SUSTAINING SUCCESS IN THE YEAR AHEAD: PLANS FOR 2020

We will be focusing on extending the season and developing tourism across the Wild Atlantic Way region to drive visitor numbers to lesser known areas again next year.

Additional product development funding will be coming on stream for the Wild Atlantic Way through new investment scheme, Platforms For Growth, in 2020.

We will continue to engage with industry through enterprise support workshops, marketing and the Local Expert Programme.

We will implement seven Visitor Experience Development Plans and commence work on a further three.

We will implement the Wild Atlantic Way Gateway Town strategies for Killarney and Limerick.

WILD ATLANTIC WAY INDUSTRY CONFERENCE

Join us in 2020 for our first Sustainable Tourism Conference. This first of its kind event will be held on the Wild Atlantic Way in Q4, 2020 (date and venue tbc) and will be a must for all forward-thinking tourism businesses who want to develop sustainable business practices and give their organisations a competitive edge. The day will be packed with practical advice, insights and ideas from international and Irish speakers who have taken their lead to sustainable tourism.

ACTIVITIES

New trails at Connemara National Park (Mweelin Trail and Farm Trail) – Q1, 2020.
Completion of new 4km off road cycle and walking trail at Wild Nephin National Park scheduled for completion Q1, 2020.

MASTERPLANS:
Visitor Experience and Tourism Masterplan for Glenveagh National Park to inform future investment due to be completed in Q3, 2020.
Tourism Masterplan for Fanad Head to include visitor management and a range of new and enhanced visitor experiences – Q1, 2020.
Kerr Bay Masterplan to include visitor management and a new and enhanced visitor experience – Q1, 2020.
Kerr Island Masterplan to include visitor management and a new and enhanced visitor experience – Q1, 2020.

LOOSED RIVES
As part of our strategy to drive sustainable growth, we have created three Wild Atlantic Way Loop drives which encourage visitors to explore other parts of the region. The Shannon Estuary Drive, completed in 2018, was the first of these routes and in Q2, 2020, we will be launching the following drives in partnership with communities and local authorities:

Burren Experience.
Mulroy Bay Drive.

GETTING INVOLVED

Ensure your business is Brexit Ready
www.failteireland.ie/getbrexitready

Log in to the Trade Portal for Trade Events & Supports
https://tradeportal.failteireland.ie/

Ensure your business is Industry Ready
www.wildatlanticway.com/industryreadyreality

Digital Platforms for Wild Atlantic Way
www.wildatlanticway.ie

Instagram: Wild Atlantic Way
www.instagram.com/wildatlanticway

Facebook: Ireland’s Wild Atlantic Way
www.facebook.com/irelandswaw

YouTube: Ireland’s Wild Atlantic Way
www.youtube.com/wildatlanticway

Twitter: Ireland’s Wild Atlantic Way
www.twitter.com/wildatlanticway

#wildatlanticway

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While 2019 was a record year for the Wild Atlantic Way in terms of both domestic and international spend, 2019 was seen as a slow down in that growth with businesses in the west expecting a very mixed year.

With Brexit on the horizon, we are facing into challenging times but we are confident that the Wild Atlantic Way will continue to deliver and we have ambitious plans in place to that end.

2020 will see us publish our 5-year regional development plan for the Wild Atlantic Way 2020-2024, aiming to outline how we will grow the visitor economy of the region in a sustainable manner for the benefit of all stakeholders. Integrate this will be our Visitor Experience Development Plans, which we are currently developing all along the west coast. These plans bring together the public and private sector in a collaborative and progressive framework, with the aim of driving this region to become the first in the world to be considered a ‘visitor-oriented’ destination.

In its sixth year, the Wild Atlantic Way has captivated the imagination of visitors both home and abroad. This is very much testament to the strong partnership between our industry, and the Wild Atlantic Way team in Fáilte Ireland. We will continue to work closely with you over the course of 2020 and beyond as we strive to achieve sustainable growth in the years ahead which will positively impact your business.

Miriam Kennedy
Head of the Wild Atlantic Way

ECONOMIC IMPACT 2019

The Wild Atlantic Way initiative is focused on the economy.

Based on info for the Wild Atlantic Way

80,000 jobs
Over €200m per year
3.7m overseas tourists

MARKETING & PUBLICITY

Fáilte Ireland is engaged in Fáilte Ireland Enterprise Supports in 2019 with

870,000 visitors to existbilising.com with organic search
up 5% and social referrals up 50%

18,300 Trade Referrals from the website (outbound clicks to a trade business listing)

2,700 new followers and fans on social channels within a total social community of 400,300, average engagement rate up 30% in 3x social media engagements across Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

Digital & Consumer Communications - 17,445 enquiries and
Fáilte Ireland hosted Wild Atlantic Way marketing campaigns valued at €20m for revenue with an increased 119 million people in 2019.

NOTABLE MEDIA VISITS INCLUDED:

Conde Nast and Lonely Planet Traveller.

ECONOMIC IMPACT 2019

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Based on info for the Wild Atlantic Way

80,000 jobs
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KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2019

PLATFORMS FOR GROWTH

Fáilte Ireland’s new investment programme Platforms for Growth 2019-2022 launched in May 2019. Over the 5-year Programme, Fáilte Ireland will invest €150 million in developing major new visitor experiences of scale across the country. The first call for submissions focused on developing Ireland’s Heritage and Cultural Attractions of scale. In mid- November 2019 all successful applications will be invited to move forward to Stage 3 of the application process.

