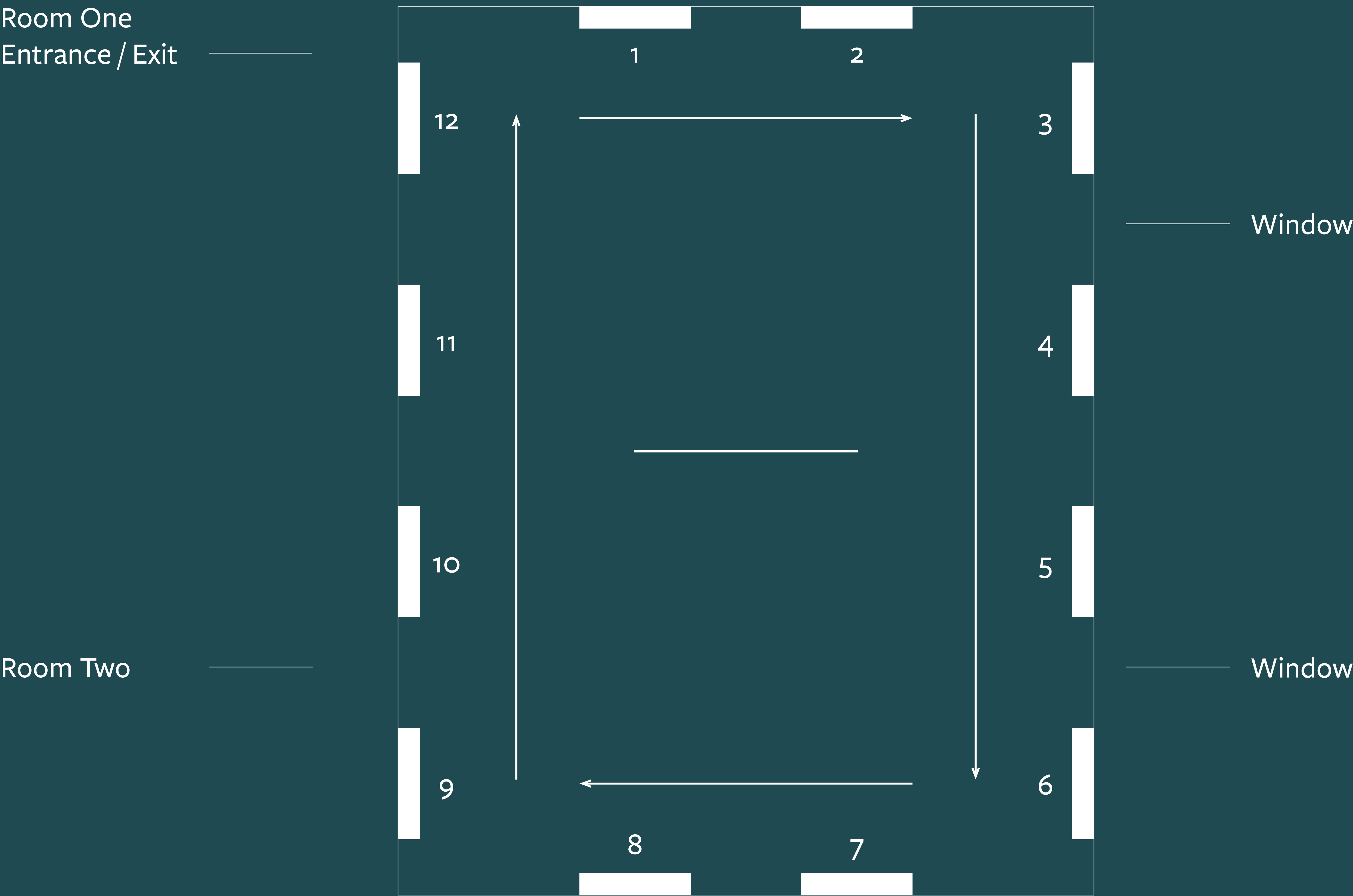


Welcome

Building Our Manifesto - An Exhibition

The exhibition boards have been individually numbered, 1-12.
If you follow the boards in number sequence, they provide a detailed overview of our ambitious plans.



Thank You for Your Visit & Interest

We would be delighted to receive your feedback.
To share your thoughts and ideas email: manifesto@castleleslie.com
Scan the QR code to sign up to our newsletter.
Take a card (located at the entrance) to sign up later.



Our Purpose

Protect, Restore and Share



Castle Leslie is one of the last Irish Historic Estates still with the founding family.

It has always proudly been part of the wider Glaslough community. Many generations have shared in life on the Estate and relied upon it for their living. We have deep ties that date back centuries.

The importance of people has long been evident, from the work of our ancestors to our present-day endeavours. Our transformative ambitions will connect people and contribute to thriving communities across the island. Our portfolio of heritage led, environmental and learning projects will build a better shared future.

Now we must secure the Estate for generations to come.

