



Public Consultation Report for New Ross Municipal District

Disability Strategy Implementation Plan

2015-2016

**Report to the Members of the
New Ross Municipal District**

Prepared April 2015

Table of Contents

Section 1 Introduction	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Consultation.....	2
1.3 Submissions and Observations	2
Section 2 Key Objectives.....	3
Section 3 Conclusion.....	4
3.1 Conclusion.....	4
3.2 The Next Stage.....	4
Section 4 Persons and Bodies who made Written Submissions and Observations and a Summary of the Main Issues Raised and Responses	5

Section 1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The Local Government Reform Act 2014 saw the abolition of the Town Councils and their structures and, as a result, the Town Access Focus Groups' functions ceased. A new consultation process was introduced to cover each of the Municipal Districts consisting of drop in/open meetings to be held each year in each Municipal District; these meetings are in addition to the new Public Participation Network for Wexford County Council.

The aim of the public consultation event held on 24th March, 2015 at The Dunbrody Visitor Centre, New Ross was to help identify the key issues regarding accessibility, access and disability-related access issues and universal design for the plan area.

This report, which summarises the issues raised at the public consultation event, is presented in four sections:

Section 1 provides an overview of the public consultation process undertaken.

Section 2 outlines the key objectives.

Section 3 concludes the report and outlines the next stage in the plan preparation process.

Section 4 lists the persons and bodies, their submissions and observations and provides Wexford County Council's responses to those issues.

1.2 Consultation

The pre-consultation stage consisted of the following activities:

1. Letters (fifty-two in total) were sent to local community groups, stakeholders, and relevant government departments informing of the intention to review the Disability Strategy Implementation Plan, and inviting these parties to a public consultation event on 24th March, 2015.
2. A notice was published in the local newspapers covering the period from 10th March to 24th March, 2015 informing the public of the intention to review the Disability Strategy Implementation Plan and inviting their attendance at the public consultation event.
3. As a result of the extensive area under the remit of the New Ross Municipal District Area, it was decided to advertise the public consultation event via as many avenues and in as many formats as possible. In this regard, notices were included in Parish Newsletters during the weekends of 14th/15th March and 21st/22nd March, 2015 and were read out to congregations in many parishes.
4. A radio campaign was arranged and ran from 19th March to 24th March, 2015 to inform of the public consultation event.
5. Notice of the public consultation event issued via Wexford County Council's MapAlerter System to persons within the New Ross Municipal District Area.
6. Notice of the public consultation event was displayed on Wexford County Council's website and staff intranet.
7. Additional supports available at the public consultation event to facilitate access for all included the provision of a sign language interpreter and visual presentations.
8. The public consultation event was well attended with 17 people signing the attendance sheet.

1.3 Submissions and Observations

Written submissions and observations could be made in the period from 4th March to 10th April, 2015. A total of five submissions/observations were received at the public consultation event on 24th March, 2015.

The submissions/observations received covered a wide range of issues from the policing of disabled parking bays; the height of footpaths; lack of disabled public toilets to access to business and retail services within the Town Centre.

Completed Submissions/Comments Sheets could be submitted to the Access Section staff at the public consultation event on 24th March, 2015, or any time prior to the deadline for receipt of same i.e. 10th April, 2015.

Section 2 Disability Strategy Key Objectives

1. Policing of Disabled Parking Bays

Point noted. Community Wardens will be instructed to be extra vigilant. This issue will stay on agenda with consideration for an awareness event on this item for 2015.

2. Lack of Public Disabled Toilets

There are four locations where Accessible WCs are designated for public use as follows: the Pavilion (Town Park); Dunbrody Visitor Centre; The Tholsel; and the Library.

It is noted that raising awareness and informing the public, tourists etc., of this provision requires further discussion.

3. Wheelchair access to Bank of Ireland and AIB; ATM not accessible

The Access Officer will advise relevant parties, in this instance Bank of Ireland and AIB, of access-related issues.

4. Height of counters in Dr. Walsh's, North Gate St. and in XtraVision, South St.

The Access Officer will advise relevant parties, in this instance Dr. Walsh's and XtraVision, of access-related issues.

5. Gradient of ramp at fire exit at back entrance to Men's Shed

These premises lie outside the remit of Wexford County Council insofar as they are in private ownership. The Access Officer will advise relevant parties, in this instance the Men's Shed Steering Committee/Wexford Local Development (WLD), of access-related issues.

6. Lack of skate park in New Ross

While not an access-related issue, the possibility of a skate park has been investigated to the point of being costed. However, a suitable site is not currently available. This item will stay on the agenda.

Section 3 Conclusion

3.1 Conclusion

The Access Section would like to thank the local community for taking the time to make written submissions and observations and attend the public consultation event held on 24th March, 2015. The consultation process has been an extremely valuable information gathering exercise. The submissions and observations received were detailed, informative and provide an enhanced understanding of the key access issues of the area. There are many reoccurring issues throughout the submissions and it can be concluded that the local community consider these to be priority issues to be addressed.

3.2 The Next Stage

The Access Section will continue with the preparation of the New Ross Municipal District Disability Strategy Implementation Plan 2015-2016 based on the outcome of the submissions, findings and responses of the public consultation. Once the Draft Plan is approved, it will be published on the Council's website on the Access for All page.

<http://www.wexford.ie/wex/Departments/AccessForAll/>.

Copies of the report on the public consultation for the New Ross Municipal District Area will be forwarded to all those who participated in the process by submitting their items of concern.

