

WATERFORD CHAMBER

NETWORK

ISSUE 14 • Q1 2021

RELATECARE:
**A GLOBAL SUCCESS
STORY FROM
WATERFORD**

SUZANNE PARKER:
**LEGALLY BLONDE
AND BOUND FOR
SUCCESS**

NEARFORM FLYING HIGH

**MAJOR EXPANSION ON THE WAY FOR WATERFORD'S
OVERALL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR**



**Waterford
Chamber**
Advancing business together

Sectoral Meet-Ups

Join Waterford Local
Enterprise Office and
Waterford Chamber for a
sectoral 'Meet-up' series.

With a focus on learning
and sharing ideas, hear
from the experts on
topics such as marketing,
finance, and HR.

Book your free place on
www.localenterprise.ie/Waterford



Message from Gerald Hurley, Waterford Chamber

It's hard to imagine we are a quarter way through the year already and we are still in lockdown. However, now that the vaccine roll-out has begun, we are looking forward to our economy opening up again in the coming months. Here at Waterford Chamber, we are planning ahead for when we can be together again at our various events.

This third lockdown was particularly tough for all and the Waterford Business Awards brought a welcome distraction. You can catch up on the results in the coming pages, but just to say thank you to our partners Waterford City & County Council, WLR and Dungarvan & West Waterford Chamber and all our sponsors for making the event possible, and a heartfelt congratulations to all the finalists and winners.

The *Regional Leaders Programme* has been extremely busy so far this year with weekly group sessions with our inspirational leaders and over 50 one-to-one mentoring meetings. We have held numerous webinars to support our members on topics ranging from finance to Microsoft Teams to Resurgence.

We also submitted our review of the *National Development Plan* to Government, with the support of a panel of advisors from our membership companies. In addition, we collaborated with Cork, Limerick, Galway and Dublin Chambers to make a second submission on behalf of the five cities.

We met with Minister Darragh O'Brien when he

visited Waterford and discussed a number of topics that are specific to Waterford and our members. In fact, we have been extremely active in terms of lobbying, including correspondences to Government, in relation to Covid supports and the roll-out of the *National Broadband Plan*, among others.

Among the pages ahead we are highlighting the importance of the Technological University through the words of our members. The TUSEI is something we have been extensively lobbying on for many years and most recently have engaged directly with Minister Simon Harris, Oireachtas members and various stakeholders to deliver the message that a properly funded University of substance, headquartered in Waterford, is what is expected for the region in line with the ambitions for Waterford as outlined in *Project Ireland 2040* and the *Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy*.

Also in the pages ahead, you will find a wealth of interesting articles and features, including an extensive feature on the Arts, so please enjoy this our 14th issue and I look forward to hopefully meeting you in person in the coming months.

Gerald Hurley
CEO, Waterford Chamber



IN THIS ISSUE...



06

"As a collective we are facing brighter days ahead."

– **Danette Connolly,**
Chamber President



10

"Brexit as delivered is not good news for Ireland, the EU or the UK."

– **Jim Power, Economist**



22

"The role the artist plays in society is equally as important as any other."

– **Mayor Damien**
Geoghegan

CONTENTS



**Waterford
Chamber**
Advancing business together

12



"It is a real privilege for us to build the Covid apps."
– **Cian O'Maidin**,
NearForm

18



"Remote work is not just a temporary response to this global crisis."
– **Joanne Mangan**,
Grow Remote

46



"Food for St. Patrick's Day is a celebration of everything Irish."
– **Jenny Flynn**,
Faithlegg Hotel

22 FEATURE

The curtains will rise again:
local artists explore the
business of the arts



- 14 ESG Investing is going mainstream**
- 16 Automation from the village to the global stage**
- 20 €44m OSB expansion for MEDITE SMARTPLY**
- 32 Let Skillnet take care of your training needs**
- 34 Finding the path to independence**
- 36 Economic incentives for a better Waterford**
- 38 Review to Renew: opportunity for Waterford**
- 42 Take care of your hearing**
- 44 Bite-Size News**
- 49 Waterford's Blue Plaque Trail**
- 50 Membership Directory**



■ Visit www.waterfordchamber.ie for the online edition



PUBLISHED BY:

Waterford Chamber of Commerce
2 George's Street, Waterford
Tel: 051 872639
Email: info@waterfordchamber.ie
Web: www.waterfordchamber.ie

Editor: Lynda Lawton

Design: Michael Lynagh
Advertising: Angela Jackman

DISTRIBUTION:

Digital copy emailed to 1,000+ contacts, uploaded to Chamber website and social media (15,000+ followers). 500 print copies.

© WATERFORD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2021

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means without written permission from the publisher. Opinion and comments expressed herein are not necessarily those of Waterford Chamber of Commerce.

IMAGE CREDITS:

Images on pg. 12-13, 26 by Freepik.com. Photos on pgs. 6, 50 by Fáilte Ireland. Photo on pgs. 10-11, 32 by Pexels.com. Photo on pgs. 16-17 by iStock.

THE PREMIUM
BUTCHER
Quality Meat direct to your door



VISIT US

CARROLL'S CROSS

Kilmacthomas,
Co. Waterford
T (051) 295266

CLICK & COLLECT AVAILABLE



thepremiumbutcher.ie



The parting clouds

■ By DANETTE CONNOLLY, President, Waterford Chamber

Amidst the dark cloud that is Covid-19, we were treated to a little sunshine at the Waterford Business Awards, which showcased the success of Waterford businesses locally, nationally and internationally.

While the coveted title of Overall Waterford Business of the Year deservedly fell to NearForm, there were also many other businesses who were celebrated along the way for their ingenuity and determination.

It would have been easier to say we would cancel the awards, as many others had chosen that path, but we truly believed the awards were something everyone needed and they proved a great tonic during what has been a very difficult third lockdown.

We had over 160 applications from across the city and county, which is incredible given the current climate and while we had very strong category winners, to my mind, the big winner here is the Waterford business community.

We should all be proud of our

achievements over the past year. We are all weary and wary but we have endured and survived, and while we need to keep it up for a little while longer, there is now light at the end of the tunnel.

The dark cloud is beginning to part thanks to the feeling of hope the rollout of vaccines has brought us all, as we see frontline workers and our elderly relatives getting the vaccine. We have certainly come a long way since the high figures which crippled us in January, and we must acknowledge the incredible work being done by our frontline workers and medics in this regard.

But we can also give ourselves a pat on the back. We have made many sacrifices along the way and as a collective we are facing brighter days ahead.

We always say in Waterford Chamber that *collaboration is key* and the past year has been indicative of that. We have worked side by side with many stakeholders, doing everything we can to support our members and the wider

business community. We adapted and diversified, we communicated and educated, we lobbied and fought for the things that matter most – the development of our community, be it for better Covid supports or for the Technological University of the South East.

Waterford Chamber Skillnet has brought skills and education to remote teams and continues to offer a diverse range of employer-led, part-funded training for the business community.

Never before has being a member of Waterford Chamber been more important – we have to stand together to make a real difference, and we will be there as the voice of business with you by our side.

I'm looking forward to the months ahead when our economy starts to reopen and we will be able re-explore this beautiful place we call home and support our local businesses who matter so much to our economy.



Positivity must prevail on TUSE

A university of real substance and quality will be the kind of catalyst for regeneration, innovation and development that the region so desperately needs.

According to Gerald Hurley, CEO of Waterford Chamber, “The TUSEI is an economic game changer giving the needed updraft to our region and has a basis of sustainability, based on proper upfront decisions on funding comparable to institutions in other regions of Ireland.

“The TUSEI should be of a standard capable of providing the best in third-level education that the country can offer, so as to halt the brain-drain from the region where some 60% of third-level students from the region leave for their higher education.”

Following a meeting with Waterford Oireachtas members and a selection of its members, Waterford Chamber has reaffirmed its commitment to the process of securing a Technological University for the South East.

“Our Oireachtas members were very clear on a number of things, mainly that talk of a standalone University was futile. The only option on the table is a regional TU and all our efforts now have to go into ensuring that for the TU to deliver on the regional and national

ambitions as outlined in *Project Ireland 2040*, the SE's higher education institutions need equivalent funding to other regions.

“The discussion around funding is undoubtedly one of the biggest issues because it dictates the standard of university that's going to be delivered, and we are certainly at the forefront of lobbying for this and will continue to do so. However, there is nothing to lobby for if we don't get past the application stage.

“The issue of the location of the TUSEI headquarters is a concern for the business community in Waterford who are being asked to support a policy of ‘look after you leap’. They believe that it defies logic that the headquarters would be any place other than in the capital city of the region.

“The Tánaiste has reiterated his preference for Waterford as the leading campus. In addition, over the past number of months we have had frequent correspondence and meetings with Minister Harris and recently he wrote to us to clarify a number of points we had addressed.

“In his letter he stated: ‘Commentary regarding Kilkenny in recent weeks is misleading. I am not aware of any such plans for a headquarters in Kilkenny. Such

conjecture, at this critical stage in the development process or, indeed, at any stage, is divisive and counterproductive. TUs can only come into being in the first place and prosper thereafter if all parties come together and work together. At this critical time, our concentration must be on getting the application in and over the line.’

“So to clarify where we are at right now – in the coming weeks there will be a vote of staff in both institutes to ascertain their support for the merger. If that is passed, WIT and IT Carlow will then submit an application on April 28th. That will go to an international panel who will assess the metrics. If they approve the application, it will then be up to the Government to designate the institutes as a Technological University commencing January 1st.

“From there a legal entity will be formed and a Board of Governance appointed. After nearly 50 years, this is now within our grasp within a ten-month timeframe. Let's move forward now as a collective and ensure delivery.”

TUSE critical to economic development

The Waterford business community is united in its desire to see University status for Waterford Institute of Technology. Below are the thoughts of a selection of our business leaders as we continue to lobby for a university of substance for Waterford.



"The Technological University of the South East is an essential cornerstone of the development of Waterford as the leading city in the SE Region of Ireland and of the Region being strongly represented in both national and international academic circles and league tables. The future economic prosperity of Waterford as a gateway city will be greatly enhanced if the Technological University is headquartered in Waterford and global businesses can be attracted to the region. Waterford has the infrastructure and the critical mass to support the growth and prosperity of the Technological University as it is the regional capital."

– Michael Flynn, CEO, FLI Group



"As an ambitious and growing company we at Dawn Meats are eagerly awaiting the designation of Waterford IT and IT Carlow to University status. We believe that a properly funded University of substance will empower Waterford and the South East region to compete with its Irish peers and beyond and will enhance our human capital, install confidence and enable us and the generations to come to drive our economy for the benefit of all who choose to live and work here."

– Paul Nolan, Group Development Mgr, Dawn Meats



"Waterford needs both indigenous and multinational companies to thrive. I have hosted many IDA visits, including one where I agreed to start up Bluefin, an Atlanta based encryption company. I have seen first hand how housing and education are the key areas of interest. Unfortunately, I have seen companies choose other cities due to the presence of a University. As a former WIT lecturer, I truly believe that WIT deserves to be a University with its headquarters here on the Cork Road."

– Elaine Fennelly, CEO, Crystal Valley Tech



"I'm strongly of the view that it should be centred in Waterford City and we should use some available sites in Waterford City to expand it further."

– An Tánaiste, Leo Varadkar



"I believe that TUSE would be of great benefit to the people of Waterford and the South East. We want to keep our future leaders here in the South East, we want to keep the benefit of their ambition and their forward thinking here. TUSE would be a factor in attracting multinationals to the area given the availability of locally educated and trained staff, and it would also entice high-earning and high-achieving non-locals to settle here, as there would be a local University for them to send their children. All of this would lead to a more diverse and dynamic community, and more economic security for the region."

– Eadaoin Carrick, President, Network Waterford and Director, Cantec



"I want to see the footprint in Waterford expanded and capital will be forthcoming to facilitate that. Normal business plans and appraisal processes need to be gone through. This is an opportunity to significantly expand the footprint in Waterford. That will include more students and investment, and a wider availability of courses. That is what I want to see for Waterford and the new technological university for the South East."

– Simon Harris, Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science



"The delivery of the TUSE is for me the number one priority in terms of ensuring the successful growth and development of Waterford and the entire South East Region. We have a growing Pharma/ Biotech cluster in the South East. University status will provide us with the home grown talent we need to accelerate this growth and also act as a catalyst for research and development which is crucially important to sustainability and growth in this sector."

– Andy Crowley, Managing Director, TEVA



"Waterford is the only major City in Ireland without a University. The creation of the Technological University of the SouthEast (TUSE) will harness the excellence of education resources, research and innovation, industry, social and community engagement in WIT and IT Carlow, and develop a new university for the City of Waterford and the wider South-East that will be a catalyst for social, cultural and economic change."

– Southern Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy



"WIT in our view is an excellent 3rd level education institute which already develops top class graduates. MEDITE SMARTPLY employs numerous WIT graduates from a wide range of different disciplines, Engineering, Business, Forestry, ICT, Science, all applicable to MEDITE SMARTPLY's business and future strategy. As an indigenous Irish export business competing in international markets, the skills and credentials of our people is a key factor in our success. University accreditation (including greater post graduate capability) would certainly enhance the quality and range of courses and therefore the graduates which are essential to our business."

– Neil Foot, CEO, MEDITE SMARTPLY

BREXIT has changed a lot

■ By JIM POWER, Economist

Since that fateful day in June 2016, Brexit has become an all-consuming topic of conversation and of intense uncertainty. The EU negotiations with the UK were difficult, complicated, and full of rancour, and this has certainly complicated the early days of the EU's relationship and co-operation with the UK.

The UK exited the EU on 31st January 2020, and then exited the transition mechanism on 31st December 2020, thereby formally

leaving behind the Single European Market trading environment. Thankfully, on 24th December, a trade deal of sorts was agreed between both parties, which avoided the so-called 'hard Brexit', and the imposition of a WTO tariff regime that would have ensued in the event of no deal being agreed.

While the most negative 'hard Brexit' scenario was avoided, it must be recognised that the 'bare bones' trade deal agreed will still have significant negative



implications for Ireland's trade relationship with the UK market, which is vital for indigenous Irish SMEs in particular.

The deal agreed relates to goods, with the consequence that tariffs or quotas will not apply to trade in goods between the EU and the UK. However, the UK decision to leave the single market and the customs union, will necessitate

border, customs, rules of origin, and veterinary checks and controls that will cause delays and increased bureaucracy. This will increase the cost of trade, the cost of some goods for the consumer, and the choice of goods available to the Irish consumer. The rules of origin provisions in particular are extremely complicated, and are causing serious difficulties. Goods coming from the EU to Ireland though Britain are extremely problematical and authorities are struggling to cope.

DIFFICULTIES

Less than three months into the new world, many difficulties are being experienced. Customs checks and bureaucracy are seriously complicating bi-lateral trade between the UK and Ireland. Online shopping that originates from the UK has become difficult and expensive (Amazon is setting up a distribution centre in Dublin as a result); Irish supermarkets are struggling to source some products from the UK; there is some evidence of higher prices; and generally, the important trading relationship has become more difficult. The notion of frictionless trade between Ireland and the UK has unfortunately been confined to history.

It is likely that some of the issues could be described as teething problems that should eventually be sorted out as business pragmatism comes to the fore, but the reality is that there has been a fundamental deterioration in the ability to engage in trade with the UK.

The Northern Ireland Protocol is also causing serious difficulties. In order to avoid border checks on the Island of Ireland, the EU and the UK agreed that some goods would be subject to checks when they are transported between Britain and Northern Ireland. This

would include health certificates for Agri-food shipments. A temporary 'grace period', during which there would be rule exemptions, was given to the end of March, after which time more stringent rules would apply. The UK Government has unilaterally sought to push the grace period out to the beginning of October, and this has raised the ire of the EU. This move comes on top of the UK introduction of the 'Single Markets Bill' last year, and the attempt by the EU earlier this year to invoke Article 16 as a result of vaccine concerns. These moves have seriously complicated the political situation in Northern Ireland. This was inevitable because the Northern Ireland Protocol was a patched-up compromise deal driven by short-term concerns, rather than long-term realities. The chickens are now coming home to roost.