The vision will resonate beyond these walls and bring benefits to our whole community which will be far reaching.

Following significant investment and a gentle restoration programme over the last three decades, the Estate now employs over 200 local people and contributes over €10m to the local economy.

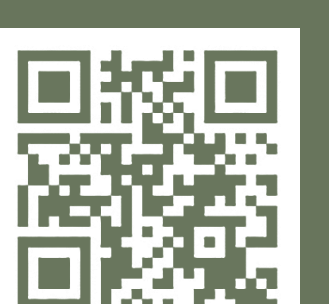
We are transitioning from leaders in the hospitality sector to purveyors of a working estate that places nature recovery at the heart of everything we do. We are diversifying our skills and refocusing to build a place with a new kind of prosperity and wellbeing in every sense.

Now is the time to move Castle Leslie Estate into a new dimension, a place of dynamic innovation, creativity and learning.

To support the nature and heritage-led regeneration of the lands and along with the sensitive restoration of our heritage buildings, we are investing in specialist skills in rewilding, restorative farming, climate resilience, biodiversity development, sustainable energy, and building conservation. These are the ingredients that, when combined, will help us to deliver the immersive Irish country estate experience our future visitors expect and our community deserves.

We are setting the course for lasting sustainability and anchoring our future firmly in the currency of biodiversity, social value, human health, happiness, heritage and eco-tourism. Creating new opportunities for all in many directions, not least to our local community, towns and villages of our border region and beyond.

We must look after our planet so it can help look after us. The possibilities are endless, this is an invitation to you, to join us and help deliver something quite special.



Who Will Deliver the Manifesto?

In collaboration with the local community and relevant stakeholders, Castle Leslie Estate, CL Innovations and Projects, The Leslie Foundation, Castle Leslie Preservation Trust and others, will oversee the delivery of the Manifesto.

This strong and agile structure will help ensure the Manifesto achieves its ambitions to protect, restore, and share Castle Leslie for centuries to come, wrapping it in nature, designing a truly inclusive place with health and happiness at its heart.

Castle Leslie Estate

Est. 1992

This operates as a social enterprise and is currently in the process of becoming a registered B Corp. It manages the hospitality operations across the Castle, Lodge, Old Stable Mews and the Equestrian Centre.

Castle Leslie Preservation Trust

Est. 2000

A Discretionary Preservation Trust charged with the protection, collection and nurture of the heritage assets of the Estate. It does not have a substantial income but acts as the long-term guardian forming working relationships with suitable partners on and off the Estate.

