>Focus on your place</p> <p>Aim to develop a unique sense of place and highlight the opportunity you are offering to explore your story where it happened.</p> |
| <p>STEP 6</p>  | <p>Choose how to tell your story</p> <p>The media you use to tell your story will have an enormous impact on the visitor experience, and the visitors who will most enjoy it.</p> |
| <p>STEP 7</p>  | <p>Identify the priority developments for your attraction</p> <p>Identify the priority project(s) that will make the greatest impact on visitor experience at your attraction.</p> |

STEP 1

Think about existing and potential visitors

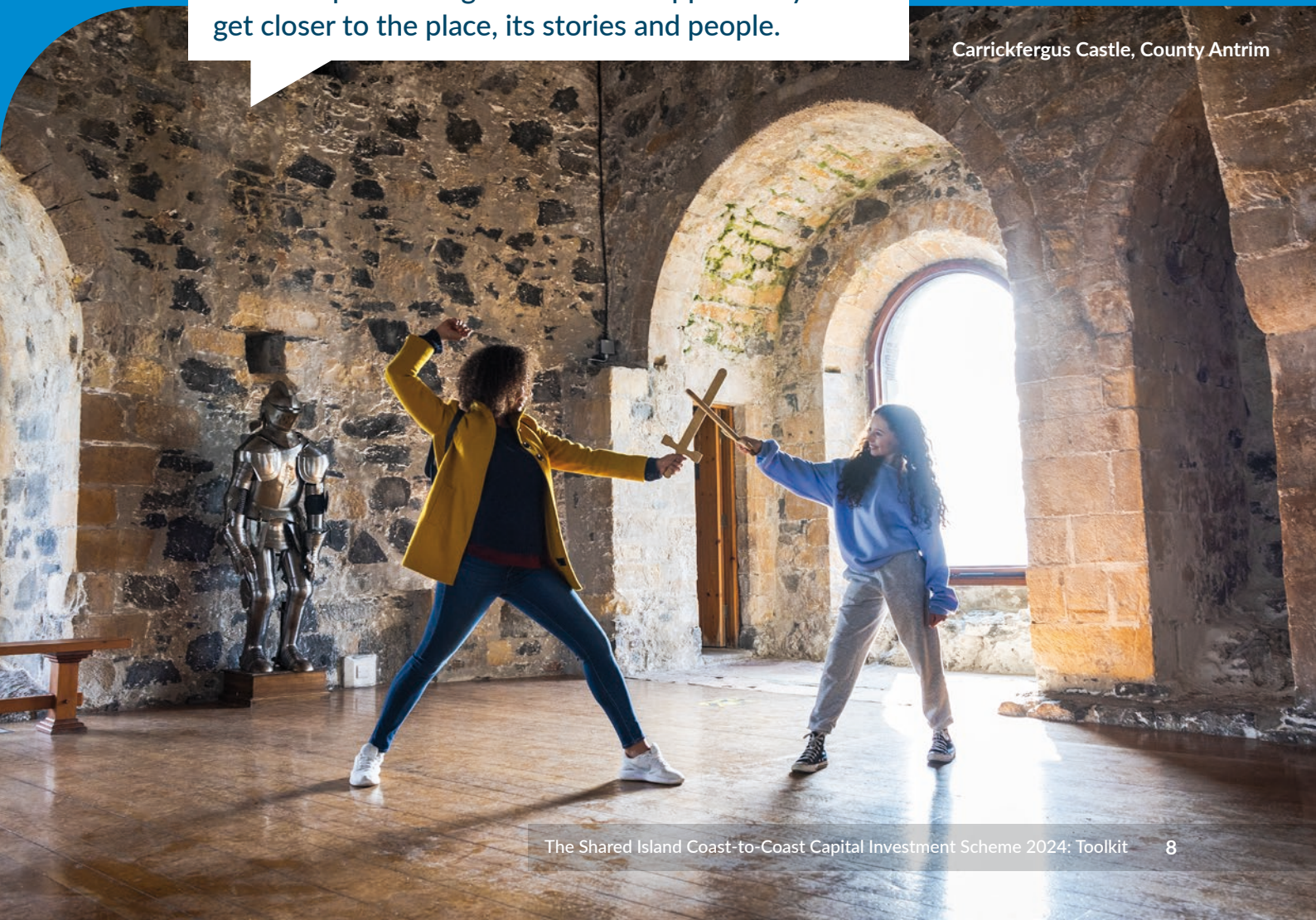


The visitor attractions and experiences located along the Wild Atlantic Way and the Causeway Coastal Route need to develop new experiences that will draw visitors with their different motivations, preferences and needs.

