



Chief Executive's Report

February 2018

1.Economic Development & Planning:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UNIT

Wexford Chamber Business Lunch 2018: A Business Lunch will take place on Friday 16th February 2018 in the Talbot Hotel entitled, 'Wexford – Economic & Community Development Update' and held in association with Wexford County Council and AIB Bank Wexford.

This event will welcome the incoming Chamber President, Niall Reck, Owner and Digital Designer of Graphedia.com based in Wexford & Kildare.

The event will be attended by the Chief Executive of Wexford County Council, Tom Enright, together with the Directors of Services who will update guests on the economic and community development plans in County Wexford for the coming years. Also in attendance will be key stakeholders across the political and business sectors.

Tradebridge: A Wexford – Savannah Initiative: Over the past three years, a series of international visits to Wexford and Savannah by key representatives from both sides has successfully occurred. These visits were organised to gain a better understanding of our substantial historical links and to explore possible joint venture prospects going forward. It is planned that teams in Wexford and Savannah will join together within a new targeted International Pilot Programme designed specially to drive Economic Development and International Trade between both regions, Countries, and Continents. Wexford County Council (WCC) in partnership Wexford Enterprise Centre (WEC) and Wexford Chamber of Commerce for Wexford, and Savannah Economic Development Authority (SEDA) for Savannah, will jointly wish develop a Pilot Project geared at developing and identifying economic trade opportunities between both regions.

Exploiting these new untapped markets will deliver growth opportunities for SME companies in both regions, and the growth of these Companies will in turn deliver sustainable job creation in Savannah and Co Wexford. Wexford companies wishing to export or expand into the USA through Savannah, and Savannah companies wishing to export or expand through Wexford into Ireland and Europe will both be accommodated as an essential element of this programme.

TOURISM

Visit Wexford Website Update: Work continues the new Visit Wexford website with data capture being gathered from the trade to give the opportunity to feature their businesses on the county tourism website. The Visit Wexford website has enjoyed a significant increase in traffic to the website during 2017. December 2017 had a 290% increase in visitors when compared to December 2016. The website is the call to action for all marketing literature to promote tourism in the county and will align itself with the Failte Ireland's campaign "Ireland's Ancient East."

Ireland's Ancient East: Support from Fáilte Ireland through the Ireland's Ancient East campaign comes with a new festivals and events listing portal for any festival organisers to submit their details to the What's on section and across Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Ireland's websites, and social media platforms and this communication has been sent throughout the industry increasing the profile of Wexford.

Regional Co-operative Tourism: A request from Carlow tourism was sent for applications for the Barrow Awards 2018, a cooperative tourism incentive to promote tourism within close Proximity to river Barrow in counties Carlow, Kildare, Kilkenny, Wexford and Laois.

Visit Wexford Brochure 2018: Work has begun on the 2018 tourism brochure with a call out to the industry to be involved. This brochure will have a similar appearance to the new website to grow the Visit Wexford brand and support Ireland's Ancient East.

New Tourism Strategy: Wexford County Council (WCC) is seeking the delivery of a fully integrated County Tourism Strategy that determines and details specific actions to maintain a high level of market share in the domestic context and deliver further growth in tourism revenue from overseas visitors. Particular emphasis is sought on recommendations which will guide and stimulate investment and identify products and services to attract overseas visitors within the context of Ireland's Ancient East. Genesis Consultants, who have substantial national and international strategy tourism experience, have been commissioned to compile the Tourism Strategy.

This review must identify specific markets and, crucially, bullseye segments and deriving key insights on growth drivers in these markets to specify the best products and services to drive growth and sustainable employment. The overarching objectives of the project are, within the strategic period of 2018-2022, to:

1. Identify the key strategic imperatives and a set of specific actions for Wexford County Council and the respective key stakeholders which will increase visitor numbers and revenue in a sustainable manner.
2. Provide recommendations to guide and stimulate investment and development in order to increase visitor revenue, drive economic growth and create sustainable employment.
3. Identify sustainable product and experience priorities, lining them to specific national markets and specific segments that Wexford should target to enhance growth.

The strategy development is now in its consultation phase and a meeting will be held for members of Wexford County Council on 28th February in County Hall to which the Management Team and District Managers will also be invited. A separate meeting will be held for private tourism industry. The final report which will guide Tourism Development for the county for the years 2018-2022 is expected in May 2018.

Media: Great recognition to County Wexford from the national campaign run by The Irish Independent paper - This nationwide campaign will assist lead by the

Independent and based on reader votes demonstrates the popularity of Wexford as a tourism destination. Results as follows

- **Irelands Favourite Place to Stay** - Kelly's Hotel & Spa Irelands Favourite Spa - Monart Spa & second place went to Seafield in Gorey!
- **Irelands Favourite Family Friendly Stay** - Amber Springs Hotel, Gorey with Kelly's Hotel in Rosslare coming in at No 2!
- **Irelands Hidden Gem** - Hook Lighthouse
- **Irelands Top Ten Beaches** listed Curracloe as second to Inch Strand in Kerry.
- **Irelands Top 10 holiday Destinations** - Wexford listed as No 6 with Galway, Killarney, Dingle, Cork & Donegal ahead of us
- **Irelands Tastiest Food Experience** - Again Wexford features in the top ten with Aldridge Lodge in Duncannon as No 6 Top Ten Tourist Attractions 2018 - No 9 Hook Lighthouse

LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE (LEO) TEAM

Regional IBYE Final: The Regional Final (Wexford, Wicklow, Carlow, Kilkenny) of Irelands Best Young Entrepreneur took place in Tinakilly Country House in Wicklow on Thursday 25th January. Unfortunately, Wexford had no regional winner this year. The three regional winners, two from Wicklow and one from Kilkenny, in the Best Idea, Best Start Up and Best Established Business, will go on to represent the region in the National Final of IBYE on March 4th In Dublin. We wish them all the best in the final.

Local Enterprise Week - 4th to 9th March: LEO Wexford, along with the 31 LEOs throughout the county, will run a series of business and enterprise events on the week of the 4th to 9th of March entitled Local Enterprise Week. LEO Wexford will shortly finalise the events for this week which will include training events, business talks and the County Final of the National Enterprise Awards.