Leslie Foundation

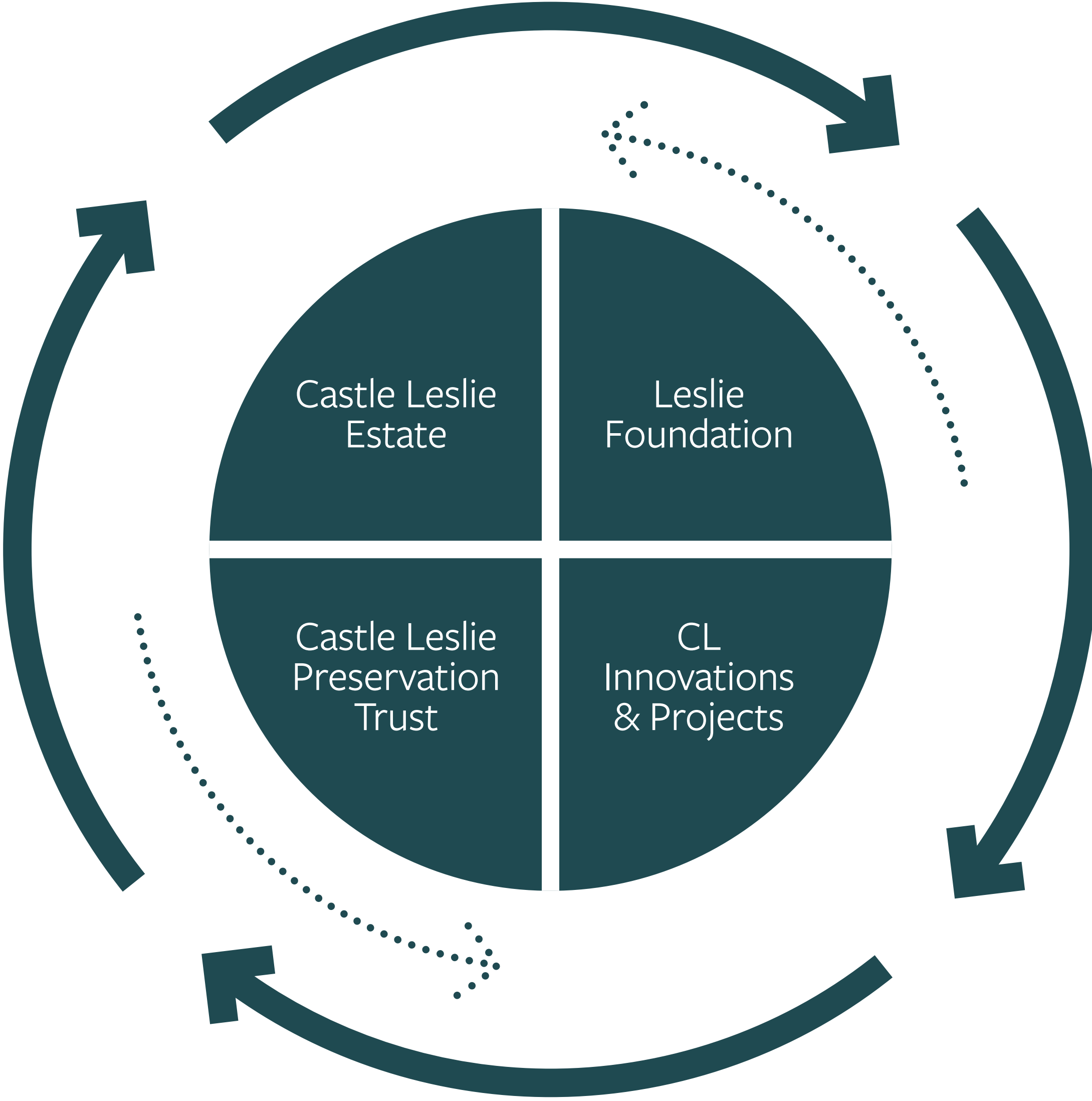
Est. 2015

A registered charity founded to protect, enhance, share and utilise the natural and built heritage of Castle Leslie Estate and so create social and environmental benefits for many generations through local partnership and sustainability projects.

CL Innovations & Projects

Est. 2006

Initially established to build homes in the village and restore the Lodge, it now acts as an innovation hub nurturing fledgling ideas, undertaking research and development. It incubates ideas for the other entities on the Estate to enact.



Our Guiding Principles

By nurturing talent, creativity and ambition, we are supporting people to grow and honouring those gone before. Listening and learning is central to all we do.

We are committed to protecting nature, wildlife, biodiversity and minimising our negative impact on the planet through our nature led approach.

We strive to protect and enhance our place by revitalising and balancing our built, cultural, social and local heritage and by anchoring our projects in community well-being.

We will continue to foster greater understanding and acceptance of diversity, inclusion and equality.

We celebrate difference and sensitivities in our post conflict society and work to cultivate peace through kindness and understanding, ensuring all voices are heard equally.



Our Manifesto



Our heritage is rooted in our shared land, intertwined in who we are and supporting our growth towards the future.

Our people are the temporary custodians of our collective home, together we have evolved amongst the ancient drumlins for 10,000 years.

We are one of Ireland’s finest Victorian remodelled estates and villages, cherished by generation after generation, an exemplar for heritage-led regeneration.

We are home to innovators and craftspeople, farmers and artists, activists and poets, authors of the tales of this rich land.

We have long been purveyors of peace, guardians of a shared tranquillity.

We are champions for global climate justice.

Protecting and collecting, rebuilding and balancing our natural, cultural, social and local place.

As we grow, we will preserve our community way of life, cultivating curious minds and honouring those who have gone before.

Immersed in natural beauty we offer a place to restore, recharge, relearn and rewild.

We will nurture creativity and champion the creative.

We are bold, we are brave, we are breaking moulds and rebuilding in circular ways.