All in all, the relationship between the EU and the UK is very toxic at the moment. The appointment of the UK's Brexit negotiator, David Frost, to manage the future relationship with the EU has not helped matters. Frost does not have a good relationship with the UK, and negative feelings appear to be very mutual.

It is way too early to reach any conclusions about the impact of Brexit on the Irish or UK economies, as the impact of COVID-19 is just so all pervasive at the moment. Indeed, the UK Prime Minister is lucky in the sense that he can blame all of the UK's ills on COVID-19 rather than Brexit, and so it could be some time before the real folly of his actions becomes apparent.

UNCERTAINTY AHEAD

The UK is now gone from the EU, but the future will be characterised by ongoing negotiations and haggling in relation to many

aspects of relations between the EU and the UK, which is pretty much the situation between the EU and Switzerland. This implies significant uncertainty ahead on many aspects of the relationship between both parties. The hope is that future negotiations will gradually address the issues and complications caused by Brexit, and that trade will become freer over time. However, the toxic nature of the relationship at the moment does not bode well for a tranquil and constructive relationship, or meaningful progress.

The bottom line is that Brexit as delivered is not good news for Ireland, the EU or the UK, but it could have been considerably worse if WTO rules had materialised. For Ireland, the opportunities have got to be exploited in areas such as import substitution and the fact that Ireland is now the only native English-speaking country in the EU (if tiny Malta is ignored). This has got to offer some opportunities on the foreign direct investment front. Ireland has made good progress in putting ferry services in place to bypass the British land bridge. More will be needed, and there certainly would appear to be further opportunities for the Port of Waterford in this regard.

Waterford is now the 5th largest native English-speaking city in the EU. We should exploit that fact, but getting a fully-fledged university for the South East headquartered in Waterford should be the immediate priority for local stakeholders.

■ Jim Power is a graduate of UCD with a BA in Economics & Politics, and a Master of Economic Science Degree. He writes regular columns in both *The Irish Examiner* and *The Sunday Business Post* online edition and contributes to numerous other newspapers and magazines. Jim will be delighted to discuss any upcoming projects with which he might be able to assist you.

WATERFORD

2020



HOME SOIL RECOGNITION FOR GLOBAL TECH COMPANY **NEARFORM**

NearForm was named Overall Waterford Business of the Year at the Waterford Business Awards by Mayor of Waterford City & County, Cllr Damien Geoghegan, during a live virtual awards ceremony, hosted by Waterford Chamber and supported by Waterford City & County Council, Dungarvan & West Waterford Chamber and WLR.

The multi-national company also picked up the Technology & Innovation award during the streamed event and is the second time the Tramore-based company has won the top prize, collecting it first back in 2016.

NearForm is one of the biggest success stories to come out of Waterford, if not Ireland, during Covid-19, having created the tracker app, which is now being used globally. Just a week before the Business Awards win, the company secured a multi-million euro investment from Columbia Capital, which will be used to scale up operations and accelerate recruitment in sales, marketing, engineering and design, across North America and Europe.

The company, founded by Tramore native Cian O'Maidin, currently employs around 160 people, most based in the sunny South East, but plans are afoot to grow that number considerably.

Accepting the award, Mr O'Maidin said: "This award recognises the commitment, talent and hard work across the board here at NearForm. There were a lot of weekends and late nights getting projects over the line during the year and our people have gone above and beyond. It is a real privilege for us to build the Covid apps. How cool is it that we get to build something that saves lives and it's our job! It's going to be pretty crazy over the next few years for us and we can't wait to see what happens next."

In addition, dynamic duo David and Sandra Whelan, founders of Immersive VR Education, were announced as Entrepreneurs of the Year. David and Sandra founded their award-winning virtual reality software company in 2014, dedicated to advancing how people collaborate and consume content globally.

Based in Waterford's Cleaboy Business Park, Immersive has a team of 60 and a reputation for delivering outstanding virtual reality experiences over its short history and has won global awards for not only its bespoke experiences but its globally-used ENGAGE Communication Software Platform.

Sandra and David Whelan listed their company on the London Stock Exchange and Euronext in March 2018, less than four years



from the company's inception and became the first tech company to list on the Exchange in 17 years.

Commenting during the awards ceremony, which was hosted by WLR's Damien Tiernan and Mary O'Neill, Sandra said: "It is very special to be recognised on home soil and thank you to Faithlegg for sponsoring the Entrepreneur of the Year Award. We are proud Waterford people and are committed to the South East, which has a world-class emerging tech community."

"We are so proud of our team – they are the best in the business, and we look forward to many more years of creating innovative products for our global market."

■ **The Waterford Business Awards were viewed by thousands all over the globe and are still available watch online on the Waterford Chamber YouTube channel, Facebook page and on www.waterfordchamber.ie**



WINNERS

CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE
RELATECARE

ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR
DAVID & SANDRA WHELAN,
IMMERSIVE VR EDUCATION

EXCELLENCE IN E-COMMERCE
MURPHY LARKIN TIMBER PRODUCTS

FOOD & BEVERAGE
GLORIOUS SUSHI

GREEN EXCELLENCE
ENERPOWER

MARKETING EXCELLENCE
LIBERTY BLUE ESTATE AGENTS

MICRO BUSINESS OF THE YEAR
INN THE DOGHOUSE

NEW BUSINESS OF THE YEAR
IASC SEAFOOD BAR

SME OF THE YEAR
POWERFLOW ELECTRONICS

TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION
NEARFORM

**TOURISM ACTIVITY/ATTRACTION
OF THE YEAR**
DUNMORE ADVENTURE

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS



ESG Investing is going mainstream

■ By JOHN SMILES, Managing Director, Adelphi Financial Brokers

Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) investing is one of the fastest-growing areas of finance, moving from a niche industry to a major disruptor.

Asset owners, big and small are becoming more aware of social and environmental issues. In 2017, *Blue Planet II*, presented by David Attenborough, opened many people's eyes to the problem of plastic pollution. The programme was so influential in generating awareness it has been dubbed the 'Blue Planet effect'.

Regulation is driving the consideration of environmental and social externalities in finance. EU legislation is due in 2021 requiring European advisers to:

- Take account of their clients' ESG preferences as part of the suitability process
- Disclose how they take sustainability risks into account in the selection process of financial products for clients, regardless of the sustainability preferences of the end investor

Responsible investing is complex, its terminology is still not completely formalised, regulations and investment providers keep evolving, and questions remain whether investing sustainably affects performance and hence the likelihood of meeting financial goals.

Historically, a lot of terms have been used for investing that incorporates social, environmental, or moral considerations along with pure financial considerations. These terms include ethical, green, socially conscious, ESG, sustainable and socially responsible investing (SRI). Responsible investment is

not philanthropy, which though responsible, does not aim to achieve a financial return. Equally, not all investing that falls outside of responsible investment is automatically 'irresponsible'. For example, investing in a passive tracker of the FTSE 100 or S&P 500 might be better described as 'agnostic' in a responsibility sense.

ESG refers to the Environmental, Social and Governance characteristics of a company or business. These facets of the business contribute to the risks and opportunities it is exposed to now and in future.

Environmental refers to a company's dependency and impact on 'natural capital', the stock of renewable and non-renewable natural resources. This includes how the business impacts or is impacted by climate change; what natural resources it produces or uses and whether it contributes to pollution or waste. All these factors affect how susceptible the company is to reputational and regulatory risk; asset devaluation (including unusable 'stranded assets'), and compensation claims e.g. the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill which severely affected BP.

Environmental factors can also be opportunities. Companies building windfarms are benefitting from increasing demand for renewable energy.

Social factors include how the company affects customers, looks after its staff, deals with suppliers, and interacts with the communities in which it operates. Handling these issues badly can lead to reputational risk and, in extreme cases, the withdrawal of the



company's social license to operate (e.g. payday lenders like Wonga collapsed after the UK government clamped down on the extremely high interest rates they charged).

Social factors can also represent opportunities, like the construction of social housing or responsible micro-finance.

Governance is the process by which a company is managed and overseen, including factors like board structure to create proper accountability, and management remuneration to create alignment of interest with shareholders.

Failures of governance can be very serious. Enron collapsed into bankruptcy because management was rewarded based on short-term share price movements and the CFO was given free rein to create off-balance sheet vehicles to hide debt and inflate profits.

ESG investing does not prohibit any specific investments as long as material ESG risks are identified and taken into account as part of the investment decision.

ESG funds can invest in oil companies; provided they are aware of the risk of oil reserves becoming uneconomic and the share price reflects this risk.

■ John is a Qualified Financial Adviser and a Retirement Planning Adviser. He has been advising a broad range of personal and business clients on Life, Pensions and Investments for 30 years.

PRISM



WATERFORD SPRAOI IMAGINING

BIG

"It's technology married with liberal arts, married with the humanities, that yields us the results that make our heart sing."

Steve Jobs

R&D model of 'Prism' conceived and designed in Waterford at Spraoi Studios.

Spraoi stands on broad shoulders



Automation from the village to the global stage

■ By LYNDA LAWTON, Waterford Chamber

How many times have you had to turn your camera off during a video call because of a poor connection? It's happened to most of us but the answer for Gerry Horan of Horan Automation is never.

But what is even more surprising is that Gerry operates his global business from the small rural village of Drangan, Co. Tipperary – population 100!

"We got fibre optic broadband to the village a couple of years ago and it has made a huge difference

to the business. All our drawings are done on big software packages and we need to be able to send and receive 3D drawings instantly. I've often been on Teams meetings with peers in the UK and Germany and I've been the only one able to leave my video on!", Gerry explained.

Horan Automation has been steadily growing in the village since 1996. "I served my time as an apprentice fitter and spent 16 years servicing and repairing machinery. The company I worked for closed, and with no job, I started to work



for myself. We had small children so they couldn't go hungry, and with my wife Kathleen, we just decided to go for it – no business plan or anything.

"All these years later we're still here and still together! Kathleen is the financial controller of the

company and we have a very strict rule – she manages the money and I take care of the engineering side and we don't cross swords. We never talk about work at home, unless it's good news of course and that's our law for keeping us sane.

"The world has changed a lot since we started but in other ways it stays the same. Robots were there back then, they have just moved on a small bit, but when it comes down to it plastic bottles still need caps and labels and need to go onto pallets. We've just modernised as we've gone along."

With a team of seven and contractors in Shanghai, Gerry still plays a very hands-on role in the business. "I love nothing more than to meet a client, walk around the factory floor with them and try figure out how we can help them. There isn't a machine that leaves our premises without any of us knowing exactly how to fix it and I'm happy to go off fixing machines all over the country myself.

"Thankfully Covid hasn't affected us too much as we are an essential service, except for the amount of travel I would do. Our contract manufacturer is in Shanghai, so

normally I would go out every six weeks or so and test the machines to make sure they were of CE quality. We design everything on site in Drangan, they are manufactured in Shanghai with my supervision and then returned to us for installation and commissioning."

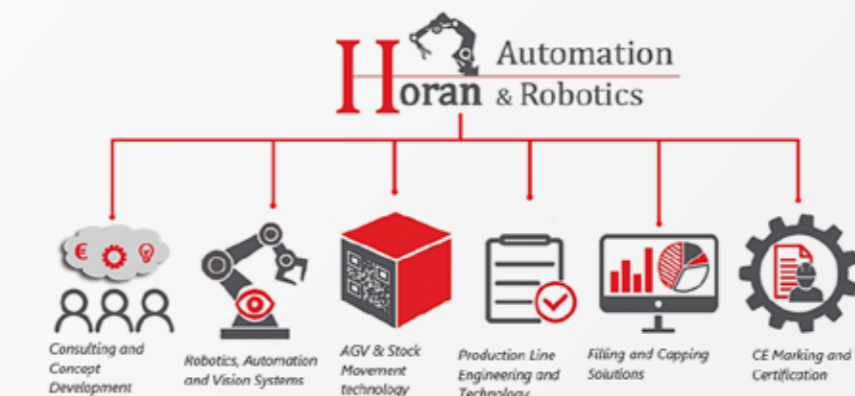
Asked where his thoughts lie on the age-old debate of automation replacing people, Gerry says, "The people who don't automate don't progress, it's that simple. Given what the salaries are in Ireland, you just can't afford to have people for every job. There's also a health and safety issue – some jobs can't be done by the human hand. A machine can get 4ml of medicine into a bottle, fill 60 bottles per minute, put the cap on and label it. People don't want to do that kind of work anymore.

"However, people generally don't automate unless they have to. Operators are still more flexible, in that a robot can only do one thing, a person can move from job to job. Covid has resulted in more automation in terms of two-metre distancing particularly on production lines. You're now looking at double shifts to ensure distance

and every job is taking twice the time, but it's very rare we would see companies letting people go in favour of automations. If you can't afford salaries, it's very doubtful you can afford automation, as it really is a three- or four-year investment."

While Gerry may spend his day surrounded by robots and machinery, for him it's still all about the people. "We wouldn't have our business if it wasn't for the lads. We're a great team and we take our time when recruiting to get it right. We want to mind our staff and build our business alongside them. As for our customers, we are accountable for everything that leaves here – if they ring us, we're on the way and we value our key customers who have been with us every step of the way.

"We envisage the next couple of years to be extremely busy based on the enquiries we have already received and we are looking forward to providing our unique service to all our clients both here and beyond."



Innovate | Automate | Prosper

Horan Automation and Robotics
Drangan
Thurles
Co. Tipperary
sales@horan.ie
052 915 2208
www.horan.ie



How to thrive in a remote working environment

■ By JOANNE MANGAN, Employers Lead with Grow Remote

One of the most dramatic transformations we have witnessed over the past year has been the shift to remote working, with employers everywhere being forced to shutter their doors and find ways to make remote working work for their people and for their businesses. As we pass the milestone of one year since COVID reached our shores, it is becoming clear that remote work is not just a temporary response to this global crisis. While the pandemic has been the catalyst for change, remote work is here to stay. How can businesses adapt and thrive in this brave new world?

At Grow Remote we are working with employers across Ireland to unlock the answers to this question. We know that remote work can add immense value to businesses, help build sustainable local

communities and make a positive impact on our environment. Companies are more competitive when they offer remote work, giving them the edge when it comes to attracting and retaining top talent. A fully remote ecosystem means that companies can access talent from anywhere in Ireland, not just from the often limited pool living in their local area. In the past, many business leaders were skeptical about remote work, mainly due to concerns about employee productivity, but research has shown that not only are remote workers more productive, they also take fewer sick days with lower employee attrition. Remote work can also lead to cost savings for companies by allowing for more efficient use of office space, leading to lower overheads such as rent and rates. At the heart of any successful

business is the wellbeing of their employees, and remote work enables this by providing a better work-life balance, leading to increased employee engagement and job satisfaction.

The benefits of remote work extend far beyond the boundaries of companies and their employees. Local communities thrive and grow when people can work anywhere. Remote work gives people the freedom to choose where they want to live, bringing more people back into local communities, which in turn opens up and sustains further local job opportunities.

But remote work is not without its challenges, and over the past year many businesses and their employees have experienced these

challenges first-hand. Managers are concerned about onboarding new staff and keeping their employees engaged, employees are struggling with stress, isolation and 'Zoom fatigue'. The lines between home and work life are blurred, with people working longer hours due to the expectation that they need to be always available.

"The first step is to recognise an important fact: what we have experienced over the past year was not remote work, it was crisis management."

So how can businesses address these challenges as we navigate into the uncertainty of a post-COVID world? The first step is to recognise an important fact: what we have experienced over the past year was not remote work, it was crisis management. Apart from those companies who had embraced remote work prior to the onset of the pandemic, for most organisations remote work was forced upon them in an emergency setting. In an ideal world this is not how a business transformation should occur – it should be a journey, not a big bang.

