



TOURISM STATEMENT OF STRATEGY AND WORK PROGRAMME
WEXFORD LOCAL AUTHORITIES
2017 - 2022

FOREWORD

Cathaoirleach, Cllr Paddy Kavanagh

County Wexford has a wealth of tourism assets, from our natural assets in our beaches, rivers, mountains and woodlands, to our built heritage including our historic assets and attractions. The breadth of all that the county has to offer places a responsibility on Wexford Local Authorities to maximise and develop these assets in a sustainable manner for the benefit of all our citizens and visitors. As Chairman of Wexford County Council, I welcome the opportunity to set the Tourism Statement of strategy and Work programme for the coming years. Tourism is an integral part of the six year Local Economic and Community Plan for County Wexford and it is important that the delivery of this programme is implemented with a co-ordinated and collaborative approach. I would like to thank all of those who have been involved in the preparation of this work programme and I look forward to supporting the delivery and implementation of its actions.



Chief Executive, Tom Enright

Tourism has always been a significant element in County Wexford's economy and the Local Authority aims to support the industry and visitor in putting the infrastructure in place and working with tourism stakeholders' to ensure our tourism product and service are world class. Tourism development is also critical for regional development and has a substantial spill-over effect into other aspects of the economy, and society in general with increased employment and also improving quality of life for permanent residents, as-well as increasing the attractiveness of an area for inward investment. Therefore investment in tourism has a multiplier effect which can reverberate across a county and region in a variety of ways. This Statement of strategy and Work Programme gives Wexford Local Authorities the opportunity to state our intention and capability to accelerate our tourism product within the county.

I look forward to working with all of the relevant stakeholders to ensure that the County can maximise its tourism assets through the implementation of this work programme over the coming years.



INTRODUCTION

Wexford Local Authorities aim to maintain and increase its support for the Tourism sector and to capitalise on the increased investment in Tourism and its benefits to the regional and local economy using the policy objectives as set out in the Government strategy for Tourism People Place and Policy, Growing Tourism to 2025. The strategy will also be aligned with the Fáilte Ireland strategy including the rollout of the Ireland's Ancient East proposition, and also with the agreed South East Jobs Strategy and the objectives of the Local Economic & Community Plan(LECP) for County Wexford.

Wexford County Council recognises the important contribution that tourism has on the economy and communities of County Wexford and aims to ensure that infrastructure is in place to deliver benefits for visitors and locals alike. It is also recognised that visitors do not recognise county boundaries and therefore counties and local authorities need to collaborate and co-operate with each other in order to manage and develop destinations from a visitor perspective. Tourism has always been important to County Wexford, our natural amenities, favourable climate and built heritage have meant that visitors have been drawn to the county for generations. However, visitor needs and expectations have changed and the Local Authority aims to ensure that the county increases its position as a sustainable domestic and international visitor destination within the South East region and under the Ireland's Ancient East banner. To do this, we aim to initiate and encourage the development of our county for enjoyment by both our citizens and visitors. We aim to utilise our natural and built assets in a sustainable way and ensure that our role in maximising job creation from the tourism industry can stand alongside these aims.

Domestic Tourism

Wexford has always been a popular domestic tourism destination.

At present:

- Wexford is rated 5th in Country in 2015 for the number of domestic visitors.
- The county welcomed 697,000 domestic visitors in 2015 (this was an increase of 13% on 2014 figures and was well above the national average of 1.5%)
- This amounted to €140m in Revenue for the county
- Domestic visitor spend is €238 per capita

International Tourism

- Wexford is rated 12th in the country (down from 7th) in numbers of International visitors welcomed to the county in 2015.
- This amounted to 221,000 Visitors in 2015
- This comes to €65m in Revenue
- International visitor per capita spend is €550 per capita

The Tourism Industry has an estimated value to the county of €205m (2015). This equates to a jobs equivalent of 6970¹ *Fáilte Ireland 2015*

Ireland's Ancient East is a new proposition for the eastern part of Ireland to stand alongside the Wild Atlantic Way, and Dublin- A breath of fresh air. Wexford County Council are fully committed to supporting Failte Ireland in developing this proposition and supporting its rollout across the county and internationally where appropriate.

