

## **Trail- Friendly Accommodation Initiative**

The Shannon Region International Trails Programme is a Shannon Development-led initiative which aims to establish the Shannon Region as a world-class destination for walking, cycling, water-based and other outdoor activity pursuits during the period 2008-2010. The programme aims to cater for the strong growth in trail-based holidays in Ireland with Irish and international tourists, and to attract visitors to less developed areas, in particular. As part of this programme Shannon Development is currently developing a dedicated trails website which is to include information regarding trail-friendly accommodation providers.

This initiative is in response to research carried out to review international consumer trends and 'best practice' examples of adventure tourism, with a particular emphasis on matching those consumer needs with the profile of Ireland's target customers. In response to the outcome of this research it is proposed to introduce a trail-friendly accommodation initiative in the form of a trail-friendly charter for hotels, bed and breakfasts, hostels, caravan/camping etc.

The trail-friendly accommodation initiative will be introduced on a pilot basis by selecting a small number of existing accommodation providers across the Shannon Region who already provide some, if not all, of the necessary trail-friendly services that will create a memorable experience for consumers. In this regard Shannon Development is currently in the process of gathering information from accommodation providers throughout the region with a view to having them promoted under the 'trail-friendly' category. It is intended that the initiative will be extended to all existing and new accommodation providers throughout the region.

As your business is already providing some of these services it is proposed to have your business included on our new Shannon Region Trails website as part of this pilot process. This initiative is free of charge to participants. In order to be considered a 'trail-friendly' accommodation provider on a permanent basis operators are required to supply a minimum number of added services.

We would ask that you would complete the information form and return to Shannon Development within the next two weeks. In addition we would ask that you provide a short paragraph of not more than 100 words describing your business and provide an image of your business for our website, which will be launched in early 2008. Applicants who return the information form and meet the minimum criteria will be requested to sign up for a Trail Friendly Charter, which will include all of the services set out in the attached information form.

For any queries please contact Melissa Buckley at (061) 710454, and please send your accommodation details to [Buckleym@shannondev.ie](mailto:Buckleym@shannondev.ie) or Melissa Buckley, Tourism Product Development, Shannon Development, Shannon Town, Co. Clare.