



Uimhir Thagarta Uathúil: KCC-C55-247

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Stádas: Submitted

Aighneacht: Access to the Liffey in Kildare

Comhairliúchán:

Draft Kildare County Development Plan 2023 - 2029

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Access to the river in Kildare

Caibidil: Volume 1 - chapters » 13 - Landscape, Recreation & Amenity

Ábhair: recreation, amenity

During the pandemic lots of people in Ireland looked for different ways they could get outside into nature for exercise, recreation and their mental health. I found that in Kildare it is increasingly difficult to find somewhere to swim in the Liffey

We live near Kilcullen and I note that Berney's Inch in Kilcullen is no longer accessible without trespassing, Carnalway is accessible but only a strip of the bank has been kept for public access, Virginia falls near Naas is accessible from the road but there is nowhere to park. There are very few swimming spots left with public access.

I would like the council to recognise that the river belongs to all the people of Kildare and not just those lucky enough to own property beside it.

The Barrow has a publicly accessible towpath that allows residents and tourists to enjoy walking alongside it. And "wild swimming" or outdoor swimming is a very popular pastime that can draw tourists and locals alike.

The Liffey is a shared resource but most of the people in the county have no access to it due to most of the land adjacent to the river being in private ownership.

Please add an objective to further protect any access that is currently available and to try to create access to areas that are currently stuck behind large fences and to promote outdoor swimming in the county.

We also submit that it would be possible to create a safe swimming location in Blessington lakes. For years we have been told that it is too dangerous to swim in Blessington Lakes but clearly there is already sailing and fishing going on there safely. Surely it is possible to create a safe place for swimmers perhaps using a lifeguard or perhaps by demarcating a safe zone for swimmers. Many other counties in Ireland benefit from their lakes in this way eg Lough Lene in Westmeath or Lough Derrevaragh. We would like the council to add an action to have a feasibility study to investigate providing safe swimming access in Blessington Lakes like in many other lakes in Westmeath, Cavan etc.

And add an objective to allow access for swimming in Blessington Lakes

The objectives could read:

It shall be an objective of the council to protect public access to the Liffey and other swimming and walking spots and to promote wild swimming in the county by seeking opportunities with existing landowners to provide public access to the river at suitable locations

It shall be an objective of the council to provide access for outdoor swimming at Blessington Lakes

The actions could read:

It shall be an action of the council to do a feasibility study on creating an outdoor swimming location in Blessington lakes

Eochairfhocail: Outdoor
Recreation

Príomh-thuairim:

Improve access to the waterways in Kildare for swimming/recreation

Príomh-iarratais:

Retain and protect access to swimming spots on the Liffey. Create access to more locations so people and children can swim locally. Add safe swimming location to Blessington Lakes

Main reasons:

Swimming has many benefits - health, fitness, mental health, tourism and recreation for families. It is free. The river is a shared resource. But most people in the county cant access it locally in more than a couple of locations for swimming.

Documents Attached: Níl