The brand originates from the rich history and diverse range of cultural heritage experiences that are particularly prevalent in the East and South regions of Ireland. From monastic sites to medieval castles, the experience offers a wealth of heritage set in a fertile, green landscape. This new experience brand has been designed to appeal to the Culturally Curious and the Great Escaper market segments and to present this large geographic area in a cohesive and unified manner. Indeed, County Wexford has been coined the '*Cornerstone of Ireland's Ancient East*'.

Ireland's Ancient East is Fáilte Ireland's proposition for the 16 counties on the eastern side of the Shannon to complement and stand alongside the Wild Atlantic Way. Wexford is well placed to capitalise on this, being at the cornerstone of the designated region. According to Failte Ireland, Ireland's Ancient East aims to '*maximise the history and heritage in the region and bring it to greater international attention. To do this, the new initiative will offer visitors a personal experience of 5000 years of history through a relaxing journey of discovery in the beautiful landscape that attracted warring settlers for millennia and illuminated by stories from the best storytellers in the world – the local people*'.

Based on comprehensive research in overseas markets, the initiative is aimed at two particular market segments overseas, identified by the research, who have indicated they would be more likely to come to Ireland for this kind of experience:

- The Culturally Curious
- Great Escapers

The Culturally Curious tend to be older visitors who wish to broaden their minds and expand their experience by exploring new landscapes, history and culture. Great Escapers, on the other hand, tend to be younger, early thirty-something's and want time out from their busy lives and careers to connect with history and nature and their place within. This appeal to an interest in local culture and heritage, in particular, differentiates Ireland's Ancient East from the Wild Atlantic Way. The emphasis within Ireland's Ancient East on built heritage (as opposed to natural landscapes along the Wild Atlantic Way) will make it a very attractive proposition for those more interested in understanding the relationship between local place, past and people.

The key markets for the new proposition are the US; France, Germany and the UK. It is also acknowledged that the proposition will appeal especially to international visitors and will ultimately increase revenue into Ireland, based on the increased per capita spend of the international visitor.

County Wexford is rich in cultural heritage from Castles to Great houses and emigrant facilities including Enniscorthy Castle; Ferns Castle and Tintern Abbey to Wells House; Johnstown House and the Dunbrody Famine ship and the JFK Homestead. However, the capacity to attract and accommodate significant numbers of visitors to these attractions has been an issue in the county and one which Wexford Local Authorities are keen to address in the coming 5 years.

In addition; the Great Escaper market segment as outlined as part of Ireland's Ancient East proposition has untapped potential to expand in importance within County Wexford and we consider the completion of projects to attract visitors within this sphere to be of high importance. The six Greenway developments and the coastal Activity routes as outlined in the plan below are a key priority for Wexford County Council in the coming years, along with river and marine based activities.

As outlined by Failte Ireland, the Ireland's Ancient East brand promises:

- a destination that is easy and enjoyable to explore;
- where cultural experiences are memorable because they tell their story so well;
- where the stories told at individual visitor attractions link to other sites across the region and to an overall timeline, building to an unforgettable and enriching journey through 5000 years of European history;
- where spectacular heritage sites are set against the backdrop of a rich, green, pastoral countryside.

Wexford Local Authorities take strong consideration of these aims in its tourism work programme to 2022.

NATIONAL POLICY

In 2015, Fáilte Ireland launched a policy statement titled 'People, Place and Policy- growing tourism to 2025'. The policy recognised Tourism as one of Ireland's most important economic sectors, supporting 200,000 jobs in the economy and earning revenue of around €5.7billion¹. It also contributes towards social inclusion and as an access path to the labour market. Specific targets are to increase visitor numbers to 10 million in 2025, overseas revenue to €5 billion and increase employment to 250,000 by 2025. Not just focused on quantity or even revenue, the policy aspires to at least 95% of visitors to be 'very satisfied' with Ireland as a destination. To do this, focus has been placed upon co-operative marketing; protecting key assets; presenting Ireland's unique cultural and sporting opportunities to visitors; focused on identifying key propositions of 'the Wild Atlantic Way', Dublin Plus; and Ireland's Ancient East; Capital investment; supporting skills and human resource development within the Tourism sector; supporting communities and their involvement in the Tourism industry; ensuring Ireland's fiscal policy benefits the tourism industry, most notably the 9% VAT rate and the zero air travel tax . The policy also identifies the opportunity for 'convergence' with other sectors, particularly the Food sector and the Education and Skills sector through English language schools.