GDPR – Business Awareness Event – 31st January: Wexford County Council hosted a lunchtime seminar to help businesses get ready for General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) on Wednesday, 31st January.

GDPR comes into force on 25th May and affects every organisation that handles customer data. From 25th May there will be fines of up to 4% of annual turnover (or up to €20 million) for those organisations which are found to be in serious breach of the new regulations.

This GDPR seminar was hosted by the Local Enterprise Office in Wexford County Council in association with the Wexford Chamber Skillnet and Bank of Ireland.

BUCANIER: Building Clusters and Networks in Innovation Enterprise and Research): January has seen the official launch of the BUCANIER project at the UKSPA conference in Swansea on the 25th of January, BUCANIER will work with Life Sciences, Food and Drink and Renewable Energy Sectors.

Key project milestones for Dec 17 & Jan 18

- Website launched on the 24th of January - <http://www.bucanier.eu/>
- Promotional Material printed for Launch
- Facebook and Twitter pages live for launch 24th January
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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Bucanier-314218322412873/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/BUCANIERProject>

- Mentors contracted – contracts to be finalised and names announced by 31st January
- Initial contact with potential SME's and clusters in the Wexford area
- Masterclass Video to be available on website by Irish Launch
- Bucanier workbook/toolkit to be available for mid-February
- Outline and provisional schedule for Irish Launch 23rd March agreed

Wexford County Council (Project Administrator) has direct responsibility within the project for the Bucanier Website, social media (Facebook & Twitter), promotional material design and the Irish Launch 23rd March (to be held in Wexford County Council Offices).

PLANNING

Planning Applications:

<i>No. of valid applications received up to 19/01/2018</i>	<i>55</i>
<i>No. of pre planning requests up to 26/01/2018</i>	<i>51</i>

Forward Planning: *Review of the Wexford County Development Plan 2013 - 2019 and the Preparation of New County Development Plan: Having completed the consultation process, the Forward Planning team are now working on the preparation of the pre-draft Wexford County Development Plan 2019-2025. It is anticipated that the pre-draft plan will be presented to the Members at the end of Q1 2018.*

The following Consultants have been appointed to prepare the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment; Brady Shipman Martin, JBA Consulting and Scott Cawley Ltd.

Future Analytics have now been appointed to prepare both the Retail Strategy and Housing Strategy. Non-statutory Stakeholder Meetings were held in early December in all of the main four towns as part of the Retail Strategy. The feedback received will be used to inform the Retail Strategy in the County Development Plan 2019-2025.

Review of the Wexford Town and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015 (as extended)

Work has commenced on the review of the Wexford Town and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015 and the preparation of a new plan for the area.

Building Control:

- **Commencement Notices:** A total of 20 valid commencement notices have been submitted up to 26th January 2018 on the BCMS.

• Wexford	8	Gorey	4
• Enniscorthy	7	New Ross	1

- **Taking In Charge:** Inspections have been carried out on six estates. Documents have been prepared and sent to Irish Water for the next stage of the taking-in-charge process.

The six estates are:-

Woodside, Courtown	Whitecross, Hilltown
Hollyfield, Lake, Bridgetown	Cul Caislean, Taghmon
The Paddocks, Rosbercon	The Laurels & Laurel Court, Clonard

- **Derelict Sites, Dangerous Structures and Vacant Sites**

Activity on Derelict Sites/Dangerous Structures is as follows:

Notices Issued under Derelict Sites Act 1990	2
Notices issued under Sanitary Services Act 1964	0
Notices issued under Section 7 of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015	0

Planning Enforcement: The number of planning enforcement cases as at 26/01/2017 is as follows:

➤ Cases Opened	9
➤ Live Cases	437
➤ Cases Closed	4

District Court Cases: There were 7 Planning enforcement cases listed in the District Courts in the month of January 2018:

Enniscorthy:	1 listed for mention, 1 listed for hearing.
Gorey:	1 listed for mention
New Ross:	1 listed for mention, 1 listed for hearing
Wexford:	2 listed for mention

Circuit Court Cases:

One case listed for hearing
One Appeal case adjourned

Access Section: Disability Access Certificates (DACs): The number of DAC applications, validated for the period from 01/01/2018 up to and including 29/01/2018, totals five.

The total number of DAC applications received in 2017 was 67; however, eight of these DAC applications were carried over into 2018 as requested further information for each of these remains outstanding.

2. Special Projects:

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Min Ryan Park, Wexford: The Park obtained Part VIII Planning in April, 2016 based on a preliminary design by Wexford County Council. Consultants Brady Shipman Martin have completed detailed design and tender documents. The tender for construction was advertised on Dec 19th 2017 and tenders are due for submission by 7th February. Contractor appointment is due in March, 2018

Wexford Quays: Architect firm Scott Tallon Walker has completed the implementation plan - Stage 2B report on the Economic Development and Spatial Implementation Plan for the Wexford Quay front. The report is currently being reviewed by Wexford Co. Council

Trinity Wharf: The Trinity Wharf site was acquired by Wexford Co. Council to attract investment and stimulate economic development in Wexford. Architects, Scott Tallon Walker will prepare a master plan for the development of the lands. The master plan will be available in Qtr. 2, 2018 and will facilitate an application for the planning and development of the lands.

Crescent Quay/Ballast Office: A package of Improvement Works in the Crescent Quay Area is currently being formulated as the first Phase of the overall plan for the Quay Front Area.

These works will enhance and upgrade the public realm around the Crescent / Waterfront areas and improve the pedestrian links from Main Street to the Quays and the water front. An application for Part VIII approval will commence in February 2018.

Templeshannon Regeneration, Enniscorthy: The strategy plan was presented to the members of the Enniscorthy District Committee at its January meeting and adopted.

Enniscorthy Technology Park, Killagoley: Reddy Architecture + Urbanism have been appointed to develop the master plan, secure planning, prepare detailed design, procurement and construction supervision services for the Enniscorthy Business Park at Killagoley. Initial surveys, studies and site investigation works are substantially completed and the development of the mast plan is finalised. An application for Part VIII approval will commence in February 2018.