Our visitors want to connect – with our place, our culture and, most of all, with our people. They do not want to be passive consumers. They want to experience it all, to immerse themselves and discover what makes the place tick, what locals talk about and the tales they tell. They want to be surprised by unusual events and unexpected stories.

Visitor experiences give visitors an opportunity to get closer to the place, its stories and people.

Carrickfergus Castle, County Antrim



More welcome for more visitors

Many types of visitors may go to an attraction; they will behave differently and focus on different things during their visits. The best attractions offer visitors choices.

We have good knowledge of who is most likely to travel the Wild Atlantic Way and the Causeway Coastal Route, visit our attractions and participate in our experiences. We know what they look for and what they like. This enables us to plan interpretation that is tailored for them.

FIND OUT MORE: Our visitors and what they are looking for:

Fáilte Ireland's [Motivations Framework](#) for attractions and experiences based in the Republic of Ireland explains how 'moments of reset' are vital for tourists and identifies seven Travel Motivations that drive visitors' behaviour and choices.

For Northern Ireland, [Tourism 360 2023 Travel Trends](#) and [Tourism 360 2024 Travel Trends](#) contain the most recent findings on what motivates visitors to Northern Ireland.

The [Northern Ireland Domestic Tourism Strategy 2020](#) explains the interests of six domestic holidaymaker segments and why Natural Quality Seekers, Aspiring Families and Social Instagrammers are the priority segments for the Causeway Coastal Route.

At the Museum of Illusion in Vilnius, visitors participate in world-famous illusions, creating irresistible photo opportunities in a relaxed, social and entertaining environment.



More welcome for more visitors

It is increasingly important to ensure tourism attractions and experiences are accessible and inclusive to people with different physical, sensory and neurological needs.

You can find information and advice about steps you can take to achieve this at:



Northern Ireland: [Accessibility Guidance \(tourismni.com\)](https://tourismni.com)



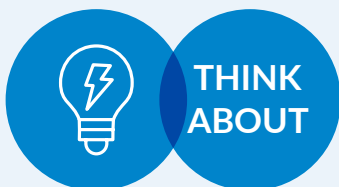
Ireland: [introductory-guide-to-accessible-tourism.pdf \(failteireland.ie\)](https://failteireland.ie)

Working closely with access groups is often the best way to understand how you can help more people use your attraction or experience safely and confidently.

Experiences for diverse visitors

Your first step in planning a great visitor experience is to decide who you want to attract so that you can design for them.

Visitors to attractions do not all want the same experience. Some like reading, some like looking at things, others like talking to people or doing practical activities.



Diverse visitors at your attraction

How do you, or could you, do the following to help make your attraction/experience enjoyable and meaningful for visitors with different backgrounds, experiences, preferences and needs?

- Help visitors meet and interact with local people.
- Provide unusual, fun, entertaining, and lively social activity.
- Provide activities that appeal to multi-generational audiences.
- Give an opportunity to participate in a memorable activity.
- Create photo opportunities and Instagrammable moments.
- Provide quiet places and times for reflection and escape.
- Give access to reliable, detailed information about your place and your stories.
- Provide information in a range of media.
- Provide universal accessible routes and experiences.

STEP 2

Focus on one Big Idea



You need to know the Big Idea of your business and make that your focus.