People, Place and Policy, Growing Tourism to 2025 is the Government's national tourism policy and it sets out ambitious goals for tourism in Ireland. The policy commits to "an enhanced role for Local Authorities and recognition of the contribution of communities to tourism."

Specifically, the policy envisages that Local Authorities will:

- Continue to act as primary developer of a range of public tourism infrastructure, including outdoor tourism infrastructure and urban and rural heritage;
- Act as a link between the State tourism agencies and communities by supporting community effort with regard to major national tourism initiatives such as the Gathering;
- Support community effort in destination development, including assisting communities to align their efforts with the tourism agencies brand architecture and consumer segmentation model;
- Provide a competitive environment for tourism enterprises through continued focus on high quality maintenance of public infrastructure frequently used by visitors;

¹ Fáilte Ireland 2014

- Contribute to capacity building in tourism nationally by co-ordinating exchange of knowledge between established and developing tourism destinations; and
- Provide a range of advice and support through the Local Enterprise Offices.²

The recognition of tourism as a priority in the Local Economic and Community Plans (LECPs) was identified as a policy priority in *People, Place and Policy, Growing Tourism to 2025*. Every Local Authority has developed an LECP and they each have a strong tourism dimension. The LECPs outline each Local Authority's tourism outputs, identify tourism partners and set out specific goals, objectives and actions related to tourism. The majority of the LECPs explicitly reference *People, Place and Policy, Growing Tourism to 2025*. Furthermore, many local authorities have created detailed tourism strategies which build upon their tourism plans as outlined in their LECP.

All of the LECPs are prepared by the Local Community and Development Committees (LCDC), adopted by the elected members and submitted to the Minister for Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government. Each local authority develops a plan that considers unique local factors through a process that includes extensive public consultation. The strength of the LCDC lies in its composition. This membership of the LCDC is critical to the delivery of the actions set out in the LECP. The Act clearly provides for a role for the local elected members and the Chief Executive of the City or County Council, the voluntary sector, community groups and agencies that are central to the delivery of public services in local areas.

REGIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR JOBS

The South East Regional Action Plan for Jobs prepared by the Southern Regional Assembly in 2015 under the direction of the DJEI, states that applying the national targets to the South East region as set out in 'People, Place and Policy – Growing Tourism to 2025' would indicate a potential for an extra 300,000 overseas visitors over the period to 2025 and the potential for an additional €90 million in foreign earnings into the region.

The South East region, renowned as the 'Sunny South East', has continued to grow as a tourist destination, for both domestic and overseas visitors. Overseas tourists to the region grew by 13% from 2012 to 2015 to reach 897,000 and revenue from overseas visitors in the region reached €260 million in 2015, an increase of 12 per cent on 2012³. Tourism is Ireland's largest employer, with up to 11 per cent of all jobs in the tourism and hospitality centre. Tourism Value Added (GVA) exceeds any major industry in Ireland with the exception of pharmaceuticals and domestic Irish tourists spend more than our foreign visitors⁴. Every €1 million in tourism revenue supports 55 jobs in that sector.

² People, Place and Policy, Growing Tourism to 2025, Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, March 2015.

³ Failte Ireland 2015

⁴ South East Jobs Strategy 2016

Every 1,000 extra tourists support 18 jobs in the industry and expenditure on food and drink makes it Ireland's 4th biggest industry in terms of GVA. It also offers work opportunities for the young, casual and part-time worker and it supports and grows other sectors – transport, construction, professional services, agriculture and retail. The objectives of the South East Tourism Strategy are set out below:

- Develop a minimum of two cross county tourism initiatives which focus on delivering a quality international tourism experience which are hung off the Ireland Ancient East Brand, and include the Munster Vales area.

Partners: Fáilte Ireland, LAs, LEADER, LEOs, Tourism Ireland

- Develop the South East zone value proposition and experiences as part of Ireland's Ancient East, including in scaling up the asset base in the region and achieving international "stand-out" for the area based on its comparative advantage in built and cultural heritage.