New Ross Business Park: Pre-qualification of applicants is complete and qualified applicants will be invited to tender in February 2018 for the finance and build of an advanced technology unit in Butlersland, New Ross.

Gorey Market House: A Part VIII planning application for re-development of the Market House into a multi-purpose, multi-functional, Retail/Performance/Exhibition space will be advertised in early February. The procurement process, seeking development proposals, will issue in February.

Wexford Arts Centre: Funding of €1m has been approved by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional and Rural Affairs and the Gaeltacht for an extension and renovation of the Wexford Arts Centre. Wexford County Council have committed to providing matching funding. Funding must be expended by March 2020.

Carrigfoyle Activity Centre: Wexford County Council is preparing a brief for services for the design and tender of infrastructural work at Carrigfoyle as the initial stage of a project to develop an activity centre on the lands. Construction of the infrastructural works is planned to commence in August 2018.

Enniscorthy Tourism Project: Wexford County Council are currently preparing a brief for services for the design and tender of a Master plan to develop Enniscorthy town as a long term sustainable tourism destination. An Implementation Plan will also be developed as part of this brief and it is expected that this will be completed in May 2018.

Greenways:

Rosslare to Waterford City Greenway.

The contract to review route options, prepare baseline environmental studies and prepare and submit planning applications was awarded to Roughan O'Donovan on Friday 19th January 2018 and the study has now commenced. The first stage deliverables – Feasibility, Route Selection and Economic Report are due in early May 2018. A framework has also been established from the top 5 applicants for use on future greenway and tourism projects for similar services thereby reducing time and complexity of procuring future services for similar projects.

New Ross Red Bridge Greenway and Walking Trail.

The development of a greenway around New Ross, linking with Kilkenny County Council's planned greenway from Rosbercon to Waterford City, is currently at the planning stage. A separate Part VIII application will be submitted in Qtr. 1 2018 for the section of Red bridge route located in Kilkenny and for a link from the Rosbercon Road to the N25.

Greenway Regional Strategy

Wexford County Council, in its function as the lead authority for the regional greenway office is preparing a regional strategy for the development of an integrated network of greenways across the South East.

It is planned that this network of Greenways would be developed as a major tourism resource that links with national greenways and opens up the South East region to the activity, leisure and recreational tourism market nationally.

3. Housing, Community, Libraries, Arts, Emergency Services & Community:

HOUSING

Social Housing Supply Programme 2017 – 2019

In early 2017, Housing Section prepared and launched the Wexford County Council Social Housing Supply Programme 2017-2019. Wexford County Council (WCC) recorded progress of **961** units at the end of Year 1 (31/12/17):-

Summary	Target 2017-2019	Target 2017	Progress (31 st Dec.2017)
Construction Projects	245	87	24
Part V – WCC	83	1	60
Part V – AHB's	5	0	0
Approved Housing Bodies (AHB's)	208	117	137
Portfolio Acquisitions	10	10	3
Acquisitions	310	150	104
Buy & Renew	52	12	2
Refugee Resettlement Programme	32	32	26
Turnkeys	78	8	8
Traveller Accommodations Plan (TAP)	6	2	2
Other	1	1	2
	1,030	420	368

From 2017 to 2019 a further **1,757** social housing units will be delivered through the Private Rental Sector throughout the County:-

Unit Type	Target 2017-2019	Target 2017	Progress (31 st Dec, 2017)
Leasing (<i>note intended 9 NARPS units no longer available</i>)	69	29	20
RAS	36	12	35
Repair & Leasing	52	12	2
HAP	1,600	400	536
TOTAL	1,757	453	593

A number of housing capital projects have been approved by the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (DHPCLG) and are progressing to construction stage:-

Construction Complete 2017

- Francis Street, Wexford.
- No 41 St Martin's Park, Ballycullane.
- No 5 Mountain View in Rathnure.

Under Construction

- **2 Special Needs Houses in Oilgate** – Roofs on, windows and doors installed, rendering complete. Project on programme for completion in May 2018
- **8 houses in Cherry Orchard, Enniscorthy** – Under construction. Blockwork nearing completion on programme to complete in September, 2018.
- **2 houses in Cois Mara, Rosslare** – under construction, block work complete. Houses to be sealed in by Christmas. On programme to complete in April, 2018.
- **9 houses in Baile Eoghain, Gorey** – under construction, to complete in 2018.

Stage 4

- **1 house at Ross Road Enniscorthy** – Stage 4 approved, construction to commence Q1 2018.

Stage 3

- **10 Houses in Creagh, Gorey** – Stage 3 approved in October 2017. Tender report and Stage 4 with DHPCLG, construction to start in Q1 2018.
- **10 Houses in Danescastle** – Stage 3 approved by DHP, tender in February, 2018.
- **10 Houses at Slippery Green, Wexford** – stage 3 approved Oct 2017. Tender report and Stage 4 with DHPCLG, construction to start in Q1 2018.

Stage 2

- **7 Houses in Coolcots** – preparing Stage 3 for submission in January 2018.
- **1 House in Castlemoyle for Special Needs** – Stage 2 approved, Part VIII approved, Stage 3 – February, 2018.
- **1 house in Castlemoyle** - Stage 2 approved, Stage 3 Q1 2018.
- **1 house at Ballynaboola** - Stage 2 approved. Costs have been reduced and a new planning permission was lodged. Stage 3 February 2018.

Stage 1

- **40 Housing Units at Whiterock Hill, Wexford** – Delay due to investigations of Attenuation system on site. Stage 2 submission to be lodged in Q1 2018
- **3 Units at King Street, Wexford** – Stage 2 detail costing to be submitted in December 2017. Part VIII submitted to Planning in November 2017, awaiting planning decision.
- **14 Houses in Carricklawn** – Stage 1 in June 2017, on hold. Problems with title to be rectified by land owner before we finalise purchase. This will be a 2018 project to commence in 2019.
- **18 houses in Taghmon** – Consultants appointed. Stage 2 January 2018.
- **7 Units at Belvedere Road, Wexford** – Currently organising appointment of a design team and the first task will be to see how savings can be made. Stage 2 February 2018.

