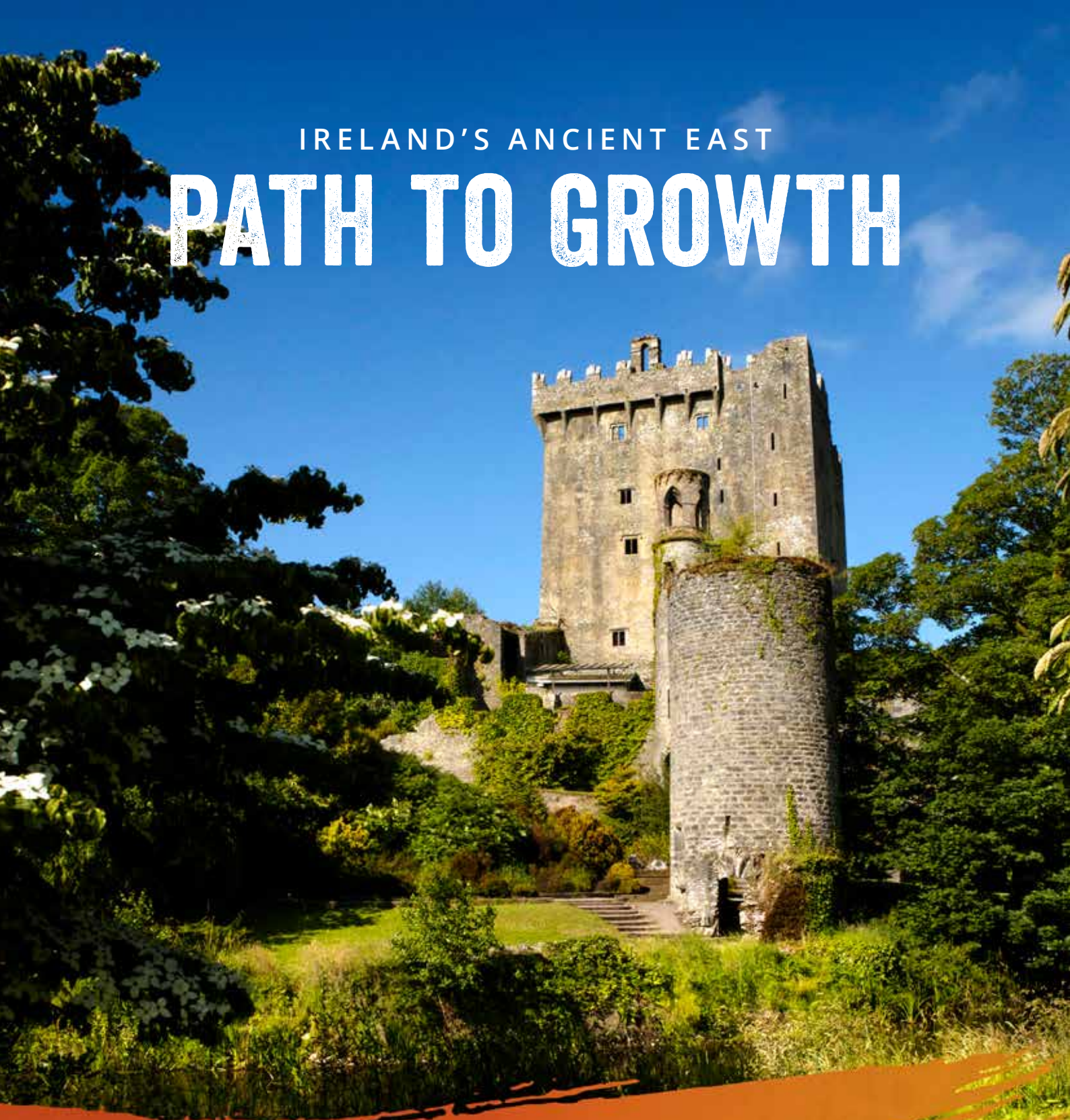


IRELAND'S ANCIENT EAST
PATH TO GROWTH



**IRELAND'S
ANCIENT EAST®**

Wander Through Time

FIVE YEAR PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF IRELAND'S ANCIENT EAST

OUR STRATEGIC INTENT

Ireland's Ancient East showcases Ireland's living culture and ancient heritage and brings it to life through stories that create unique visitor experiences, unite stakeholders and support vibrant communities.

Our goal is to make **Ireland's Ancient East** the most personally engaging cultural destination in Europe by harnessing the authentic character of the real Ireland, its living culture, lush landscapes and hidden history, opening it up for everyone.

When we achieve this, we support sustained economic growth and community wellbeing whilst valuing our heritage, history and environment.

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01

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT FOR THIS DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Ireland's Ancient East (IAE) has been developed by **Fáilte Ireland** as a branded visitor experience encompassing the rich heritage and cultural assets that Ireland has to offer in the midlands/eastern half of the country, providing a counterbalance to the **Wild Atlantic Way** on the west coast.



The concept has been fully taken on board by Tourism Ireland but given that it is in its infancy, international awareness levels remain very low. Significant investment has and is being made to support and bring to life **IAE** including for example domestic and international marketing campaigns; signposting, interpretation and wayfinding through the installation of county boundary and orientation signage; digital asset development - mobile first website and a digital storytelling toolkit; visitor route planning; story development; professional guides and tourism industry support. In addition, there has been capital investment in tourism attractions and this will continue.

