

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, mentoring 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 the lead in sustainable tourism.

ACTIVITIES

- ▶ New trails at Connemara National Park (Mweelin Trail and Farm Trail) – Q3, 2020.
- ▶ Completion of new 56km off road cycle and walking trail at Wild Nephin National Park scheduled for completion Q4, 2020.

MASTERPLANS:

- ▶ Visitor Experience and Tourism Masterplan for Glenveagh National Park to inform future investment due to be completed in Q1, 2020.
- ▶ Tourism Masterplan for Malin Head to include visitor management and a range of new and enhanced visitor experiences – Q1, 2020.
- ▶ Keem Bay Masterplan to include visitor management and a new and enhanced visitor experience – Q2, 2020.
- ▶ Fanad Head Masterplan to include visitor management and a new and enhanced visitor experience – Q1, 2020.



Proposed installations for Burren Experience

LOOPED DRIVES

As part of our strategy to drive sustainable growth, we have created three Wild Atlantic Way looped 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 Q1, 2020, we will launch the following drives in partnership with communities and local authorities:

- ▶ Burren Experience.
- ▶ Mulroy Bay Drive.



Galway 2020 Excellence in Service Programme

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/>
- ▶ Access Imagery and Video Free of Charge www.failteireland.ie
- ▶ Industry Opportunities with Tourism Ireland www.tourismirelandindustryopportunities.com/home
- ▶ Digital Platforms for Wild Atlantic Way www.wildatlanticway.com #wildatlanticway www.facebook.com/irelandswaw www.youtube.com/wildatlanticway Instagram: Wild Atlantic Way

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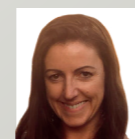
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FI-124348-WAW-1119



Wild Atlantic Way Industry Update November 2019



Fanad Head, Donegal



While 2018 was a record year for the Wild Atlantic Way in terms of both tourist numbers and tourist spend, 2019 has seen a slow down in that growth with businesses in the west reporting 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, outlining how we will grow the visitor economy of the region in a sustainable manner for the benefit of all stakeholders. Integral to 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 visitors to lesser known areas and attractions. They aim to encourage visitation in the off-peak, increasing dwell time and revenue, without compromising the environment or culture of the region.

Now in its sixth year, 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 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

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2019

PLATFORMS FOR GROWTH

Fáilte Ireland's new investment programme **Platforms for Growth 2019-2022** launched in May 2019. Over the 4-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 Immersive 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 62 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 notified in early 2020 and will be awarded between **€250,000 and €500,000** to develop a town in their area.



Limerick - Gateway to the Wild Atlantic Way

ATTRACTIONS

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

Project Name	Failte Ireland Scheme	Total Grant Amount
Atlantic Museum, Galway	Large Grants 2016	€6,444,000
Sligo Cultural Plaza	Large Grants 2016	€2,523,256
Céide Fields, Mayo	OPW Strategic Partnership	€266,250
Mulroy Drive, Donegal	Looped Drives Programme	€170,000
Burren Experience, Clare	Looped Drives Programme	€241,068
Skellig & Connemara VEDPs	New Horizons on The Wild Atlantic Way Grant Scheme 2018	€1,366,687

WILD ATLANTIC WAY GATEWAY TOWNS

Fáilte Ireland is working with key stakeholders, Irish Hotels Federation, Vintners Federation, National Parks & Wildlife Service, Chambers of Commerce, industry partners and Regional Convention Bureaux in **Limerick and Killarney** to develop plans to implement both as '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 to leverage visitors already coming to the Wild Atlantic Way. Gateways offer visitors a broad and valuable range of accommodation, visitor experiences and a vibrant day and night-time economy.

ECONOMIC IMPACT 2019

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

Based on Fáilte Ireland's national performance estimates 2019

3.7M
overseas
tourists

80,000
jobs

Over
€3bn
spend

VISITOR EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT PLANS

SKELLIG COAST – Launched in January 2016, implementation is underway by the Skellig Coast Implementation Group. Results include a 7% increase in business; 10 new business start-ups and the development of 15 new saleable experiences.

CONNEMARA COAST & ARAN ISLANDS – Launched in March 2018, this VEDP is being driven by the Connemara & Aran Islands Tourism Network (CAITN). 17 new saleable experiences have been developed and a 5% increase in occupancy for 2019 is being reported.



DINGLE PENINSULA – The VEDP is due to be launched in Q1, 2020 and a dedicated Business Supports Programme will commence early in the new year.

WEST CORK'S THREE HEADS (BALLYDEHOB TO KENMARE) – This VEDP is at final draft stage with actions being reviewed and agreed with key stakeholders and the Working Group. Implementation will commence in Q4, 2019.

WEST CORK'S HAVEN COAST (KINSALE TO BALLYDEHOB) – The Working Group has been established and the first draft will be reviewed in Q4, 2019. The VEDP will be launched Q1, 2020.

BURREN & CLIFFS OF MOHER – Pre-VEDP supports are in place and the VEDP will be launched in Q1, 2020.

CLEW BAY – The VEDP will be launched in early 2020.

NEW VEDPS 2020

- ▶ Inishowen
- ▶ Sligo
- ▶ North Kerry/South Clare

Note: All VEDP's must undergo Appropriate Assessment.

BUSINESS SUPPORTS

▶ **704 tourism business** and **2,319 individuals** on the Wild Atlantic Way engaged in Fáilte Ireland Enterprise Supports in 2019 to date.

▶ **29 individual Brexit 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, Meeting the Needs of Chinese Visitors, Routes to Market – China, China Ready COTRI Cultural Awareness and Culinary F&B Service training programmes*).

▶ Additional training programmes focused on Boosting Online Sales and Growing & Using Your Database Effectively, in addition to five Taste the Island Industry Mobilisation Workshops.

▶ Service Excellence Training was delivered to **205 businesses & 1,460 front line staff**. This included **74 In Company** programmes.

▶ In 2019, Fáilte Ireland hosted **37 Local Experts Workshop** in Donegal (8), Sligo (6), Galway (15) and Limerick (8) with a combined **1,505 participants**.

▶ **85%** 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 content.

▶ **205 new and improved B2B and B2C Saleable Experiences** developed and supported, and **500 Key Account Meetings** held, by the Wild Atlantic Way Team in 2019.



MARKETING & PUBLICITY



▶ **870,000 visitors** to wildatlanticway.com with organic search up 4% and social referrals up 50%.

▶ **19,000 Trade Referrals** from the website (outbound clicks to a trade business listing).

▶ **47,000 new followers** and fans on **social channels** within a total social community of 440,000, average engagement rate up 18% to 1.9m social media engagements across Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

▶ Domestic Consumer E-zines - **17,444 consumer subscribers**.

▶ Fáilte Ireland hosted Wild Atlantic Way media familiarisation trips valued at **€20 million EAV** with a reach of **119 million people** in 2019.



Metheal 2019 familiarisation trip, Keem Bay

NOTABLE MEDIA VISITS INCLUDED:

- ▶ Conde Nast and Lonely Planet Traveller.
- ▶ US Golf media group.
- ▶ National Geographic Traveller.
- ▶ OffThePath.com Porsche TV crew and bloggers.



Tubridy Show, Sligo



2019 HIGHLIGHTS