- **3 units in Ballyhine** – prepare Stage 2 in Q2 2018. Awaiting approval by members.
- **6 units at The Ballagh** – prepare Stage 2 in Q1 2018.
- **11 units in Ballywish** – Stage 1 approval. Planning and site line issues, propose purchasing additional land.

The number of units with Capital Approval is 164 as detailed above. The following **61** projects will be submitted to DHPCLG as the next round of Stage 1 applications:-

• Taghmon	1	• Killeens	34
• Enniscorthy	12	• Devereux Villas	2
• Creagh	12		

Pre-development Stage: We are working on another **177** projects preparing feasibility studies prior to the Stage 1 application. These include the following larger projects:-

○ Rosetown	40
○ Gorey, Wexford St	14
○ Clonard	26
○ Carley's Bridge Road, Enniscorthy	14
○ Francis Street	1
○ Daphney, Enniscorthy	20
○ Castlemoyle (<i>Land Aggregation Scheme</i>)	40
○ Rosbercon, New Ross	22

Refugee Resettlement Programme: Five families have now moved into their homes in New Ross town. The remaining six families will arrive as soon as the houses become available. This will give a total of eleven families in each of the towns of Wexford, Enniscorthy and New Ross.

The Resettlement Programme is now commencing in Gorey with the preparation of the first six houses in various locations around the town and the sourcing of support services by the relevant agencies. The families will arrive as soon as their houses are ready.

Affordable Mortgage Scheme: A Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan is a new Government backed mortgage for first time buyers. It is available nationwide from all local authorities from 1st February 2018. As a first time buyer, you can apply for a Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan to purchase a new or second-hand property, or to build your own home.

This initiative introduces long term fixed mortgages, at very affordable rates. Borrowers will now be able to avail of finance, at 2% over 25 years or 2.25% over 30 years. The introduction of the life-time of mortgage fixed rates, has eliminated the necessity to stress test applications, for future interest rate increases.

This will provide an opportunity for low to middle income first time buyers, to buy or build a home, who may otherwise fall foul of current private lender stress testing.

You can borrow up to 90% of the purchase price of a property or 100% if it is a tenant purchase property. If you are applying for a house construction mortgage and you own a site, you may qualify for up to 100% of the construction costs. The maximum allowable purchase price or construction cost in County Wexford is €250,000. The income limits for applicants is €50,000 for single and €75,000 for joint.

ENVIRONMENT

Wexford to Curracloe Greenway: A planning application is to be submitted shortly for the provision of a greenway from Wexford to Curracloe to An Bord Pleanala. The proposed route in 3 sections will run along the coast from Wexford to Ardcavan, the 2nd section on the inside of the seawall to the Raven Point and the 3rd leg via the existing path through the Ravenwood.

If planning permission is granted by an Bord Pleanala the mid section of the route through the slob and wild fowl reserve will be closed during the Winter months to protect the wintering Greenland White- Fronted Geese which are of world importance and a primary reason for the area's designation as an SPA

Illegal Dumping: Additional resources have been approved to tackle illegal dumping with the county. The expanded Rapid Response Crew will be centrally managed but there will be a 2 person crew based in each of the 4 Municipal Districts from April 2018 onwards.

The expanded crew set up will have responsibility for illegal dumping within the 4 Municipal Districts including the towns and also on other County Council lands. Department sanction has been received for the recruitment of staff and this process is underway

Wind Farm Noise Consultancy: Tenders have been received for the next phase of noise monitoring for wind farms at Bolamore and Castledockrell. The contract is due to be awarded to the successful tenderer in February 2018.

Environmental Education & Awareness: Wexford County Council worked with Waterford City and County Council and produced a 1 min animated video on food waste prevention. It was funded through the Local Authority Waste prevention Network and will appear in 4 cinemas in Wexford, Gorey, and Dungarvan and Waterford city. The clip will be available on You Tube in both Irish and English and to further drive home the message of food waste prevention a schools competition will be launched in February.

Tidy Towns clinics will be held with 6 groups on Wednesday 31st January. Ann O' Leary, National Tidy Towns adjudicator has completed a desk survey of applications and adjudication reports form 2016 and 2017, and has also completed a survey of the 6 villages.

She will now meet the groups for a Tidy Towns clinic on Wednesday 31st January to feed back any comments and suggestions to help the group with their application for the 2018 competition. 6 groups are New Ross Tidy Towns, Enniscorthy Tidy Towns, Rosslare Tidy Towns, Ferns Tidy Towns, Blackwater Tidy Towns and Wexford Tidy Towns.

COMMUNITY

Traveller Community Development Project: Wexford County Council in partnership with FDYS will commence the Traveller Community Development Project in March 2018. The project is funded through a grant of €112,000 from the Department of Justice and Equality. The project will be based at the Traveller Community Building in Drumgoold, Enniscorthy offering satellite services in New Ross, Clonroche, Bunclody and Taghmon.

Bridgetown Community Hub: Wexford County Council in partnership with FDYS will open a Community Hub at Bridgetown in March 2018. This project will engage with local people in the areas of education, childcare, lifestyle and general community development. The project has the support of the Children & Young Peoples' Services Committees (CYPSC).

Healthy Ireland: The 2017 Healthy Ireland programme is progressing well and is on target to have all Actions completed by the end of March 2018. It is anticipated that there will be a 2018 Healthy Ireland programme.

Age Friendly & Older People's Council: 16th January 2018 saw the inaugural meeting of County Wexford's Older People's Council. This group has been established under the auspices of the County Wexford Age Friendly Programme to put the voice of older people central to decision-making about matters that affect their everyday living.

Meetings will commence shortly with the Older People's Council Executive Committee to ensure the Age Friendly policies and actions are implemented in County Wexford.