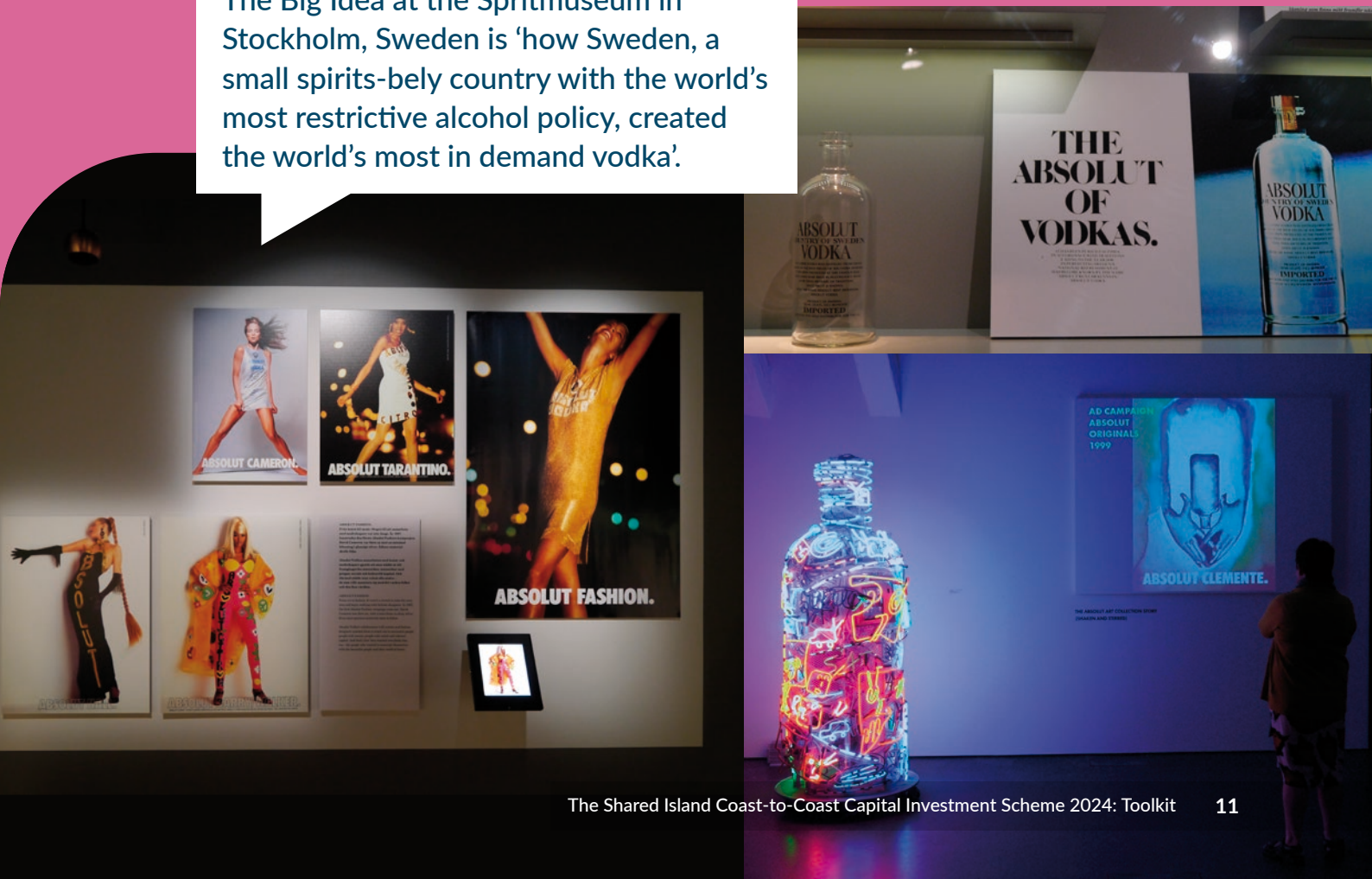
Your Big Idea is what you want people to remember about you after they have left, what they will talk to each other about and tell their friends about when they return home. It is your identity, your DNA, your reason for people to visit you.

People will find it much easier to remember your Big Idea if you state it very clearly before the visit, repeat it at the start and during the visit and reinforce it as they leave.

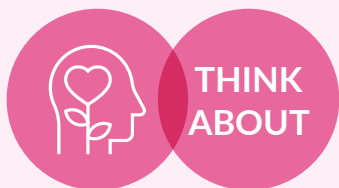
Make it simple enough for people to remember and drop into their conversation.

Remember that your fantastic cafe, your friendly guides and clean toilets are not your Big Idea. They are essential to a good visit, but they are not the things that will drive visitors to your door.

The Big Idea at the Spritmuseum in Stockholm, Sweden is 'how Sweden, a small spirits-bely country with the world's most restrictive alcohol policy, created the world's most in demand vodka'.



Your Big Idea



The Big Idea for your attraction

What is the Big Idea about your attraction that you want your visitors to remember?

Where and how do visitors encounter your Big Idea before, during and after their visit?

Could that be improved and made more powerful?

Use your Big Idea to choose the stories you tell and the information you give

Visitors will understand and remember more from their visit if you choose to show them and tell them things relating to Your Big Idea.

Planning interpretation involves selecting and organising what you will communicate.

For instance, if *'This is a working lighthouse that has a vital life-saving role for modern seafarers'* is your Big Idea, you would choose stories and experiences that showcase the technology used today and the role of the lighthouse as an aid to navigation.

On the other hand, a Big Idea of *'Fishing has been part of this area for centuries and has shaped this town and the people who live here'* would be supported by stories about fishing families past and present, and how the industry affected the local economy, the size of the town and its buildings.

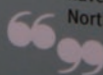
up to 1880s

Families looked out for loved ones

'Herring Girls', from the Herring Houses in the harbour below, looked out for fishing boats.



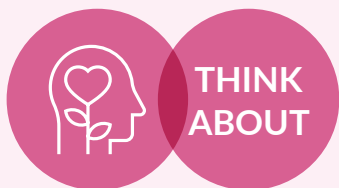
In August and September, boats from the Scottish east coast herring fleet used to call in here on their annual journey south, following the 'silver darlings' (herring). They unloaded fish to be smoked in the Herring Houses. Some boats from Holy Island would have joined them to fish the herring on the Northumberland coast.



