



THE YEAR AHEAD – SUSTAINING SUCCESS IN 2019

Looped Drives

As part of our strategy to drive sustainable growth, we are creating a series of Wild Atlantic Way looped drives which will encourage visitors to explore other parts of the region.

The Shannon Estuary Drive is the first of 10 routes identified and is nearing completion.

In 2019, we will develop the following drives in partnership with communities and local authorities:

- Burren Drive - due to launch in 2019
- Mulroy Bay Drive – due to launch in 2019
- North Cork Drive – work to commence in 2019 for launch in 2020

Visitor Experience Development Plans

The following Visitor Experience Development Plans will be progressed in 2019, including:

- Inishowen Peninsula
- Sligo Coast
- Clew Bay
- Loop Head Peninsula and North Kerry
- Haven Coast (Kinsale to Ballydehob)

Masterplans for Signature Discovery Points

A number of Masterplans for Wild Atlantic Signature Discovery Points focusing on visitor management will be developed in 2019 for specific locations, including:

- Inishowen Peninsula, Malin Head
- Fanad Peninsula
- Keem Bay



MEET THE TEAM

Miriam Kennedy
Head of Wild Atlantic Way
T: 091 537736
M: 086 772 6640
E: Miriam.Kennedy@failteireland.ie

Joan Crawford – Donegal
Team Manager
T: 074 9160027
M: 086 0443803
E: Joan.Crawford@failteireland.ie

Máire Aine Gardiner – Donegal
Projects Officer
T: 074 9160026
M: 086 6057313
E: MaireAine.Gardiner@failteireland.ie

Tom Conneely – Donegal
Projects Officer
T: 071 9194203
M: 086 6002292
E: tom.conneely@failteireland.ie

Eva Costello Sligo/Mayo
Team Manager
T: 071 9194206
M: 086 0455055
E: Eva.Costello@failteireland.ie

Fionnán Nestor - Mayo
Projects Officer
T: 098 51502
M: 086 0481877
E: Fionnan.nestor@failteireland.ie

John Neary – Sligo
Projects Officer
T: 071 9159672
M: 087 4144035
E: John.Neary@failteireland.ie

Margaret Jenkins – Galway/ Limerick/Clare
Team Manager
T: 091 537772
M: 086 3555587
E: Margaret.Jenkins@failteireland.ie

Letitia Wade – Galway
Projects Officer
T: 091 537751
M: 087 6362858
E: Letitia.Wade@failteireland.ie

Siobhan King, - Clare/ Limerick
Projects Officer
T: 061 403806
Mobile: 086 868598184
E: siobhan.king@failteireland.ie

Josephine O'Driscoll – Cork/ Kerry
Team Manager
T: 021 4233213
M: 086 8099330
E: Josephine.ODriscoll@failteireland.ie

Declan Murphy – Kerry
Projects Officer
T: 064 6638311
M: 086 1739543
E: Declan.Murphy@failteireland.ie

Danielle Favier – Killarney/Dingle
Projects Officer
T: 064 6638310
M: 087 6667706
E: Danielle.Favier@failteireland.ie

Marie Healy – Cork
Projects Officer
T: 021 4233216
M: 087 9140877
E: Marie.Healy@failteireland.ie





ECONOMIC IMPACT 2018

The Wild Atlantic Way brand is having an impact on the region:



Based on Fáilte Ireland's national performance estimates 2018

A BUOYANT YEAR – KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2018

We have established a Wild Atlantic Way **Tourism Co-ordination Steering Group and Working Group** in order to ensure that we are all working together for the benefit of the Wild Atlantic Way. Chaired by Paul Keeley, Director of Commercial Development at Fáilte Ireland, members of the steering group include all CEOs of local authorities and public agencies active in tourism, along with representation from industry.

Visitor Experience Development Plans

- **Skelligs Coast** – plan launched and funding for four new and existing visitor attractions announced, 7% increase in business across Skellig Coast and 15 new Saleable Experiences developed
- **Connemara Coast & Aran Islands** – steering group established to implement plan, and funding for five key new and existing visitor attractions allocated
- **Burren & Cliffs of Moher** – plan due to launch at the end of 2018
- **Three Heads (Ballydehob to Kenmare)** - plan due to launch in December 2018
- **Dingle Peninsula** - plan due to launch in December 2018

New Horizons Grants Scheme

We launched the Wild Atlantic Way New Horizons 2018 Small Grants scheme to provide funding of over **€1m** for 9 new and operating visitor attractions along the Wild Atlantic Way within the defined geographies of the Connemara Coast & Aran Islands and the Skellig Coast.