LEADER: A total of €1,614,716 was approved by the Wexford LCDC acting as the Local Action Group (LAG) for LEADER

Artisan Food & Drink	388,78 5.00
Community Centre Development	802,77 3.00
Activity Adventure Eco & Marine Tourism	224,00 5.95
Heiratge Tourism	34,125. 37
Social Enterprise	21,309. 75
Development of Walking Trails	25,926. 83
Community Arts and Culture	10,667 1.94
Youth Facilities	11,118. 43

SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

Urban Outdoor Adventure Initiatives: Outdoor recreation programmes have been developed and run in disadvantaged communities, for at- risk youth groups, disadvantaged school groups and people with disability in many countries with success. There is now a growing body of evidence to suggest that outdoor adventure programme where participants interact with nature and experience new outdoor adventure sports are successful in developing confidence and skills among participants and also help young people to manage risk and encourages them to welcome challenge. Applications were invited from Local Sports Partnerships, in a competitive bid process Sports Active Wexford was awarded €44,950 for the application for Bunclody.

“Get Ireland Swimming”: ‘Get Ireland Swimming’ is a Healthy Ireland initiate run by Swim Ireland and Ireland Active. The programme is an intervention which is giving National School students the opportunity to learn to swim or to continue their swimming development. Swim Ireland have been fortunate to develop a partnership with Sport Active Wexford (Local sports partnership) in the Get Ireland swimming Initiative here in Wexford. Swim Ireland and Sports Active Wexford are working closely with a number of schools in County Wexford, with the support of the Local community Swimming pools.

The programme was launched at the new Edmund Rice Bun Scoil Ri, New Ross, where Wexford Olympian Grainne Murphy and Sports Co-ordinator Fran Ronan presented the goodie bags to the Principal Gerry Moran.

Phase one of 'Get Ireland Swimming' is focused on increasing swimming participation amongst the National school population. This phase will see over 700 students in County Wexford provided with Swimming lessons and Swim Ireland will be providing each child with a goodie bag which will include a swimming hat and goggles to support their swimming development and provide up to 10 weeks of lessons which includes pool hire and teaching staff .

We have 22 schools availing from support on this programme, and the Support of the Healthy Ireland funding will further support the funding of swim teachers.

Operation Transformation: The RTE programme is on its 11th Series this January. The LSP network held their National Walks on the 13th of January. Sports Active Wexford (Local Sports Partnership) organised the National Walk from The Promenade Country Walk in Enniscorthy. Over 150 walkers of all ages took part in the 5 km walks around the county despite the yellow weather warnings. There was a great atmosphere in Enniscorthy with 50 people participating.

LIBRARIES, ARTS & ARCHIVES

A new **Culture and Creativity Strategy 2018-2022** for County Wexford is being developed by the Culture Team as part of the Creative Ireland initiative. Following extensive consultation, a draft strategy is being prepared for Council. The strategy identifies themes that have potential for long-term impact, community engagement, new forms of collaboration and interdisciplinary work.

The new **Laureate for Irish Fiction** will host a first public reading in Gorey Library on Tuesday 13th February. An announcement will be made on 8th February as to the identity of the new Laureate who replaces Anne Enright in this key role in the promotion of literature and reading.

Preparations are ongoing for events to mark the **centenary of the death of John Redmond**. An exhibition will be launched on Saturday 3rd March and a seminar will be held on Sunday 4th March in Wexford Library. Both the exhibition and seminar are being supported by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

The **new mobile library vehicle** took to the road on 11th January 2018. Featuring a range of upgraded services and equipment, the vehicle will visit 51 stops and be used by over 2,000 active members in South Wexford in 2018. Minister for Rural and Community Development, Michael Ring is expected to confirm a date for launch of the new mobile.

Healthy Ireland at Your Library national service began in January. Talks, discussions and workshops are being offered by libraries with a focus on physical health, mental health and health literacy. The service will be promoted in national and local media.

To celebrate Nollaig na mBan on Saturday 6 January, Dr Mary McAuliffe, Assistant Professor in Gender Studies at UCD presented a talk entitled "**Women, Politics and Propaganda, 1917-1919: the activism of Wexford women**". After the lecture, as part of the "**Illuminate HerStory**" global light festival, images of three Wexford

Women: **Lady Jane Wilde; 'Min' Ryan** and **Úna Brennan** were projected from Wexford Library, from dusk to celebrate the lives of these Wexford women and Nollaig na mBan.

Small Arts Festival/Experimental Event Grants, the Arts Department requested applications for this new festival fund on January 29th 2018. The programme has a total fund €20,000 and grants will be awarded from €1,000 to €3,000. The closing date for applications is 26 February 2018.

Art links 2018, professional development support for emerging and professional artists in the South East Region with Wexford, Carlow and Waterford Arts Offices. The request for applications for artist's bursaries took place in December 2017; the closing date for applications is 29th January 2018.

Creative Community programme, Artists Panel, The Arts Office requested applications for an Artists' panel for the newly branded 'Creative Community programme (formerly Artists in the Community Scheme). 27 artists' applications were received and 20 artists selected for panel across visual arts, literature, music, dance and puppetry/circus skills.

Michael Warren Public Art Sculpture, the refurbishment / new replica model of the Michael Warren Public Art sculpture in Ferrybank is nearing completion. The foundation is being prepared on site and the new refurbished sculpture in Corten steel will be installed in February 2018.

Public Arts, New Ross Bypass, Per Cent for Art Commission, the Public Art Working Group, art subcommittee, Remco de Fouw, Aileen Lambert and Liz Burns met on 12th January, 2018 to finalise the artists brief for the commission and nominated 11 artists to invite for expressions of interest. The closing date for expressions of interest is 2nd February, 2018.

Arts Council Award: Art & Biodiversity, the Wexford Arts Department was awarded €15,000 as part of the Arts Council's 'Invitation to collaboration Scheme' in 2017. This action research programme on coastal biodiversity, is in partnership with Dublin City Council and Fingal County Council Arts departments and Biodiversity offices, with Wexford Arts office as lead partner. It will feed into future public art commissions. The first think tank took place on Friday 26 January in Fingal North Dublin. It was attended by Arts and Biodiversity Officers from Wexford, Fingal and DCC with invited artists and experts in biodiversity.

FIRE SERVICE

News: Three tenders were received for the lead consultant for the new New Ross fire station and extension/material alteration to Gorey fire station. The independent board shall choose the successful candidate in January.

The Fire Authority went to tender for two second hand Class B appliances to replace the county spares. Central funding had already been obtained to finance the purchase.