Partners: Fáilte Ireland, LAs, LEADER, LEOs, Tourism Ireland

- Promote and incentivise greater business links between tourism and food sectors, promoting use of local produce by the local hospitality sector and attracting visitors to the region for food and beverage related activities.

Partners: Fáilte Ireland, Chambers, Industry, HEIs, LAs, Teagasc, Bord Bia

- Identify opportunities which are appropriate to each county where co-ordination of attendance at Trade Shows can be managed at a regional level to ensure appropriate marketing and promotion of tourism offerings in SE. This will require coordination and collaboration on a) on shows to attend b) crossmarketing material and c) training on promotion.

Partners: Fáilte Ireland, Industry, LAs, Teagasc, Bord Bia

- Develop FET programmes for new entrants to the Hospitality and Tourism sector as well as upskilling Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programmes for those currently engaged.

Partners: ETBs, Solas, HEIs, Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Industry

- Develop schools tourism initiatives such as "Know Your Own County" Campaigns and online tourism induction programmes for schools to (1) promote offerings within the region (2) develop future tourism ambassadors for the region (3) to highlight potential career opportunities in the sector.

Partners: LAs, LEOs Business Representative Bodies, HEIs, ETBs

- Ensure appropriate marketing material is available at Rosslare Port on visitor experiences and key destination locations in the South East Region.

Partners: Failte Ireland, LAs , Irish Rail and design companies

- Develop the rivers and coastal 'water margins' assets of the South East region as key elements of the Failte Ireland South and East region offer, including blueway trails linking activity hubs and amenities.

Partners: LAs, Tourism, SMEs, LEOs, Failte Ireland, Waterways Ireland, CIE, Harbour Commission

- Develop a plan to improve the visitor experience and business capability of water activity providers (SMEs) active in tourism in coastal and river areas considered key to delivering on the objectives of both Failte Ireland's Experience Development strategy and the DAFM's marine strategy Harvesting Our Ocean Wealth (HOOW).

Partners: LAs, LEOs, DAFM, Fáilte Ireland,

LECP TOURISM OBJECTIVES

The Wexford Local Economic and Community Plan as agreed by the LCDC sets out Six High Level Goals to improve socio-economic and community outcomes in County Wexford up to 2021. Each goal is expressed in terms of objectives with indicators, related partner activities and roles. The Wexford Local Economic and Community Plan is guided by the following overarching vision:

The agreed vision is that Wexford will be a county:

- With vibrant, diverse and resilient sustainable urban and rural communities experiencing a high quality of life
- Where people will want to live, work and do business
- Which offers its citizens quality employment opportunities
- Which offers high quality urban and rural environments supported by excellent sustainable physical and social infrastructure and sustainable employment opportunities; and which values its natural environment and heritage.

HIGH LEVEL GOALS INCLUDE:

1. Foster the culture of educational attainment and lifelong learning in County Wexford and provide opportunities to develop educational and workforce skills, to improve work readiness and access to employment
2. Support and promote the development of socially inclusive, sustainable communities in County Wexford and ensure that all citizens enjoy optimal health and well-being
3. Continue to develop and promote County Wexford as a great place to live, work and visit
4. Develop and market County Wexford as an outstanding business environment for starting, growing and attracting business

5. Continue to protect and enhance our infrastructure and promote resource efficiency in order to create the right conditions for long-term sustainable economic growth
6. Protect and sensitively utilise our natural, built and cultural heritage and together with the Arts, realise their economic potential

The county has a very strong tourism sector which is a significant and important revenue generator. The county has a wealth of built, cultural and environmental amenities, many internationally renowned.

- The number of overseas visitors to Wexford has increased significantly in recent years with numbers increasing by 25% since 2009. In 2015, Wexford welcomed 221,000 overseas visitors to the county which represented 29% of the total visitors to the South-East region. Wexford generated €65m of overseas tourism revenue with a total €259m generated in the region.
- Wexford offers an excellent and sizeable accommodation base to serve both the overseas and domestic tourism market. The county has a higher than average proportion of 4* hotels (48%) compared to 36.4% in the South-East Region and 32.6% in the State.
- The strength of tourism in the county is reflected by the numbers employed in the Accommodation and Food sector. It is a very valuable and sustainable sector in the county. In 2011, 6.9% of the county's total workforce was employed in this sector. This rate is considerably higher than the State average of 5.7%. Wexford has the 8th highest rate of employment in this sector amongst all counties.

