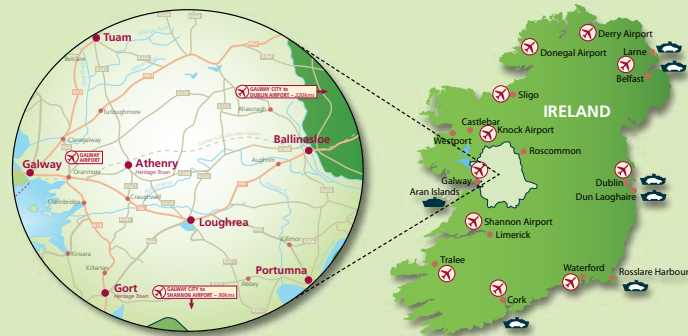


Listen to the story of Athenry Take an audio walking tour

The English language audio-narrative to accompany this tour can be downloaded from www.galwayeast.com/wayfinding. This audio tour narrated by Dr Peter Harbison describes in detail each of the sites featured in this tour and can be listened to on your PC, or on an MP3 player while walking the tour. There are 5 other Walking Tours in this series: Ballinasloe, Loughrea, Gort, Tuam and Portumna.

See also our Ecclesiastical Driving Tour for a comprehensive tour of the main religious sites in Galway East. For more information on any of the places described in this brochure, or for general information on Galway East, contact Galway East Tourism www.galwayeast.com



Éist le scéal Bhaile Átha an Rí Gabh ar shiúlóid fuaimne

Is féidir an tráchtairacht fuaimne Béarla don turas seo a íoslódáil ó www.galwayeast.com/wayfinding. Tugann an turas fuaimne seo le tráchtairacht ón Dr. Peter Harbison mionchuntas faoi gach suíomh atá luaithe sa turas seo agus is féidir leat éisteacht leis ar do ríomhaire nó ar sheinnteor MP3 agus an siúlóid á dhéanamh agat. Tá 5 Shiúlóid eile sa tsraith seo: Béal Átha na Sluaighe, Baile Locha Riach, An Gort, Tuaim agus Port Omna.

Féach freisin ar ár dTuras Tiomána Eaglasta do thuras cuimsitheach ar phríomhionaid chreidimh in Oirthear na Gaillimhe. Tá breis eolais faoi aon cheann de na háiteanna atá luaithe sa bhróisiúr seo, chomh maith le heolas ginearálta faoi Oirthear na Gaillimhe, ar fáil ó Thurasóireacht Oirthear na Gaillimhe ag www.galwayeast.com.



This tour was developed by Galway County Council, with Galway East tourism and funding from Fáilte Ireland.



Other Interests

1. Athenry Heritage Centre

This superb Heritage Centre chronicles the story of Athenry. Medieval archery and other medieval games available during the summer. Costumes available for children and adults for dressing up. School tours and groups welcome. Tel: 091 844661

2. Athenry Walled Town Day

Athenry celebrates National Walled Towns Day with a programme of events that reflects the unique history of the town and promotes the medieval features that include the town walls, the restored Norman Castle, the Dominican Abbey and St. Mary's Collegiate Church. The programme is a 'family fun day for all to enjoy' with Re-enactments, falconry displays, puppet shows, heritage tours and craft displays. Tel: 091 844661

3. Walls and Towers

The defining feature of Athenry, 80% of the walls, five out of the six wall towers and one fine arched gateway still remain.

4. Monivea

8km from Athenry, Monivea is a picturesque village noted for the width of its main street, with wide greens separating the two rows of buildings from each other. The wide greens were once used to dry flax for the local mill. It is home to the former Ffrench estate, which still contains the mausoleum of this ancient Galway tribal family.

5. Rinville Park

A twenty minute drive from Athenry, Rinville Park is located on the edge of Galway Bay. A walk in Rinville Park will take you through peaceful woodland, which features some superb wildlife, as well as the remains of an ancient castle and stately home.