Collin Teago, Holy Islander

The Big Idea for the Coastguard's Lookout on the Holy Island of Lindisfarne is that, throughout the centuries and for many reasons, island people have looked out to the sea.

Use your Big Idea



How you can use your Big Idea

What stories from your site relate most strongly to your Big Idea?

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Which locations are most relevant to your Big Idea?

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Examine your visitor journey



The best visitor experiences surprise visitors with amazing stories told in fascinating ways in extraordinary places. How does your visitor experience do this?

Thinking in detail about your visitors' journey from arrival to departure is one of the most important parts of the planning process.

Learn from your visitors

To create good interpretation you need a good understanding of how people experience and interact with both your place and your story.

Your visitors are the best judges of your attraction and the experience it offers. They are your best source of insights into the quality of your visitor experience.

Take time to engage with your visitors regularly. Chat to them, watch what they do and what they avoid or ignore.

Doneraile Estate, County Cork

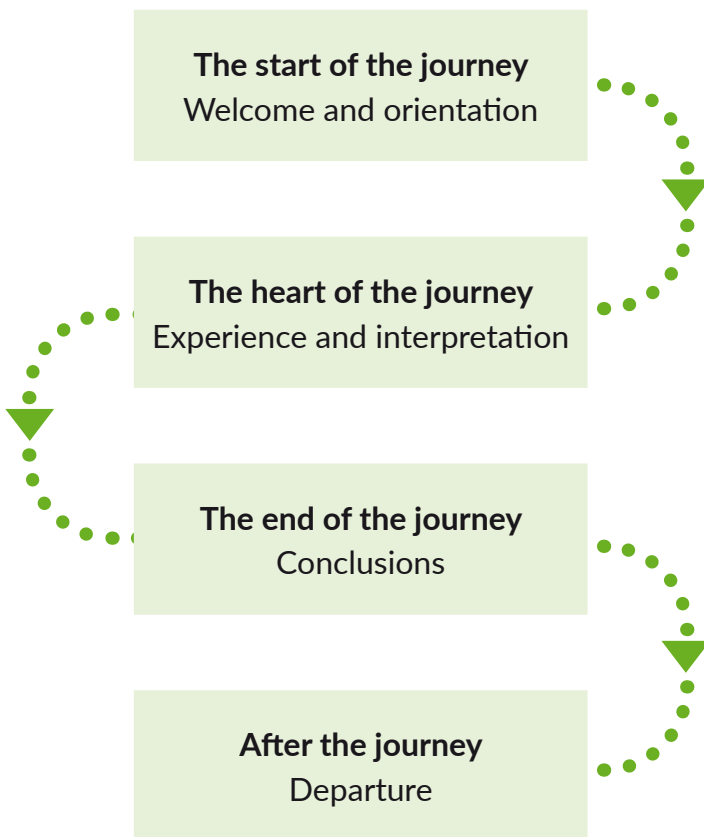


The walkthrough exercise

Walking through your experience on the ground as a visitor will help you and your team to identify a clear vision of what happens and what should ideally happen at each stage in the visitor journey.

Be aspirational. You can address the gaps between your ideal and the reality later.

This exercise focuses on four key parts of the visitor journey through your attraction:



This exercise is about the visitor experience. Remember that the visitor journey begins before the visit. Your promotional materials and on-line activity need to be in harmony with the visitor experience. They are important in building expectation and anticipation of the visit.



Chester Zoo, England.

Walkthrough Exercise 1

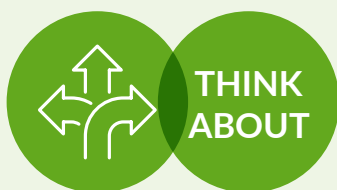
The start of the journey: Welcome and orientation

You only have one chance to make a first impression. It is vital that your attraction creates a good initial impact.

The start of a visit is vital - and a busy time for the visitor. Within the first five minutes the visitor should:

- ▶ feel welcome.
- ▶ be relaxed and confident that they will have a good time.
- ▶ know what is special about your attraction i.e. your Big Idea.
- ▶ be keen to know more of your story.
- ▶ be organised and know where they will go and what they will do.
- ▶ be excited at the prospect of what's ahead.

The start of the journey



Welcome and orientation

- How do you welcome visitors? (Identify three things)

- Your Big Idea must be introduced at the start of your visit (as well as in your promotion). How could you do that?

- Where and how will you grab people's attention and raise their expectations?