Fire Operations: In December there were 92 incidents including 24 false alarms with good intent, 25 chimney fires, 11 domestic fires, and 15 road traffic accidents.

Incident type	Year to date	December
Fires	404	23
Special Services	153	20
Chimney Fires	153	25
False Alarms	222	24

Fire Safety: The number of applications for fire safety certificates, planning referrals and Fire Services Acts inspections for the months of December were as follows:-

Applications Received	Year to date	December
Fire Safety Certificates	98	8
Planning Referrals	733	50

Number of Inspections	Year to date	December
FSA Inspections	305	14

CIVIL DEFENCE

Civic Duties: We covered 2 community duties for January 2018

- Wexford Athletics – Cross Country, Sunday 21st January 2018, Wexford Rugby Club
- Gusserance – Coiste Na Nog – Tintern Fun Run, Sunday 28th January 2018

Training Courses: Training continues on a weekly basis in Gorey, New Ross and Wexford. We have volunteers currently complete their EFR – Emergency First Responder Course, they will sit their MCQ Exam on the 17th February 2018.

EMT CPC Training Day: We held a training day for all 22 of our EMT's Emergency Medical Technicians to discuss the new PHECC CPC

4. Transportation, Water Services:

COUNTY WEXFORD'S NATIONAL ROADS SCHEMES:

1. N25 New Ross Bypass

Progress Update January 2018

The project remains on target to open in early 2019.

The construction of the central deck spans on the Pink Rock side of the Barrow Bridge continues. The central deck sections for Spans 1 & 2 are poured and post tensioning works continue. The wing traveller system (see photo no. 4 below) for the edge deck sections on these spans has been erected. The central deck for Span 3.1 is under construction and will be completed in the coming weeks. The pier head on pier 4 (central pier on main spans) is complete and ready for start of deck construction. Falsework for approach spans were transported from Pink Rock to Stokestown as abnormal loads last week without any difficulties. Falsework is now being reassembled for erection to support the construction of the first of four approach spans on the Wexford side.

Rock blasting is complete at all locations apart from Camlin (cut 4) where periodic blasting will continue until the end of February. The construction of mainline road pavement foundation layers has commenced at Camlin and will progress further over the coming months.

The L-8049 Camlin Road Overbridge and realignment and the L-8048 Creakan Road realignment have opened under temporary traffic management. A road closure and diversion route for the L-8142 Arnestown Road is in place until early April to facilitate the completion of the Arnestown Road Overbridge and realignment. A road closure on the L-8144 Lacken South remains in place to facilitate the completion of the associated overbridge and realignment. All other local road closures on the Wexford side of the project are now re-opened to traffic. Realignment works on the R733 Campile Road will require temporary traffic management for a period over the coming months and the completion of Corcoran's Cross Roundabout later this year will require temporary traffic management on the N30 and L-4003 Knockroe Road. The current temporary diversion and statutory 60km/h speed limit will continue to operate on the N25 Wexford Road at Ballymacar until October. At that stage the roundabout will be fully complete and opened to the current traffic network (i.e. both Bypass arms will remain closed).

The next phase of traffic management at N25 Glenmore is anticipated to become operational in the first weekend of February. Traffic will be switched to the opposite side of the roundabout (currently under construction – see photo 1 below), the N25 climbing lane will be closed and a new ghost island junction will be opened to a newly constructed link road to the Ballyverneen Road. The L-7513 Ballyverneen Road will also be closed and a diversion route will be in operation along this section of the N25. It is anticipated that this temporary traffic management will be in operation for approx. 3 months.

Surface conditions on public roads continue to be monitored at interfaces with the site and preventative and remedial measures are being implemented as necessary to keep road surfaces clean. This is particularly important during very cold or wet winter weather and there is ongoing liaison with the Contractor on winter maintenance measures on public roads in the vicinity of the site. Emergency and patrol crews are available as necessary to carry out any operational or maintenance measures that may be required during bad weather on surfaces or traffic management systems on public roads. The site continues to be monitored for the generation of noise, vibration and dust.

The seventh quarterly project newsletter was published before Christmas, and the dedicated project website www.n25newross.ie continues to provide progress updates as well as information on traffic management and road works, and also provides contact details for the project. A further progress video was released by Wexford County Council before Christmas on the Council web and social media sites as well as selected local community sites. Further videos will be released periodically in 2018. A 24 telephone hotline is also operational to deal with any queries or complaints from the public. The number is 1800 815672, and this number has been posted on both the newsletter and website. The Project Liaison Office will continue to liaise and consult with all landowners and other interested parties for the duration of the project.



1. Works at Glenmore Roundabout for next phase of traffic management and completion of road underpass.



2. Barrow Bridge at Pink Rock – central deck cast and struck for spans 1 & 2, falsework removed from span 1



3. Barrow Bridge – Pier head for Pier 4.



4. Barrow Bridge – Wing traveller assembled at span 1.



5. R733 Grade Separated Junction taking shape, and Upper Base laid on mainline.



6. L-8049 Camlin Road Realignment & Overbridge



7. Accommodation Works: New stone faced domestic entrance at R733

2. M11 Gorey to Enniscorthy PPP Scheme update Program

The contractor has 86% of their certified design issued for construction and is on target in their overall program for construction. As of December 2017 the program is on target and the M11, N30 and N80 will be opened to traffic in July 2019 with minor works taking place up to the contract end date of November 2019

Construction to Date

The following table indicates site work progression to date.

	Progress Reported in Dec 2016	Progress Reported in Dec 2017
Site Clearance	96%	98%
Fencing	85%	86%
Drainage & Service Ducts	7%	32%
Earthworks	23%	75%
Structures – Main Bridges		58%
Structures – Culverts	29%	97%
Structures – Access Structures	12%	85%
Accommodation Works	6%	8%
Pavement	0%	4%

Earthworks:-

Bulk Cut to Fill was approx. 986,821m³ to the end of the year for 2016 (6-month Work Period). Bulk Cut to fill as reported to the end of December 2017 was 1,700,000m³

Blasting

The following program indicates the remaining duration for blasting for the project:

Area	Name	No of Blast remaining	Est. Completion date
M11, Cut 1	Frankfurt Junction	0	Complete
M11, Cut 6	Crane Road	0	Complete
N30, Cut 1	Ballyorril	0	Complete
N30, Cut 4	Bessmount	TBC *	February 2018

* Contractor is ripping out rock at the moment and will determine if additional blasting is required

Affected landowners are being notified by the contractor 14 days in advance of blasting commencing and 3 days by either text or a phone call in advance of the blast taking place. Results to date for Vibration and Noise Monitoring have returned below the maximum permitted levels for the contract.