Ábhair Spéise Eile

1. Ionad Oidhreachta Bhaile Átha an Rí

Tá scéal Bhaile Átha an Rí le fáil san Ionad Oidhreachta iontach seo. Bíonn boghdóireacht agus cluichí meánaoiseacha eile ar fáil i rith an tsamhraidh. Tá éide ón tréimhse ar fáil do leanaí agus do dhaoine fásta. Tá fáilte roimh thurais scoile agus roimh ghrúpaí. Teil: 091 844661

2. Lá Múrtha Bhaile Átha an Rí

Déantar ceiliúradh ar Lá Náisiúnta na mBailte Múrtha i mBaile Átha an Rí le clár imeachtaí a léiríonn stair uathúil an bhaile agus a chuireann gnéithe meánaoiseacha chun cinn ar nós múrtha an bhaile, an Caisleán athchóirithe Normannach, an Mhainistir Dhoiminiceánach agus Eaglais Choláisteach Mhuire. Is 'lá spraoi teaghlaigh do chách' é an clár le hAthléirithe, taispeántais sheabhcóireachta, taispeántais phuipéid, turais oidhreachta agus taispeántais cheardaíochta. Teil: 091 844661

3. Múrtha agus Túir

Gné shainiúil Bhaile Átha an Rí, seasann 80% de na múrtha, cúig thúr múir as sé cinn agus geata le háirse bhreá go fóill.

4. Muine Mheá

8 km ó Bhaile Átha an Rí, baile taibhseach is ea Muine Mheá a bhfuil cáil ar a phríomhshráid leathan, le bánta leathana a scarann dhá shraith foirgneamh óna chéile. Úsáideadh na bánta leathana tráth chun líon a thriomú don mhuileann áitiúil. Is ann atá iareastát chlann Ffrench mar a bhfuil másailéam an tse-anteaghlaiigh seo as Gaillimh fós.

5. Páirc Rinn Mhíl

Turas fiche nóiméad ó Bhaile Átha an Rí i gcarr, tá Páirc Rinn Mhíl suite ar imeall Chuan na Gaillimhe. Tá coillearnach shíochánta i bPáirc Rinn Mhaoile le siúl tríd, agus fiadhúlra iontach mar ghné de, chomh maith le hiansmaí seanchaisleáin agus teach maorga.

Athenry

Architectural Walking Tour

Baile Átha an Rí

Turas Siúlóide Ailtireachta



Introduction

Athenry distinguishes itself among the towns of Galway East in having a considerable collection of buildings surviving from the Middle Ages. The ancient defensive walls with their imposing gate and several towers enclose the modern town, including a medieval priory and an old town church and the most dominant landmark in the urban landscape is the powerful Norman castle, built in the 13th century.

Most of the present buildings of Athenry's old core date from the 18th and 19th centuries, but these are overlaid onto a medieval plan and property boundaries. The plan, it is said, was laid out to confound any invaders who managed to breach the wall... So let us take a closer look at this ancient town, located at an important crossing of the River Clarin.

Athenry is 20km east of Galway City and on the main Dublin to Galway rail-line.