- How can you ensure your welcome and introduction works for a range of visitors, including people who do not visit you at present?

- What will international visitors need to know before they can understand your story? (Remember that they may not have any understanding of our culture and heritage.) How and where will you deliver it?

- Who are the first members of staff that visitors meet? How can they enhance the start of the visit?

Walkthrough Exercise 2

The heart of the journey: Experience and interpretation

This is where you deliver on the promises made pre-visit and at the approach and arrival. Visitors should find memorable experiences linked to surprising stories throughout their visit.

The visit begins at the entrance and ends at the exit. Unless you have a strict route, where visitors go and what they do between those two points can be very variable. The middle of the visit therefore will often be stand-alone locations that people can visit in any order.

Divide your story into parts and link each part to a different location. Think about what visitors can do at each location to turn your place and story into a memorable experience



At Glencolmcille Folk Village in County Donegal stories are told in different houses throughout the village, including the old schoolhouse.

The heart of the journey



Experience and interpretation

- What is unique to your site and how can you turn that into an unforgettable experience?

- Which are the most popular, interesting or evocative places at your attraction?
How can you enhance the experience of those places?
How can they be used to tell your story?

- Where do visitors seem less engaged or interested?
What could you change there?

- Where do visitors meet people?

- Where can or could visitors do things?

- Where do or could you get your visitors talking?

- Where and how can visitors find out more?



Fanad Lighthouse, County Donegal

Walkthrough Exercise 3

The end of the journey: Conclusions

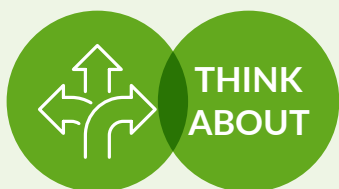
Create a strong ending that will leave people thinking and talking and wanting to share their experience with others.

You want your visitors to leave your attraction buzzing. Make sure your visit doesn't peter out before the end.

This is a good point to create a surprise that animates visitors.

Make sure your story ends in a satisfactory way.

The end of the journey



Conclusions

- What do you want people to be saying and feeling as they leave?
(You may want to reiterate your Big Idea as a strong take home message.)

- Can you refer back to the start to round off the visit? (If you asked, or were asked, questions during the visit, answer them here. If you set visitors a challenge or a quiz, acknowledge their efforts.)

- Can you deliver a memorable ending to the visit that will make people laugh or set them talking?

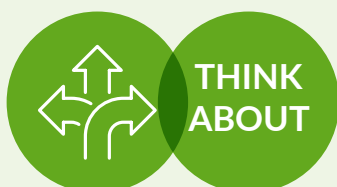
- Who is the last member of staff visitors meet? How can they enhance the end of the visit?

Walkthrough Exercise 4

After the journey: Departure

You want the people to remember you and your attraction positively and to tell others about you.

Think about how you can use the end of the visit to set up a post visit relationship.



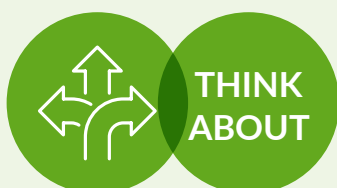
THINK
ABOUT

Staying in touch

- Do you want your visitors to do anything after their visit? Is there a call to action?
- How could you persuade visitors to:
 - leave an email address?
 - follow you on social media?
 - take an events programme?
 - make a return visit?

Priority Actions for improving the visitor journey at your attraction

Identify where investment could make most difference to how visitors move around your attraction and what they do at key locations.



THINK
ABOUT

Your priorities for improving interpretation and visitor experience on your visitor journey.

- What are the strengths of your current visitor journey?
- What are the weaknesses of the current visitor journey?
- Are there any missed opportunities?
- What changes at your attraction would have the greatest positive impact on the visitor journey?
- Could this be part of your application to the Coast-to-Coast Capital Investment Scheme?

STEP 4

Work on your stories



Great stories contain characters and dramas that can bring the experience of an attraction to life.

For example: The great story of a business is not statistics about products and their features, it is about the people who make the business happen, about the visionary entrepreneurs who started it or who saved it. It is about ups and downs, challenges, successes and failures - things that people around the world can relate to.

Telling the great story of a heritage attraction is not reciting the history or showing a timeline. It is about why this place matters, about amazing individuals and their contribution. It will be about drama and dilemmas, love, loyalty and loss, friends, families and foes.

Dramatic, full-size images of the people who lived on the Blasket Island in County Kerry helps to tell the human story of a community's struggle for existence, their language and culture, and the extraordinary literary legacy they left behind.



Find your best story

'Stories of People' and 'Stories of Place' are the most powerful for creating a great visitor experience at attractions.