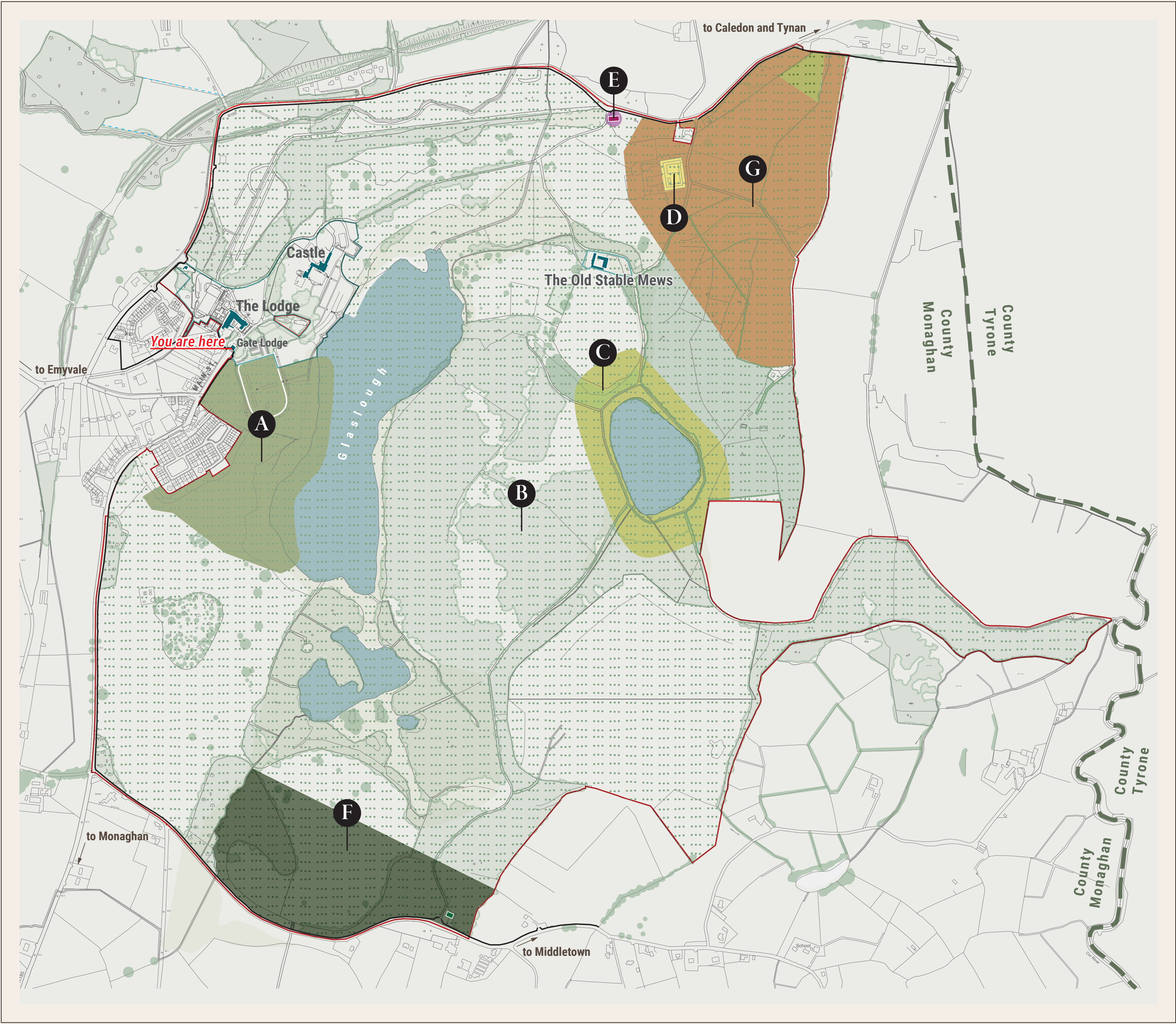
This is a place of magic, a refuge to the memory maker, the educator, and the inquisitive.

People will gather here to be inspired.

We will be the kindness our planet needs.



The Draft Spatial Plan



This map and area boundaries are illustrative and indicative. For discussion purposes only.

Study Area - The Historic Estate

78,000 sq ft of historic buildings, over 38 structures set on 985 acres of land, surrounded by 4.25 miles of Famine Wall.

The Famine Wall

Originally commissioned by Christina, wife of Charles Powell Leslie II, the 4.25 miles of Famine Wall that wrap the historic estate was initially built to provide work for the poor.

Existing Castle Leslie Estate Hospitality

Area The Castle and Pleasure Grounds, The Lodge, The Spa & Equestrian Centre, Car Parks, Tennis Court - Gate Lodge and Garden Lodge

Potential Project More rooms, Spa, Staff Accommodation, Energy and Waste, Estate Orientation Hub.

A

The Walled Garden Restoration & Green Box

Area The Walled Garden and Pleasure Grounds down to the lake, Pineapple and Banana Houses, Pump House, Water Tank, Woodlands and Farmland.

Potential Project Restoration of Historic Gardens, building of Green Box Visitor Centre, Food School and others to be layered.

B

Biodiversity ARK, Assisted Rewilding, Restorative Farming

Nature Lead Regeneration

Area Farmland, Ancient Woodlands, Commercial Woodlands, Bog, Wetlands, Waterway.

Potential Project Re-wilding, Regenerative Farming, Sustainable Food Production, Vertical Farming, Renewable Energy and Green Waste Management.

C

Immersive Estate Accommodation & Experiences

Area Ancient Woodlands/Secluded waters of Kilvey and Glaslough Hidden Lake.

Potential Project New luxury lodges, woodlands, water, treetop and subterranean accommodation, wellbeing facilities, treatment spaces, restored woodlands and water experiences.

D

Traditional Rural Skills, Hospitality & Innovation Academy

Area The Model Farm.

Potential Project Inclusive Centre for Traditional Skills and Crafts.

E

Artist's Retreat & Residency

Area Gothic Lodge.

Potential Project Artist retreat based on the model at Cill Rialaig.

F

The Famine Wall, Christina's Garden & Green Graves

Area Dinkin's Lodge, Famine Wall, Woodland and Farmland.