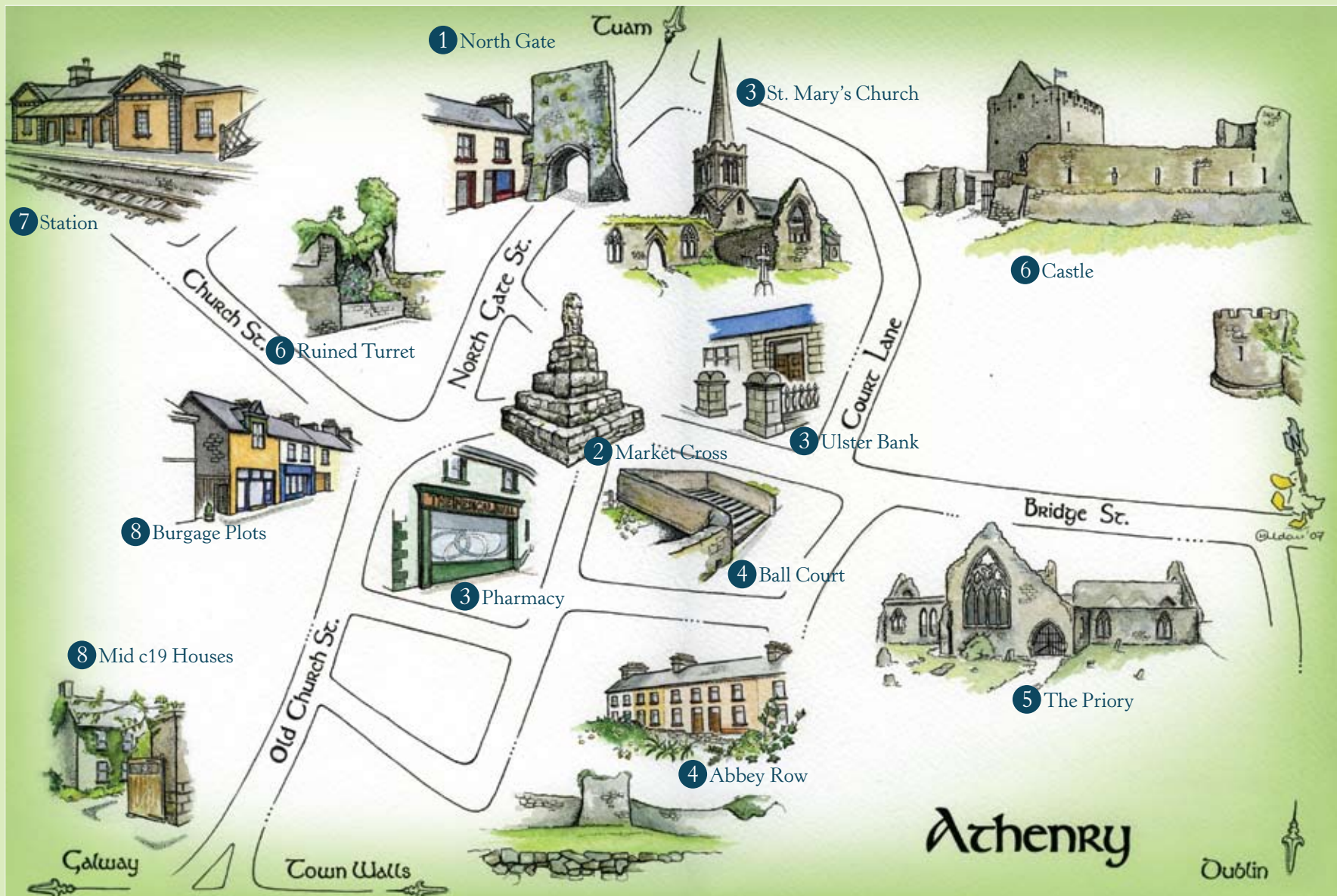
Réamhrá

Seasann Baile Átha an Rí amach i measc bailte Oirthear na Gaillimhe mar gheall go bhfuil bailiúchán mór foirgneamh ann a tháinig slán ó na Meánaoiseanna. Tá na seanmúrtha cosanta lena ngeata uasal agus a gcuid túr bailithe timpeall ar bhaile an lae inniu, mar a bhfuil príoireacht mheánaoiseach agus seanséipéal an bhaile agus an caisleán cumhachtach Normannach, an séadchomhartha is suntasaí sa tírdhreach uirbeach, a tógadh sa 13ú haois.

Tógadh an mhórchuid de na foirgnimh atá i seanchroí Bhaile Átha an Rí anois san 18ú agus sa 19ú haois, ach tá siad tógtha os cionn seanphlean agus seanteorainneacha maoinne na meánaoiseanna. Tá an plean leagtha amach, deirtear, chun mearbhall a chur ar ionróirí ar bith a bheadh in ann an múr a shárú...

Breathnaímis anois go géar ar an mbaile ársa seo atá suite ag áth tábhachtach ar Abhainn an Chláirín. Tá Baile Átha an Rí suite 20 km soir ó chathair na Gaillimhe ar an iarnród ó Bhaile Átha Cliath go Gaillimh.





4 From the Bridge, turn right onto Abbey Row and you will come to the three-sided hand-ball Court within the window-less walls of part of the Priory. Opposite, a set of steps for the spectators has been constructed.

Within view of the ball court stands a well-preserved row of 19th century cottages, Abbey Row, with two floors, slate roofs and fine groups of chimneys.