The **IAE** visitor experience is based on Ireland's rich built, natural and cultural legacy, made accessible and delivered through stories and interpretation at key historical sites, a significant number of which are owned and managed by the Office of Public Works. Fáilte Ireland has established a strategic partnership with the OPW which will enable key heritage assets to be opened and made accessible through a sensitive, sustainable tourism approach. This will ensure their protection and sustainability whilst enabling visitors to enjoy an integrated, holistic heritage experience in new and engaging ways.

Industry partners and stakeholders are committed and engaged - adopting and establishing the brand on the ground and in their businesses. More than 20 new improved visitor experiences have been funded to date through the Ancient Spaces grant scheme. This has helped to re-energise interest in the brand and generate positive results, particularly from international markets. Other early indications of success and adoption of the brand include reports (by many visitor attraction operators) of an increase in visitor numbers in 2016 and growing interest from international groups for 2017. Other positive initiatives include CIE's introduction of an open bus ticket which will improve accessibility and county branding by Local Authorities which is creating awareness of the geographical location of **Ireland's Ancient East** and bringing it to life on the ground.

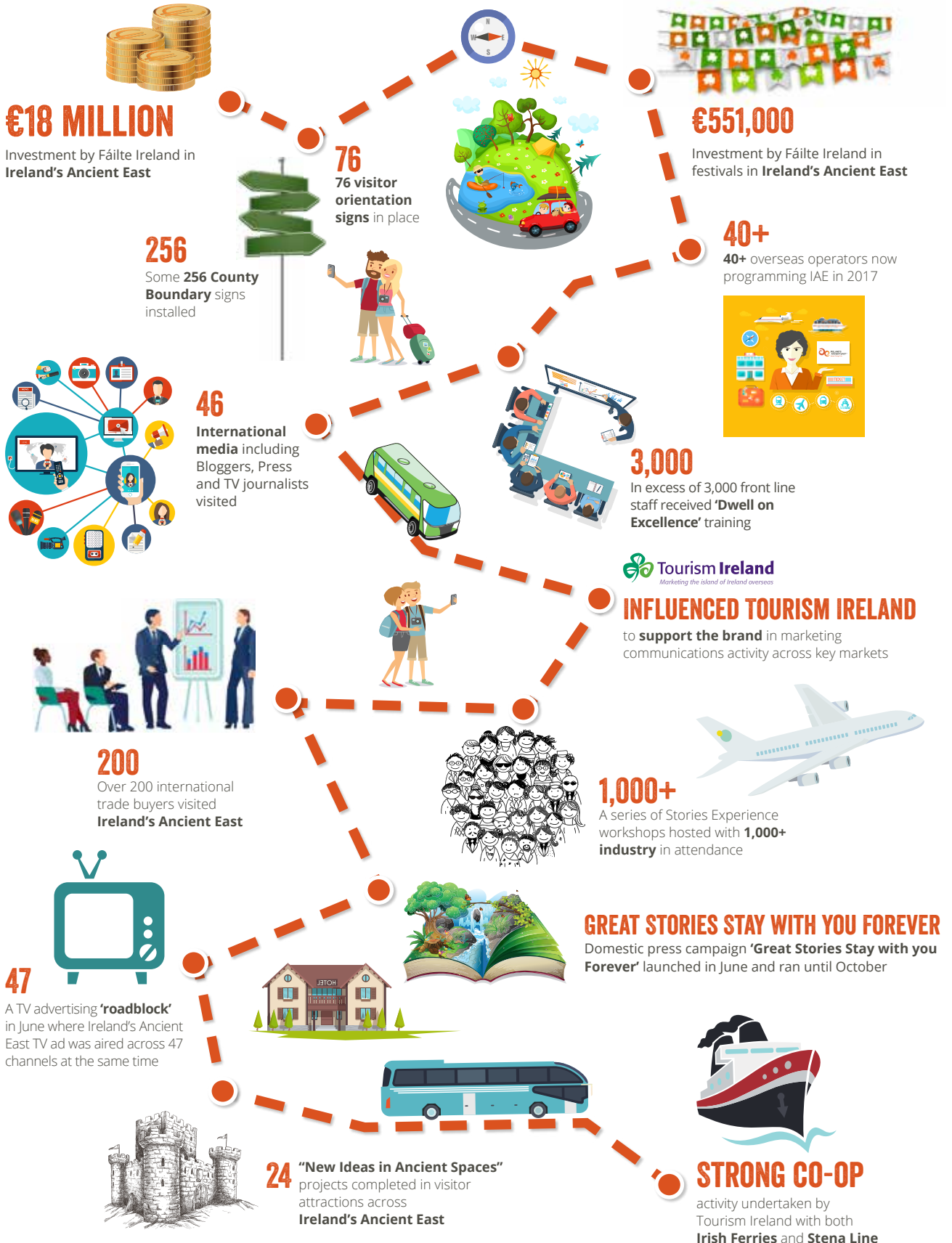
Ireland's Ancient East is now established and the foundations for growth are in place. However, as with any new branded visitor experience ranging across such a wide and diverse geographic territory, **Ireland's Ancient East** faces a number of strategic challenges:

- ▶ Creating brand awareness and understanding amongst those not currently involved, particularly the wider community within the geographic territory of **Ireland's Ancient East**.
- ▶ Development of a sense of common cause and shared purpose amongst industry and key stakeholders so as to create networks that have the capacity to deliver coherent visitor experience across the destination.
- ▶ Commitment of industry and key stakeholders to align and focus effort around a number of key initiatives which have the potential to create a big impact in creating awareness and bringing **IAE** to life for visitors.
- ▶ Continuous engagement with local industry to upskill and equip them to develop their product, align or cluster it with others locally/regionally and market it effectively, domestically and internationally.
- ▶ Continuous investment in cut-through international marketing communications at trade and consumer level.
- ▶ Management and development of the alliance with OPW (and other key stakeholders whose support is essential) to ensure that the quality of the visitor experience lives up to the brand promise.