Potential Projects Famine and Estate Diaspora Centre in Lodge, Christina's Famine Memorial Garden, Famine Wall restoration and Walk, Home Stone and Green Graves.

G

Rose Hill Farm - Equine Assisted, Nature based and Movement Therapies with Alternative Respite

Area Historic Haggard behind Model Farm, Woodland and Farmland.

Potential Project Equine Assisted, Nature & Movement Therapies, All-Ireland Centre for Excellence, Family respite & Care Farming.

Creating Homes

Sustainable Living

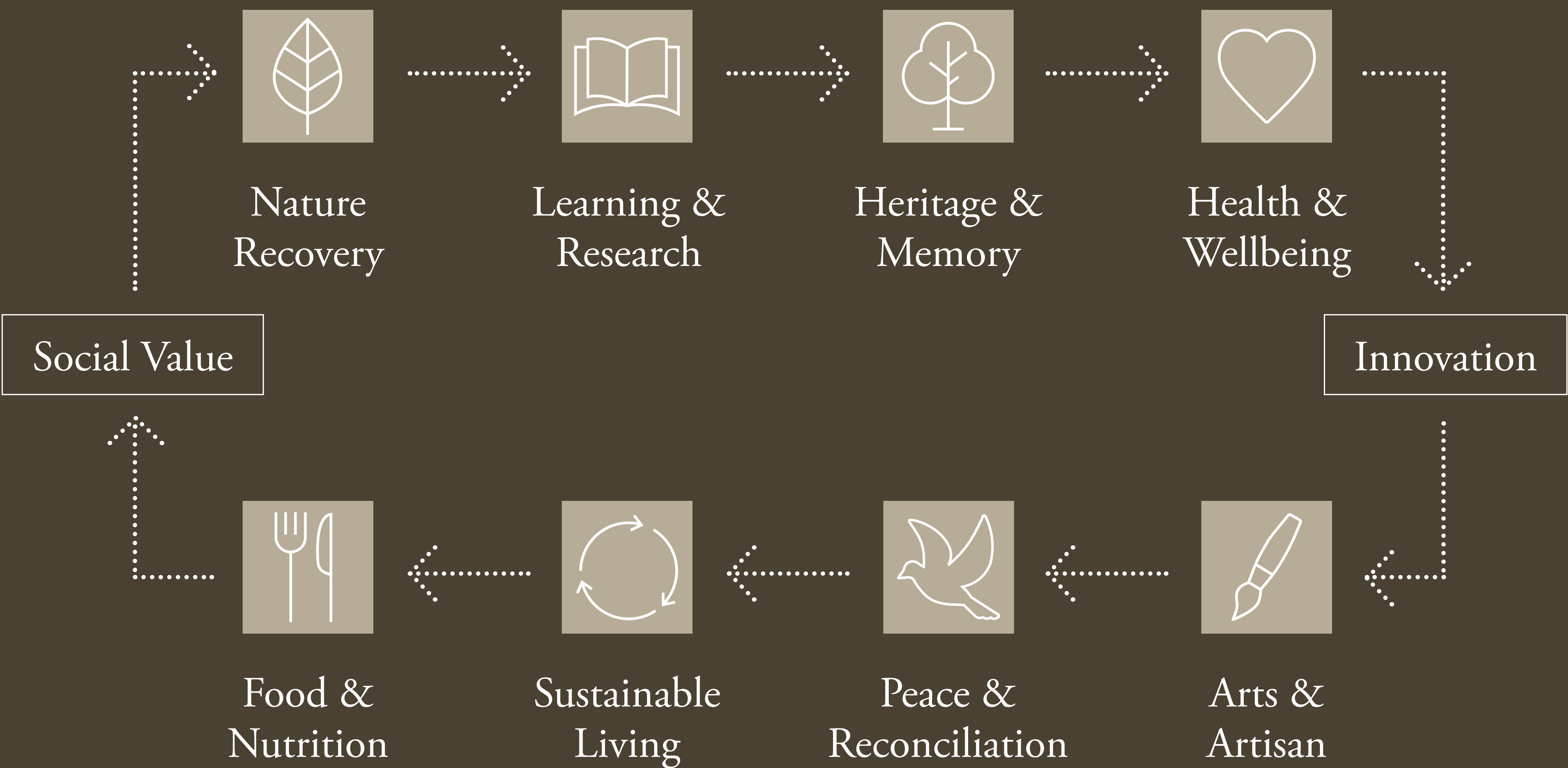
Area To be determined following consultation.

Potential Project Healing Homes for Families with needs, Homes for 55+, Community homes, others in line with housing needs.



Impact & Community

The impact of our Manifesto, when delivered, will be significant and far reaching. Below is a diagram illustrating the potential areas of positive impact.



We have much to do and cannot make the magic happen on our own. We are actively seeking the ideas and participation of the local community, young and old, to help us define and deliver our proposed signature projects.