Ongoing repairs and monitoring of local roads

The following roads are being inspected on weekly basis by the contractor and Wexford County Council. Any defects arising from this inspection are being addressed by the contractor.

- L1027, Ballygullen Road
- L2020, Crane Road
- L2021, Ballynabarny Road
- L2011, Tinnacross Road

Newsletter

The Newsletter for Q1 of 2018 is currently being drafted. This website is updated on a monthly basis providing information on blasting, road closures and traffic management.

A 24-emergency telephone is also operational to deal with any queries or complaints from the public. The number is 1800 815701, and this number has been posted on both the newsletter and website. The Project Liaison Office will continue to liaise and consult with all landowners and other interested parties for the duration of the project.

Drone Survey

The drone survey for 2018 is due to commence within the next few weeks, weather permitting.

Applications submitted to WCC from the PPP:**Road Closure Applications**

The following road closures have been enacted:

Road	Closure Date	Duration (months)	Opening Date
M11-S4, L5092, Ballyeden Road	12/8/17	6	15/2/18
M11-S5 L5093, Ballymore	27/11/17	5	27/04/18
M11-S9, L2021, Crane Road	17/4/17	7	2/2/18
M11-S13, L6055, Drumgold Road	31/10/17	7	11/5/18
M11-S15, L6048, Glenteige Road	15/8/17	3	16/2/18
N30-S1, L2015, Coolnahorna	2/8/17	6	23/2/18
N30-S2, L2014, Ballyorril	2/1/18	2	9/3/18
N30-S5, L2030, Bessmount Road	16/1/18	3.5	27/4/18
N30-S7, L6122, Templescoby	1/4/17	6	9/10/17

2018 Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) Allocation:

Transport Infrastructure Ireland has provided funding for the following schemes.

N25 New Ross By-Pass Residual Network**N25 Oaklands Roundabout**

Works commenced on 3rd. January and are due to be completed by early June.

N30/ R700 Roundabout

Tramore House Regional Design Office is working on the contract documents. This scheme should be tendered in March/April.

N11 Kyle Upper Pavement Scheme

Tenders will be invited week commencing 22nd. January with a tender return date of Thursday 15th. February.

This scheme should commence mid to late March and should be completed by mid May.

N11 Killeen to Newtown

Site investigation works are ongoing on this scheme at present.

The timeline for construction works are dependent on the outcome of the site investigation works.

N30 Mountelliot

Fwd testing was carried out last week. Topographical survey works to be carried out in February/March. This scheme should be tendered in May/June.

N30 Enniscorthy Southern Approach

Fwd testing was carried out last week. Topographical survey works to be carried out in March/April. This scheme should be tendered in June.

N30 Clonroche

FWD testing was carried out last week. It is hoped to have a design proposal for this scheme by the middle of 2018. This scheme should be ready to be tendered in early 2019.

2017 HD28 Pavement Works – Contract 1

This contract is substantially completed. The remainder of the contract will be completed in March subject to suitable weather conditions.

N11 Glentigue

N11 Edermine

N11 Baylands

2017 HD28 Pavement Works – Contract 2

Works will commence in March subject to suitable weather conditions.

N11 Clogh Roundabout

N25 Ashfield Cross Roundabout

N25 Whitford Roundabout

Winter Maintenance

The 2017/2018 winter maintenance programme commenced on Monday 16th October. There have been 35 no. call outs up to 26th. January 2018.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL ROADS

Improvement Works

Works on New Ross Flood Relief Scheme ongoing.

Construction work on Oaklands Roundabout (New Ross District) commenced on January 3 2018.

General Maintenance

Drainage, patching and road surface repair works ongoing in all Districts.

A. Irish Water – Asset Management

Irish Water Capital Schemes

IW Asset Management: Enniscorthy Sewerage Scheme – Stage 3 (included in IW – CIP14-16 i.e. Irish Water Capital Investment Programme (CIP) 2014 to 2016)

The WWTP is to be extended to cater for a PE of 26,000, an increase of 10,000 PE from the existing 16,000 PE. The DBO contract was signed on the 10th April, 2017. Ward & Burke are the contractors and have commenced on site. J.B. Barry are the Consulting Engineers. Works are progressing on target with programme. It is intended to have the inlet works complete in 2017.

IW Asset Management: Enniscorthy and Sow Regional Water S.S. (included in IW - CIP14-16)

IW Asset Strategy has approved the following elements of work on this Scheme:

- New intake and pumping station at Clonhasten.
- New rising main from Clonhasten to Vinegar Hill WTP.
- Hydraulic model of the Enniscorthy and Sow Schemes.

Terms of Reference are being agreed with Irish Water in order to appoint Consultants to progress the above work.

Preparation of budget application for Concept Design is underway; this includes for Strategic Report and review of options for the entire scheme.

IW Asset Management: Fethard-on-Sea Sewerage Scheme (included in IW - CIP14-16)

Site Investigations have been completed along the proposed outfall route. Foreshore application was lodged. The land acquisition by CPO has also commenced for the selected WWTP site and Pumping Station site. Revised terms of reference and new appointment for the Consulting Engineer, is complete. The design of the scheme is in progress and preparation of tender documents. A detailed design report was prepared and workshop held to review report.

IW Asset Management: Gorey Sewerage Scheme – Stage 2 (included in IW - CIP14-16)

The DBO contract with AECOM/SIAC Construction to upgrade the wastewater treatment plant in Courtown was completed in 2016. The plant is now operated by the contractor. (Aecom is now Murphy Process Engineering).

The 75% OPW-funded flood relief works minor scheme for Gorey Town is underway.