Fáilte Ireland will continue to develop **Ireland's Ancient East** in 2017 and beyond and work with stakeholders and industry partners to address the key strategic challenges and develop world-class visitor experiences. This will leverage the huge potential the brand offers and ensure a long term sustainable future for **Ireland's Ancient East**.



2016 ACTIVITY IN A NUTSHELL





02

SCALE OF AMBITION

OUR PURPOSE

Ireland's Ancient East exists to unlock Ireland's living culture and ancient heritage through a storytelling experience that motivates visitors, unites stakeholders and sustains a better Ireland, thereby creating economic growth.

OUR GOAL

To make **Ireland's Ancient East** the most engaging, enjoyable and accessible cultural holiday experience in Europe.

OUR VISION

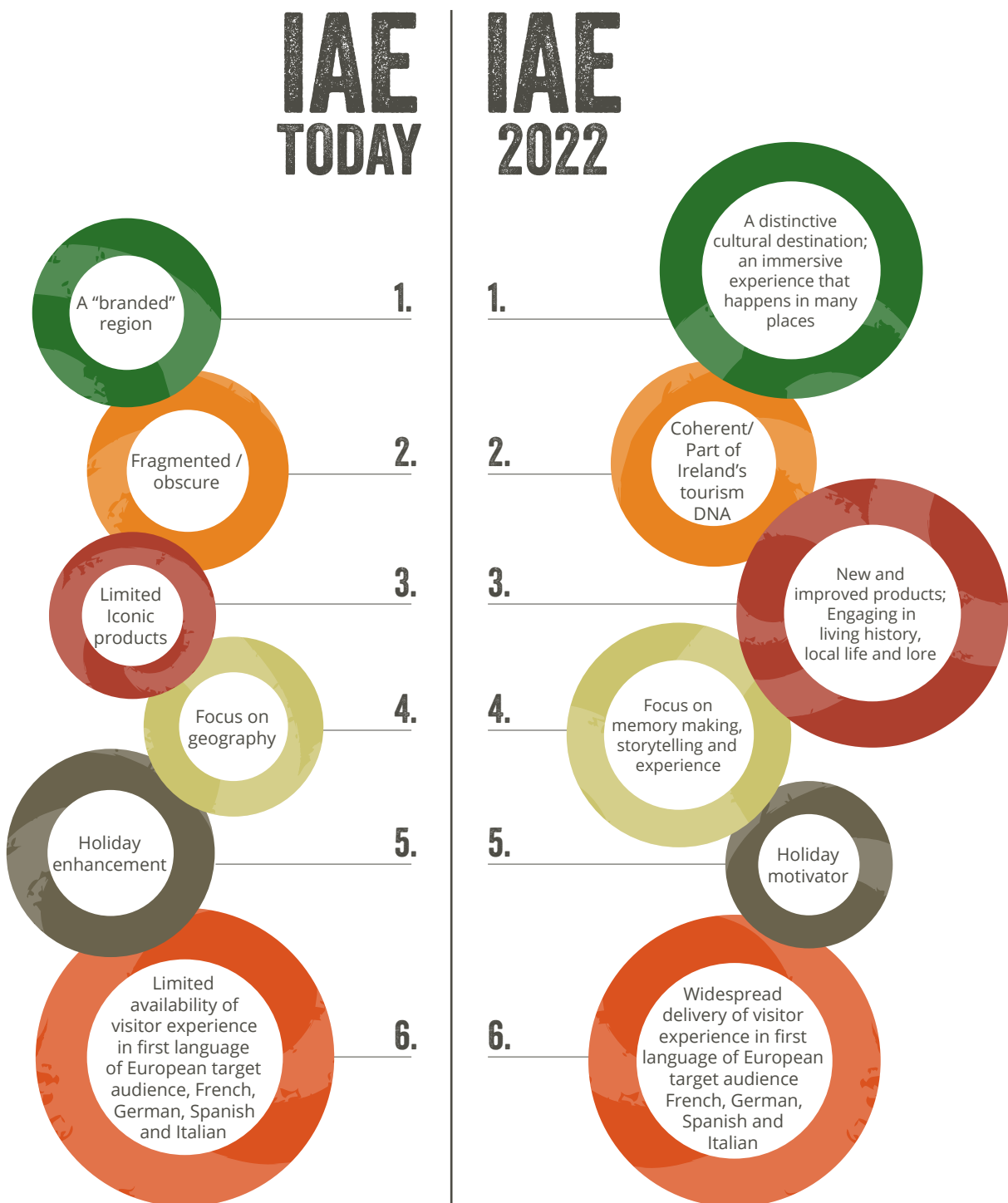
(of what will be different or better when IAE has achieved its goal)

Ireland's Ancient East will be an immersive experience of living culture, breath-taking landscape and hidden history made remarkable by vibrant communities, local lore and the authentic character of the real Ireland.