5 Back on Bridge Street, enter the grounds of Athenry Priory, which was founded for the Dominicans by Meiler De Bermingham immediately after his conquests here in 1241. For access to the Priory itself, a key can be obtained from the reception of the Castle or the Heritage Centre.

The church has a cruciform plan and, mostly, the style of the structures that survive is a form of pointed-arched Gothic, either as plain lancets in the north wall of the chancel, or as tracery windows from the slightly later work. Tombs in the form of wall niches are visible within the church walls. In the mid 1600s, the Priory was briefly a university until it was sacked by Cromwell's troops in 1652.

6 Approach the castle. The rise of the central tower up to its battlements and roof is phenomenal and there are impressive stretches of fortified outer wall enclosing the open castle yard. At the base of the main structure, the walls splay into a broad plinth. The Castle was begun by Meiler de Bermingham and probably reached its first, single story phase by the year 1240. It reached its present height in the 1400's when the pitched roof and gables were added.

It was abandoned by the De Berminghams at the end of the 1400's. They moved into a town-house (now the Ulster Bank) and the old castle fell into ruin. The restoration took place in the 1990's. Court Lane continues round the walls of the town from the Castle gate as you re-enter the town centre once more by the North Gate.

7 At the far end of North Gate street, pass along Church Street on the right to take the walk out to the railway station on the right; five minutes on foot.

The stone and brick station was designed in a classical style and if you imagine travelling from it you will be transported back to the great Age of Steam by its picturesque authenticity.

8 Heading back into the town centre, turn right into Old Church Street; the frontages on the right and the first group on the left are 'burgage plots'. These are narrow, long properties with a building, such as house at the front and a piece of land stretching out at the rear. The right-hand ones all stretch back as far as the town wall which makes up their rear boundary.



1 Tosaigh ag an nGeata Thuaidh, nó 'an Áirse'. Tá sé ina sheasamh anseo ag acomhal bhóthar Thuama le breis agus 400 bliain. Bíonn geata daingithe ag baile daingean agus bhí cúig cinn eile ar a laghad ag Baile Átha an Rí ó thús na 1300í, nuair a tógadh na múrtha ar dtús.

Nuair a théann tú tríd an Áirse agus Sráid an Gheata Thuaidh i dtreo lár an bhaile, féach na gnáth-thithe dhá stór, a bhfuil éadan tráchtála anois orthu, agus an tsairseacht níos airde ón 19ú haois ar aghaidh an Claymore Café. Cas ar chlé isteach i gCearnóg an Mhargaidh, atá i gcroílár Bhaile Átha an Rí.

2 Tá iarsmaí de Chrois an Mhargaidh i gCearnóg an Mhargaidh agus é suite os cionn céimeanna cloiche a phlionsa. Crois Laindeír a thugtar air, agus cé nach bhfuil fágtha ach a cheann, is é an ceann is fearr dá chineál é atá fágtha in Éirinn.

Ar chos nua-aimseartha os cionn an phlionsa, tá trascheann cloiche snóite ar thaobh amháin, le Crois Chéasta agus figiúirí ag bun na Croise leis an Spiorad Naomh i bhfoirm coilim os a gcionn, agus ar an aghaidh eile, Muire agus a Leanbh.

3 Tá geata cloiche ag cúinne na Cearnóige mar a raibh Séipéal Mhuire tráth. Tógadh fothrach ársa an tséipéil cloiche i lár an 13ú haois agus scrios mic Iarla Chlann Riocaird é sa bhliain 1574. Sa bhliain 1828, úsáideadh leath an tsuímh chun séipéal Protastúnach a thógáil, agus leanadh á úsáid mar ionad creidimh ar feadh 100 bliain go dtí go ndearnadh Ionad Oidhreacht de chun é a shábháil ó dhearóiliú.

Tar ar ais go Cearnóg an Mhargaidh agus siúil leat soir thar fhoirgneamh suntasach Bhanc Uladh.

4 Cas ar dheis ón droichead isteach i Rae na Mainistreach agus sroichfidh tú pinniúr tríthaobhach liathróid láimhe agus ballaí gan fhuinneoga na Prióireachta. Tá céimeanna do lucht féacha-na tógtha ar an taobh thall.