- ▶ 'Stories of Place' capitalise on relevance and authenticity and help you develop a unique sense of place. They can help visitors feel that 'being there' is important and worthwhile.
- ▶ 'Stories of People' give you characters, the core of all stories, they help you create empathy and human interest and connect visitors with your attraction.

Types of stories

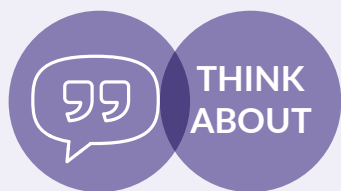
Your story might be a well-researched historical narrative, a popular local story, folklore, or fairy tale. Your visitors should always know what sort of story you are telling.

Whatever your story, you must understand and believe in it to tell it well.



The Gobbins Cliff Path, County Antrim

Stories of Place

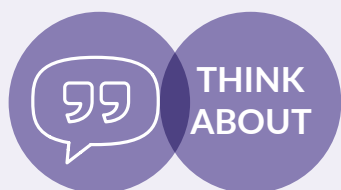


THINK
ABOUT

**What makes your place unique or distinctive?
What happened here? Who was involved?**

| Distinctive feature or event | Associated person |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |

Stories of People



THINK
ABOUT

**Who are the key people connected with your place
and what important stories could they tell?**

| Person | Stories |
|--------|---------|
| 1. | a. |
| | b. |
| | c. |
| 2. | a. |
| | b. |
| | c. |
| 3. | a. |
| | b. |
| | c. |

Make the most of your characters

Decide which of your characters are most important in your story and/or would be most effective in telling it.

The characters you choose should feature prominently in your interpretation, whatever medium you use.

You need to know the people in your story well to make your storytelling attention grabbing and convincing. Look for characters who will appeal to different types of visitors to give your storytelling wider relevance.

Consider whether there are sensitivities around any of the characters. Have you chosen people who are well known and, if so, are they popular or unpopular? Do they have living relatives who may be affected by your interpretation and who you need to consult?

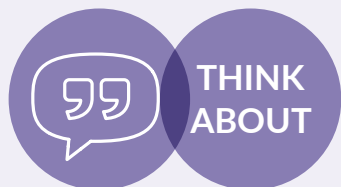
Decide how you can use your characters to provoke thought and discussion and make the visit more memorable.



A costumed interpreter becomes Carl Linnaeus, drawing visitors into his world and his work at Uppsala University, Sweden.

Priority Actions for improving the stories you tell at your attraction

Identify where investment in your attraction could make most difference to the stories you tell.



Your priorities for improving the stories you tell at your attraction.

- What stories do you tell best at your attraction?

- Are there any untold stories that you could be telling at your attraction?

- What artefacts, objects or other resources do you have that can help bring the story to life?

- What could you add to the interpretation and visitor experience to make your stories more powerful?

- Are there any weaknesses or challenges in your stories that need to be addressed?

- What changes at your attraction would have the greatest positive impact on the stories you tell?

- Could this be part of your application to the Coast-to-Coast Capital Investment Scheme?



Focus on your place

Aim to develop a unique sense of place and highlight the opportunity you are offering to explore your story where it happened.

Visitors want to experience your place so include activities that encourage interaction with the physical location.

Visitors dress up in soldiers' uniforms and handle weapons at Passchendaele, Belgium.



Find the best locations for visitors to experience your story

- ▶ Break your story down into elements and match each to a place-based activity to engage visitors and help them empathise with your characters. (The activities can be simple things, such as looking at a view, unlocking a door or climbing some stairs.)
- ▶ Look for places where people can comfortably gather to hear key parts of the story.
- ▶ Look out for bottle necks and other areas like stairways where you need people to keep moving and not be distracted by interpretation.
- ▶ Consider the mood of your story and choose places to heighten it. For instance, tell scary stories in dark, tight spaces.
- ▶ Look for specific places that relate to people in your story.

An open panel reveals the historic spot where King Richard III died in the bloody Battle of Bosworth, England.



Put your story into its place



Work out the best place for these key elements of your story.

- **Introduction**
Where will you grab people's attention and build expectations of the visit?

- **Starting your story**
Where will you introduce your story? Where and how will visitors discover your characters?

- **Dramatic moments**
Where will you make the most of your high-points, the incidents that make your story and your attraction unforgettable?

- **Dilemmas and decisions**
Where will you get people talking and participating with your story?

- **Reveals**
Where can you build in surprises?

- **Extra details**
Where can visitors find more about your story?

- **Ending**
Where will your story come to a natural close?

Bring your place to life

Activity, interaction and conversation animate a visit and make it more personal and memorable.