TOURISM WORK PROGRAMME 2017 – 2022 – KEY ACTIONS

This section sets out the key actions that will be implemented in County Wexford in the period 2017 – 2022.

PRODUCT / EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT

Wexford has a wealth of tourism attractions including the Irish National Heritage Park; Wells House and Gardens; The Dunbrody famine Ship and experience; the iconic Hook Lighthouse; and Johnstown Castle. Enniscorthy Castle, Loftus Hall, Ferns Castle, Tintern Abbey, the JFK Homestead and JFK Arboretum are all significant tourism attractions in the county with good visitor numbers. Duncannon Fort is also marked for redevelopment and reopening in 2021. Our beaches and natural amenities are also plenty: from the Blackstairs mountains in the north of the County; to the low lands of Wexford Wildfowl reserve; and the Hook Peninsula in the South; coupled with our five Blue Flag and eight Green Coast beaches in between are attractions in themselves offering a variety to visitors that is although recognised to some degree nationally, is still considered undiscovered internationally.

Further, although there are a number of attractions, there lacks a visitor attraction of scale in the county. Therefore, Wexford Local Authorities aim to create a Tourism hub in Enniscorthy Town, centred around Enniscorthy Castle with a combination of indoor and outdoor activities which will accommodate and attract large visitor numbers to the town and county. The development of the Norman Way Trail along the South coupled with the exploration of the Norman Wexford heritage offering is also considered a priority for the future. Other ambitions include the development of the Greenways and the Coastal activity routes, in order to showcase our natural amenities in a sustainable manner; and the development of a County Outdoor Adventure centre in Carrigfoyle. Public realm is also an important element of our tourism product for visitors as well as for our citizens so it is intended to improve and maintain these across the urban areas of the county.

Further detail on the plans for the tourism programme are outlined below:

LECP Objectives	Action	Lead	Partners	Timeframe
Objective 3.3 Making the Living environment more attractive/ Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Develop the Wexford Quay Front including the Selskar area and Westgate Tower and the development of the Cultural Spine within the town	WCC	ERDF; Southern Regional Assembly	2020

Objective 3.3 Making the Living environment more attractive/ Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Refurbish the Ballast Office in Wexford Town as a building of significant heritage	WCC		2021
Objective 3.3 Making the Living environment more attractive	Development of Min Ryan Park as a substantial amenity within Wexford Town	WCC		2018
Objective 3.3 Making the Living environment more attractive/ Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Restoration of Town Wall and Medieval Graveyards under the Wexford Town Wall 's project	WCC	<i>OPW, Heritage Council</i>	2022
Objective 3.3 Making the Living environment more attractive	Upgrade Enniscorthy public realm/urban area & Templeshannon urban area	WCC		2019
Objective 3.3 Making the Living environment more attractive	Enhance and upgrade New Ross Town Centre	WCC		2020
Objective 3.2 Supporting Rural Tourism	Greenway developments :	WCC		
	1. Wexford to Rosslare (Road) Greenway on National route south of Wexford Town to Drinagh	WCC	Failte Ireland, Wexford Local Development	2022
	2. New Ross to Waterford: Greenway on Old Railway from New Ross to Waterford (joint project with Kilkenny and Waterford County Councils')	WCC	<i>Irish Rail, Failte Ireland, Wexford Local Development</i>	2019

	3. New Ross to Redbridge/Mount Elliot Bridge: Greenway on Old Railway around New Ross to link with New Ross/Waterford Project	WCC	<i>Irish Rail,</i> Failte Ireland, Wexford Local Development	2020
	4. Wexford to Rosslare Greenway: Greenway from Wexford Town to Rosslare Strand via South Sloblands	WCC	Failte Ireland, Wexford Local Development	2022
	5. Wexford to Curracloe Greenway: Greenway from Wexford Town to Curracloe via North Sloblands	WCC	Failte Ireland, Wexford Local Development	2020
	6. Rosslare Harbour to Waterford: Greenway on Old Railway from Rosslare Harbour to Waterford (to link with New Ross Projects)	WCC	<i>Irish Rail,</i> Failte Ireland, Wexford Local Development	2022
Objective 6.3 Maximising the potential of the natural and built environment/resources	Redevelop the Gorey Market House	WCC	Private Investment	2020
Objective 6.3 Maximising the potential of the natural and built environment/resources	Develop the Hook Peninsula Cycle Route	WCC	Wexford Local Development, Hook Tourism	2020

