

peat. It is also the border between the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland. Even more, it is the border between the European Union and the United Kingdom with all that implies. The cause of numerous terrorist atrocities and military activity over decades, it is fought over as vehemently by politicians now and is one of Europe's most intractable problems.

Yet there is nothing to see, no border posts, no customs officials, nothing at all, not even anything to say that it is the border, which follows the Woodford River from here, just peaceful agricultural land. Where there are a couple of cuts away from the river, the waterway goes totally into Northern Ireland but it is hard to tell without a map and not that easy with one. This is the peaceful eye of the storm.

The Cloncoohy Cut, crossed by Cloncoohy Bridge, and the Dernagore Cut are the significant ones but the wanderings of the Woodford River are not easy to spot.

Corraquill Lock, with its adjacent service block, is the last one on the waterway.

The most obvious sign of the border is the Senator George Mitchell Peace Bridge although its significance is not obvious from the water, only the flock of raucous crows making any fuss. Traffic travelling north on the N3 has its speed reduced from 100km/h to 60 mph as it becomes the A509 but that is the speed at which lorries thunder along the road which now has a better alignment than when the earlier bridge was blown up in 1970. Round the corner stand the abutments of a bridge with no deck. A castle was sited on the east side of Aghalane in earlier days.

Killynick has a marina and glamping pods, after which the Woodford River lacks any facilities. The Shannon-Erne Blueway uses the Fualies Cut to turn away from Northern Ireland and head up the River Erne to finish at Belturbet, towards the disused Ulster Canal. Otherwise, Upper Lough Erne becomes



*The waterfront at Ballyconnell.*



*A bank of flowers at Ballyconnell.*