OUR JOURNEY

In order to realise our vision for **Ireland's Ancient East**, we need to transition from where we are today and shape the future that we want visitors to experience.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Create satisfied visitors who become advocates for IAE

- ▶ To deliver engaging world class visitor experiences that make Ireland's living and historical culture accessible through authentic stories as a differentiator
- ▶ To create and deliver unique visitor experiences based on "living" the history
- ▶ To communicate how **Ireland's Ancient East** can be enjoyed and where
- ▶ To provide the visitor experience in the first language of the target audience ie in English, French, German, Spanish Italian,

Motivate international and domestic visitors to visit and stay in Ireland's Ancient East

- ▶ To create awareness and make **Ireland's Ancient East** a must-visit destination for our chosen consumer segments from our selected target markets
- ▶ To increase the length of time visitors spend in **Ireland's Ancient East** and the amount of money they spend there (so share of volume and revenue are in line with each other)
- ▶ To encourage visitors to visit towns, villages and attractions beyond current tourism hotspots
- ▶ To encourage overseas visitors beyond the traditional tourism season and encourage them to stay longer

Build a committed and engaged stakeholder and community network

- ▶ To foster cohesion and generate greater RoI for stakeholders by encouraging collaboration and a spirit of shared endeavour
- ▶ To engage, motivate and educate the tourism community to deliver unique visitor experiences in line with the brand promise
- ▶ To engage the broader community and create awareness of their important role in supporting the industry to deliver great visitor experiences



04

HIGH-LEVEL TARGETS: 2020



05

TARGET MARKETS AND CONSUMER SEGMENTS

TARGET MARKETS

We will continue to work closely with Tourism Ireland to promote **Ireland's Ancient East** in the US, UK and mainland Europe markets in order to maximise the potential from those markets. The focus of our efforts initially will be on English speaking markets, North America (including Canada) and to a lesser degree, the UK, given ongoing Brexit developments and Tourism Ireland market diversification strategy.

We will support industry partners to develop and deliver stories and world-class experiences in English initially and then we will provide supports for businesses to translate the story experiences into other languages. This will strengthen our position in attracting visitors from key mainland Europe markets.

TARGET CONSUMER SEGMENTS

Culturally Curious visitors are our key target segment. Whilst there are a total of **31.9 million** culturally curious visitors in our selected target markets, **7 million** of these are warmly disposed to Ireland and these are our bullseye target.

Culturally Curious visitors choose their holiday destinations carefully and are independent 'active sightseers' looking to visit new places and expand their experience by exploring landscapes, history and culture. They are unlikely to return for some time once they have visited a new place, and often travel as a couple or as individuals and rarely in a family group. The age group for this demographic is 40 plus.



Their motivations for visiting a destination can be summarised as follows:

- ▶ They're interested in all that a place has to offer and they want to have an authentic experience
- ▶ They love to discover history and find ways of getting real insight. They want to encounter new places and experiences that are out of the ordinary. They love to meet the locals to get the lowdown on hidden gems and local stories
- ▶ They like to feel that they have broadened their minds and immersed themselves in a place, giving their senses a holiday too – the sights, the sounds, the smells, the tastes, the feeling of a place
- ▶ They enjoy connecting with nature and getting off the beaten track



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

We have identified four key priorities on which we will focus resources and effort to develop and deliver a compelling **Ireland's Ancient East** experience.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: VISITOR EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT

We will unlock Ireland's living culture and ancient heritage attractions through a unique visitor experience based on best-in-class storytelling and interpretation that delivers the most engaging, enjoyable and accessible cultural holiday experience in Europe.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: VISITOR AWARENESS, MOTIVATION AND ENGAGEMENT

We will create domestic awareness of **Ireland's Ancient East** through creative communications that engage and intrigue, opening up a compelling, differentiated proposition that motivates our target segments in local and international markets to visit and stay. We will seek the sustained support of Tourism Ireland to feature the brand in its overseas marketing activities and we will work to ensure market offices are kept abreast of all developments.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Through collaboration with stakeholders and local communities, we will support the development and delivery of plans and initiatives that have the potential to strengthen the delivery of a unique **Ireland's Ancient East** visitor experience that is evident to every visitor at every turn.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4: ENABLERS TO DEVELOP IRELAND'S ANCIENT EAST

We will secure the budget to put in place the necessary capital schemes, resources, competencies and programmes to put **Ireland's Ancient East** on solid foundations for sensitive, sustained growth.

Strategic Priority 1: Visitor Experience Development

GOAL STATEMENT: To unlock Ireland's living culture and ancient heritage attractions through a unique visitor experience based on best-in-class storytelling and interpretation that delivers the most engaging, enjoyable and accessible cultural holiday experience in Europe.