At Grow Remote we have engaged with many companies at various stages along this journey and we have identified three key pillars which an organisation should consider as they plan their remote work strategy: technology, policy and culture.

TECHNOLOGY

Companies should recognise that technology alone is not the primary enabler of a successful remote work culture. Nonetheless, technology can provide the tools which companies can deploy to

allow for better remote engagement, communication and collaboration. Email, Slack, Zoom and Microsoft Teams are some of the primary communication tools while teams can also leverage project management technologies such as Trello, Miro, Teamwork or Basecamp to foster sharing and collaboration.

POLICY

Employers need to fully understand their obligations in relation to remote work. This means embedding remote work into all company policies and providing people managers and employees with adequate training to ensure successful implementation of these policies. To enable this, Grow Remote have collaborated with Laois and Offaly ETB, IDA Ireland and Solas to create two online training programmes designed to upskill prospective and current remote workers and front-line managers in remote working policies and best practices.

To unlock the pool of national talent, companies need to adopt 'remote-first' recruitment policies, such as advertising jobs as location-agnostic. Employers who want to employ people location-less can post jobs on the Grow Remote 'Remote Jobs Board', making these jobs visible and accessible to Ireland's growing remote work community.

CULTURE

Perhaps the most challenging aspect of remote work for employers is embedding the right culture within their organisations. To do this, companies need to think differently about how they and their people are working. It is not enough to simply 'add remote work and stir', without making changes at a cultural level within the organisation. Output needs to replace presenteeism as a measure of productivity. Managers need coaching, training and leadership support to enable them to effectively engage with and lead their teams. Leaders and managers



must encourage their teams to disconnect and, in this respect, it is critical that they lead by example. Recognition, career development and promotion opportunities also need to be equally accessible to all employees, whether office-based or remote.

One of the most important pillars of a sustainable remote work culture is community. Isolation has been an issue for many working remotely during the pandemic, but there are steps organisations can take to ensure their remote workforce feel connected. As a community development organisation, Grow Remote has supported the establishment of 130 local chapters, where remote workers can meet others in their local community and participate in a wide range of community events and initiatives. Employers can promote awareness of local chapters within their organisations or avail of opportunities to contribute to and participate in local events.

At Grow Remote we recognise that we do not yet have all the answers, which is why we are engaging with employers across Ireland to learn from their experiences and to share best practices. We work closely with employers at every stage in their remote work journey, from those who are unsure about how to proceed, those who are in the process of transitioning to remote, to employers who have been remote-first for years. Remote work is a new frontier for many, and we are all learning as we travel along this uncertain but exciting path.

■ Visit Grow Remote, a non-profit organisation, at www.growremote.ie



Digital image of the new Drying and Screening process being built at SmartPly

€44m OSB expansion for MEDITE SMARTPLY in Waterford

■ By LYNDA LAWTON, Waterford Chamber

Covid, Brexit, the Green Deal, a massive expansion and a huge increase in product demand – what more could 2020 throw at MEDITE SMARTPLY?

But for CEO Neil Foot it was just one day at a time, coupled with the optimism that “2021 will be a lot better.”

“When Covid landed on us all last March, we took the immediate view that we were going to be under serious pressure and rapidly adjusted our business model and budgets,” explains Neil. “However, wood products and forestry was deemed essential so it didn’t affect our production too badly and we began to see an increase in demand, particularly from hospitals like the special Covid “Nightingale Hospitals” in the UK which used our panels for cubicles, while other healthcare facilities were looking for components for rapid build solutions that we could provide. We also saw a surge in demand for packaging and when lockdown eased, the DIY, Repair, Maintenance and Improvement demand kicked in. So thankfully this all resulted in 2020 being a

lot stronger than we might have expected.

“From an operational perspective, we introduced strict Covid protocols so ensure employee welfare and we had a 100% success rate to Christmas. All our plants are highly automated so people are not in close proximity anyway and our larger sites are all set up with camera and voice communication technology. We changed our canteen and washroom facilities and adapted without major impact. A lot was accomplished on-site by our employees who had the skills to create what was necessary and that paid off in terms of being Covid-free.

“Following the community outbreak over the Christmas holiday, we were impacted to a limited extent and consequently introduced antigen testing which was 100% embraced by staff.”

BREXIT

Of course thrown into the mix was Brexit and as MEDITE SMARTPLY has quite a concentration of timber processing for export, there were bound to be concerns.

“We got through the Brexit uncertainty eventually thankfully with no tariffs,” says Neil. “We are an Irish-owned business heavily dependent on the UK construction products market, so tariffs or any other significant impediment would have presented a serious challenge. Our customers are handling materials for all types of construction and furniture manufacture with Just-In-Time deliveries. Although we have long-standing relationships with them, if we can’t deliver then they will look elsewhere, so as you can imagine a lot of work went into reassuring people we would be there for them. The positive is that by maintaining our service through the double crisis we actually enhanced our reputation and consolidated our relationships against the backdrop of uncertainty.

THE GREEN DEAL

2020 also brought the ramping up of the Green Deal from Brussels, a key component of which is to make construction much more sustainable by substituting high carbon materials such as cement, metals and plastics. It is becoming

higher and higher on the global agenda and sustainability credentials are increasingly important for companies like MEDITE SMARTPLY whose products end up as key components in the fabric of a building whether that is a new home, a school extension or a new Tesco store.

According to Neil, “We have to offer something different from the cheaper, less sustainable alternatives and to prove that we have been certified to the highest standards. Our materials are being used in hospitals and childcare facilities and we use as much natural materials as possible – 96% wood content from renewable sources and the remainder is glue – which results in a very environmentally-friendly product. Our products capture and lock up carbon, so for example every cubic meter soaks up approximately one tonne of carbon. Our extensive product offering can be viewed on our MEDITE SMARTPLY website www.mdfosb.com.

“Our plants use bio-energy on a day-to-day basis with over 70% of our energy being produced from sawdust and bark. We also have a sustainability strategy for the next five years to increase renewable energy and rainwater harvesting in our processes as well as developing higher performing products that are resistant to fire and moisture.

“We knew the trend was coming so we got out ahead of it thanks to our industry network and working closely with colleagues in Brussels. We believe that the Green Deal



House of Heroes is a hospice in Sweden (using Medite Tricoya Extreme) – Sweden’s Safe Sanctuary: ‘House of Heroes’. Photo by Lindman Photography.

is a very positive opportunity for the Irish forest industry and if we continue to grow our forest resource (currently the lowest in Europe at 11%) we should have the raw materials for manufacturing society’s future needs and ensured sustainability.”

EXPANSION

This year will bring a €44 million investment to the SmartPly Belview plant resulting in a 25% capacity increase for OSB. Works are currently underway by contractor David Flynn Ltd and it is anticipated the extension will open this time next year.

“We are also at an advanced stage in our MDF diversification strategy to produce Medite Tricoya Extreme at commercial scale in Clonmel from a first-in-the-world fibre acetylation facility which is a joint-venture under construction in the UK.

“We are all going to have to live with Covid for a lot longer and we are investing as we see demand growing. We will be in a position to create more jobs and reach more markets which is very exciting and a strong vote of confidence by our parent company, Coillte (www.coillte.ie).

“We have found the South East a good place to recruit and as it is a very attractive place to live and work, it’s not a hard sell to get people to relocate here from abroad

either. The bulk of our employees are educated in the south-east many having graduated from WIT, be it in engineering, forestry, ICT or business – they really do produce high class graduates. The Technological University can only enhance the range and quality as the foundations are already there. The talent compares favourably with any other area and we do also see a lot of potential with the postgraduate students. In fact, we have been working with WIT in the areas of bio-chemistry and forestry, and having a university will certainly enhance their research capabilities.

“There is a lot of job satisfaction here, as you see a raw material being transformed through a state-of-the-art manufacturing process – from a simple, natural log to a highly-specified finished product which inspires creativity and a sense of empowerment in our people. We have nurtured some 25 ha of forestry around our sites filled with nature’s biodiversity and have even seen deer wandering through the grounds at night. MEDITE SMARTPLY has never been so relevant to the needs and challenges of society today and in the future. All these aspects motivate us to succeed and we couldn’t be prouder of our staff and the organisation we have created here in the South East.”

The curtains will rise again

■ By CLLR DAMIEN GEOGHEGAN, Mayor of the City and County of Waterford

If a week is a long time in politics, then just think what a year is in the lifetime of the Arts in Waterford! On March 12th 2020, as I left the Theatre Royal in Waterford, having heartily laughed my way through the previous couple of hours, in the company of the wonderful cast of *The Full Monty*, little did I (or anyone else) think, that as the lights went down on that performance, and the house lights came on, that we'd be here in 2021 and there's still no indication as to when we can take our seats and watch the curtain rise once again in our theatres and performance spaces.

The Arts Community was one of the first sectors hit by this pandemic, when the country began to go into lockdown on 13th March 2020. In the words of

one of my great friends in the Arts Community in Waterford: "Our whole world came crashing down." Live performances stopped, lights were switched off, microphones were silenced, the greasepaint was left lying idle and costumes were literally left hanging in dressing rooms and storage spaces. People's livelihoods were put on hold for an indeterminate amount of time. Many thousands of highly-qualified and professional people in support-services to the arts had their contracts cancelled. The phone calls initially came to cancel all immediate work, and then the phone literally stopped ringing and reality kicked in.

Festivals and events were cancelled or scaled back to a fraction of what went before, and of course those who practice the arts in all

its forms, being the creative and imaginative individuals that they are, looked at all means available to them to continue to create, perform and entertain. But the sad reality is that creativity and imagination can only get you so far during restrictions and lockdowns, and you do need paying audiences. Of course, we saw the wonderful online content and contributions from so many wonderful people, and these certainly lifted our spirits and continue to do so. This online content took enormous work and input and kept us going during the darkest of days and nights.

The arts play a significant role in our daily lives. We read books, we watch TV, we listen to the music and poetry of our choice. People don't give a second thought to the work that goes into producing all

works of art. Quite often the arts, and the role that the performing arts play in our community and in our lives is understated and undervalued.

As a country, Ireland is known and famed world-wide for its artists, writers, actors, playwrights, musicians and poets, and we have a proud tradition here in Waterford that can hold its own with any place in Ireland.

Indeed, Waterford has produced singers, actors, musicians, poets, playwrights, producers, promoters and technicians who've gone on to national and international acclaim, and we can be enormously proud of the contribution that Waterford people have made to all facets of the arts.

But we must remember, our best days lie ahead. Our theatres and

performing spaces will come back to life again. The house lights will fade and the curtains will rise, as the orchestra strike up and our hearts will soar once again as we are transported to the most magical of places. Young and old, rich and poor, will once again come together in mutual appreciation of light-hearted musicals and serious plays alike, and we will once again rise in unison having witnessed the magic of theatre and live performance.

And when (not if) our theatres and performance spaces open up, go that extra mile to support those who put their work and creative efforts together to entertain and brighten our lives. If you can afford it, please support and subscribe to the arts in all its forms in whatever way you can. Buy a piece of

original art, take out an advert in a show programme, give the street-busker and performer an extra couple of euro, sponsor a spot prize, buy an extra ticket and bring a friend.

All of our lives are enriched by the arts, and will continue to do so, as long as we open our hearts and minds and recognise that the role the artist plays in society is equally as important as any other. What a dull world we would live in without that magic and creativity.

In the words of Henri Matisse "Creativity Takes Courage".

SUPPORT THE ARTS!



A Covid unsung hero

Covid-19 has been tough and yet we have found many heroes living amongst us in our community. We can never thank our healthcare and frontline workers enough. But there are others who have risen to the challenge and brought such joy to our lives.

For many people, the highlight of their week during the lockdown/restrictions has been to tune in to YouTube or Facebook every Sunday night, where Wayne Brown has put together fantastic shows and compilation videos of musicals, *Tops of the Town* shows and plays, in order to keep people entertained at home.

Mayor of Waterford City & County, Cllr Damien Geoghegan paid tribute to Wayne by saying, "Wayne, who's a central figure in the arts in Waterford, has gone above and beyond since last March, by putting together these fantastic shows on a weekly basis. He deserves enormous credit as he brought back great memories of some fantastic moments in musical theatre in Waterford, and indeed brought the golden moments of Waterford Theatre to a brand new audience. It's a labour of love for Wayne, and he put in an enormous amount of work each week in order to entertain us as we tuned in from our homes. All lovers of the arts in Waterford miss the buzz of the theatre, and Wayne deserves our thanks and praise, and as Mayor I wish to put on record my appreciation of his time and fantastic efforts over the last year. Take a well-deserved bow Wayne!"

And so say all of us.

Ballybricken to Bridgerton

As the arts continues to face immeasurable suffering, Waterford's Jamie Beamish has seen his star rise during the pandemic. Here Lynda Lawton talks to the *Bridgerton* star about the hit Netflix series, the business of show business and how the arts can recover post Covid-19.



Q: Jamie, congratulations on *Bridgerton*. The ratings and reviews are incredible, you must be on cloud nine?

A: Thanks so much! It's completely mental to be honest and I keep pinching myself. You take on a job and hope it will be good, but you never expect it to explode in the way *Bridgerton* has! Netflix are projecting 82 million households to have viewed it which is just astonishing. We had a feeling we were doing something decent but none of us could have predicted the phenomenon it has become. As for myself, the reaction to my character, Nigel Berbrooke, has come as a complete shock. He's become this hate figure online and it's just brilliant! Yeah, I'm completely buzzing. I've been in enough flops over the years but to be part of something like this is amazing. It just shows it's a mad life and you never know where it will lead you.

Q: One would expect after such success the offers would be rolling in, but I assume like everyone else in the arts, projects are stalled due to the pandemic?

A: Yeah, just my luck to be in the biggest TV show in the world at the exact time that the world has stopped for a bit. Theatre of course is in a bad situation, but TV and film

are coming back bit by bit as it's easier to control the environment. A couple of things have come in, but dates keep changing because of changes in restrictions etc. But you try to keep optimistic. If I wasn't an optimist I wouldn't be an actor. I always say, 'tomorrow your life can change.' I still hold that tenet true. I was having a pretty quiet couple of years when I got the offer for *Bridgerton* and suddenly everything changed. That can happen again with one phone call. The trick is to hold your nerve. It's not easy but it's worth it.

Q: The arts is your business. Do you feel you are being properly supported during these times?

A: On one level I do because as a community we are supporting each other as best we can. But it was always that way. People that work in the arts inherently feel a community and a camaraderie with each other, we are a tribe, and that has been evident during the pandemic. Trying to make things happen even though it's really really hard to at the moment.

On a whole other level I don't think we are being supported at all in some aspects, and I mean that on a government level. To hear the Chief Medical Officer in Ireland say that he didn't take theatre into consideration when asked why

cinemas could reopen and theatres not was unbelievable. I work and live between England and Ireland and both governments seem to have hung the arts out to dry, despite the fact that in both countries the arts are a major contributor to the economy and a massive cultural export. I find it completely crazy. Theatre especially has taken a huge battering. It's disgraceful and needs to be dealt with.

Q: What can the arts community do to resurge as quickly as possible?

A: It's going to be hard when things start getting back to normal because of the lack of support and clarity from those in charge as I said above. But as a community we are used to weathering tough times and coming back from them. We are nothing if not resourceful. At the moment theatre is at the forefront of my mind personally because of my love for it and how much I miss it. I think we will need to be conscientious in how we get people back into the seats in the Theatre Royal and Garter Lane, as people will be nervous about going into an enclosed space with a large group at first. I think a way of doing that is to give them things that they feel they can't miss, make those first projects 'events', say that we are not just back, we are back with a bang. People will be crying out for

the communal experience they've been lacking for so long so let's make sure that there's an amazing experience waiting for them. I have some ideas...