IW Asset Management: Gorey Regional Water Supply – South Wellfield (included in IW - CIP14-16)

The Gorey RWSS will be upgraded and a new 8 Ml/day WTP and 7,500m³ reservoir provided at Ballyminaun. A DWSP and catchment yield review is to be done. Consultants have been engaged by IW to review the design and revise the contract documents. Planning permission was granted by WCC to upgrade the borehole sites and build a new water treatment plant at Ballyminaun. The hydrogeological investigations show that remedial works will be required to most of the boreholes and the contract documents are being revised accordingly. Negotiations for wayleaves ongoing with landowners and CPO will be served in January, 2018. Tender documents are due to be ready in January, 2018.

IW Asset Management: Untreated Agglomeration Study (UTAS)

Aecom has been appointed to design a waste water treatment plant for the villages of Arthurstown, Ballyhack and Duncannon. These designs are currently underway.

A Scheme for Kilmore Quay is also currently being designed. These have progressed from the Untreated Agglomeration Study (UTAS) to identify areas of the highest priority requiring treatment. Options reports on potential sites for the schemes are currently under review. Both projects will be submitted for planning approval in Spring 2018. Initial contact with landowners has commenced.

IW Asset Management: Wexford Town Watermain Rehab and Gas Network

Site Investigation works are complete for gas and water main installation around Wexford town.

There are two areas of common gas / water mains to be laid. Design works are currently underway for the remaining water main and gas mains, as well as design to eliminate back yard services around Wexford. A new hydraulic model for Wexford town is being updated to allow for the design works to progress.

New Ross Sewerage Scheme – Irishtown to Nunnery Lane Sewers

MJS Civil Engineering Ltd. have been appointed by Wexford County Council to construct the new foul and surface sewers from Irishtown to Nunnery Lane. Work has commenced week 20th November, 2017 and is expected to last for 20 weeks.

IW Asset Management: Water Conservation Stage 3– Watermain Rehabilitation Phase 2 (Direct Labour Crew)

4.5km of 355mm OD pipework in Ballylucas – Screen is now complete, permanent reinstatement outstanding. 2.5km in Mill Lands, Gorey 30% complete. IW are funding this project for €2m for 9KM of pipeline rehabilitation.

B. IRISH WATER MINOR SCHEMES & SPECIAL SCHEMES

IW Asset Management: Murrintown P.S. (Wastewater to Wexford WWTW)

Award and Regret Letters were forwarded on the 26th October, 2017.

Flow Monitoring & Sampling Programme

Snagging 98% complete. 4 Additional sites added, Camolin North and South, Campile and Balycanew.

Sewer network pump station maintenance contract

2nd round now in progress.

WWTP pre-planned Maintenance Contract

Works progressing on site.

IW Asset Management: Newtown WTW (pumps, blowers etc.)

High lift pumps installed in early January. Backwash flow meter installed late January.

IW Asset Management: Kilmallock & Taylorstown WTW (new pumps, automated treatment, replacement of chlorine gas etc)

Filter sand replacement complete in Kilmallock and underway in Taylorstown. Dosing replacement is ongoing. Commissioning is scheduled for January 2018. Additional works for acid dosing in Kilmallock have been approved to improve the proposed operability of automatic coagulant dosing.

IW Asset Management: pH Emergency (Automated dosing control)

Coolgreany caustic pumps serviced mid January. Caustic pumps to be turned on by end of January.

IW Asset Management: Coagulation automation at Creagh, Vinegar Hill and Newtown WTW
Some Coagulation automation equipment installed at Vinegar Hill and Newtown WTW in mid to late January.

IW Asset Management: Disinfection and pH Control Programme
Chestnut Grove: UV units and chloros dosing installed w/e December 15th. BWN lifted December 21st.

Suppressed Capital Maintenance scheme

A capital maintenance budget of €930,000 has been allocated by Irish Water for Wexford for 2017. Our present approval from Irish Water is at 117% of budget at €1.163 million. Committed expenditure recorded at present is €592,682. A number of projects through this fund are at mini-tender stage. Committed expenditure recorded at present is €783,976.55.

C. RURAL WATER PROGRAMME

Blackstairs Group Water Scheme – Contract No. 11 Pollpeasty

Contract commenced 5th February.

Kilanerlin Group Water Scheme

AMR contract complete.

Oilgate Group Sewerage Scheme/ The Bing Group Sewerage Scheme

Awaiting response from the Department of Planning Community and Local Government on infrastructure upgrades required on both schemes.

Crosstown Group Sewerage Scheme / Orchard Lane Group Sewerage Scheme

Takeover Process ongoing.

5. Finance:

Audit of Annual Financial Statement (AFS) 2016

The LGAS audit of the 2016 financial records is complete and the Local Government Auditor Statutory Audit Report together with a copy of the Audited Accounts for 2016 have been included on the Agenda for consideration of members.

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee met with the Local Government Auditor to discuss the 2016 Accounts and associated audit. The committee will now proceed to prepare their report for the Council on the Audit Committee activity during 2017, their views following consideration of the Audited Financial Statement for 2016 and associated audit report together with a note on their proposed programme of work for 2018. It is expected that the report will be submitted to the Council for consideration after the next Audit Committee meeting which is scheduled for 7th March 2018.

Annual Financial Statement 2017

Work has commenced on the preparation of the 2017 Accounts. This work will take a number of months but it is expected that the Council will meet the submission deadline of the end of March.

Capital Programme 2018 – 2020 (Borrowing Proposal)

A draft of the 2018 – 2020 Capital Programme is nearing completion and will be included on the March agenda for consideration of members. As part of this work there is a need to commence the process of securing ministerial sanction for works being progressed in 2018 and this proposal is included as a separate item on the agenda for consideration and formal approval of members.

Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan

A briefing note on the recently announced new Government backed mortgage scheme has been circulated to members. This note gives an overview of the scheme to be implemented with local authorities from 1st February 2018. An information booklet will also be circulated to members.

Cash Flow/Overdraft

The Council continues to operate in overdraft, Ministerial Sanction is in place for borrowing by way of overdraft in the amount of €13m will expire on 31st December, 2018.

**Tom Enright,
Chief Executive.**