	Objectives	Specific Initiatives	KPIs (measures)	Desired Outcomes/ End result
On-brand visitor experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage stakeholders and tourism community to develop and implement a shared plan that will build out the Ireland's Ancient East experience on the ground Identify and work with key industry networks (including non-heritage businesses) to support the delivery of shared plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot and implement experience development process Engage stakeholders and industry in the development and delivery of shared plans for BH&HT, CC and MWW (Year 1) Engage stakeholders and industry in the development and delivery of shared plans for A, MG and V (Year 2) Engage stakeholders and industry in the development and delivery of shared plans for final 3 stories (Year 3) Implement shared plans for 9 stories (Year 3-5) Roll out small grants scheme, 2017 focused on interpretation and foreign language provision and 2018 and beyond tied into experience development plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CC and MWW shared plans in place (Q2 2017) A, MG and V plans complete Q4 2018 Shared plans for final 3 stories in place (Q4 2019) Strategic partnerships in place with key stakeholders e.g. OPW, Waterworks Ireland Plans delivered by all to schedule and budget (2017 – 2020) 10 new/improved story-led experiences in place per annum Sheme 2 launched 2017 and 15 projects approved to be delivered across 2017/2018 In 2018-2022 scheme rolled out as part of experience development plans 5-10 projects supported per plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging on-brand visitor experiences in place across Ireland's Ancient East bringing our history, culture and stories to life Industry and stakeholders engaged and proactively investing in the delivery of the shared plan Clusters/hot spots of experiences created to create centres of gravity for the visitor and encourage additional bed nights New/improved Visitor experiences delivered in the first language of the target visitor
Accessibility and visibility of the brand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement phase 2 orientation signage Upgrade historic town trail content to reflect the stories of Ireland's Ancient East Roll out IAE Welcome Signs scheme Continue to explore additional signage opportunities to maximise physical presence on the ground 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put additional orientation signs in place Develop and install story-led content on 16 historic town trails Develop, launch and execute welcome sign scheme Identify additional signage opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50 additional orientation signs in place Q4 2017 16 town trails updated by end 2019, 4 in 2017, 6 in 2018, 6 in 2019 30 welcome signs in place Q4 2017 New signage opportunities identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved understanding and visibility of the brand Improved wayfinding and accessibility throughout the region Increased physical brand presence on the ground
Iconic experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify 1 iconic experience that will deliver an [additional] must visit experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify experience to develop (Halloween Festival) Develop plan and progress for funding Implement plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience to develop identified in 2016 (Halloween) Plan developed in 2017 and funding agreed Plan implemented 2018/2019 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New iconic/must see experience ready for sale 2018 and to experience in 2019

Strategic Priority 1: Visitor Experience Development

GOAL STATEMENT:

To unlock Ireland's living culture and ancient heritage attractions through a unique visitor experience based on best-in-class storytelling and interpretation that delivers the most engaging, enjoyable and accessible cultural holiday experience in Europe.

	Objectives	Specific Initiatives	KPIs (measures)	Desired Outcomes/ End result
Festivals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Leverage festivals to drive off season activity and deliver "living history" ▷ Develop a range of festivals that incorporate a story element to support the brand and/or provide off-season activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Identify festivals that have the potential to support off-season activity and progress for funding/supports. ▷ Develop 1 off season festival per annum ▷ Identify and support festivals that bring the brand to life by incorporating story-related experiences and showcasing living culture (2 festival stories per annum) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ 5 on-brand off season festivals by 2021 (1 per annum) ▷ 10 festivals enhanced by stories and living culture (2 per annum) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Visitors coming to IAE for festivals and staying longer
Food and drink experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Create an IAE food story (based on the agreed National Food Strategy) that leverages the lush green landscape, layers an accessible living culture visitor experiences across all signature stories and positively engages industry and stakeholders to deliver easily accessible visitor experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Complete story Q4 2016 ▷ Create digital content Q2 2017 ▷ Identify and support 10 key food experiences to deliver new saleable experiences Q4 2017 + Q4 2018 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Food experiences aligned with brand Q2 2017 ▷ 5 new saleable food experience developed in 2017 and 2018 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ IAE is associated with fabulous food and drink experiences

Strategic Priority 1: Visitor Experience Development

GOAL STATEMENT:

To unlock Ireland's living culture and ancient heritage attractions through a unique visitor experience based on best-in-class storytelling and interpretation that delivers the most engaging, enjoyable and accessible cultural holiday experience in Europe.

	Objectives	Specific Initiatives	KPIs (measures)	Desired Outcomes/ End result
Incremental international distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a trade partnership programme to win the commitment and support of key operators to deliver incremental distribution and bed nights with regional spread and extended season 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Plan Q4 2016 Identify best potential buyers including DMCS Commence implementation Q1 2017 Conduct annual reviews of Plan to optimise implementation (2018 - 2021) Modify implementation plans as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17 (2017), 20 (2018) and 23 (2019) new leads will programme IAE 28% increase in international revenue Season extension by 6 weeks by 2020 2017 35k new bed nights delivered, 2018: 39k and 2019: 43k 	Trade and industry collaborating, supporting and delivering incremental international distribution
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support 30 x new engaging visitor experiences through small grant scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch Scheme 2 in 2017 and approve 15 projects Deliver 15 Scheme 2 projects in 2018 Deliver Scheme 3 via experience development plans 2018-2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 new/improved on-brand experiences delivered 2018 3-5 new/improved experiences delivered per EDP Capital drawn down to plan and budget 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hero experiences adopting the brand at every level of the business - targeting and delivering international growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Influence operators of 'Hero' Experiences (e.g. Castle Leslie, Birr Castle, Smithwick's Experience, Lough Gur, Wicklow Gaol etc.) to become early adopters and brand champions using the brand at each consumer touch point and inspiring other industry partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 key experiences adopting and living the brand per annum (as exemplars) and demonstrating incremental international growth Brand champions in place and active 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key accommodation providers, with an overseas focus, adopt the brand in their key selling message and cross-sell on-brand attractions and activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Influence key accommodation providers to deliver visitor experiences, adopt the brand physically and sell the brand domestically and overseas driving awareness and cross selling attractions and activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 key accommodation providers adopting and selling the Ireland's Ancient East Experience Increase of 5% in international revenue 	