Maximising the potential of the natural and built environment/resources	Develop the Gorey Showgrounds as a sports and leisure amenity	WCC	Sports Active Wexford, Wexford Local Development, Local clubs and community	2019
Objective 3.2 Supporting Rural Tourism /Objective 6.3 maximising the potential of the natural & built environment/resources	Development of an Adventure Activity park at Carrigfoyle Activity Park-	WCC	WWETB	2020
Objective 6.3 Maximising the potential of the natural and built environment/resources	Active/Coastal Route development :	WCC		2020
	1. Kilmurray: East Coast pathway from Kilmurray to Wexford	WCC	Failte Ireland, Wexford Local Development	2020
	2. Southern Coastal Walk : Wexford to County Boundary	WCC	Failte Ireland, Wexford local Development	2020
	3. Slaney Trail : Enniscorthy	WCC	Failte Ireland, Wexford Local Development	2019
Objective 3.1 Promoting Tourism as a major sector for development; Objective 6.3 Maximising the potential of the natural and built environment/resources	Maintain and develop County Wexfords's Blue flag Beaches: Courtown; Morriscastle; Ballinesker; Curracloe; Ballymoney North.	WCC	Local Community, DHPCLG	Ongoing

Objective 3.1 Promoting Tourism as a major sector for development; Objective 6.3 Maximising the potential of the natural and built environment/resources	Maintain and develop County Wexford's Green Coast Beaches: Ballymoney; Cahore; Old Bawn; Culleton's Gap; St. Helen's Bay; Ballyhealey; Booley Bay; Grange; and other designated bathing areas	WCC	Local Community, DHPCLG	Ongoing
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Renovate and establish Duncannon Fort as a significant tourism building and experience within Ireland's Ancient East	WCC	OPW, Failte Ireland	2022
Objective 3.1 Promoting Tourism as a major sector for development ; Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Develop Norman Wexford as a tourism, arts and cultural project which includes the development and extension of the Norman Way Trail regionally	WCC	Regional LA's, Local community, Failte Ireland, Private Industry	2020
Objective 3.3 Making the Living environment more attractive/ Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Enhance and develop Ferns Village as a Heritage Village	WCC	Local Community, Private Industry	2022
Objective 3.1 Promoting Tourism as a major sector for development ; Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Enniscorthy Castle : Expansion of tourism experience and facilities and establish the area as a significant Tourism hub within Ireland's Ancient East, incorporating indoor and outdoor activities	WCC	Failte Ireland, Local Community, Private Industry	2022
Objective 3.1 Promoting Tourism as a major sector for development ; Objective 5.3 Ensuring Sustainable and efficient use of water resources	Develop the New Ross Pontoon to facilitate local and tourist related water activities	WCC	Failte Ireland, Waterways Ireland, Private Industry	2021

Objective 3.1 Promoting Tourism as a major sector for development ; Objective 5.3 Ensuring Sustainable and efficient use of water resources	Develop the rivers and coastal 'water margins' assets including Blueway development and activity hubs	WCC	Failte Ireland, Waterways Ireland, Private Industry	2019
Objective 3.1 Promoting Tourism as a major sector for development	Improve and support Key Ireland's Ancient East experiences and tourism facilities throughout the county	WCC	LEO, Wexford Local Development, Private Industry	2017-2022
Objective 3.1 Promoting Tourism as a major sector for development	Support and develop the Wexford Trails collaborative group through maintenance of existing trails including the Garden; Heritage; Craft & Walking Trails and support of new trails	WCC/WLD	Private Industry	2017

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

County Wexford prides itself on its variety of festivals and events. The world class Wexford Festival Opera is linchpin of County Wexford's festivals and has attracted international visitors since its inception in 1951. The Spiegelent Festival has also developed into a significant festival and lengthens the festival atmosphere of the county in October. In addition, each town within the county prides itself on its delivery of local festivals and summer schools as well as significant Christmas festivals delivered across the county. It is intended that support for these festivals will continue into the future. Consideration is always given to new festivals within the county, particularly those who will give considerable economic impact to the retails and tourism industry to the county.