These days, visitors want to actively get involved with participatory elements rather than a passive experience

- ▶ Aim to engage visitors with evocative sights, smells, sounds, tastes and tactile experiences as much as possible
- ▶ Enrich the sensory experience. For example:
 - add background sounds to an audio tour
 - give people specific things to look for e.g., finding patterns or objects, looking for places in a view.
 - Compare and contrast smells, tastes or textures
- ▶ Give people things to do such as using tools or solving puzzles.
- ▶ Have costumes or props for people to carry, use or wear.
- ▶ If you are demonstrating an activity, find ways that people can join in.
- ▶ Highlight things that are unique to your area.
- ▶ Provoke conversations e.g. by asking speculative questions that get visitors thinking about your story.
- ▶ Build unexpected and surprise elements into the visit.

Animate your place and your story

Think about how you can use activity, interaction and conversation to make the most of the key storytelling locations you identified in the last exercise.



Where and how can visitors engage more with your place and your story?

| Location | Story | Activity |
|----------|-------|----------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Priority Actions for improving the physical environment at your attraction

The physical environment of your attraction refers to all the places where visitors go and what they can see, hear, feel, smell and do there. It may change with the weather or the seasons. Assessing the physical environment is a key part of the visitor experience planning and is especially important in identifying visitor routes and stopping places.

Identify where investment in the physical environment could make most difference to how you tell your stories.



Your priorities for improving the physical environment at your attraction

- What could you add to the interpretation and visitor experience to improve your physical environment for visitors?

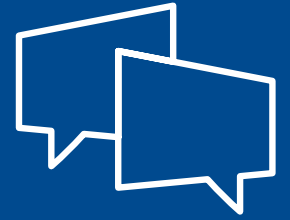
- Are there weaknesses, challenges or risks in your physical environment that need to be addressed?

- What changes to your physical environment would have the greatest positive impact on your storytelling?

- Could this be part of your application to the Coast-to-Coast Capital Investment Scheme?

STEP 6

Choose how to tell your story



The methods you use to tell your story will have an enormous impact on the visitor experience, the look and feel of your attraction, and the visitors who will most enjoy it.

Attractions can use a range of methods to tell their story and engage with visitors in different ways.

All media need to be well-planned and produced to a high standard.

At the Seamus Heaney Homeplace in County Londonderry a range of methods are used to tell stories and engage visitors.



Some guidelines for choosing your media

- ▶ **Focus on the media your visitors will be most comfortable with.** Providing a range of media allows diverse visitors to choose how they want to explore and experience your attraction.
- ▶ **Remember that people warm to people, so use your staff well to create personal experiences.** If you achieve high visitor numbers, it is unlikely that all your interpretation can be face-to-face.
- ▶ **Trial your ideas for new media with your target audience, including accessibility and inclusion advisors, and pay attention to their feedback.**
- ▶ **Do not compromise on quality.** Choose a medium that you can comfortably afford so you have more options for higher quality, more innovative, work.
- ▶ **Use media that suit your story and the physical and sensory experience that your place offers.**
- ▶ **Planning and producing good media for your attraction will require time, thought and a skilled team.** Satisfactory results will rely on your understanding of your audiences and of your story.

Media options: pros and cons

Face-to-face interpretation / guides

The most obvious way to tell a story is with a storyteller – a good guide can create a wonderful experience for your visitor. Contact with people is the biggest driver of satisfaction at attractions.

Pros

- ▶ a skilled guide will be versatile, responsive, and entertaining. They can change their delivery to suit the audience.
- ▶ the delivery can be structured so the story can be told in sequence.
- ▶ can use a range of storytelling techniques.
- ▶ can be interactive.
- ▶ can be easily updated and improved.

Cons

- ▶ requires considerable management to maintain a team of skilled guiding staff.
- ▶ expensive when visitor numbers are low.
- ▶ can be hard to maintain standards when visitor numbers are high.
- ▶ constraining for visitors who want to explore on their own.
- ▶ difficult to provide in multiple languages.
- ▶ may be difficult for people who are uncomfortable in groups, have mobility issues or impaired hearing.
- ▶ limited capacity.



Guides at the Crolly Distillery in County Donegal, adapt what they say to suit the knowledge and interests of visitors from around the world.

Media options: pros and cons

Exhibitions

If you have authentic material to show, an exhibition is likely to be a good choice. An exhibition can also give a good overview or provide extra detail.

Encourage visitors to take, and hopefully share, images by creating photo and video opportunities.

Pros

- ▶ can be well-structured.
- ▶ good for giving wider context and telling complex stories.
- ▶ can contain detailed information.
- ▶ can portray characters and drama well.
- ▶ can include a wide range of media and be designed to be inclusive for a range of learning styles and specific needs.