Strategic Priority 2: Visitor Awareness, Motivation and Engagement

GOAL STATEMENT:		To create domestic awareness of Ireland's Ancient East through creative communications that engage and intrigue, opening up a compelling, differentiated proposition that motivates our target segments in local and international markets to visit and stay. To seek the sustained support of Tourism Ireland to feature the brand in its overseas marketing activities.		
Objectives	Specific Initiatives	KPIs (measures)	Desired Outcomes/ End result	
<p>Domestic visitors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Create a domestic communication (including digital) strategy that drives awareness and understanding of Ireland's Ancient East and grows domestic visitor bed nights across the geography and the season 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop and agree Plan Q1 2017 ▶ Implement Plan Q2 2017 ▶ Review and optimise Plan each year ▶ Develop and agree creative and media plans Q1 each year; communicate and implement as agreed ▶ Review effectiveness of communication on an ongoing basis and apply learnings ▶ Leverage Fiona Shaw as a brand ambassador 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Increase of x% in domestic visitors to IAE ▶ NPS ▶ Increased regionality and extension of season measured by things to see and do being available 2 weeks extra per annum and per EDP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ IAE is well understood in Ireland and recognised as a must visit destination ▶ Incremental domestic bed nights 	
<p>International visitors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop a communications strategy with TI to increase level of awareness and understanding of IAE in key markets. ▶ Generate awareness of new and interesting on-brand experiences that will showcase the IAE region to international media ▶ Identify key content partner e.g. Trip Advisor to partner with and drive awareness and engagement with IAE internationally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Establish Ireland's Ancient East TI/Fl working group ▶ Align Ireland's Ancient East section of Ireland.com with IAE.com ▶ Co-create digital content with TI and use across both organisation's platforms ▶ Establish a platform to influence content on Ireland.com that will showcase brand experiences ▶ Agree and implement plans each year ▶ Strategic partnership in place with key content distributor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Increased YOY EAV and distribution internationally ▶ Awareness and know targets tba with TI FAM trips showcasing on-brand experiences ▶ Increased exposure in key markets ▶ IAE content distributed internationally (reach target) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ IAE is well understood and recognised internationally as a premier European cultural tourism destination 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Explore the possibility of building a strategic partnership with English Heritage and National Trust to enable cross promotion and shared learning opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Establish interest and open conversation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Cooperative relationship established ▶ Insights developed and shared ▶ Targeted marketing initiative to data base delivered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ International best practice learnings gained ▶ New visitor base opened up 	
<p>Awareness and understanding of the brand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop and implement a research programme to measure visitor awareness, perception, satisfaction and amend visitor experience as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Agree Plan Q1 2017 ▶ Implement Q2 2017 ▶ Review and optimise each year ▶ Apply learning to improve visitor experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Consumer satisfaction x90+% ▶ NPS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ High levels of awareness and understanding of the brand in key markets ▶ Satisfied visitors recommending IAE as a place to visit 	

Strategic Priority 2: Visitor Awareness, Motivation and Engagement

GOAL STATEMENT:		To create domestic awareness of Ireland's Ancient East through creative communications that engage and intrigue, opening up a compelling, differentiated proposition that motivates our target segments in local and international markets to visit and stay. To seek the sustained support of Tourism Ireland to feature the brand in its overseas marketing activities.		
	Objectives	Specific Initiatives	KPIs (measures)	Desired Outcomes/ End result
Media stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a media engagement strategy, including a media toolkit, to develop understanding of Ireland's Ancient East strategy and its evolution and positive proactive media coverage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop strategy Q1 2017 Develop and distribute media toolkit Q1 2017 Positive targeting and engagement of media 2017-2021 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proactive positive coverage of Ireland's Ancient East Increased on-brand coverage domestically and internationally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media positively engaged with Fáilte Ireland and towards Ireland's Ancient East
Sales strategy and champions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a sales strategy that motivates distributors, delivers incremental distribution of Ireland's Ancient East, extends seasonality and regionality and delivers incremental bed nights Create unique IAE element to Meitheal in 2017 and leverage the opportunity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Plan by Dec 2016, Implement Plan 2017-2020 Identify and target best prospect tour operators Run minimum of 2 Ireland's Ancient East specific promotions with buyers each year Deliver IAE focused trade FAM's each year showcasing iconic product and hidden gems Meitheal 2017 to be a showcase for IAE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in distribution in target markets Increase in incremental bed nights by y Incremental regionality More Tour Operators programming IAE (17 converted leads 2017, 20 in 2018 and 23 in 2019) IAE showcased to all buyers at Meitheal in 2017 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IAE a must programme destination for Tour Operators More visitors spending longer in IAE +28% by 2020 Increased engagement of international buyers with Meitheal
Political stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a public affairs strategy and plan. Align with Fáilte Ireland's public affairs strategy and plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Plan by Dec 2016, Implement Plan 2017-2018 Design and conduct a survey amongst politicians and their advisors to measure awareness and attitudes towards FI & IAE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of political representative meetings complete Increased awareness and attitudes towards FI & IAE amongst politicians and their advisors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political stakeholders aware and supportive

Strategic Priority 3: Stakeholder and Community Engagement

GOAL STATEMENT: To collaborate with stakeholders and local communities to support the development and delivery of plans and initiatives that have the potential to strengthen the delivery of a unique Ireland's Ancient East visitor experience that is evident to every visitor at every turn.