Q: You are also a key character in *Derry Girls*. Are there plans to go back filming?

A: Oh yeah! The next thing I know for definite I'll be doing is *Derry Girls* Series 3, which we were supposed to film last year but with everything happening as it did it's been postponed. I do think that's the right decision though. It's important to keep people safe and also important to do the show in the best way possible and not compromise it to fit within restrictions. The work and the fans deserve that so it's better to wait. It will be worth waiting for let me tell you.

Q: Having had a successful career now on stage and screen, what are your aspirations for the future?

A: Well the main aspiration is just to keep working. I'm so, so lucky to have had a career like I had. I still can't quite believe it. But at the end of the day I'm not some star actor where the phone is always ringing. I'm a jobbing actor who has to audition like everyone else and the real success is being able to work at something I love and pay my rent by doing it. The success of *Bridgerton* and my own part in it has been so exciting but it will pass as the world moves on to the next big thing. It was fun while it lasted but I'm back to waiting for my agent to ring with a casting. I work extremely hard at my business like anyone does, but I have no interest in being 'famous'. I have great interest in doing good work though.



There is another aspiration I have now though and it's because of our current situation and is linked to something I said above. I do hope to be able to make one of the 'events' that I talked about. Something that would entice people back into the theatre in Waterford. In the first lockdown I used my time to write a new play and my hope is to present it with some of Waterford's best actors coming back home to support its audiences and community. All going well this will happen when theatres are allowed to reopen at full capacity. So keep an eye out for *The Horrors*. To say any more would spoil it, but I'd love to hear the buzz of a big crowd taking their seats and watching a story about their city unfold in front of them and be lost in it. That's something to really aspire to.

Q: What advice would you give to anybody starting out in the business?

A: I could go on about going to drama school or do this or do that, you can find all that advice elsewhere and its good advice but there are people that will talk about that better than me. The main things for me are: work hard, stay positive and keep your nerve. It's one of the hardest professions to be successful in but all the blood, sweat and tears can be worth it. It's both the best and worst job in the world at any one time but if you love it keep at it. Try not to let all the knocks beat you down. And if you find that you're not getting work, make your own. Collaborate with like-minded people. It's always worth it.

Q: Who have been your mentors along the way and how important is it to have someone to guide you through your career?

A: A major influence for me was Bro. Ben Hanlon in De La Salle College. He instilled in his students a love of music because his own passion for it was infectious. That love of music led to me getting involved in local musical societies

and on and on. He's a huge figure in the cultural life of Waterford and his contribution cannot be understated and he's still doing it. An amazing man. An actor I've always looked up to is Dermot Crowley. A great man of Cork and the actor I would like to be when I grow up (if that ever happens). We worked together in a play in the West End 17 years ago and he has been such a supporter ever since. Legend. And if anyone has 'guided' me through my career it would have been my first agent Hannah Hodgkinson. She believed in me when I didn't believe in myself and any success I might be seen to be having now is directly because of her and all her hard work. I was with her for 15 years and we are still really close and I talk to her regularly and seek her advice often. I've been very lucky to have people like that in my life.

Q: Waterford is a city steeped in the arts. How important is that as a marketing tool for our city?

A: It's imperative really. I always say that the reason I'm doing what I'm doing is because I'm from Waterford. The access to the arts in the city is so brilliant. In normal times there always seems to be something going on. It is something that our city can be proud of and can mark us out from everywhere else. Years ago I sat in a rehearsal room with the legendary director Sir Peter Hall and he was asking me where I was from and I told him Waterford and talked a bit about it and then remarked to him that there were two other actors from Waterford in his productions that season: Andrew Macklin and Matthew Dunphy. He said to me: 'You must be from a very talented place.' He was right, I am, and everyone should know it.

Q: What is your favourite thing about Waterford?

A: For all the reasons I've mentioned above and also that it's home. Not London home. Home home. There's a difference.

A21stCentury Renaissance

...somanypossibilities

■ By MICHAEL JOSEPH

From the French word “re-birth”, the renaissance came following the middle ages, a time for the revival of learning and wisdom following huge cultural decline. The last twelve months has devastated so many industries in every corner of our planet in some way shape or form. However, what it is very evident is the huge decline of our cultural landscape – theatre, cinema, art, music, festivals, dance, club culture, all of which bring people together. We find joy, communion, we ask questions, we learn, we are moved, we share moments!

The arts will sadly be the last industry to return, due to in most cases the large number of people it brings together. And that’s just it, it brings people together, that is what is profoundly sad about it all. But let’s not forget, the arts is what has kept us all going on platforms such as Netflix, Disney+, radio, online streams etc. They provided an escape from the madness surrounding us.

The arts are more present than we realise sometimes and not just as entertainment but as an educational tool. One of the first



experiences for children is to recreate the nativity, an often comical experience for parents seeing their children dressed in tea towels and fighting over who holds the baby Jesus. Third sheep from the left as



it turns out was my theatrical debut – I got rave reviews in the Scoil Lorcaín Gazette!

The recent TV sensation *It’s a Sin* has educated a new generation about the AIDS crisis of the 80s/90s. People took to social media to say they were in tears, so moved by the story and performances, but fundamentally they have maybe learned to have empathy towards a disease that caused countless deaths and a section of society that had been cruelly cast aside.

People want to dance again, to dance with strangers, bringing people back face-to-face to let it all out on the floor, to engage with each other in soul-stirring music. We will share a collective WAHEEEYY when that first glass smashes off the floor! I believe music to be the closest thing we will ever have to a time machine. We all have that song in our heart that the second we hear it – bang – we are back on that beach feeling that summer heat, smelling that certain perfume,



reliving that special time! A song that reminds of us a lost loved one, a bittersweet comfort that will always connect us. A show we have been to that has us on the edge of our seats by a cast of remarkable performers singing with every bit of their heart, the music being played by virtuosic musicians making us leap to our feet in that last key change, tears streaming down our faces at a shared moment of pure magic. A concert that we went to with our friends after a few tough months, that restored our spirit and gave us the energy to pick ourselves up again. I truly believe when this is over, and the arts return, there will be a 21st century renaissance. The crew and creatives I have worked with and met over the last 20 years have been some of the most inspiring and hard-working people I have ever met and I know that we are all ready to create and share like never before, to see that audience fill those beautiful auditoriums and hear them laugh and cry. To see thousands of people

at outdoor concerts in unison sing back the lyrics of a band’s biggest hit – goosebumps!

To quote the final words from composer Stephen Sondheim’s musical *Sunday in the Park with George* – “White! A blank page or canvas...So many possibilities.”

■ Michael Joseph is a professional actor from Waterford. Working primarily in musical theatre he has performed all over the world from London to New York and every corner of Ireland. Michael is well-known for his work in Panto having playing leading roles in the biggest pantos here in Ireland and the UK. One of his last theatre jobs prior to the pandemic was the Ireland and UK tour of the smash hit *Angela’s Ashes* which finished in London in which he was the winner of Best Supporting Actor in the BroadwayWorld.com awards.





Spraoi Spirits

We regularly confuse artistry with creativity. High-end artistic, scientific and sporting talents are rare, but everyday people are creative every day. Unleashing people's creativity is Spraoi's mission.

Spraoi studios are Ireland's only purpose-built street arts and spectacle creation centre. Their presence positions Waterford as a national R&D axis for these artforms. Along with generating Spraoi's own artistic output, the studios are regularly used by street artists from all over Ireland to test, develop and rehearse new ideas.

In Waterford, the company is best known for its annual international festival and parade. Spraoi has fired a generation of Waterford imaginations. Since the 1990s there has been no August Bank Holiday in Waterford, it's simply 'The Spraoi Weekend'. Spraoi is rightfully owned in the imaginations of Waterford people at home and away.

Nationally, Spraoi represents Waterford's authenticity, wit and innovation. For almost 30 years it has been a creative ambassador,

showcasing the diverse and inclusive people we have become. It has a proven track-record of delivering huge spectacles at a diverse array of venues ranging from Dublin Castle to the River Lee. Spraoi harnesses creativity, artistry and technology to tilt Irish hearts and minds.

Spraoi has transitioned from a local arts organisation to an identifiable Waterford brand. Nationally, Spraoi intertwines with the city's identity and image. It reflects a locale where creative human endeavour in the new

technology, pharma and hospitality sectors is charting new histories for people and place. As a not-for-profit Spraoi frequently partners with these commercials to deliver shared community goals.

As béarla Spraoi translates as 'fun' or 'play'. Playfulness is at the heart of invention and as computer scientist Alan Kay said: "The best way to predict the future is to invent it." Spraoi invents its future this summer with 'Prism', a new generation spectacle show world premiering in Waterford.



The dramatic effect

■ By VICKI GRAHAM

Our children's creativity, musicality and laughter has been silenced. Our industry has been silenced.

I'm writing this from the eerily quite and empty studio I lease from where my stage school operates – or should I say where it used to because the last proper class we had was on 12th March last year.

Since then, like other stage and dance schools, we've had to close our doors to keep our students and staff, and of course our own families, safe. We did get back briefly in late September for three weeks but hadn't even begun work on an end-of-term production when we had to close again.

Of course it's understandable and inevitable as so many other businesses have had to do similar but all the same it's sad and not just for my business and me personally, but for the many students for which drama or singing and dancing is their passion and sometimes only pastime outside of school.

Everyone speaks about mental

health these days and how important it is, and for a lot of these kids and young adults drama is a means of expressing themselves in a safe environment and can be an outlet for the everyday stresses they might be feeling at school or elsewhere – stresses that for many during this pandemic have escalated and changed.

It's also a well-known fact that being involved in performing arts is great for boosting confidence. I've seen countless shy children and children who might be struggling elsewhere begin to flourish after a few short weeks of classes. Unfortunately, at the moment, being away from stage school is having a very negative effect on many of them. I've seen some who have reverted back to being crippling self-conscious again and that's heart-breaking.

I do offer a Zoom class on a pay what you can/if you can basis, but this doesn't suit the vast majority. For some it's bad internet coverage or not having enough devices in the



home to facilitate work/school and hobbies. Those few getting involved they seem to love it, but it goes against the very nature of drama and musical theatre – being online and distanced. But it's something and these days I try to see the positive wherever I can. I love teaching them and simply seeing and having fun with those I do see every week. And if I'm being honest, the sessions do me as much good as it does them. I've never, in my lifetime, been out of work more than a couple of weeks and not having a show to plan or be in is taking its toll on me too. But I know we will be back, hopefully sooner rather than later, and I can't wait to open up these doors and welcome home my stage school family with open arms but socially distanced of course!

GROW WITH WATERFORD CHAMBER

COMPANY, PRODUCT, SERVICE OR INNOVATION PROMOTION



Waterford Chamber
Advancing business together

-  **6K** monthly page views on Chamber website
-  **23K** social media followers & **200K** monthly impressions
-  Email database of over **1.5K** contacts
-  **500+** Chamber members across all business sectors

TO DISCUSS EVENTS & WEBINAR OPTIONS, CONTACT:
Lynda - 087 937 9894
Angela - 083 462 7579

A theatrical revival

Theatre Royal strives to be at the heart of its community. It stirs emotions, entertains, enlightens, and informs us. We now ask ourselves how do we ensure that this ambition is realised as we work through a worldwide pandemic and how do we now need to adapt to ensure Resurgence – recovery, rebirth, revival? Here we speak to Theatre Royal Manager, Mary Boland, who was a guest speaker at our recent Resurgence 25X online event, in association with ATPO.



Q: How have the team, management and board dealt with the situation to date and managed continuing steps to recovery?

A: Our development plan is ongoing and constantly reviewed and updated by the team with oversight by the Theatre board.

On March 13th last we immediately reviewed the staffing structure in terms of the needs of the organisation and the importance of retaining our staff long-term which then informed our decisions on the retention or laying-off staff during the Covid lockdown. Only those critical to the ongoing operation were retained – those needed

to stay in touch with our artists, producers, audiences and funding stakeholders. We immediately applied for support for wages through the TWSS scheme.

Return to work was slowly implemented, in line with government guidelines, with the focus at all times on the re-opening of the Theatre when appropriate to do so.

On re-opening on August 13th a minimum number of the team returned while adhering to strict health and safety regulations.

From September most of the core team were back on their normal hours, be they part-time or full-time, as while audience numbers were low, the work

involved in ensuring the health and safety of all our staff, performers and patrons was intensified as we were open to live audience.

Our Covid-19 Response Team was established to take responsibility for the design and implementation of our health and safety plan while premises adjustments to front of house and backstage areas were carried out to ensure the complete safety of all.

Each and every member of the Theatre team has adapted their proficiencies, upskilled in the areas of risk assessments and H&S protocols and, having received training, has now become an expert in Covid hygiene and management.

Q: How has regional and national collaboration come to the fore during these times?

A: One very positive development that has emerged has been the collective engagement that the arts sector nationally has experienced. We have come together to discuss, share, plan and advocate for the future of the arts.

National partnerships have been developed with NCFA, Theatre Forum, Arts Council and so on. This engagement has strengthened Theatre Royal's place on the national map and positioned the theatre as the cultural leader in the region due to its diverse offering and experiences. As part of the ongoing partnerships developed, plans for regional artists supports and opportunities will be rolled out in 2021.

Q: The Theatre has adapted from live stage to live stream. How has that worked?

A: When it became apparent last March that our country and indeed the world needed to shut down the theatre team began to ask questions and consider options. How can we continue to engage with artists and audiences? How can we ensure the sector in our city and county remains vibrant? How do we continue to engage with the arts, our peers and colleagues? Very quickly we began to adapt, to consider new ways of creating opportunities for arts practitioners and new ways for audiences to view live performance. We sought out financial aid which has enabled the theatre to invest in equipment and training to enable the team to upskill and present work.

One example was 'Keeping the Light On' – four artists all living within 5 km radius of the theatre a Singer, Theatre Actor, Spoken Word artist and Musical Theatre performer were invited to perform on the Theatre Royal stage. Over the course of a day each arrived at their designated time and separately performed a piece relevant to their art form, each

piece was filmed and then disseminated online to audiences with the message, the theatre team is keeping the light on for you. This exercise carried out by the theatres Technical Manager, Dermot Quinn in partnership with John Loftus Media, gave us the confidence to consider and deliver work to audiences digitally through recorded and live streams and to date close to 9,000 audience members have viewed theatre, music, clowning, pantomime, and this work has been viewed in living rooms, classrooms, residential care homes and has been viewed as far afield as Germany, USA, Australia and in many counties throughout Ireland.

Q: So where to from here?

A: Future creative practises and work is being programmed for 2021. This work can continue inside the theatre building, it can rehearse, develop and perform throughout what we see will be a quiet time. If we are unable to welcome in live audiences, the work will then be live streamed out to people's homes as a preview of what's to come later. This is a very exciting prospect as what it will do is allow work to continue to be created with the view to being seen at a later date. Once we see a light at the end of that tunnel we will and have already begun to do so, build a programme of activity that includes all performance genres – commercial comedy, music, national theatre, pantomime as well as art led music, theatre, dance etc and we plan to host a cultural explosion for the latter end of 2021. Is this too ambitious and optimistic? Perhaps. But we need to be ambitious and optimistic to ensure the continued future engagement for and with artists for and with audiences.



RESURGENCE 25X for the Arts

Date: 7th April 2021

Time: 11am to 1pm

Building on the extraordinary success of the initial Resurgence 25X event, during which Mary Boland was a contributor, ATPO in association with the Theatre Royal will convene a webinar dedicated to a vibrant recovery from COVID-19 for the Arts. All those working in the Arts domain have been heavily impacted by the pandemic. This event is intended as a platform for ideas that will help its recovery. The intention is to share, magnify, and multiply the ideas and opportunities for a resurgence for the Arts that can be adopted now and show fruit in 2025.