If you are drawn to a particular project or would like to know more, we would be delighted to talk to you. Over the coming weeks, months and years, we will be consulting through surveys, workshops and focus groups and we would encourage you to take part.

PLAY YOUR PART

We are forging a new path, beyond anything this island has witnessed before.

We are securing a legacy that will benefit the region and its people for generations to come.

We are working towards a sustainable future - one that is Peaceful, kind to the Planet, to its People, and to this Place.

We are seeking innovators, collaborators, co-creators, investors, philanthropists and funders who share our vision.

Could that be you?



The Walled Garden Restoration & Green Box



The historic Walled Garden at Castle Leslie is not only of heritage significance, but its restoration also presents significant opportunities for immersive learning , positive health impacts and social benefits. This heritage restoration of the historic Walled Garden will result in a new and unique regional visitor destination.

The development of an accompanying food production strategy will see the creation of an innovative food experience. Initial work has already commenced, led by Professor Terry Stevens (of Stevens & Associates), about how to bring this magnificent historic site back to its original Victorian splendour and what the impacts for the community and visitors of such positive action could be.

The Ambition

The comprehensive heritage restoration of the Castle Leslie Walled Garden and the derelict glasshouses will transform it into a major regional visitor destination and learning centre. This will include a garden school and events programme linked to an education and rural skills academy, aligned with the Monaghan Destination and Experience Development Plan and directly connected to ‘The Green Box’ concept.



Image: Macallan Visitor Centre, Speyside, Scotland

In keeping with the spirit of innovation, we want to develop a new and contemporary biophilic space that could be our new welcome and orientation centre on the Estate, serving the local area. The concept of a ‘Green Box’ has been identified as a hero project in the Monaghan Destination and Experience Development Plan, (launched in June 2022) by Fáilte Ireland in partnership with Monaghan County Council. Opportunities for the inclusion of additional ideas around purpose and use will be explored following feedback from this exhibition and community consultation.

This world class high-tech green space could become a significant destination to explore and explain our relationship with plants and the planet over the millenniums and into the future. It could also offer space to protect and exhibit estate archives and collections in a contemporary gallery setting. It may include an event and exhibition space to support our expanding experience programme. The themes of biodiversity, soil, water, wind, and sun will be explored in the context of sustainable food production with expanded cookery, food, garden schools and conscientious food and beverage retailing.

The Ambition

We wish to create an exemplary world class eco building, a destination born out of an immersive learning centre. This smart sustainable new build development on the Estate will become home to a contemporary exhibition, events and archives. As a high-tech sustainable venue and research facility, it will become a new and exciting gathering space, a centre of excellence for training, conference programmes and the community. It will be rooted in the knowledge of our ancestors, rekindling a new found curiosity in plants and soil.



Biodiversity ARK, Assisted Rewilding, Restorative Farming

Nature Led Regeneration



Rewilding is a progressive approach to conservation. It is about assisting nature to take care of herself, enabling natural processes to shape land and water, repair damaged ecosystems and restore degraded landscapes.

Through rewilding and nature led regeneration of land, woodlands, bogs, waterways, and lakes we will restore and protect this natural environment creating greater carbon capture and wilder, more biodiverse habitats. Work is already underway with funding in place to deliver the initial planning and ecology baseline studies required, but for nature to return we have so much more to do.

By restorative farming activity, removing the invasive species and non-native woodlands, and ensuring all our gardening activities are considered, the Estate will become a much richer haven for nature. In parallel, we will be exploring new ways to grow nutrient dense and low carbon impact foods through vertical food production and regenerative farming.

The Ambition

Sharing our new found knowledge and data with the proposed National Centre for Heritage & Traditional Skills Learning, we will research traditional skills and regenerative farming practices of old and in doing so create traditional skills learning and educational programmes at an onsite academy. We will create employment opportunities, supporting the local circular economy in the border region. There will be many ways to help with our biodiversity restoration programme, such as helping with the removal of invasive species or becoming a champion for the reintroduction of a native species. Participation of the community will be key to our success.



Sustainable Resource Management

Leave No Trace

Castle Leslie is part of a community led steering group working towards creating a Sustainable Energy Community for Glaslough. We want to play a full role in this and help develop projects that can minimise our collective energy and carbon impact. Following on from our pioneering integrated wetland project with Monaghan County Council and academic partners, we are committed to continuing to develop new resource management solutions. This requires that we consider how we manage water, waste, energy and how we travel more sustainably. In addition, we wish to develop and expand our composting capacity, improve our water storage, harness the value of geothermal and hydro power within our lakes, and develop solar power from our south facing drumlin hills.

The Ambition

To be energy self-sufficient through a combination of technologies and new practices using all our resources to maximum effect, whilst helping visitors significantly lighten the carbon footprint of their travel. To work as part of the wider community, using all our natural and built resources to help achieve a sustainable energy and waste strategy for Castle Leslie Estate, our network of heritage villages and Glaslough. To be self-sustaining in our own right in energy production and use.