Tá sraith de theaichíní dea-chaomhnaithe ón 19ú haois le feiceáil ón bpinniúr, Rae na Mainistreach, dhá urlár iontu, díonta slinne agus simléirí breátha.

5 Ag teacht ar ais go Sráid an Droichid, gabh isteach i dtailte Phríóireacht Bhaile Átha an Rí, a bhunaigh Meiler de Bermingham do na Doimniceánaigh tar éis dó an ceantar seo a ghabháil i 1241. Más mian leat dul isteach sa Phríóireacht féin, tá eochair ar fáil ón ionad fáilte sa Chaisleán nó san Ionad Oidhreacht.

Tá an séipéal i bhfoirm croise, agus tá an chuid is mó de stíl na struchtúirí a mhaireann i bhfoirm áirsí bioracha Gotacha, fuinneoga caola ar bhalla thuaidh an tsaingil, nó fuinneoga féitheacha a rinneadh níos déanaí. Tá tuamaí le feiceáil i gcuaa i mballaí an tséipéil. Bhí an Phríóireacht ina hollscoil ar feadh tamaill i lár na 1600í go dtí gur chreach saighdiúirí Chromail í sa bhliain 1652.

6 Ar aghaidh leat go dtí an caisleán. Éiríonn an túr láir in airde chuig na forbhallaí go tobann suntasach agus tá clós oscailte an chaisleáin timpeallaithe le stráicí taibhsíúla den mhúr dhaingean seachtrach. Spréitear na múrtha ina bplionsa leathan ag bun an phríomhstruchtúir. Chuir Meiler de Bermingham tús leis an gcaisleán agus meastar go raibh a chéad chéim curtha i gcrích sa bhliain 1240 le hurlár amháin. Cuireadh bailchríoch air sna 1400í le díon agus beanna claonta.

Thréig clann de Bermingham é ag deireadh na 1400í. Chuaigh siad isteach i dteach baile mhóir (Banc Uladh an lae inniu) agus rinneadh fothrach den seanchaisleán. Rinneadh athchóiriú air sna 1990í. Lúbann Lána na Cúirte timpeall ar mhúrtha an bhaile ó gheata an Chaisleáin agus tú ag dul isteach arís i lár an bhaile ag an nGeata Thuaidh.

7 Ag bun shráid an Gheata Thuaidh, gabh thar Sráid na hEaglaise ar dheis chun siúl amach chuig an stáisiún traenach ar dheis; cúig nóiméad siúil.

Tá deardhad clasaiceach ar an stáisiún cloiche agus brící agus ní deacair Aois na Gaile a athchruthú i do shamhlaíocht nuair a bhíonn tú ann.

8 Agus tú ag fillleadh ar lár an bhaile, cas ar dheis isteach i Sean-sráid na hEaglaise; tugtar 'burgage plots' ar aghaidheanna na bhfoirgneamh ar dheis agus an chéad ghrúpa ar an taobh clé. Gabháiltais chaola, fhada iad seo le foirgneamh ar nós tí chun tosaigh agus píosa talún ag síneadh siar ar chúl. Síneann na cinn ar thaobh na láimhe deise chomh fada le múr an bhaile atá mar chríoch cúl acu.

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

Passing through The Arch along North Gate Street towards the town centre, observe what once were typical two-storey houses, now with commercial frontages and the taller masonry 19th-century elevation of The Claymore Café. Turn left into the Market Square, which is at the heart of Athenry.

2 In the Market Square are the remains of the 15th century Market Cross surmounting the stone steps of its plinth. Known as a Lantern Cross, only its head is extant, yet it is the best preserved of its type in Ireland.

Standing on a modern shaft above the plinth, a stone cross-head is carved on one side, with a Crucifixion and figures at the base of the Cross with the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove above and, on the other face, with a Madonna and Child.

3 The stone gateway at the corner of the Square leads into the former church of St Mary's. The ancient, ruined part of the stone church dates from the mid 13th century and was destroyed in 1574 by the Earl of Clanricard's sons. In 1828, half of the site of St Mary's was used to build the Protestant church, which continued in religious use for 100 years and was subsequently rescued from dereliction by being transformed into the Heritage Centre.

Returning to Market Square, walk eastwards, past the impressive Ulster Bank building.