Large Capital Investment Projects

- In partnership with the **Office of Public Works (OPW)**, we announced investment of **€4.3m** in four key heritage sites along the Wild Atlantic Way; Blasket Island Visitor Centre in Co. Kerry, Céide Fields in Co. Mayo, Inis Mór in the Aran Islands, Co. Galway and Carrowmore in Co. Sligo
- Alongside funding from the **Special EU Programmes Body, Irish Lights, Donegal County Council and Údarás na Gaeltachta**, Fáilte Ireland invested **€470k** in the development of a new visitor centre and car park for Fanad Lighthouse, Co. Donegal, which was officially opened in 2018
- As part of our partnership with **National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS)**, we invested **€5.2m** in the restoration and development of Killarney House and gardens, which was officially opened in 2018. We will continue to work with The National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) to enhance the quality of the visitor experience in all Ireland's National Parks (five of our six National Parks run along the Wild Atlantic Way) with **€2.35m** in funding
- We are investing **€2m** with **Coillte** to establish Ireland as an international destination for mountain-biking. The project proposes the development of four 'national' centres across seven counties, two of which are on the Wild Atlantic Way: Ballyhoura Mountain Bike Centre, Co. Cork/Co. Limerick and Coolaney, Co. Sligo

Stretching 2,500km from the Inishowen Peninsula in County Donegal to Kinsale in West Cork, the Wild Atlantic Way is the longest defined coastal touring route in the world and has become a household name in Ireland since it was launched in 2014, repositioning the West Coast of Ireland as a compelling and unique holiday experience.

2018 has been a record year for the Wild Atlantic Way in terms of both tourist numbers and tourist spend with an estimated 3.8m overseas and 4.4m domestic trips to the region, with a combined spend of €3bn - the highest spend since the inception of this regional experience brand.

We are committed to building on this success, enhancing the visitor experience along the length of the route and developing tourism in the region for the benefit of all stakeholders. Integral to this, are our Visitor Experience Development Plans, which are 5 year, holistic, commercial development plans for a region. These plans bring together the public and private sector in a collaborative and progressive framework with the aim of driving visitors to lesser known areas and attractions, encouraging visitation in the off peak, increasing dwell time and revenue, without compromising the environment or culture of the region.

In just four years, the Wild Atlantic Way has captured the imagination of visitors both home and abroad. This is very much testament to the strong partnership between you, our industry and the Wild Atlantic Way team in Fáilte Ireland. We will continue to work closely with you over the course of 2019 and beyond as we strive to build on what has been a buoyant year for the Wild Atlantic way.

Miriam Kennedy
Head of the Wild Atlantic Way



Business Supports

- We hosted **125 workshops** including programmes on Developing Saleable Experiences, Service Excellence and Social Media across the region for **1,945** members of the tourism industry from **530 businesses**
- We piloted the Local Experts programme in Donegal, Limerick and Sligo for almost **400 members of the local community** who welcome and engage with visitors to their county
- We delivered the Service Excellence Programme to **18 businesses (312 frontline staff)** over 16 full day training sessions in Westport, which became the first town in Ireland to be awarded the Service Excellence Destination Award
- We provided **25** businesses with 1-1 mentoring

Marketing and Publicity

- We invested **€1m** in two dedicated Wild Atlantic Way **domestic marketing** campaigns promoting Spring and Autumn breaks, seen by **94%** of all adults (**3.3m people**)
- **1.1m** unique visitors to www.wildatlanticway.com
- **2.9m** social media engagements across Facebook, Instagram and Twitter
- We launched two international marketing campaigns with Tourism Ireland - **Call of the Wild** and **Wonders of the Wild Atlantic Way**
- **125** individual international media visits and 20 group media visits in partnership with Tourism Ireland resulting in Estimated Advertising Value of **€18.2m** with a total reach of **283.7m**

International Buyers and Platforms



Wild Atlantic Way Passport

This year, alongside our Tourist Information Offices and Posts Offices on the West Coast, we increased the distribution outlets for the Wild Atlantic Way passports to include:

- Donegal, Shannon, Cork and Kerry airports
- five National Parks on the Wild Atlantic Way
- the Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience

We are also piloting the passport with overseas Tour Operators.