Each of the guest speakers has been given a '5 for 25X' challenge, to speak about their perspective on resurgence for the Arts based on their knowledge, experience, and ideas for our recovery from COVID-19 over the next few years (to 2025). To add to the challenge each speaker is asked to provide at least 5 examples of resurgence in their delivery. The guest speakers are:

- Sean Corcoran (High Impact Sand Artist. Image below courtesy of Sean).
- Siobhan Brady (Guinness World Record High Altitude Harpist)
- Eoin Kilkenny (Production and Event Manager)
- Megan Nolan (Novelist)
- David Duffy (Musician, Producer)

Keep an eye on social media for more details.

Let Waterford Chamber Skillnet take care of your training needs

Waterford Chamber Skillnet is a dynamic industry-led training network that responds to your training requirements.

With a dedicated team of Learning & Development specialists, Network Manager Tommie Ryan and his team are on hand to source and arrange training for you and your team at a time and pace that suits you.

With an extensive panel of approved quality training providers, Waterford Chamber Skillnet can

offer companies considerable cost savings on training programmes at a reduced rate.

Tommie outlines, "We moved into digital training sessions as a rapid response to the uncertainty and to assist employers and their staff to transition into working from home and to help those on the COVID payment to maintain their skills. It has been really heartening to see how many employers supported their staff training during this time, and we will continue to offer all the training companies

need, when they need it, and remain open to requests and suggestions."

In 2020 Waterford Chamber Skillnet assisted companies with funding towards training programmes in excess of €500,000.

So let Tommie and the team support you in organising training for your business. Email Tommie at tommie.ryan@waterfordchamber.ie or call 085 125 4668.

How to avail of Training Supports and Funding

Contact Waterford Chamber Skillnet Network Manager Tommie Ryan to discuss your training needs and funding opportunities!

Email: tommie.ryan@waterfordchamber.ie | Call: 085 125 4668

For more information and current open training courses visit www.waterfordskillnet.ie



Waterford Chamber Skillnet is co-funded by Skillnet Ireland and network companies. Skillnet Ireland is funded from the National Training Fund through the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.



An Roinn Breisoideachais agus Ardoideachais, Taighde, Nuálaíochta agus Eolaíochta
Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science



BRANDING YOUR WORLD[®]

SIGNAGE | FLEET BRANDING | INTERIOR BRANDING

End to end service with Universal Graphics

Universal Graphics, Ireland's leading providers of fleet branding, signage, and interior branding, have moved to a new larger premises at 11b Six Crossroads Business Park. The company, formerly known as Design Display, has now fully rebranded as Universal Graphics.

Well-known Waterford man Shay Purcell has recently joined the Waterford office and is looking forward to building the Universal Graphics brand in the region.

"Our talent here in the Waterford office is incredibly strong and we are proud to have retained the diverse and talented skillset that Design Display was so well known for," Shay said. "Everything is done in-house from design to production to installation, so we offer an end to end, high-quality service. Our skills and technology means we can cater for any job be it advanced laser cutting, CNC routing, spraying, lamination, and finishing. The manufacture of signs is one of our main strengths here in Waterford."

As well as their new modern facility in Waterford, Universal Graphics has a 30,000sq ft production facility in Monaghan and a climate-controlled wrapping centre on the NVD campus in Dublin, which allows them to wrap vehicles in advance of distribution, saving

customers time and money. According to Shay, *"This is great for Waterford as we can call on the expertise and resources of our other facilities when needed."*

With over 50 staff across the country and 10 in Waterford alone, Universal Graphics are leading the way in terms of branding solutions in Ireland. Part owned by proud Waterford man Mervyn O'Callaghan, they are at the cutting edge in terms of printing systems and are constantly investing in the latest technology to offer the best service. For example, if you need to match a specific colour in your brand guidelines, Universal Graphics have it covered with their own Spectrophotometer-controlled colour management system. They are unique in that they are the only company in Ireland that can offer printed warranties backed up by the leading vinyl manufacturers like Avery, Arlon, and 3M. Their installation teams are fully certified by these leading vinyl manufacturers.

In summary, Shay noted that *"We have a great facility and incredible expertise here in Waterford, particularly in signage. Universal Graphics is proud to build on the excellent reputation the late Paul Finn built with Design Display. With the backing of our nationwide presence, we plan to grow significantly in Waterford and the south east into the future."*

Universal Graphics Ltd., Unit 11B, Six Crossroads Business Park Kilbarry, Waterford X91 EP90

Contact: (051) 378 685

www.ugbranding.com

sales@ugwaterford.com



Finding the path to independence for Waterford migrants

■ By LYNDA LAWTON, Waterford Chamber

For most of us, it is impossible to imagine fleeing for your life from a war-torn country or a city with the utmost corruption, but for over 5,000 people in Waterford and the South East, that is a stark reality.

Thankfully for them, they have made their way safely to our shores and with the help of Waterford Integration Services, a humanitarian Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), they have begun to slowly build a new life for themselves.

Many are young adults, sent by their families who have handed over their life savings to give just

one family member a chance. Here in Waterford, they seek out education, a place to call home and a chance to earn a living so they can send money home to the rest of their family who are still living in unimaginable conditions.

Waterford Integration Services work with Waterford City & County Council, Embassies, Immigration Department, other NGOs, agencies, academics and the private sector to provide a variety of supports to their clients, including advocacy, integration, human rights resources, professional service referrals, access to English language classes, outreach, integration

activities, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) implementation, and policy development.

Access to education is an ongoing issue in Direct Provision Centres but the coming together of Elaine Fennelly, CEO of Crystal Valley Tech and Anne Nolan of Waterford Integration Services, during the Waterford Chamber Regional Leaders Programme, has resulted in the business community stepping up in support of our migrant residents.

Working together, Anne and Elaine very quickly figured out a way that the ICT firms of the South East could support vulnerable

migrants. Many ICT firms replace laptops quite frequently to keep up with the demands of hungry software, so they often have a pool of second-hand laptops. After an initial appeal by Elaine who is in regular contact with tech firms in the region, Sun Life Financial and Radius Technologies, both based in Waterford, donated 30 second-hand laptops to support the development of technology skills, programme access and delivery and assist with home schooling.

According to Anne, “The laptops have made a huge difference in terms of training and education. We work closely with WWETB, and having access to technology has allowed our clients to upskill and get ready for the workforce. A lot of these people are highly educated but their qualifications don’t necessarily transfer to Ireland, so they need to requalify or upskill with added language and technology competency.

“We are appealing to the business community to consider migrant workers for open roles. They are desperate to work and contribute to the economy. Securing jobs is a major step on their journey to independence and having a diverse workforce can only be of benefit to our community.”

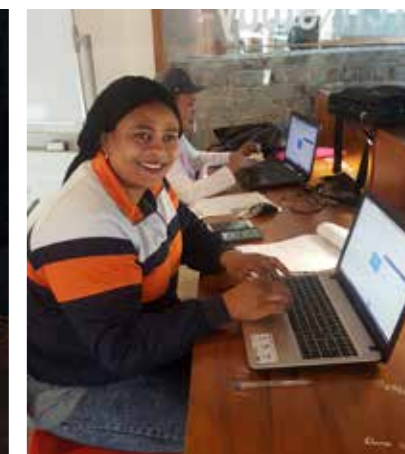
Waterford Integration Services host a number of cultural events throughout the year, including the ever popular Africa Day, and this year held ‘Choose to Challenge’ as part of International Women’s Day, with a host of



inspirational speakers and the support of Waterford Library Services and Europe Direct Waterford.

“It was a fantastic event and our speakers were honest and open about the challenges and opportunities they have faced in their lives,” said Anne. “We want to inspire our migrants and lead them on the path to success and independence and with the help of the Waterford community, we can do just that.”

■ For further information, visit www.waterfordintegrationservices.ie





Economic incentives for a better Waterford

As Waterford City & County Council look to finalise their Development Plan in the coming weeks, a number of incentive schemes are now on offer to attract new businesses and assist with urban development. Here we take a look at some of those on offer.

SHOP FRONT IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

A budget of €20,000 has been allocated to build on the pilot Shop Front Improvement Scheme launched in the city centre in 2020, with a further 20,000 allocated to Dungarvan to promote the use of Irish language signage. The scheme opens this month and closes to applications in April, with all works to be completed before the year end. The objectives of the scheme are:

- To enhance the appearance of retail and commercial premises in Waterford City centre by encouraging and supporting owners of local retail and commercial premises to improve their individual shop fronts
- To support the vitality and vibrancy of Waterford City centre with positive benefits for all
- Create a more attractive environment that residents, visitors, shoppers and businesses can enjoy

What type of buildings/premises are eligible?

- Commercial premises fronting onto a public road
- Commercial premises in the city centre (as defined by the Development Plan)
- Owners or leaseholders of indigenous commercial businesses/retail premises – premises that are part of a franchise or chain are not eligible
- Commercial premises where there are no commercial rates outstanding to Waterford Council

The scheme provides for up to 50% of the cost of shopfront refurbishment, depending on the work proposed with a maximum allowable contribution of €2,000 per applicant depending on the nature of the works. Proposals should be in line with Waterford Council's 'Shopfront and Signage Guidance Document' (2019).

Type of Work (Examples only):

- Up to a max of €1,000:
 - Paint and redecorate shop front
 - Decluttering and repair of shop fronts
- Up to a max of €2,000
 - Replace shopfront and/or signage
 - Material changes to shopfront
 - Removal of high level signage
 - Specified works to upper floors, subject to improvements at ground level

■ For details, please contact:

Maureen Fitzsimons (city centre)
mfitzsimons@waterfordcouncil.ie
087 7649173

Bernadette Drohan (Dungarvan)
bdrohan@waterfordcouncil.ie
087 2586597



Comhairle Cathrach & Contae Phort Láirge
Waterford City & County Council

Economic Incentive Scheme 2021–2022

Rates Incentive

Rates free
for 3 years

Start-up Grant

Year 1:
Fit-out contribution
€3,000

Year 2:
Overhead costs
€2,000

Year 3:
Overhead costs
€1,000

Soft Supports

Site identification
and market data

Training, mentoring,
networking, marketing

ECONOMIC INCENTIVE SCHEME FOR VACANT PROPERTIES IN URBAN AREAS 2021–2022

Waterford City & County Council is offering incentives over a three-year period to attract new retail and other businesses within the core retail area of the city centre, towns and village centres of Waterford in order to bring vibrancy and vitality to the city and town centres.

It is intended to ensure that any incoming retail or service use will respect and enhance the

multifaceted character of the area and will allow and encourage a diversity of uses to increase its overall attractiveness for shopping, leisure and business purposes.

There will be a strong presumption in favour of grant-aid for higher order comparison retail outlets including fashion outlets – both multiple and independent stores, 'lifestyle stores', flagship stores, niche and specialist retailers such as home furnishings, beauty products, jewellery and bookshops.

■ For details, please contact

Maureen Fitzsimons (city centre)
mfitzsimons@waterfordcouncil.ie
087 7649173

Bernadette Drohan (Dungarvan)
bdrohan@waterfordcouncil.ie
087 2586597

Lisa Grant (all other areas)
Economic Development Officer
lgrant@waterfordcouncil.ie
087 2124242

LIVING CITIES INITIATIVE (OPEN UNTIL END 2022)

The Living City Initiative is a scheme of property tax incentives designed to regenerate both historic buildings and other buildings in specified cities. The scheme applies to certain "special regeneration areas" (SRAs) in the centres of Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway, Waterford and Kilkenny.

These areas have been designated for the purposes of the scheme by Order of the Minister for Finance.

Residential element of the initiative

- The residential element of the Living City initiative provides for an income tax deduction for qualifying expenditure incurred on the refurbishment

or conversion of a building for use as a dwelling over a ten-year period.

- The building must have been constructed before 1915 and be located in a Special Regeneration Area of the city in question.
- The property must be occupied by the claimant as his/her sole or main residence in order to avail of the income tax relief

Commercial element of the initiative

- The commercial element of the Living City initiative provides for capital allowances over a seven-year period in respect of qualifying expenditure incurred on the refurbishment or conversion of a property located in a

Special Regeneration Area for use for the purpose of retailing goods or the provision of services within the State.

- The amount of tax relief available under the commercial element of the initiative is effectively capped at €200,000 for any individual project.

Full details on the scheme are available at <https://www.waterfordcouncil.ie/departments/economic-development/living-city-initiative/index.htm>

■ For details, please contact:

Finn Brophy
fbrophy@waterfordcouncil.ie
087 826 3387

REVIEW TO RENEW presents opportunity to highlight Waterford

Waterford Chamber, in consultation with members, submitted a comprehensive document on Review to Renew of the National Development Plan (NDP). Below is an extract from our submission, highlighting the key priorities for Waterford in terms of capital investment.

INTRODUCTION

Waterford is the largest urban centre in the South East of Ireland and the fifth largest city in the Republic of Ireland. It has a population of over 53,000 with a population of 603,902 within a 60-minute drive, making it the largest region outside of Dublin.

The *National Planning Framework* (NPF) had identified the city as an important driver of national growth and a Regional City of Scale. This is confirmed in the *Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region* and the *Waterford City Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan* (2020). The development plan for the city will see considerable growth in Waterford's population and employment base as a driver for metropolitan and regional enterprise growth to 2040.

We are predicting average economic growth in the Waterford City Region of 4.3% year-on-year over

the next 20 years. Waterford City Region Total Gross-Value Added (GVA) is expected to grow by €1bn per annum from €21bn in 2018 to €53bn by 2040, a 150% increase. This integrates a +3% annual rise in GVA per capita from €35,000 in 2018 to €67,000 in 2040.

GVA per capita has increased by 74% since the year 2000, making Waterford City the fastest-growing city region in Ireland and the 7th fastest-growing region in the EU in terms of GVA per capita.

The Waterford City Region has long been under-funded, as acknowledged by Government. However, based on the projections above, it has massive potential and needs the appropriate funding by Government in order to deliver the ambitions set out by *Project Ireland 2040*.

To ensure Regional Growth, in consultation with our 600+ members and various stakeholders, we have identified a number of

key requirements, which are listed below in order of priority. We feel Climate Action is an integral part of our regional development and so have included it in each of the priorities below.

EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CHILDCARE

EDUCATION

Waterford Chamber has long championed the delivery of a properly funded university of substance, headquartered in Waterford, for the South East region and we are encouraged to see the same outlined in the *National Development Plan*.

To achieve the aspirations of *Project Ireland 2040*, the University has to be of an international standard and have the ability to compete with universities in the other cities, namely UL, NUIG and UCC.

While we support the merging of WIT and IT Carlow, merging them

in their current form will not benefit the region. TUSE must be a game-changer for the region, it cannot simply be a name change.

Investment must come in the form of a robust campus offering a full spectrum of courses and research. It needs to be seen as a world-class research centre, something it is already on course to becoming. We need to ensure high-level professionals such as cardiologists feel they are at the cutting edge of research and innovation. We want the TUSE to attract these people to live and work in Waterford.

To achieve this, TUSE will need new buildings, new programmes, new facilities and strong leadership to ensure the delivery of exemplary higher education to stop the current 'brain drain' from the region.

We support WIT's immediate need for 17,000m² of teaching space for their immediate growth requirements to 2025 and the desire to have 25,000m² additional research space.

HEALTH

To ensure that Waterford remains an attractive place to live and somewhere that people will consider favourably when relocating, it is vital that University Hospital Waterford (UHW) continues to develop its range of services and specialties commensurate with serving a large regional hinterland. The hospital is not only a vital piece of social infrastructure in the South East region, but also a key economic driver and a source of valuable direct and indirect employment. Any diminution in services must be resisted and the hospital's role enhanced.

A growing and ageing population will only increase demand for healthcare provision and, notwithstanding advances in primary care, acute services will remain largely concentrated in our major hospitals.



The region is serviced by both and public and private offering, namely by UPMC, and with proper investment, those two areas could grow. UPMC's capacity is increasing within the region with the acquisition of Aut Even in Kilkenny and having a state-of-the-art facility at Whitfield in Waterford, and we have seen how public and private collaboration can benefit the region during the ongoing pandemic.