LECP Objectives	Action	Lead	Partners	Timeframe
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Wexford Festival Opera	National Opera House	WCC	2017-2022
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Christmas in County Wexford festivals across the county	WCC	Chambers	2017-2022

Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Byrne Perry Summer School	WCC	Gorey & District Chamber	
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Gorey Market House Summer Festival	WCC	Gorey & District Chamber, Gorey Tourism Group	
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Gorey Halloween Festival	WCC	Gorey & District Chamber, Gorey Tourism Group	
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	St. Patricks day Festivals- County Wexford	WCC	Chambers	
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Sri Lankan festival;	WCC	Gorey Chamber, Gorey Tourism Group, Local Community	
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Polska Eire	WCC	Gorey Tourism Group, Local Community	
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Courtown /Riverchapel Maritime Festival	WCC	Local Community	
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	New Ross 4 th July Festival	WCC	New Ross & District Chamber,	

			Local Community	
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	New Ross Piano Festival	WCC	New Ross & District Chamber, Local Community	
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Kennedy Summer School	WCC	New Ross & District Chamber, Local Community	
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Hooked on Sea/Duncannon /Hook Festival	WCC	Hook Tourism, New Ross Chamber, Local Community	
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	AIMS Choral Festival	WCC	New Ross & District Chamber, Local Community	
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	St. Patricks Day Parade- Wexford	WCC	Wexford Chamber, Local Community	
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	John Barry Maritime Festival	WCC	Wexford Chamber, Local Community	
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Art in the Open Plein Air Festival	WCC	Local Community	

Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Kilmore Seafood Festival	WCC	Local Community	
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Leo Carthy Music Weekend	WCC	Local Community	
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	All Ireland Farmers Market	WCC	Enniscorthy & District Chamber, Enniscorthy Tourism, Local Community	
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Strawberry Fair/Roots	WCC	Enniscorthy & District Chamber, Enniscorthy Tourism, Local Community	
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Rock N Food Festival	WCC	Enniscorthy Tourism, Local Community	
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Street Rhythms	WCC	Enniscorthy Tourism, Local Community	
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Blackstairs Blues	WCC	Enniscorthy Tourism, Local Community	
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Focal	WCC	Enniscorthy Tourism,	

			Local Community	
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Eileen Aroon Festival, Bunclody	WCC	Private Industry, Local Community	
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Spiegel tent Festival	WCC	Wexford Chamber	
Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	JestFest Comedy Festival	WCC	Wexford Chamber	

MARKETING & PROMOTION

In recent years, Wexford Local Authorities have increased investment in the marketing and promotion of the county tourism product. Particular emphasis has been given to collaborative efforts; regional efforts; and industry led approaches, particularly where other funds can be leveraged. This has reaped impressive rewards for the county and has set the county as a leader in innovative marketing initiatives.

County Wexford sits under the leading tourism brand of *Ireland's Ancient East* which is being promoted by the national tourism agencies Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Ireland and all international marketing will align itself under this brand. However, it is important that the South East presents a strong regional presence and unique identity to attract international visitors to the region. The Regional Co-operative Access fund, with the aim of addressing capacity issues at our main points of international access and as administered by Tourism Ireland, has initiated collaborative marketing ventures with key regional access points and major international carriers to the County and South East region. To that end, County Wexford, in association with Waterford and Kilkenny a number of collaborative tourism marketing initiatives aimed at the UK market have been undertaken in 2016, and further campaigns are in hand for 2017. Collaborative partners include Tourism Ireland, Rosslare EuroPort, Irish Ferries and Stena Line.