Section 4 Persons and Bodies who made Written Submissions and Observations and a Summary of the Main Issues Raised and Responses

No.	Name	Main Issue Topics	Response
01	James Long	<p>a) (i) Would like WCC wardens to check vehicles displaying blue badges, to ensure the driver/occupant is the holder of the badge and legitimately entitled to park in a disabled parking bay.</p> <p>(ii) Would also like to see policing of disabled parking bays in privately-owned car parks by the owners of said car parks.</p> <p>b) Lack of public disabled toilets in New Ross and Wexford Towns.</p>	<p>Point noted. Action: Community Wardens will be instructed to be extra vigilant. This issue will stay on agenda with consideration for an awareness event on this item 2015.</p> <p>These premises lie outside the remit of Wexford County Council insofar as they are in private ownership. Wexford County Development Plan 2013-2019 sets out and informs of development management standards which developments should have regard to.</p> <p>There are four locations where Accessible WCs are designated for public use as follows: the Pavilion (Town Park); Dunbrody Visitor Centre; The Tholsel; and the Library. Action: It is noted that raising awareness and informing the public, tourists etc. requires further discussion.</p>
02	Annie Murphy, Community Resource Officer, DeafHear	<p>a) Access issues in New Ross / Wexford Town Libraries and Heritage Sites:</p> <p>(i) Is there clear signage in the libraries? The provision of pictograms would be beneficial to deaf people.</p> <p>(ii) Is there a desk loop system in place?</p>	<p>Accessibility is to the fore in all the County Libraries. Wexford County Council supports where appropriate heritage sites and buildings within the county. Training has been paramount with all staff within the Library Service.</p> <p>Yes, all of our libraries and heritage sites under the remit of Wexford County Council have desk induction loops systems and signage informing of same.</p>

No.	Name	Main Issue Topics	Response
		<p>(iii) Are the staff in New Ross Library and The Dunbrody Visitor Centre deaf aware? Would they benefit from Deaf Awareness Training?</p> <p>(iv) If not already present, could subtitles be provided for films etc. shown in heritage sites/museums/art galleries?</p> <p>(v) Could an information screen (similar to those located on the approach routes to Wexford Town) be provided on entry routes to New Ross? Could additional information such as weather alerts; details of heavy traffic areas; details of upcoming events in the town e.g. festivals etc. be displayed on these screens?</p> <p>(vi) Could Sign Language Interpreters be provided at festivals (for the speeches) e.g. at the opening ceremony of the Wexford Festival Opera to enhance a deaf person's enjoyment of the event.</p>	<p>All staff within the Library Service having completed various training programmes including the National Disability Authority's e-learning disability awareness training. Action: Heritage sites under the remit of Wexford County Council will be encouraged to engage in the NDA e-learning training if already haven't done so.</p> <p>Point noted.</p> <p>Point noted. In the short term, this is not something that presents as a priority. However, further investigation to its future provision will be looked at.</p> <p>Point noted. Action: Wexford County Council, where appropriate, will inform events organised or funded, in part by Wexford County Council, of the requirement for the provision of access and inclusion for all to be considered. Through a process of pre-assessing event licensing applications within the Planning Department, this item will be considered.</p>

No.	Name	Main Issue Topics	Response
03	Veronica Rossiter	<p>a) Lack of wheelchair access to Bank of Ireland and AIB; ATMs not accessible:</p> <p>b) Access issues with footpaths at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of Mary Street (beside Vodafone shop) – too high • Michael Street – very slippery; <p>b) Counters are too high in Dr. Walsh's, North Gate Street and in XtraVision, South Street.</p>	<p>The issue of access into premises which are in private ownership lies outside the remit of Wexford County Council. Wexford County Council will support local businesses, and appropriate further development of their respective premises, subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. Additionally, the Council, if carrying out works to carriageways and footpaths along a thoroughfare will, when practicable and in agreement with the landlords, make provision for level access to premises along the route.</p> <p>Action: The Access Officer will advise relevant parties, in this instance Bank of Ireland and AIB, of access-related issues.</p> <p>Points noted and on further investigation carried out April 2015 the following refers:</p> <p>Mary Street: The footpath at the end of Mary Street to Vodafone is all dropped – carriageway, kerb and footpath are all level throughout the junction. The kerb height further up Mary Street is within regulation. Access around the Mary Street, South Street, John Street, Quay Street junction is good – no remedy required.</p> <p>Michael Street: On investigation, no issues were found with the footpath surface. The street is approx 6m wide with a concrete footpath on both sides – all in good condition. There is no shading or vegetation causing a problem. No further action to be taken.</p> <p>These premises lie outside the remit of Wexford County Council insofar as they are in private ownership. If the building is existing and not in the ownership of Wexford County Council, the Council has no remit in this regard.</p> <p>Action: The Access Officer will advise relevant parties, in this instance Dr. Walsh's and XtraVision, of access-related issues.</p>

No.	Name	Main Issue Topics	Response
04	New Ross Men's Shed	a) The ramp at the fire exit back entrance to the Men's Shed is not accessible for wheelchair users.	<p>This premises lies outside the remit of Wexford County Council insofar as it is in private ownership. Wexford County Council will support local businesses, organisations and community groups, with appropriate further development of their respective premises, subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. Additionally, the Council, if carrying out works to carriageways and footpaths along a thoroughfare will, when practicable and in agreement with the landlords, make provision for level access to premises along the route.</p> <p>Action: To assist the Access Officer will advise relevant parties, in this instance the Men's Shed Steering Committee/Wexford Local Development (WLD), of access-related issues</p>
05	Joane Smith, Fáilte Womens' Group	<p>a) Lack of skate park in New Ross Town;</p> <p>b) Lack of seating at 'The Ponds' in The Irishtown, New Ross.</p>	<p>While not an access-related issue, the possibility of a skate park has been investigated to the point of being costed. However, a suitable site is not currently available. This item will stay on the agenda.</p> <p>Seating in this instance is not an access-related issue.</p> <p>Action: This item will be looked at as part of any future amenity development for the area.</p>