The HSE are looking to continue outsourcing to UPMC from other regions and there is a strong argument to be made for the region to become a centre of excellence for medicine. We already have strength in terms of research and, with proper funding, enhancing the research capabilities would strengthen the region's position as a leader in health.

HOUSING AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Waterford's position in the Government's *Project Ireland 2040* is clearly identified as one of the five cities where a population growth of a minimum of 35,000 persons has been specifically targeted for the regional city to deliver.

To achieve this minimum population target growth, Waterford requires to deliver approximately 750 new residential homes per year for the next 19 years. This equates to an investment program

of approximately €185m per annum to meet these targets.

Waterford is ideally positioned with sufficient serviced lands and road infrastructure to meet the short to medium-term delivery of the housing need. However, given the targeted growth is almost an increase of 35% of the current population, a short, medium to long-term investment program is required to be implemented and funded now to deliver key infrastructure such as roads, water, sewerage, schools, recreational facilities etc., so that a targeted and planned approach can be adopted, designed and delivered in advance.

This will ensure Waterford is best positioned, not just to meet the targeted minimum population growth over the next 19 years, but that it can identify, plan and market, with confidence, the delivery of housing for our regional City to align with the Government's *Project Ireland 2040* strategy and policy.

MOVING TO THE CITY CENTRE.

We have a lot of vacant properties, derelict properties, and accommodation over shops that are not accessible from the street. We have a lot of vacant buildings that are not suitable for family accommodation. We have to examine repurposing them. We have to look at pockets of vacant sites that can be redeveloped as suitable housing and repurpose some of the existing



buildings that are there. We should also be looking globally for ideas – urban living is not new. Waterford needs a vibrant city centre in order to grow, and to achieve that we need the proper planning legislation and the funding to deliver.

We welcome to acceleration of the roll out of the *National Broadband Plan* as this is key to the future development of our city. We need to be creating smart homes with proper broadband connectivity so we can attract professionals and investors to come here.

AIRPORTS & PORTS

AIRPORT

A recent survey of the largest employers in the region highlighted the importance of the €12m investment in a new runway extension at Waterford Airport, which will allow for greater international connectivity. The airport is vitally important for future investment and attracting multi-national companies to the region.

This investment will allow for 300,000 to 400,000 additional passengers landing directly into the region which would be a tremendous boost for tourism.

PORT

€140m investment in the region's deep sea port. The annual value of goods through the Port was estimated at €1.7 billion in 2017 with 1,000 jobs directly and indirectly

supported. We estimated a +4% growth per annum growth forecast to 2040. With Belview Waterford Port and Rosslare being the closest Irish ports to mainland Europe, and with both ports being key components of the EU's *Ten-T Transport Network*, the regional ports are strategic assets in ensuring the continued growth of Irish exports.

Port of Waterford provides infrastructure that is relevant both regionally and nationally. The importance of the Port needs to continue to be reflected in the *National Development Plan* and in regional/local development plans/spatial strategies and future revisions of National Ports Policy.

ENTERPRISE, SKILLS AND INNOVATION CAPACITY

The Waterford City region has in recent years seen a significant shift in terms of enterprise and innovation, with a number of key clusters emerging. This is timely, given *Project Ireland* calls for "building competitive clusterings in key sectors" and "a competitive, innovative and resilient regional enterprise base is essential to provide the jobs and employment opportunities for people to live and prosper in the regions."

Key areas emerging with the region include pharma and biopharma, IT and ICT, med-tech,

agri-tech, advanced manufacturing and financial services.

To service these areas, we need to ensure we have enough graduates coming through from a well-rounded University and that our region is attractive to the talent required to sustain and grow these industries. We need to ensure continued support and development of our talent through work-based and apprentice-type educational programmes, especially at the higher levels of the *National Framework of Qualifications*.

We need to ensure the right supports are in place to attract further FDI. We also need to ensure the future growth of our research centres so these professionals can be at the coalface of cutting-edge research and development, be it in terms of med-tech, IT or robotics, to name but a few.

Funding is required to enhance our innovation ecosystem by supporting our entrepreneurs and developing enterprise within our region.

Further investment is needed in terms of digital infrastructure and broadband to allow for regional collaboration and growth into the future.

ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The improvement of the rail service to Dublin from Waterford is essential. We need early and hourly direct services to Dublin to ensure better connectivity and for faster commute times.

A rail service from Waterford and Carlow directly is also required, to allow for direct connectivity between the two University campuses.

NATIONAL ROAD NETWORK

A key priority for effective development in Waterford, the South East and wider Southern Region must be to upgrade the N24 to motorway standard thereby providing motorway connectivity between Waterford to the M8 through Cahir and onwards to Limerick.

On completion, connectivity between the cities of Cork, Limerick, Waterford, and Galway will be ensured in a speedy, cost-effective manner enabling the four city regions to become a very real and viable counterbalance to growth and development in the Dublin region.

The N24 Limerick—Waterford route features some of the worst stretches of national primary road in the country and disconnects Waterford and the South East from the Limerick/Midwest and Galway/West Regions. This also means these regions have impaired access to/from the Europort in Rosslare which is many visitors' entry-point to Ireland.

The need for improved connectivity between Galway, Limerick, Cork and Waterford was

underlined by the Irish Academy of Engineering in their May 2016 publication *On Ireland's Atlantic City Regions*.

More efficient and cost-competitive public transport within and to/from Waterford is also vital to supporting population growth.

CULTURE, HERITAGE AND SPORT

With the accolade of the 'Sunny South East', the region is one of the most attractive tourist destinations in the country. With over 300km of coastline, river valleys, hiking trails and a 46km cycle and walk greenway, which is the longest in Ireland, the region is characterised by quaint seaside and country style villages and towns steeped in Ireland's ancient history of castles, churches and abbeys. In addition, with over 64 national and international events and festivals including Viking Marathon, Spraoi, Winterval, Film Festival, Tramore Races and Harvest Food Festival, tourism is a vibrant industry and synonymous with the Waterford City region, accounting for over one million visitors annually and

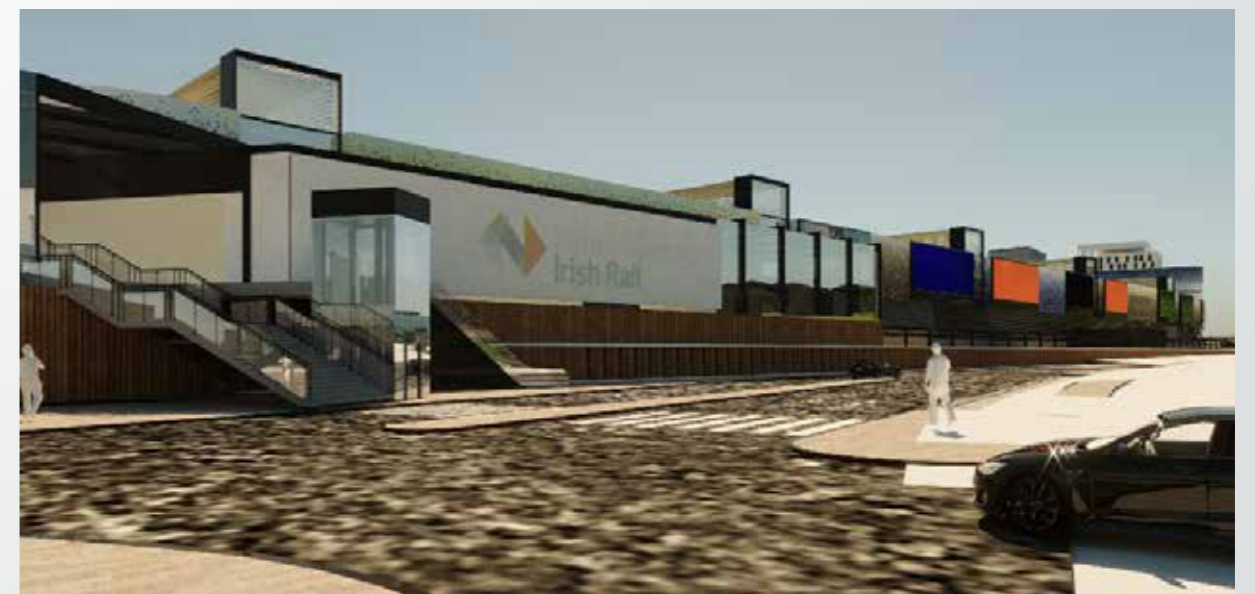
6% of the State's total tourism revenue. The South East has everything to offer and yet suffers from a serious lack of investment. With proper funding, a fully functioning airport and better road and rail connections, the South East has the potential to become one of the most sought-after locations in Europe.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Waterford Chamber welcomes the announcement with regards the *National Broadband Plan* and has been lobbying in this regard for quite some time. It is essential in terms of connectivity not just in the city centre but also for rural development.

WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

While the urban settlement is well serviced by Irish Water, the rural areas are in need are major investment. Tramore in particular needs addressing.



Take care of your hearing

■ By LYNDA LAWTON, Waterford Chamber

“Where are my ears buds?”, “Has anyone seen my headphones?”, “Turn the TV down!” – sound familiar? It used be: “Where are my keys?” Oh for simpler times!

And while it may seem funny, looking after our hearing is in fact hugely important. Never have we been more reliant on technology to communicate.

So what’s the professional advice? Abe Yakob is a senior clinical Audiologist in the Audiology Department in University Hospital Waterford and also hosts a private clinic on Saturdays at Nolke Opticians.

According to Abe, “Normal face-to-face conversation sits around 65dB but with the use of certain headphones that can increase, which is significant, particularly if you consider if you are in an environment with over 85dB of noise, like a factory floor, where you must by law wear hearing protection. More and more young people are at risk of permanent hearing loss due to the increased use of headphones to listen to a loud music. Prolonged noise exposure can cause permeant hearing loss and tinnitus (ring in the ears) or both.

“If you are wearing headphones for four hours or more at the rate of 75 to 85dB, there is no doubt you are at risk of permanent hearing loss over time. The best way around this is to invest in headphones with advanced noise cancellation. These can be custom-made depending on your profession, so for example, we work a lot with musicians or sound technicians.

While a lot of Abe’s referrals come through ENT specialists and self-referral, you can make an appointment at Nolke Opticians with their excellent audiology screener on-site to carry out a screening test. This will allow



Abe Yakob

them to prepare interested patients for a full assessment with Abe on Saturdays.

“Hearing loss is a serious problem”, says Abe. The most common cause of hearing loss is age-related and noise-induced hearing loss. “It is really important that if you have concerns about your hearing, no matter how small, that you seek help right away. It’s quite simple, the earlier the treatment initiated the better the outcome.”

“Studies have shown untreated hearing loss can lead to social isolation, depression, increased risk of falls and increased risk of cognitive decline and dementia. It can also be particularly difficult for children. The World Health Organisation says there are over 400 million people worldwide with hearing difficulties, 34 million of whom are children.”

“Up to a number of years ago, there was no hearing screening for infants but thankfully that has changed, and each new baby must be screened within the first month of life. Most are screened before

leaving the hospital.” Early identification and appropriate intervention of hearing loss is critical for their long-term outcomes.

Abe has only been in Waterford a few years, but now considers it home. “I was working in the UK as a senior locum audiologist and came to Ireland on a six-month contract. That got extended again and again and then I got a permanent job. Once I had that, I brought my whole family over and set up my private practice. We absolutely love it here. It’s really nice compared to the UK and a much more relaxed place to live. I feel honoured to be serving those with hearing difficulties in our community.” It is a rewarding to see individuals smile when you help them communicate well and improve their quality of life.

■ For more information on making an appointment to see Abe, please go to www.nolkeopticians.com/about-nolke-hearing-care

Dooley’s Hotel

a Waterford Hotel that holds a fascinating history

Dooley’s Hotel has a unique history. Started on the quayside in Waterford City, it was originally owned by sisters, Mol and Kate Dooley. The hotel changed hands on a couple of occasions before it was purchased by Rita Nolan in 1947, when it boasted a mere eight bedrooms, eight cups without handles and a turf-burning range.

Over the following years the reputation of Dooley’s Hotel grew. Ongoing investment in the hotel enabled new building projects and renovations to enhance the hotel’s offering. By the mid 1960’s it had grown organically to 34 bedrooms. Rita Nolan was joined by her daughter June Darrer in running the Hotel, having completed her training at the College of Catering in Dublin. In 1994, Tina Darrer joined her mother at the helm, and in doing so became the 3rd generation of the family to be involved in the running of the hotel. Her sister Margaret then joined Tina,



Tina, June and Margaret Darrer

thus completing the unique family management team.

In 1994 the family co-purchased the Granary building with Waterford Corporation. In 1996 Dooley’s Hotel closed with 34 bedrooms and development commenced. It subsequently re-opened in the summer of 1997 with 113 bedrooms.

Throughout the years Dooley’s Hotel has experienced the highs and lows of the Irish hospitality sector. June Darrer recounts, “In

the late 1940’s and 50’s guests tended to be commercial guests rather than tourists. Throughout the week the rooms were occupied by professionals such as bank managers and gardai rather than tourists. Also, in the 1950’s petrol was very expensive and difficult to come by, so there wasn’t a lot of traffic through Waterford City and tourism as we know it today simply didn’t exist.”

“In the 1960’s the overseas tourist market eventually began to open up and it consisted mainly of visitors from the UK. These visitors usually made their way to the popular tourist hotspots such as West Cork or Kerry and would have perhaps only stayed for a night in Waterford or a quick stop for lunch as they undertook the Irish leg of their journey from Rosslare Port.”

In the intervening years, international tourism began to flourish, and Ireland became a popular destination for overseas visitors. By the early 2000’s international visitors to Dooley’s Hotel accounted for almost 70% of revenue. However, not unlike the arrival of COVID-19, events arose that tested the resolve of the Dooley’s team.

A prolonged recession in the 1980’s, the outbreak of foot and mouth disease which ground the country to a halt in 2001, the devastating effect on travel and tourism following the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the eruption of Iceland’s Eyjafjallajökull volcano, which clogged the skies with ash in 2010, the banking crisis of 2008, and an arson attack on the hotel before the planned reopening of the newly expanded hotel in 1997 were huge obstacles that were faced head on.



While Dooley’s Hotel remains open to provide accommodation to frontline workers and essential service providers, it is anticipated it will be the summer before there is a return of Irish tourists to the city and county.

“What we saw in the summer of 2020 was that there is a huge appetite for staycations. Ireland, and Waterford has so much to offer. The travel restrictions imposed last year gave people the opportunity to reassess what they want in a holiday. Although we cannot do anything about the weather, there is so much to do within the county.

“The hospitality sector in Waterford alone generates almost €140 million for the local economy and supports 6,400 jobs and we must do everything in our power to protect these jobs. While most international visitors will not be returning to our shores before Autumn 2021, Waterford as a family-friendly, culturally-enriching, vibrant, sunny and scenic destination will have huge appeal to Irish holidaymakers in the coming years.”

Over the last seven decades Dooley’s Hotel has endured and with a team of strong dedicated women at the helm is sure to prevail into the future.

BITE-SIZE NEWS

PHD SCHOLARSHIPS PAVE WAY FOR FUTURE TU RESEARCHERS

The two institutes of the Technological University of South East Ireland (TUSEI) consortium have announced details of a €4.5million cross-institutional PhD scholarship initiative described as “a game changer for research in the south east region” and a key element in the development process towards TUSEI.

Institute of Technology Carlow and Waterford Institute of Technology are to collaborate on a funded programme of 48 PhD scholarships that will see both institutes attract and mentor leading national and international academics in areas such as artificial intelligence, applied engineering and bio-environmental science with the objective of transforming the number of PhD graduates and research and development output in the region.

