



## **Waterford joins the National Purple Flag celebrations**

Waterford Purple Flag joined the celebrations in Carrick-on-Shannon this week as the Purple Flag Accreditation programme reached a milestone of 20 accredited towns and cities in Ireland since its inception in 2012. Waterford was awarded the internationally recognised accreditation in 2015 and has just completed its renewal application and expects to be successful and retain the coveted status.

At the National Awards ceremony in Leitrim this week Limerick, Maynooth, Dublin One and Wexford received their accreditations. Dublin's Creative Quarter and Dame District was one of the first to be awarded with the Purple Flag, showing a significant increase in footfall and decrease in vacancies as a result. Now, a second area on Dublin's north side called 'Dublin One' which stretches from O'Connell Street to Capel Street has stepped forward and achieved the evening and night-time accreditation.

The Purple Flag status has been hugely beneficial to the evening and night time economy in Waterford. A recent survey conducted by the group has revealed that awareness of the initiative is on the up and that the majority of people would be happy to recommend Waterford for a night out.

Waterford Purple Flag Co-ordinator Nick Donnelly said: "If our towns and cities are to survive and thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century they must meet the expectations of both visitors and residents. To achieve that goal our town centres must be professionally managed and promoted. Cities and towns all over Ireland are proving their ability to do so with this accreditation and having now over 20 flag holding locations puts Ireland firmly on the map in terms of excellence in the evening and night-time."

He continued by saying: "I would like to acknowledge the huge interest, work and enthusiasm that town and city representatives are making in creating a welcoming, safe and vibrant environment, which is a critical element of Purple Flag accreditation."

Shanaaz Carroll, CEO of the accrediting body Association of Town and City Management (ATCM) commented: "A new milestone has been reached for Purple Flag on the island of Ireland – over 20 Purple Flags is a great achievement, which shows the quality of the Evening & Night Time Economy (ENTE). I am delighted to say following the Purple Flag Panel meeting that all Irish applications have impressed the judges both in terms of quality of the night-time offering as well in the partnerships of the towns and cities that applied."

'Purple Flag' is the highest award for a vibrant and well-managed evening and night time economy in Europe offering successful towns and cities a way to recognise, promote and further develop the evening and night-time economy, making places more attractive and vibrant for both locals and visitors alike.

**Ends**