Immersive Estate Accommodation & Experiences



Image courtesy of Koto Cabins

At one with the rewilding experience and nestled in nature, a new suite of luxury lodges will bring a new dimension to the established hospitality offer on the Estate. Wellbeing facilities dedicated to the provision of therapeutic practices using the natural environment of the Estate as treatment space will be developed sensitively within the ancient woodlands of the Estate and on the secluded waters of Kilvey and Glaslough lakes. These will be offered as treatment spaces in conjunction with our rewilding programme, our equine assisted therapies and our rural skills programme.

The Ambition

To have a woodlands accommodation, water based, treetop, subterranean and well-being offer on the Estate that complements our rewilding strategy. Offering state of the art, eco-designed cabins, floating accommodation and a wellbeing hubs delivering an unparalleled immersive, restorative experience of nature-based living in a rewilded Irish landscape.



Hazelmead in Birdport by Barefoot Architects.

Creating Homes Sustainable Living

There is a long and proud history of landed estates like Castle Leslie building homes and providing secure long-term tenancies for employees and workers. Indeed, there is a heritage architecture devoted to this practice that marks the distinctiveness of our village townscapes across North County Monaghan. We will continue this tradition, building new homes using a range of tenancy/ownership models in answer to innovation in this space required across rural communities. Help us shape something new.

The Ambition

The delivery of carefully designed new build and restoration projects for long term secure letting and sale, within Glaslough and on the Estate grounds that will meet the needs of our ever changing society. To introduce an affordable and accessible shared living model for all generations, reinventing the tradition of high-quality rental estate housing and offering unique purchase opportunities for existing and new residents.



Traditional Rural Skills, Hospitality & Innovation Academy

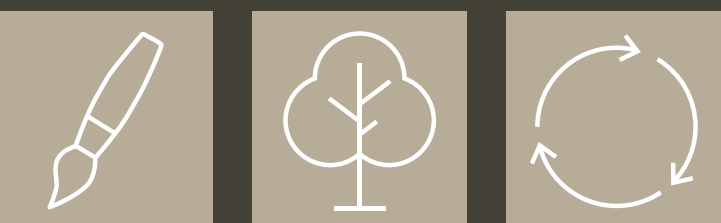


At the heart of everything we are doing at Castle Leslie Estate is the commitment to continuous learning and skills development. As a working estate, there is always the need for a skilled workforce in land management, historic building restoration, regenerative farming, horticulture, woodland, and biodiversity management. In the hospitality industry there is always a need for cooks, chefs, food and beverage professionals, as well as trained gardeners guides and estate rangers.

The skills academy will be offered to people of all learning abilities and will also invite visitors to participate in conservation training and experiences as part of a package of working holiday projects centred on all these areas. There are many skills that will be offered as part of a therapy and/or upskilling.

The Ambition

To restore the core of the Victorian Model Farmyard transforming it into a rural skills academy with accredited courses developed in partnership with regional third level academic institutions north, south and further afield. To offer skills development and conservation courses core to our working estate practices as an integral part of our visitor experience and therapeutic offering.

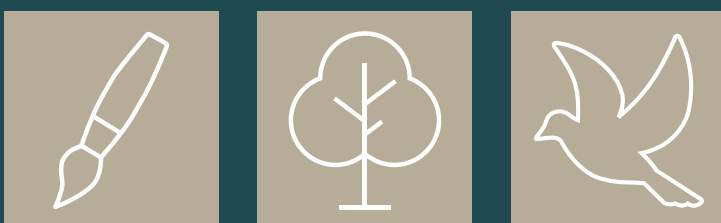


Artist's Retreat & Residency

Home to generations of writers, artists, and musicians, it is only fitting that we carve out a space for creatives to visit, stay and work at Castle Leslie. The endangered Gothic Lodge, with its huge light giving gothic window and fantastical stone and ironwork gates, will provide an inspiring location to nurture creativity to artists of all disciplines.

The Ambition

To restore the Gothic Lodge and establish it as an artist's retreat. This self-contained artist retreat, will be available for hire or offered as a residency throughout the year. A delightful space for a single or two people to stay with a studio space for indoor work and the wide estate for outdoor work.



Built Heritage, Archives, Collections & Collective Memory



Jack Leslie returning from the war, welcomed by local children.

With over 78,000 sq ft of historic buildings the Estate is poised to become an exemplar of heritage-led regeneration. The Estate, the Leslie family and the wider community who worked on the Estate have a unique and fascinating history. Having now passed through ten generations of the family, the house remains a testament to these histories and stories, many of which have never been told. There is still so much more social history to be gathered, particularly in relation to traditional skills and life on the border.

The Ambition

To collect, protect and share the stories and artefacts of life in the big house, the wider estate, the village of Glaslough, the wider community and the border region, ensuring this unique historical resource can be experienced by many and shared as an educational and inspirational resource for generations to come.