The initiative effectively combines the research arms of WIT and IT Carlow, reflecting the future scope and opportunities the new technological university will bring to the South East. It is anticipated that the pilot scheme will be followed by a further 34 scholarships across both institutes between now and the proposed TUSEI designation day (1 January, 2022).

Further information on the PhD scholarship initiative can be found at www.tusei.ie



NATIONAL AWARD FOR AISÉIRÍ PROGRESSION PROGRAMME

The Aiséirí Progression Programme has won the 2021 AONTAS Star Award for Social Inclusion. The STAR Awards are a national awards initiative coordinated by AONTAS as part of the annual Adult Learners' Festival to acknowledge the work undertaken by adult learning initiatives throughout Ireland.

The Aiséirí Progression Programme supports men and women in addiction treatment and in the early years of addiction recovery to access meaningful education and training to move forward towards a meaningful quality of life.

The support and generosity of local employers who have provided work experience opportunities and mentoring to our participants plays a huge part in the on-going success of The Aiséirí Progression Programme, and the organisation would like to thank all stakeholders, funders and everyone at Aiseiri for their continued support.

WATERFORD VIKING MARATHON GOES VIRTUAL

Calling all companies and their staff to join runners all over the world as the Waterford Viking Marathon goes Virtual for 2021! Due to Covid-19 Restrictions Waterford Viking Marathon has launched the 2021 Marathon as a Virtual running event. The event will take place from Thursday June 24th to Sunday 27th enabling runners to complete their chosen distance any day over this period at a time that suits them and their working schedules.

Waterford Viking Virtual Marathon are inviting companies to encourage their staff here in Waterford and from all over the country and beyond to choose their goal for this coming June with Full, Half and Quarter Marathon options.

In these strangest of times, we have created an event that all staff can participate in, walk or run. Why not take this

opportunity to bring your staff together even when they are physically apart? If you are the local office of an international company, challenge other offices, be they overseas or intercounty to a marathon challenge.

Why not set a goal and when registering, staff can start raising funds for a company dedicated to a charity close to your heart or perhaps a local community group that the organisation is linked with.

Registration for the event is now open on www.waterford-vikingmarathon.com. Every participant will receive a Race Pack, including a brand-new finisher t-shirt and WVM commemorative medal. Register today at www.waterfordvikingmarathon.com and join the virtual marathon in a non-virtual way.



SCHIVO ACQUIRES SUPREME SCREW PRODUCTS INC.

Schivo, which has an extensive plant in Waterford, has acquired Supreme Screw Products, Inc. (“SSP”) based in Plainview, New York, a leading supplier of precision machining, laser processing, and assembly services for the medical device market. Since its founding in 1963, SSP has achieved consistent growth by providing novel engineering solutions to complex customer requirements, coupled with an innate focus on customer experience and timely service. SSP is led by Misha Migdal, President and CEO

and operates out of two facilities in Plainview, New York. This acquisition will strengthen Schivo’s development and manufacturing footprint, enhance its technical capabilities, and deepen customer partnerships. SSP’s two manufacturing facilities in Plainview, New York will be added to Schivo’s footprint in Ireland. SSP will complement Schivo’s existing capabilities for minimally invasive surgery and life sciences markets through the addition of micro-machining, laser processing, and assembly technologies.



WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

- Bell Transport & Logistics
- Belview Management Consultants
- Croia Ireland
- Fyrefli
- Merrigan Doyle Phelan and Partners
- Q1 Scientific
- Smart Move Properties
- Viking Irish Drinks



Dr Ramesh Raghavendra, SEAM Director and Eoghan O'Donoghue, SEAM Operations Manager.

ISO ACCOLADE FOR SEAM RESEARCH CENTRE

The South East Applied Materials (SEAM) research centre in Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) has achieved ISO 9001:2015 certification for its quality management system. ISO 9001:2015 is an international standard for organisations that demonstrates the ability to consistently provide a service that meets customer and regulatory requirements. SEAM is a leading Technology Gateway funded by Enterprise Ireland and has been providing cutting-edge technology resources while delivering world-class advanced materials engineering services to wide ranging industrial technology and research sectors.

BOXWORKS NAMED 'RUNNER UP' IN DIGITAL AWARDS 2020

At the inaugural Digital Business Ireland virtual award night, Waterford’s Boxworks Co.Work Space were named runner up with Dublin based Dogpatch Labs, the largest and most innovative Hub in Ireland. Emer Ward Powell, Facilitator at Boxworks said, “To be named runner up with Dogpatch Labs, the largest and most inspiring innovation Hub in Ireland makes us truly proud of what we have achieved in 2020. However, we are only as good as our community and this award really belongs to the Boxworks cowork community, sponsors and supporters. I see it as an acknowledgement of what we have achieved together, despite this ‘new normal’ and all that it has thrown at us in 2020.”

Speaking about the future of coworking Jim Gordon, Director at Boxworks said: “We are living through a challenging time and while the processes might be changing, coworking has not stopped – it is adapting, as are we, and we believe this ‘new normal’ brings an opportunity to redesign the way we connect with the world of enterprise. It’s opening up alternatives for the remote workforce who might be struggling with an often insular and disconnecting working environment and they are looking to reconnect, to be part of something, and a coworking community is the ideal solution for companies and their remote workers...that’s where we come in, so yes, we think the future looks bright for coworking.”





Traditional Irish Recipes

Jenny's twist on the Irish classic bacon and cabbage

IRISH BACON AND CABBAGE CROQUETTES WITH A PARSLEY CREAM

Growing up St. Patrick's Day was always a very busy day in my household, from early morning church to the local parade, thaw out in the car on the way home (it was always bitterly cold) and GAA All-Ireland Club Final day on the TV with the bacon on since early morning.

The food around St. Patrick's Day is a celebration of everything Irish. It has evolved over the years but at the heart of it is bacon and cabbage. So, when the bacon and cabbage dinner is finished you can use this recipe to have croquettes, all the flavour of a bacon and cabbage dinner in one bite.

INGREDIENTS

Cooking the bacon:

- 1.3kg of back bacon
- 1 onion peeled and studded with 6 cloves
- Large bunch of herbs tied together including bay, thyme, and parsley stalks (bouquet garni)
- 1 head cabbage cut into quarter

with the heart still intact; I use sweetheart but curly is just as nice.

For the parsley cream:

- 150ml stock from the bacon.
- 142ml cream
- 1tsp mustard
- Hand full curly parsley chopped

Mashed potato:

- 2 large potatoes diced
- 50g butter
- 50ml cream
- Ground black pepper and sea salt
- Panko crumb flour and egg

METHOD

Place the bacon in a stock pot with the onion and herbs, cover with water, then cook for 45 mins, topping up with water if needed. Ladle 150ml of the bacon stock into a smaller saucepan set aside. Add the cabbage wedges to the stockpot, then continue to cook for another 15-20 mins until the cabbage is tender. Remove cabbage and bacon and use the off-cuts of bacon in the croquette's recipe.

ULTIMATE MASHED POTATO

In a saucepan put the diced potato into cold salted water, bring to the boil and cook until tender. When cooked strain off the water, put pot back onto the heat to dry out

potatoes, mash the potatoes with the cream and knob of butter season.

MAKING THE CROQUETTES

For every 200g of potatoes you will need approx. 100g bacon bits and approx. 50g cabbage diced. Mix, checking seasoning. Roll croquettes into even-sized balls, allow to cool in a fridge for approx. 20mins and set up in 3 different bowls: flour, egg wash, and panko breadcrumbs. Dip the croquettes into the flour first, then into egg wash and finally into breadcrumbs.

Cook in a fryer 180°C for approx. 5 mins or until golden brown.

While everything is cooking make the sauce, pour the cream into the bacon stock, and bring to the boil. Simmer for a few minutes then whisk in the mustard and parsley season with salt and pepper to taste.

TO ASSEMBLE

Put the sauce on the base of the plate and put croquettes top. I like to serve it with a little salad of pickled carrots and parsnips with rosemary oil.

Lá Fhéile Pádraig sona duit

Jenny Flynn
Príomh Chef
Faithlegg Óstán



Colcannon Soup with Homemade Guinness Brown Bread

By
Saoirse Mooney,
Head Chef
at the Vee
Bistro



This Colcannon Soup is a quick and easy spin-off of the iconic Irish dish of bacon and colcannon. All the flavors of the iconic dish with half the hassle and half the clean-up. Perfect for the hustle and bustle of St. Patrick's Day or any other day of the week for that matter.

Guinness Brown Bread

- 300g wholemeal flour
- 100g plain flour
- 10g baking powder
- 1tsp salt
- 75g porridge oats
- 150g mixed seeds
- 200ml Guinness
- 200ml butter milk
- 100g treacle
- 1 large egg
- 20ml oil or melted butter

METHOD

This brown bread recipe is extremely easy and quick to do; the hardest part is waiting for it to bake. First preheat the oven at 170°C. Weigh all the dry ingredients then add together in a large mixing bowl. I like to toast my nuts in the oven for 6-10 minutes for added flavour. Then whisk all the measured wet ingredients together in a jug. Then add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients and mix by hand.

Once you can no longer see any dry flour and the mixture is nice and sticky it is ready for the oven. This mix will make one large loaf or two small loafs. Grease the loaf tin with 1tbs of oil and then add the mix, top with some extra seeds and bake for 45 minutes, then flip the bread out of the tin and upside down and bake for a further 10 minutes.

Colcannon Soup with Pulled Ham

- 1 onion, diced
- 2 stalks of celery, diced
- 3 cloves of garlic
- Knob of butter
- 2 large peeled potatoes, grated
- 1 small head of cabbage, shredded
- ½ leek, thinly sliced
- 750ml vegetable stock
- 200g boiled ham

METHOD

In a large saucepan over medium heat sauté the onion, garlic and celery for 2-3 minutes. Then add the knob of butter and the grated potatoes and sauté for a further 5 minutes.

Then add the cabbage and leek into the pot and sauté until the cabbage starts to wilt – this will take between 5-10 minutes. Then add the stock and allow to simmer for 15-20 minutes and blend.

Once fully blended and smooth, taste and season accordingly. Lastly, serve in a warm bowl topped with some cooked ham and the freshly-baked brown bread with lashings of butter and enjoy.





Rhubarb Tart and Vanilla Sabayon

■ By Peter Everett, Head Chef, Everett's Restaurant



This is a lovely spring tart. Here we serve it with a vanilla sabayon. There is some work in the sabayon, and you need a sugar thermometer, but this tart would be equally delicious with some whipped cream or some vanilla ice cream. Makes 4 individual tarts or one large tart.

INGREDIENTS

Pastry

- 150g plain flour
- 25g ground almonds
- 85g butter
- 20g sugar
- 1 egg
- Pinch of salt

Frangipane

- 100g butter
- 100g icing sugar
- 100g ground almonds
- 1 egg

Sabayon

- 100g egg yolks
- 135g soft sugar
- 70g water
- 150g whipped cream
- 2 leaves of gelatine
- Seeds from one vanilla pod or 1 teaspoon of vanilla essence
- Stewed rhubarb
- 200g rhubarb
- Approx. 40g caster sugar

METHOD

Tart

- 1) Roughly chop the rhubarb and place in a small saucepan with the caster sugar. Cook gently at a low heat until the rhubarb has fully broken down. Have a taste to check if it needs more sugar – it should still have a nice sour bite. Leave aside and allow to cool.
- 2) Place all the ingredients of the pastry except the egg in a food processor. Blitz until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs and then add the egg. The pastry should come together in a ball.
- 3) Chill the pastry for one hour. Roll as thin as you dare and then use to line four individual tart moulds or one 8-inch tart mould. Place on a baking tray and keep in the fridge while you make the frangipane.
- 4) For the frangipane, place all the ingredients in a food processor. Blitz until you have a smooth paste. Place the mix into a piping bag.

- 5) To assemble the tarts, place a spoonful of the stewed rhubarb into the tart shell. Pipe the frangipane on top to barely fill the tart shell. Sprinkle some flaked almonds on top if you like. Bake in an oven pre-heated to 180°C (fan) for 20 mins. If making the large tart this will take about 10 mins longer.
- 6) When cooked, leave to cool on the tray and carefully remove from the tart mould.

Sabayon

- 1) Soak the gelatine in cold water.
- 2) Place the egg yolks in a stand mixer with the vanilla seeds or essence. Whisk on a medium speed until pale and fluffy while you cook the sugar.
- 3) Place the sugar and water in a small saucepan and cook until you reach 120°C on a sugar thermometer.
- 4) Carefully pour the syrup onto the egg yolks, whisking all the time.
- 5) Add the soaked gelatine straight away as it is important it dissolves in the mixture while still warm.
- 6) Keep the stand mixer whisking until the mixture is at room temp.
- 7) Carefully fold in the whipped cream.
- 8) Place in a container and leave to set in the fridge for 2-3 hours (preferably overnight so this can be done the day before).
- 9) Serve the cooled tart with a big dollop of the sabayon.



A Civic Trust Blue Plaque is a permanent sign installed on a building in a public place to commemorate a link between notable figures of the past and the buildings in which they lived or had some connection to. It is a unique way to highlight these special achievements and celebrate those who have helped to shape our heritage and history.

■ By DES GRIFFIN, Waterford Civic Trust

Teresa Deevy was born on 21st January 1894 in Waterford. Her father Edward Deevy died when she was two years' old. She attended the Ursuline Convent in Waterford and in 1913, she enrolled in University College Dublin, to become a teacher. However, that same year, she became deaf through Ménière's disease. In 1914 she went to London to learn lip-reading and returned to Ireland in 1919 and started writing plays and contributing articles and stories to the press.

The Irish War of Independence heavily influenced her writing and ideology as she was involved in the nationalistic cause. She admired Constance Markievicz and joined Cumann na mBan, an Irish women's republican group. Her republican and even proto-feminist views can be clearly seen in plays such as *Katie Roche* and *The King of Spain's Daughter*. In 1930, Deevy had her first production at the Abbey Theatre, *Reapers*. Many more followed in rapid succession, such as *In Search of Valour*, *Temporal Powers*, *The King of Spain's Daughter* and *Katie Roche*,

the play she is perhaps best known for. Writers such as W.B. Yeats and Lady Gregory believed she would be among those who would take up the mantle as part of a new generation of Irish playwrights. Her works were generally very well-received with some of them winning competitions, becoming headline performances, or being revived numerous times and were often quietly subversive. Her relationship with the Abbey Theatre soured over the rejection of her play, *Wife to James Whelan* in 1937 and she mainly concentrated on radio, a remarkable feat considering she had become deaf before radio was a popular medium in Ireland.

Deevy had a prolific output for twenty years on Radio Éireann and the BBC, including adaptations of previous works such as *Temporal Powers* and *Katie Roche* and also an adaptation of Anton Chekhov's *Polinka*. Two of her plays were eventually broadcast on television by the BBC while they have also enjoyed several stage-revivals since her death, most recently by the Mint Theatre Company in New York.



In 1954, she was elected to the Irish Academy of Letters in recognition of her contribution to Irish theatre and enjoyed renewed interest in her work from the mid-1950s onwards. She returned to the family home at Landscape, Passage Road, Waterford after the death of her sister Nell, with whom she had lived in Dublin and on whom she was very reliant as a lip-reading interpreter. She became a familiar figure in Waterford City as she cycled around the city. She died in Waterford in 1963.

■ Waterford Civic Trust is a registered charity and is a company limited by guarantee. We have erected Heritage Blue Plaques in many locations in Waterford City and County. Contact us at Brick Lane, Greyfriars, Waterford.