Cons

- ▶ expensive.
- ▶ are often passive, impersonal and rather serious.
- ▶ need skilled design.
- ▶ can date quickly and are hard to change.

The exhibition at Stonehenge, England, combines media to create zones, some of which are largely visual and atmospheric while others focus on information. The banners introduce the Big Ideas for the visit and the exhibition.



Media options: pros and cons

Auditory and visual media

Audio, projections, film and sound can create atmosphere and drama in all kinds of spaces. Mixed reality can create or recreate scenes from other times and places.

Pros

- ▶ undemanding medium, can be a break from more focussed reading or listening.
- ▶ can be strongly structured and good for storytelling.
- ▶ can be good for conveying complex information.
- ▶ can use headsets for multi-lingual provision.
- ▶ versatile.

Cons

- ▶ can be expensive to install.
- ▶ can be expensive to update and can become out-of-date quickly.
- ▶ often a passive experience.
- ▶ can lead to 'clumping' visitors at a busy site.
- ▶ may require regular maintenance and repair.

Media options: pros and cons

Audio trails with mobile phones

Audio trails using mobile phones or devices provided by the attraction are common so many visitors will be familiar with the technology.

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Pros | ▶ can be provided in different languages. |
| | ▶ can be closely linked to site experience especially with location triggers. |
| | ▶ can use different voices, sound effect, visual and virtual content to add variety and create atmosphere. |
| | ▶ can convey characters and drama well. |
| | ▶ visually unobtrusive. |
| | ▶ can give visitor choices of what to listen to. |
| | ▶ can be easy to edit and update. |

| | |
|-------------|---|
| Cons | ▶ require staffing. |
| | ▶ translations of different voices can be difficult and expensive. |
| | ▶ usually a passive experience. |
| | ▶ headphones cut people off from the rest of their group and so can reduce the social content of the visit. |
| | ▶ can be a hassle for visitors. |
| | ▶ roaming charges or hire fees can be an unwelcome extra expenses for visitors. |



The Derry Girls Experience at the Tower Museum, Derry~Londonderry

Media options: pros and cons

Panels

Panels are good for making relatively simple points in well-chosen words and images. They can be especially useful for giving a different view, such as what this place looked like in the past or how this machine works.

Pros

- ▶ can show images as well as words.
- ▶ are closely associated with the place.
- ▶ are always available.
- ▶ are relatively inexpensive.

Cons

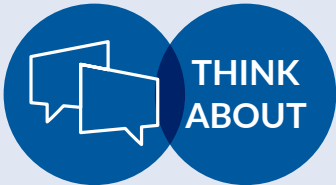
- ▶ very limited in how much information they can carry.
- ▶ passive (and often dull).
- ▶ are difficult to do well.
- ▶ not good for multiple languages.
- ▶ only read by motivated visitors.
- ▶ can clutter a site.

See through panel on the industrial history at RSPB Old Moor, England



Priority Actions for improving the storytelling media at your attraction

Identify where investment in media could make most difference to how you tell your stories.



Your priorities for improving storytelling media at your attraction

- What media do you use successfully?

- What media could you add or improve to make your attraction more engaging?

- Are there any out of date, broken or damaged media that need to be removed?

- What changes to the media at your attraction would have the greatest positive impact?

- Could this be part of your application to the Coast-to-Coast Capital Investment Scheme?

STEP 7

Identify the priority developments for your attraction



This Toolkit sets out to help you identify how to develop your interpretation and visitor experience. You may well have come up with many ideas but for your application to the Coast-to-Coast Capital Investment Scheme you will need to identify how you can make most difference with the time and budget available.

Look back at your responses to all the steps in the Toolkit, especially to the Priority Action exercises on pages 12, 14, 23, 30.

Identify three priority developments that will make the biggest impact on visitor satisfaction, what the benefits will be and how you could quantify the impact of the change.



THINK ABOUT

Your priorities for funding to enhance the interpretation and visitor experience.

| Development | Benefit | Measure of impact |
|-------------|---------|-------------------|
| 1. | | |
| 2. | | |
| 3. | | |

We hope you have found this Toolkit useful

If you have an attraction in the eligible geographical areas, you can apply to the Coast-to-Coast Capital Investment Scheme for funding to enhance the interpretation and visitor experience at your attraction.

The Scheme is available for areas on the Wild Atlantic Way comprising Counties Sligo, Donegal and parts of Leitrim, and along the Causeway Coastal Route comprising the Local Authority Areas of Derry City and Strabane District Council, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, and Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council.

For more information on the Scheme, visit the relevant website:



For Northern Ireland:
www.tourismni.com/sharedisland



For Ireland:
<https://www.failteireland.ie/shared-island-initiative.aspx>

WB Yeats Statue, County Sligo

