



## **National conference highlights vital role played by Local Authorities in developing and supporting Tourism**

The local government sector is hosting a national tourism conference entitled 'Collaborate Locally to Compete Globally' on 29<sup>th</sup> and [30<sup>th</sup> March](#) in Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford.

Supported by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTAS), the conference will hear from a number of key speakers, including Jim Deegan, Professor of Tourism at Limerick University, Raymond Coyle of Tayto Park, Paul Kelly from Fáilte Ireland, David McLoughlin of the Wexford Opera Festival and Simon Kay of Center Parcs.

This event will highlight the significant Irish success stories in tourism, share key learnings, and highlight the role of local authorities in facilitating this success. The Irish tourism market is supported by very targeted and active participation by local government and in partnership with a number of government agencies, who work very positively on national, regional and local initiatives.

Between 2011 and 2016, the local government sector leveraged a total capital investment of **€170.9million in tourist attractions**, with **€73.3million of this investment made by local authorities**, while the matching €97.6million capital was made by other stakeholders (e.g Fáilte Ireland, DTTAS). This supported **259 attractions** and plans are advancing for a further **121 new tourism products**.

Over **1,400 events** and festivals are supported by local authorities every year, contributing to local economies. Much of the support provided by local authorities at events goes unnoticed, but is vital to the success of events; such as project management, clean ups, administrative support, health and safety, all put in place so that people can enjoy their day.

The Minister of State for Tourism and Sport Patrick O'Donovan TD will address the conference on the day, and speaking ahead of the event, has said:

"Ireland is famous across the globe as a destination that is welcoming and vibrant. Perhaps our greatest potential tourism offering over the coming years is where the aspects of People and Place converge at the level of the local community. This conference will showcase the collaboration between communities, industry, state agencies and the local authorities that makes it all happen.

The Irish tourism offering originates with local people at local level. That's why this event is so significant, it is the coming together of all local authorities in the country, including those with high profile Irish tourism successes, to share learnings and to see how we can continue to grow and develop our tourism offering in an increasingly competitive global marketplace."



Joe MacGrath, Chief Executive of Tipperary County Council and Chair of the County and City Management Association (CCMA) recognises that local government is playing a significant role in tourism development of local areas, from the provision of attractions and infrastructure, support for events, mobilising a network of stakeholders, agencies and groups to promote local tourist offerings.

“This is an important event for local authorities and the wider tourism sector. No organisation can work in isolation; we rely on our partnerships with other state agencies and private industry to help us provide a modern and positive experience for our visitors”.

Anna Marie Delaney, Chief Executive of Offaly County Council explains that “every local authority embraces their own unique heritage and natural amenities, building on these and exploring new ways to share them with visitors and locals, while being sympathetic to conservation and environmental issues. Historic castles, houses, museums and art centres build on our heritage, while greenways, habitat trails, blueways and beaches are developed and maintained to allow us to enjoy our natural environment”.

Covering themes such as public and private investment priorities, branding, food tourism and innovation this conference will bring together all the key players in the Irish tourism industry.

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