Tel: +353 (051) 849602
www.waterfordcivictrust.ie



MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

Accountant

Aidan McAvinue & Co
APBS
Clinton Higgins
Comerford Foley Consultants Ltd
Connors & Co. Chartered Accountants
David M. Breen & Co
Drohan & Knox
EY
Fitzgerald Power
Hall Lifford Hall
James F. Wallace & Company
Jephson & Co
Mark Kennedy & Co. Accountants
MK Brazil
O'Connell Meskill & Company
O'Dwyer Power
O'Sullivan Scanlon Brazil
PwC
Ray Wall & Co. Chartered Accountants & Registered Auditors
Veritas Chartered Accountants & Registered Auditors

Architect

C.J. Falconer & Associates
DHB Architects
Douglas McGee Architects
Fewer Harrington & Partners
Merrigan Doyle Phelan and Partners

Arts & Leisure

The Art Hand
Artform School of Art
Christ Church Cathedral
Coastguard Cultural Centre
Copper Coast Minifarm
Dead Ball Displays
Freedom Surf School
Garter Lane Arts Centre
Imagine Arts Festival
Kilcohan Park Greyhound Stadium
Lafcadio Hearn Japanese Gardens
Lake Tour Stables
Mount Congreve Estate
Newtown Driving Range
Peter Flanagan Hurleys & Sports
Pirate's Adventure
Pure Adventure
Splashworld
St Anne's Waterford Tennis Club
Symphony Club of Waterford
Theatre Royal
Tramore Amusement & Leisure Park
Tramore Golf Club
Tramore Mini Golf
Tramore Pro Shop
Tramore Surf School
The Walls Project
Waterford & Suir Valley Railway
Waterford & Tramore Racecourse
Waterford Golf Club
Waterford Healing Arts Trust

Audio/Visual

DigiCol Photography & Media Productions
Frontline Audio Visual
MJ Technologies

Banking & Financial

Adelphi Financial Brokers
AIB Bank
AIB Bank (Ardkeen)
AIB Bank (Business Banking)
AIB Bank (Lisduggan)
AIB Bank (Tramore)
Bank of Ireland
Bank of Ireland (Ardkeen)
Bank of Ireland (Lisduggan)
Bank of Ireland (Tramore)
Cantwell Financial Advisors
Close Brothers Commercial Finance
First Citizen Finance
Fitzgerald Life & Pensions
Investec Bank
KBC Bank

Business Development

Parolla
Permanent TSB
Permanent TSB (Hypercentre)
Ronan McCarthy Life & Pensions
St. Dominic Credit Union
Sure Valley Ventures
Ulster Bank
Waterford Credit Union

Cleaning Services

3to5 Club
Arclabs
Enterprise Ireland
Fumbally Exchange
IBEC
IDA Ireland
Irish Exporters Association
New Frontiers Entrepreneur Development Programme
South East Business & Innovation Centre
Waterford City Enterprise Centre
Waterford Micro Business Network

Community & Children

CCS Facilities
MHL Facilities
Tramore Dry Cleaners

Construction

Aiséirí
Ballybeg Greens
Copper Coast Geopark
GIY Ireland
Home from Home Creche
Polly & Andy
Renew Enterprises
Society of Saint Vincent de Paul
Solas Cancer Support Centre
Waterford & South East Samaritans
Waterford Area Partnership
Waterford In Your Pocket
Waterford PPN

Consultancy

Bolster Construction
Encon
Fergal Tynan Construction
Hi-Tec Construction
Hus Living
Keating Construction
MacMinn O'Reilly Mahon

Construction

Almega Business Consulting
ATPO
Belview Management Consultants
Brendan M Cummins
Brian Hennebery & Associates
CaffCo Business Planning
Carron + Walsh
EAP Institute
FP Consulting
GDPR Audits
James Ivory Consulting
Keystone Procurement
Matt Shanahan TD
ncco
Nolan Construction Consultants
Project Life Cycle Partners Ltd
Ria White HR & Training
Synantra

Education

Irish Management Institute
Junior Achievement Ireland
Language Xchange Ireland
Waterford & Wexford ETB
Waterford College of Further Education
Waterford English Language Centres
Waterford Institute of Technology
Waterford Youthreach

Engineering

Advantage Engineering
Ellickson Doors
Ellickson Engineering
Kearney Engineering
Institute of Industrial Engineers & Safety
Management Systems
M.W. Murphy & Son
Metalman Engineering
STS Group
Total Precision Engineering Solutions
Weltec Engineering

Engineering Consultants

Douglas Carroll Consulting Engineers
Frank Fox & Associates
Garland
Land & Aerial Surveys
Leyden Consulting Engineers - LCE
Malone O'Regan Consulting Engineers

Environment, Energy & Waste

Byrne & McGuire Oil
Enerpower
ESB Networks
FLI Group
Gas Networks Ireland
Granny Recycling
Kollet
Supporting Nature Naturally Co.
Visor Construction Solutions

Florist

Casia Flowers
Floral Symphony

Food & Drink

Anchor Spirits Ireland
Blackwater Distillery
Coffee House Lane
Dawn Meats Group
DessertFirst
Fintan Stanley Ltd
Glorious Sushi
The Iverk Show
Jack Molloy & Son
Legacy Irish Craft Cider
Mary Grimes Food Hall
Molloys Butchers Ardkeen
Paula's Delicatessen
Pipin Pear
Tra Coffee Roasters
Viking Irish Drinks
Walsh's Bakehouse
The Natural Health Store

Funeral Directors

Falconer & Sons Funeral Director
Robert Thompson Funeral Directors

Graphic Design

B2B Communications
Cantec Business Technology
Emagine
HelloWorld Marketing, Web & Graphic Design
Márla Communications
OfficeMaster
Passion For Creative
Swift Print
Tagline Print & Design
TOTEM
Vitamin Creative

Health & Beauty

Beautorium Beauty Salon & Training
Academy
CBD Ireland
Colm Morrissey Hair Salon
Dr. Hemp Me
Eye & Face Clinic

Eyecatchers Opticians
Eyeworks Opticians
Generations Hair Salon
Health and Wellness International
Jemma Kehoe Nutrition
Major Opticians
The Natural Health Store
Nolke Opticians & Hearing Care
Smovey Health
Spirit Beauty Spa
The Arch Barber
Tramore Medical Clinic
Urban Hype
Wild Honey Hair Salon

Healthcare

Ani-Pets Veterinary Clinic
Celltrion Healthcare Ireland
City Denture Clinic
Clannad Care
Dermot Crowley & Associates Dental Surgeons
Dr Joseph O'Beirne
Family Practice Medical Centre
FormaHoof
Genesis Laser & Aesthetic Clinic
Havenwood Retirement Village
Home Instead Senior Care
The Keogh Practice
Tramore Dental
University Hospital Waterford
UPMC Whitfield
Waterford Hospice

Hotels

The Address on the Beach
Arlington Lodge Suites
Dooley's Hotel
Faithlegg Hotel & Golf Club
Fitzwillton Hotel
Granville Hotel
Greenway Manor Hotel
The Haven Hotel
Majestic Hotel
O'Shea's Hotel
Richmond House
The Sands Hotel
The Strand Inn
Tower Hotel & Leisure Centre
Travelodge Ireland
Treacy's Hotel, Spa & Leisure Centre
Viking Hotel Waterford
Waterford Castle Hotel & Golf Resort
Waterford Marina Hotel

Household & Interior Design

Dlight
Evoke German Kitchens
Glen Parquet Flooring
Laurence Farrell
Mattress Shop Ireland Co Ltd
Murphy Larkin Timber Products
Tara Blinds
Woodpecker Floors & Tiles
Colourtrend Paint and Wallpaper
Tramore Furniture
Sienna Home Furnishings

Housing Association

Focus Ireland
Respond

HR & Recruitment

AA Euro Recruitment Group
Aphex Group
Hartley People Recruitment & Training
itContracting
Matrix Recruitment
Morgan McKinley
Rigney Dolphin
Taylor & Associates

HR Services

Adare Human Resource Management

Darlington Consulting
Insight HR
Peninsula Business Services Ireland
Ria White HR & Training
SimplifyHR

Insurance

Anita Cambie Financial
Arachas
BMCi Insurance & Investments
Hooper Dolan Insurances
McDonald Dwyer Reddy & Byrne Insurances
O'Leary Insurances (Waterford)
Oliver Murphy Insurance Brokers
Vhi

IT Services

Agora Publishing Services Ireland
Evros
Fyrefli
Lighthouse IT
Radius Technologies

Manufacturing

APS Materials, Inc.
ARTeSYN BioSolutions Ireland
Azzurri Sport
Ball Beverage Packaging Ireland
Bausch & Lomb
Cartamundi Ireland
Carten Controls
CMC Hygea
E. Flahavan & Sons
Eco-Burner
EirGen Pharma
ELC Laser Group
Garrett Motion Ireland
Glanbia Management Services Ltd
Glazik
Jabil Healthcare
MEDITE SMARTPLY
Monkey Cups
PPI Adhesive Products
Sanofi Waterford
Schivo Medical
Signode Packaging Ireland
South Eastern Chemicals
Swedencare Ireland
Teva Pharmaceuticals Ireland
West Pharma

Marketing & PR

Agora Integrated Marketing
Bance Nolan
B2B Communications
Focus Visual Communication
Forest Group
Márla Communications
Meraki Marketing
Monica Leech Communications
Passion For Creative
Preferred Marketing & PR

Media

Beat 102-103
Hi-Lite Television Productions
International Living
The Munster Express
Nemeton TV
Waterford News & Star
Waterford Today
WLR FM

Office Supplies

Jones Business Systems
OfficeMaster

Photographer

Brownes Photography
David Murphy Studio
DigiCol Photography & Media Productions
Garrett FitzGerald Photography
John Power Photography
Leo Murphy Photography
Neal Byrne Photography
Noel Browne Photographer
Cahill's Newsagents
Carry Out
Caulfield's SuperValu
RoundHouse Video

VISIT WWW.WATERFORDCHAMBER.IE FOR FULL DETAILS

Printers

Cantec Business Technology
Graphic Image
OfficeMaster
Swift Print
Tagline Print & Design
Tramore Print
Universal Graphics

Property

Causeway Group
DNG Reid & Coppinger
Ennis Gough Property
Falcon Real Estate
Griffin Auctioneers
Lawrence & McDonald
Liberty Blue Estate Agents
M&M O'Shea
O'Shea O'Toole & Partners
Palmer Auctioneers
Property Partners Barry Herterich
Property Partners Phelan Herterich
Purcell Properties
RE/MAX Team Fogarty
Smart Move Properties

Pubs & Clubs

Croke's Pub
Holy Cross Inn
Invictus Sons of Alchemy Ltd
T/A T&H Doolan's
Jack Meades
O'Neill's Bar
The Old Forge
The Reg
Robinson's Bar
The Shanty & Terrace Bar
Tully's Bar
Uluru
The Vic

Research & Development

RIKON
SEAM Research Centre
TSSG

Restaurants & Cafés

Apache Pizza
Blackfriars Coffee
Burzza
Café Lucia
Carter's Chocolate Café
Coach House Coffee
Dooley's
Everett's Restaurant
Ginos
The Haven Hotel
Invictus Sons of Alchemy Ltd
T/A T&H Doolan's
KC Foods
Loko Restaurant
MegaBites & An Caifé
Moe's Café
Mol's
No. 9 Café
One the Waterfront
The Pantry
Pier Café
Piper's Café
Ramen
The Riverside Cottage
Sandcastle Café
Uluru
The Vee Bistro
Veronica's Café

Retail

3Store
The Book Centre
Colourtrend Paint and Wallpaper
Alfie Hale Sports
Altitude
Ardkeen Quality Food Store
Audi Waterford
Auto Boland
Brennan's Pharmacy
Cahill's Newsagents
Carry Out
Caulfield's SuperValu
City Square Shopping Centre

Croia Ireland
Delany's Pharmacy
Evolution
Fitz U
Fitzgerald Menswear
Full of Beans
George Corbett Motors
George's Court Shopping Centre
The Hanger Boutique
Haven Pharmacy Kennys
Haven Pharmacy Kennys (Branch Road)
Heroes
The Holiday Shops
House of Waterford Crystal
Kelly & Dollard
Maxi Zoo
McCarthy's Homevalue
McCormack's Hardware
Morris's Builders Providers & DIY
Mulligan's Pharmacy
Mulligan's Pharmacy Tramore
The Natural Health Store
Power's Pharmacy
Quish's SuperValu
Redlane Boutique
Satina Boutique
Seagull Bakery
Sheridan Motor Group
The Shoe Centre
Sienna Home Furnishings
Tom Murphy Car Sales
Tramore Furniture
Tramore Service Station
Worldwide Wines

Security

BlueWall Technologies
CCS Facilities
CTS Group
Germar Electrical & Security
Horizon Safety Systems
S Security

Services

Belview Management Consultants
Agora Publishing Ireland
Apex Fire Ltd
Arc Mediation
Boxworks
Brady & Co
Clem Jacob Hire
Codico Distributors
E. M. Thomas, Freelance Translator (Legaltech Translations)
Emerald Contact Centre
Euro Car Parks (Ireland) Ltd
EveryEvent
Germar Electrical & Security
Inn the Doghouse
Kelly Refrigeration & Air Conditioning
Kustom Workwear
Nigel M. Daly & Son Electrical Contractors
Prolines Naval Architects & Marine Surveyors
Q1 Scientific
Sluamor
Suir Analysis
WorkLAB

Solicitors

Bowe O'Brien Solicitors
CC Solicitors
Dobbyn & McCoy Solicitors
Mullins & Treacy Solicitors
MW Keller & Son Solicitors
Newell, Gillen & Cunningham
Nolan Farrell & Goff
Parker Law Solicitors
Peter O'Connor & Son Solicitors

Technology & Software

Aphex Group
Emagine
Fyrefli
Passion For Creative
Bluefin Payment Systems Ireland
CGM
Dataworks
Errigal
Euro Tachograph Solutions
HandHeld.ie
HelloWorld Marketing, Web & Graphic Design
Milseán Software

Pimbrook Software
Red Hat
SE2
Sedici Innovations
Sun Life Financial
Threefold Systems
TQS Integration

Telecommunications

HiSpeed Wireless Broadband
Three

Tourism & Hospitality

Atlantic View Caravan Park
Beach Haven House & Hostel
Cloneen B&B
Dilis Go Bráth
Fern Hill
Fitzmaurice's Caravan Park
Fáilte Ireland - South East
Glenart House B&B
Harvey Travel
Newtown Cove Caravan & Camping Park
Norlands
Seacourt B&B
Strand Travel Worldchoice
Tramore Holiday Homes
Tramore Tourist Office

Training

ATPO
Belview Management Consultants
CCS Facilities
Direct Training Ireland
FTC - Fitzwilliam Training & Consulting
Inspiring Excellence
Irish Management Institute
Manufacturing Excellence
MCX Training & Development
New Links Training Solutions
NLC Training
Roadskill Training Centre
Sinéad O'Neill Life Coach
Southsafe Training & Consultancy
Waterford Chamber Skillnet
Welding Academy
WJP - Wuite Jameson Partners Ltd.

Transport & Logistics

Belview Management Consultants
B&M Quinlan
Bell Transport & Logistics
Bus Éireann
DFDS
Euro Tachograph Solutions
Falconer & Sons Funeral Limousine Hire
Irish Rail
J.J. Kavanagh Coaches
MAC Trans Freight
Marine Point Partnership
Passage East Ferry
Port of Waterford
Rapid Cabs & Rapid Exec
Southeast Port Services
Storage City
Store-All Logistics
Suirway Bus & Coach Services
Thomas Carey T&T Coaches
Trans-Stock Warehousing & Cold Storage
Waterford Airport

Website Services

Aphex Group
B2B Communications
Qcent.ie
Emagine
Fyrefli
HelloWorld Marketing, Web & Graphic Design
Hosting Ireland
Márla Communications
Passion For Creative
Success Online
TOTEM
Vitamin Creative

Wholesale

Curran Foods & Express Cuisine
Musgrave MarketPlace



The only
thing
worth
shouting
about!

Hearing Care
now at
Nolke Opticians

Call 051 855638

nolkeopticians.com