	Objectives	Specific Initiatives	KPIs (measures)	Desired Outcomes/ End result
<p>Toolkit to engage industry and stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Positively engage stakeholders, industry and community in Ireland's Ancient East 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Articulate and sharpen brand definition and visitor proposition communications ▶ Define key selling points (i.e. why should I engage) for all target audiences ▶ Define what we want industry/ stakeholders/ community to do/say ▶ Create toolkit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Soft sell toolkit in place and being used consistently ▶ Key industry and stakeholders developing/using the brand consistently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Positively engaged industry/ stakeholders and community ▶ Consistent messages being delivered
<p>Industry capability building to deliver visitor experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop and implement Visitor Engagement Programme to support the development of all story telling capability including translation of key experiences into foreign languages – how to create and tell your story; interpretation; audience engagement; digital story-telling; story-telling through art, food, music, landscape etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop and implement first masterclass 2017 ▶ Develop audience engagement programme in Q4 2017 ▶ Roll out audience engagement programme 2018-2020 ▶ Put in place funding and translation support mechanism for translation of experiences into foreign languages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 250 participants in audience engagement programme (50 in 2017, 100 in 2018 and 100 2019) ▶ 5 experiences delivering quality foreign language translations per annum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Best-in-class audience engagement delivered in experiences ▶ Tourism industry working in partnership with each other and with Fáilte Ireland to develop internationally renowned visitor experiences ▶ Tourism industry cross selling and driving regionality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop and deliver a Champions Programme throughout Ireland's Ancient East with a particular focus on cross-selling and story integration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Identify champions from signature stories to participate in the programme (2017 & 2018 programme confined to signature story champions) ▶ Revise programme in 2019 and 2020 to develop Champions that cross-cut Signature Stories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 300 participants in champions programme by end 2018 ▶ Programme reviewed in light of future experience development ▶ A further 300 participants in the programme between 2018 and 2019 ▶ Increased dwell time ▶ Regional spread 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 300 participants in champions programme by end 2018 ▶ Programme reviewed in light of future experience development ▶ A further 300 participants in the programme between 2018 and 2019 ▶ Increased dwell time ▶ Regional spread 	

Strategic Priority 3: Stakeholder and Community Engagement

GOAL STATEMENT:

To collaborate with stakeholders and local communities to support the development and delivery of plans and initiatives that have the potential to strengthen the delivery of a unique Ireland's Ancient East visitor experience that is evident to every visitor at every turn.

Objectives	Specific Initiatives	KPIs (measures)	Desired Outcomes/ End result
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop strategic partnerships with key stakeholders OPW, Coillte and Waterways Ireland. OPW clear priority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree and prioritise a list of development projects Scope projects ensuring outcome is engaging on brand visitor experiences Secure funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OPW clear priority is Knowth focus needs to be kept on this and Knowth experience to be delivered asap ideally before end 2018 Coillte priority is Avondale Waterways Ireland priorities to be agree 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New/improved on brand visitor experiences in place
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage [operational level staff] with tourism & heritage officers to ensure they understand Ireland's Ancient East and incorporate it into their operational plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design, develop and deliver a series of workshops to inspire and encourage heritage and tourism officers to build IAE on the ground. Review process in 2019 and implement recommendations in 2020 Develop close working relationships [between FI Officers and tourism/heritage officers] - meeting regularly and influencing local tourism plans to build Ireland's Ancient East out on the ground 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ireland's Ancient East part of all county tourism development plans Physical branding by LAs: 2017 4 counties, 2018 8 counties, 2019 12 counties and 2020 17 counties IAE featured on all LA websites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All stakeholders committed to IAE and championing the development and growth of the IAE brand within their own organisations Stakeholders collaborating, supporting and self-managing the brand Stakeholders engaging local community on Ireland's Ancient East Stakeholders sharing best practice and working together to build Ireland's Ancient East out on the ground
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a deeper understanding of Ireland's Ancient East in key stakeholders and agree how all stakeholders can work together to deliver great visitor experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up stakeholder group (to include County Councils, OPW, Leader, Coillte, Heritage Council, Waterways Ireland etc) Design and develop a series of strategic workshops for key stakeholders Run bi-annual workshops for 2018 and 2019 Review process at end 2019 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All stakeholders proactively investing financial resources to deliver the brand on the ground Stakeholders showcasing their activities and achievements with peers. 	