A dedicated exhibition space within The Green Box will showcase an archive of the history of the Estate, village life and living on the border. The space will be designed to accommodate academic and genealogical research, providing an important educational resource that will also promote a shared understanding.



The Famine Wall, Christina's Garden Memorial & Green Graves

The Famine Wall project traces the social history story of the Leslie Relief Programme during the Irish Famine of the 1840's, its impact on the local community and its reach to the diaspora of North - West Canada and the US. This is one of the most emotive and moving stories of the Famine in Ireland tracing the survival of an entire community through one of the darkest periods in Irish History – a project led with bravery and compassion by Christina Leslie and her son Charles Powell Leslie III.

The Ambition

To protect and restore this important historic built heritage and to tell the story of the local people who built the wall and those who emigrated to Canada, the US and further.

We want to conserve the 4.25 mile Famine Wall as a monument to these historic events and the people who built it.

The restoration of this hand cut stone wall, using traditional skills will create an opportunity for learning and educational training. The restoration of the derelict Dinkin's Lodge as an interpretive venue will be an important conservation of our community's shared history. The construction of a sensory garden and Home Stones™ project on the Estate, will offer post trauma healing to our cross-border community and marking the significance of this seminal moment in the history of County Monaghan and our global diaspora.



Rose Hill Farm - Equine Assisted, Nature-based and Movement Therapies with Alternative Respite

Tailored to Individual Learning Needs



Humans and horses have a long-held partnership, and research shows that equine-assisted and nature-based services can support people with a wide range of needs including autism, neurodiversity, mental health conditions and PTSD.

Our mission is to offer and develop innovative therapies and approaches which support people to build resilience skills and unlock the potential of children, teenagers, adults and families across our Shared Island. The proposed facilities will foster inclusion by providing alternative respite and community spaces for wellbeing alongside targeted support programmes.

The Horse Boy Method, a mounted equine assisted program, is designed to deliver oxytocin through the rhythmic hip-rocking motion of riding. Oxytocin can help calm the nervous system, reduce cortisol, and enhance learning. The method has the support of neuroscientists Dr Robert Naviaux and Dr Allyson Muotri of the University of California, and studies have found therapeutic riding to be effective for supporting people with autism.

The Ambition

Rose Hill Farm will be restored to create facilities which when combined with the magic of the Estate, will deliver a range of services to support and empower individuals with complex needs and their families. Our outcomes will be to repurpose the 1990’s indoor arena and yards into a suitable space for equine assisted therapies to support children with autism and other learning and developmental issues, and to become a centre of excellence for supporting those that the current system often fails. We will also work with our natural spaces to create opportunities for families to enjoy rural respite. We aim to offer social farming and a range of nature-rich therapeutic woodland experiences that have scientifically proven benefits for all.



“Over the decades, our understanding of how children learn and develop has changed massively. In past times, if a child didn’t learn in the expected way, they were disregarded or worse. As a dyslexic having gone through 9 schools by the age of 15, I rode horses for a living and became fascinated by how we learn and develop. This an area very close to my heart. Managing the many facets of Multiple Sclerosis, Cancer recovery and long-Covid has fuelled my fascination with understanding how the brain functions, and the positive impact of nature.”

Sammy Leslie



Borderlands Healing Divisions and Rekindling Old Bonds

The Castle Leslie Estate has a long history in generating agricultural and horticultural innovation, in protecting biodiversity, and in landscape custodianship. It has a social history as a place which supported a community.

In recent decades, it has been a place of transformation and entrepreneurship, of healing old divisions through the rekindling of long-standing bonds, creating new economic opportunities for the rural economy of Ulster, and of the Borderlands. It is set in a landscape which is rich in heritage, archaeology, the stories that have shaped us, and the remnants of what has shaped our landscape over millennia.

The Estate has always quietly played a role in maintaining the connections between people and places which were severely challenged and often disrupted by historical conflicts, not least those of the late 20th Century on the island of Ireland. It lies on the border between Ireland and Northern Ireland, and the economic regeneration we have undertaken in recent decades has begun to address the legacy of that conflict.

In recognition of the fact that the process of societal recovery and healing requires a multi-generational and inclusive approach based on human rights, we intend to build on our existing achievements and to take this crucial transformative approach into a new domain.

We will explore and develop models of sanctuary, therapeutic support, and empowerment for those in our society who are most vulnerable, in recognition that all have a contribution to make to our shared future.

We invite you to join us on the journey to realise the full potential of this Estate, for the country, for biodiversity management, for food, energy, and human security, and for supporting models of transformation that can enhance lives and inspire far beyond the Estate itself, benefiting the local community and the wider island of Ireland.



Leslie brothers Norman and Shane play sparring as they defend their opposing faiths.



Horses and Customs stop.

What's Next?

Thank you for visiting this exhibition.

All proposed signature projects invite community participation at every stage.

We hope we have excited and encouraged you to play your part.