LECP Objectives	Action	Lead	Partners	Timeframe
Objective 3.1 Promoting Tourism as a major sector for development	Support the rollout of Ireland's Ancient East as an umbrella tourism brand including the 16 counties along the eastern coast emphasising Landscape;	Faillte Ireland	WCC, Visit Wexford	2017-2022

	Storytelling and heritage to international & domestic visitors.			
Objective 3.1 Promoting Tourism as a major sector for development	Maintain and develop the Visit Wexford group and associated tourism website	Visit Wexford	WCC	2017-2022
Objective 3.1 Promoting Tourism as a major sector for development	Support collaborative regional marketing efforts within Ireland's Ancient East region, in particular through the Regional Access Co-operative programme as managed by Tourism Ireland attracting visitors to our international access points of Rosslare Europort and Waterford Airport.	Rosslare Europort	WCC, Other LA's, Tourism Ireland, International carriers: Stena Line, Irish Ferries	2017-2022
Objective 3.1 Promoting Tourism as a major sector for development	Provide support and training to the tourism industry in identified skill gaps within the industry	WCC, LEO	Visit Wexford	2017-2022
Objective 3.1 Promoting Tourism as a major sector for development	Increase Wexford's profile as a tourist destination through International and domestic tourism efforts	Visit Wexford	Failte Ireland, WCC, Irish Rail, Wexford Local Development, Private Industry	2017-2022
Objective 3.1 Promoting Tourism as a major sector for development	Support niche market tourism areas including Cruise, Conference, Leisure activities and areas	WCC	Visit Wexford	2017-2022

REGIONAL COLLABORATION AND BESPOKE INITIATIVES

Waterford Greenway will be a key development within the South East region and in order to ensure the connectivity with other similar planned developments in the south east region, a Regional Greenway office is being developed, based in New Ross, County Wexford, which will manage these developments for the region, to promote connectivity, ensure cost and time efficiency, and to ensure homogeneity in delivery.

The key challenge facing tourism in the South East region is to attract more overseas visitors and thereby reduce its dependence on the domestic market.

Wexford, Waterford and Kilkenny sit under the leading tourism brand of *Ireland's Ancient East* which is being promoted by the national tourism agencies Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Ireland. However, it is important that the South East presents a strong regional presence and unique identity to attract international visitors to the region. To that end, a number of collaborative tourism marketing initiatives aimed at the UK market have been undertaken in 2016, and further campaigns are in hand for 2017. Collaborative partners include Tourism Ireland, Rosslare EuroPort, Irish Ferries and Stena Line.

The positioning of the region as a destination offering a quality heritage and culture experience within the context of Ireland's Ancient East opens the doors for the region to capture an increasing share of 'sightseers and culture seekers' who are the majority of overseas visitors to Ireland. Not only can the region attract visitors to experience an urban offering but it can also offer a choice of convenient touring bases for visitors who wish to explore the broader region.

A collaborative regional landing page promoting the region to international visitors has also been designed to support the regional identity within Ireland's Ancient East.

LECP Objectives	Action	Lead	Partners	Timeframe
Objective 3.1 Promoting Tourism as a major sector for development	Support collaborative regional marketing efforts within Ireland's Ancient East region	WCC	Other Regional LA's	2017-2022
Objective 3.1 Promoting Tourism as a major sector for development ; Objective 6.1 Preserving and promoting local cultural heritage	Support primary schools Norman Wexford tourism initiative to inform and promote offerings within the county/ region	WCC	Hook Tourism, Educational Resource Centres, Dept of Education and Science	2017-2022
Objective 3.1 promoting Tourism as a major sector for development	Develop a County Tourism Plan which audits existing tourism infrastructure across the county and outlines a plan for future development	WCC	Visit Wexford	2017
Objective 3.1 promoting Tourism as a major sector for development, Objective 6.3 Maximising the potential of the natural and built environment/resources	Support the Barrow Tourism Awards and collaborate regionally with other regional counties to support and develop tourism activities along the Barrow	Carlow LA	Regional LA's, Waterways Ireland , Visit Wexford	2017-2022

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This work programme is aligned with the objectives of the LECP. In doing so, it is agreed by the Local Community and Development Committee. Importantly, it will form an important element of the part of the annual presentation made to the Council on the status and delivery of the LECP.

The report will be presented to the Economic Development Strategic Policy Committee for approval and monitoring thereafter.



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