TOURISM DESTINATION TOWNS

Fáilte Ireland announced a major new investment scheme earlier this year to boost the attractiveness and tourism appeal of up to 64 towns across the country. The investment, through the local authorities, will help develop towns from transit zones to destinations, driving a better regional spread of overseas and domestic visitors and spend. Successful applicants will be ratified in early 2020 and will be awarded between €350,000 and €500,000 to develop a town in their area.

WILD ATLANTIC WAY GATEWAY TOWNS

Fáilte Ireland is working with key stakeholders, Irish Harbours Federation, Inishowen Federation, National Parks & Wildlife Service, Donegal Tourism, Cork Tourism, Waterford Tourism and the Regional Convention Bureau in Limerick and Killarney to develop plans to implement both in ‘Gateway’ towns over the next three years.

A Wild Atlantic Way Gateway Town is an urban area adjacent to the Wild Atlantic Way route which has a significant opportunity for tourists arriving at Wild Atlantic Way Gateway towns. Gateway towns offer visitors a broad and valuable range of accommodation, visitor experiences and a vibrant day and nighttime economy.

ATTRACTIONS

In 2019, Fáilte Ireland committed significant funding to Visitor Attractions on the Wild Atlantic Way, including:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Name</th>
<th>Scheme</th>
<th>Target Area</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atlantic Museum, Galway</td>
<td>Large Grants 2016</td>
<td>€64,660</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sligo Cultural Plaza</td>
<td>Large Grants 2016</td>
<td>€2,523,256</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Céide Fields, Mayo</td>
<td>DFM Strategic Partnership</td>
<td>€256,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>MacBrayne, Donegal</td>
<td>Looped Drums Programme</td>
<td>€170,800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burren Experience, Clare</td>
<td>Looped Drums Programme</td>
<td>€241,596</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skellig &amp; Kerry VEDPs</td>
<td>New Worlds as The Wild Atlantic Way Scheme</td>
<td>€3,366,887</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NEW VEDPS 2020

- Inishowen
- Loop Head (Sligo)
- North Kerry/South Clare

Note: All VEDPs must undergo Appropriate Assessment.

VISITOR EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT PLANS

SKELLING CASTLE - Launched in January 2016, implementation is underway by the Skelling Castle Implementation Group. Results include 3,000 visitors from the US market alone.

- 3 new business start-ups and the development of 15 new saleable experiences.

CONNEMARA COAST & ARAN ISLANDS - Launched in March 2016, this VEDP is being driven by the Connemara & Aran Islands Tourism Network (CAITN). 17 new saleable experiences have been developed, and a 1% increase in occupancy for 2016 is expected.

- The VEDP is due to be launched in Q1, 2020.

- 2019 programmes focused on market diversification including targeting the Chinese market (China Fáilte), boosting the brand of Christmas Villages, Route to Putland – China, Chiefly Connacht/CITTE Cultural Awareness and Gateway P&B Service training programmes.

- Additional training programmes focused on Boosting Online Sales and Growing & Using Your Database Effectively. In addition to the ‘Race the Island Industry Mobilisation (R3)’ programme.

- Experience Service Training was delivered to 205 businesses & 4,460 front line staff. This included 74 in Company programmes.

- In 2019, Fáilte Ireland hosted 37 Local Experts Workshops in Dingle (2), Sligo (2), Galway (1) and Loop Head (8) with a combined 1,405 participants.

- 80% of participants in our training programmes are extremely likely to implement what they learned in Fáilte Ireland training courses in 2019 and 87% were extremely satisfied with the course.


BUSINESS SUPPORTS

- 29 tourism businesses and 2,219 individuals on the Wild Atlantic Way engaged in Fáilte Ireland Enterprise Supports in 2019 to date.

- 29 individual Boost business mentoring projects (averaging three days per business) and four additional mentoring programmes were delivered.

- 2019 programmes focused on market diversification including targeting the Chinese market (China Fáilte), boosting the brand of Christmas Villages, Route to Putland – China, Chiefly Connacht/CITTE Cultural Awareness and Gateway P&B Service training programmes.

- 2 additional training programmes focused on Boosting Online Sales and Growing & Using Your Database Effectively. In addition to the ‘Race the Island Industry Mobilisation (R3)’ programme.

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- WEST COAST’S THREE HEADLANDS (MULLAGHLEGHTH TO KENNARDS) – This VEDP is at final draft stage with actions being reviewed and agreed with key stakeholders and The Working Group. Implementation will commence in Q1, 2020.

- WEST COAST’S HAVEN COAST (KINSALE TO BALLYDEHOB) – This VEDP has been developed and agreed with key stakeholders and the Working Group. Implementation will commence in Q1, 2020.

- WEST COAST’S MOOR AND HAVEN COAST (NEWTONABBEY TO Renvyle) – This VEDP has been developed and agreed with key stakeholders and the Working Group. Implementation will commence in Q1, 2020.

- Key Account meetings Gateway Towns EAV Intl. Media visits Looped Drives

- 2019 HIGHLIGHTS

- 150 new business start-ups and the development of 15 new saleable experiences.

- Over 120 business support meetings held by the Wild Atlantic Way Team in 2019.

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