Strategic Priority 3: Stakeholder and Community Engagement

GOAL STATEMENT:					
To collaborate with stakeholders and local communities to support the development and delivery of plans and initiatives that have the potential to strengthen the delivery of a unique Ireland's Ancient East visitor experience that is evident to every visitor at every turn.					
Industry capacity building to deliver increased overseas visitors	Objectives	Specific Initiatives	KPIs (measures)	Desired Outcomes/ End result	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a programme of engagement with Visitor Attractions to support them to emulate world class best practice interpretation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver best practice workshop in 2017 Deliver initial programme in 2017 Roll out programme in 2018 Optimise programme in 2019 and roll out Identify best practice examples of key iconic attractions in 2017 and benchmark Share best practice learnings with industry including excellence in customer service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 attractions participated in interpretation best practice workshops in 2017 and implemented workshop recommendations by end 2018. A further 20 attendees participated in re-developed programme in 2019 and workshop recommendations implemented by end 2020. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A professional, trained tourism sector committed to Ireland's Ancient East and actively targeting overseas growth and delivering best in class visitor experiences 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a sales capability development programme to support 'fit for purpose' industry to target international sales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop basic course in 2016 and roll out in 2017. Develop intermediate course in 2017 and commence rollout Q3 2017 Develop advanced course 2018 and roll out 2018/2019 Support Industry to capture database of visitors to attractions which can be used (by them) to cross sell and attract repeat business Support Industry to develop digital capability to target international visitors directly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 businesses attended basic course and ITOA workshops 2017 10% international revenue increase for all attendees within 24 months 		
Community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with LAs, Leader etc. to pilot an IAE engagement programme that touches all elements of the community Develop a community engagement plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify pilot community in 2017 Scope programme and agree with Leader and LA in 2017 Roll out pilot 2018 Roll out successful elements of the programme across other communities in 2019 and 2020 Develop a Master Class Series (e.g. as done in WAW) and implement - 1 in 2016, 4 in 2017, 4 in 2018 Review in Q4 2017 and develop improved plan in 2018 Review and optimise for 2019 and 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot programme rolled out in one community in 2018 Successful elements rolled out to other communities in 2019 and 2020 20 attendees in 2016 80 in 2017 80 in 2018 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local communities engaged, collaborating and using the brand responsibly and engaging with visitors 	

Strategic Priority 4: Enablers: Resources, Capital Programme and Capacity Building

GOAL STATEMENT:

To secure the budget to put in place the necessary capital schemes, resources, competencies and programmes to put Ireland's Ancient East on solid foundations for sensitive, sustained growth.

Objectives	Specific Initiatives	KPIs (measures)	Desired Outcomes/ End result
Team	Secure appropriate [human] resources to deliver the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Annual and long term resource plan in place ▶ MAC approval for resources secured 	Well resourced, high-performing team in place
	Develop a capability building programme to address skills gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Capability plan agreed and implemented by HR ▶ No vacant positions on team ▶ Motivated effective team in place ▶ eNPS 	
Budget	Secure the required budget to deliver plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Operational budget secured and spent as per plan 	Budget secured
On-brand attractions and experiences	Put in place three small grant schemes over five-year period prioritising the requirements of the signature experience development plans and creation of centres of excellence around hotspots/ networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 15 new projects approved 2017 and delivered 2018 ▶ 5 projects identified, approved and delivered per EDP 2018-2021 	High-performing on-brand attractions and experiences New iconic/must see experiences
	Implement existing capital investment strategy for large grants in IAE region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 1-2 key large grant projects approved per annum ▶ 2017 Newgrange, Knowth and Avondale 	Projects approved and implemented as per plan Capital funds drawn down to budget and schedule and delivering on-brand visitor centric experiences
	Maximise return on capital invested through FI capital funding schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Design, develop and implement [BS team] a developmental programme for grantees of FI, capital funding (including overseas sales, revenue management, digital proficiency) 	Increase international revenue by 10%
	OPW experiences more visitor focused and delivering the IAE brand promise	Support OPW strategic partnership projects, particularly in the development of the visitor experience (e.g. Knowth New Visitor Experience, Newgrange Interpretation Upgrade, Boyne Valley Interpretation Master plan, Kings Johns Castle Carlingford, and others) to deliver visitor experience through improved online booking, and interpretation etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ On line booking Newgrange by March 2017 ▶ Boyne Valley Interpretation plan agreed and resourced ▶ Improved interpretation Newgrange 2018 ▶ New experience Knowth 2018

SUMMARY OF PRIORITIES FOR EACH YEAR OF THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

YEAR ONE:

- 1) One to one engagement with local industry and stakeholders to build **Ireland's Ancient East** out on the ground, across individual businesses and in destinations.
- 2) Create shared experience development plans with key stakeholders and industry, aligning investment and maximising return.
- 3) Complete Boyne Valley interpretation plan. Approve and initiate Newgrange and Knowth projects. Scope and approve National Museum project. Identify new iconic project.
- 4) Develop Audience Engagement Programme and roll out initial Master Class.
- 5) Marketing campaign to drive awareness and sales campaign to drive distribution.

YEAR TWO:

- 1) Roll out Year 2 Audience Engagement Programme.
- 2) Implement experience development plans.
- 3) Complete Newgrange upgrade. Avondale and Knowth experiences sales ready. Scope and approve budget for new iconic project.
- 4) Marketing campaign to drive awareness and sales campaign to drive distribution.

YEAR THREE:

- 1) Roll out Audience Engagement Programme.
- 2) Implement experience development plans.
- 3) Open Avondale and Knowth Experiences. Complete National Museum project. Initiate new iconic project and make ready for sale. Approve 2 new large capital grants.
- 4) Marketing campaign to drive awareness and sales campaign to drive distribution.

YEAR FOUR:

- 1) Review and optimise experience develop plans.
- 2) Open new Iconic Visitor Experience. 2 new large capital grants ready for sale.
- 3) Marketing campaign to drive awareness and sales campaign to drive distribution.





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