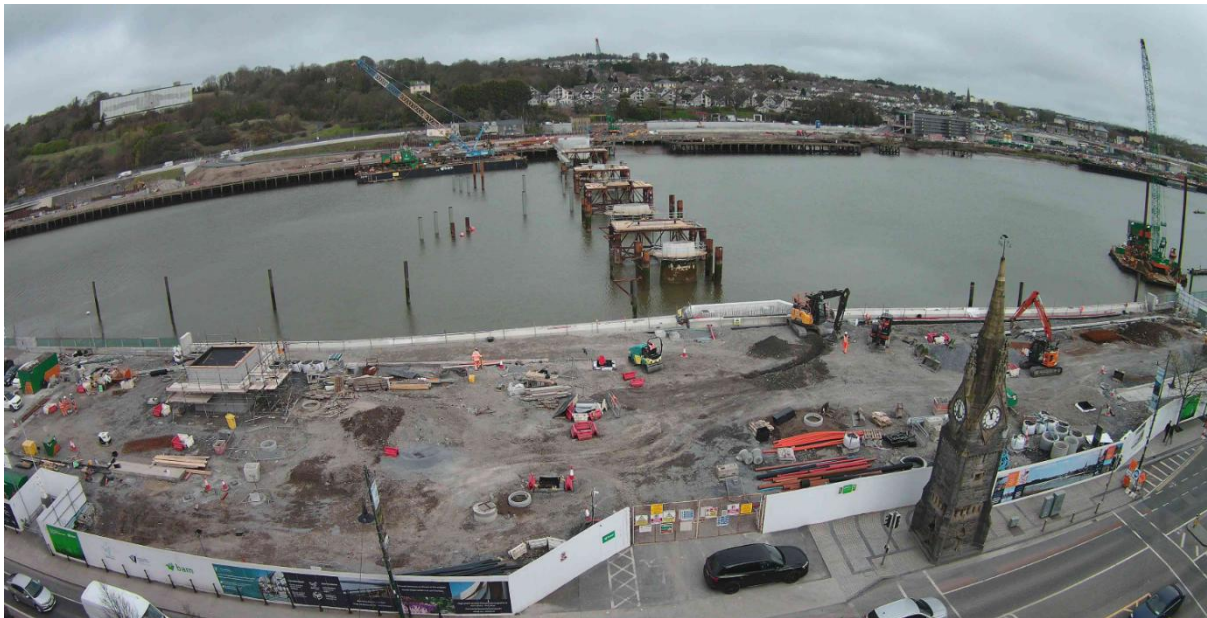


DO: GACH BALL DE CHEANTAR CATHRACH PHORT LÁIRGE
TO: EACH MEMBER OF THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT OF WATERFORD
Economic Development Report April 2025

1. North Quays

The North Quays infrastructural works are well advanced, and certain elements will be substantially complete before the end of this year. The bridge substructure is complete and awaiting the delivery of the bridge superstructure, which, subject to final inspections, checks and certification, be transported from Belgium to Waterford in May. The superstructure will be in six sections and these will be lifted into position over a four-day period.



Drainage work has commenced on the South Quays. The works extends onto Meagher's Quay and does require, in consultation with key stakeholders, the temporary closure of footpaths, cycle lanes and single traffic lanes as well as the relocation of the bus stop. Deep excavation work is required for one phase of these works, necessitating the temporary closure of the inbound lane at Meagher's Quay. To minimize disruption and ensure the safety of road users and site staff, the temporary closure of the inbound lane is proposed to take place from 8 pm on Saturday 12th April until 6 am on Monday 14th April. Details of the weekend diversion route will be communicated to the public in advance of the works and all road users are asked to adhere to all local traffic management and follow directional signage for the duration of the works.



New link road to school and care facilities on Abbey Road is in operation

The final road surface has been laid on Fountain Street and extending to Abbey Road, with the provision of a greenway access link, drainage works and installation of services, footpaths, lighting, signage, etc. Similar works are continuing on the inbound lane on Dock Road. It is expected that the new junction at the entrance to the Ard Ri / North Quays construction site will be operational in early April.

Works are continuing on the train station building, platforms and internal layout, while the northern entrance and the planters that bound the external stairs are emerging and now visible. A decision on the Part 8 planning application for the southern entrance/access to the new train station is expected in April.



Flood defence sheet piles wall being put in place which links to flood defence system installed at the Train Station

Works have commenced on the railway flood defence scheme, the sheet pile wall has been installed to the west of the transport hub. Sheet piling works to the west of Rice Bridge are anticipated to commence in

May. Subsequent phases of the flood defence system will include trackside drainage, flood defence barriers at Plunkett Station, pumping stations and outfalls.

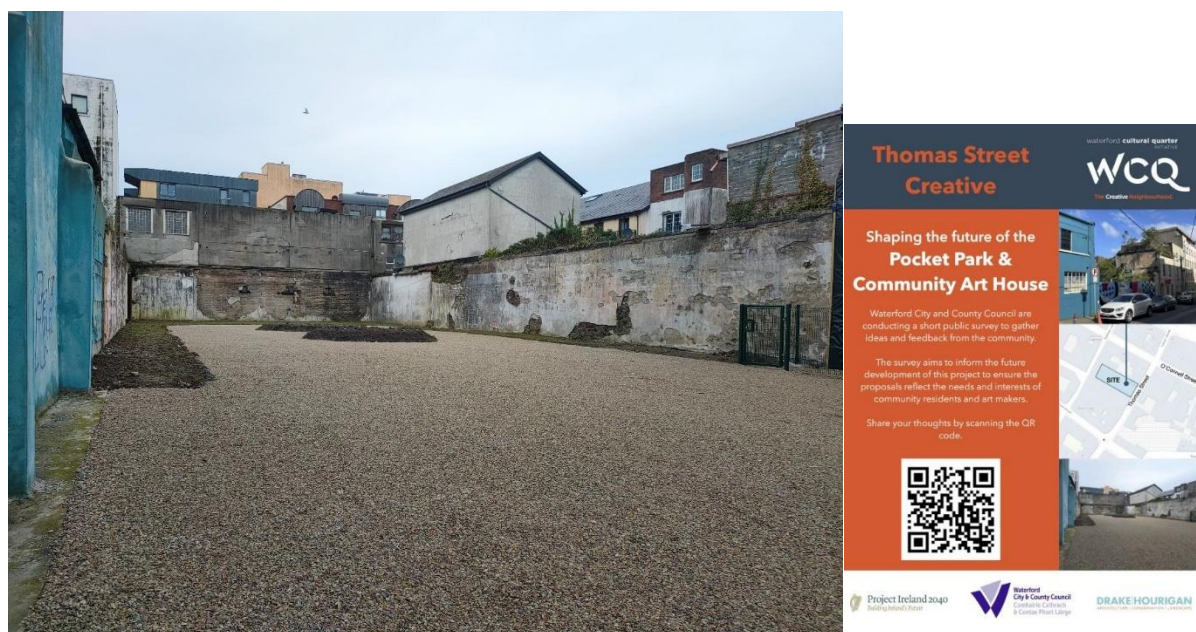
Harcourt Developments submitted further information in respect of their planning application for Phase 1 of the North Quays SDZ development. A planning decision is due on the proposed development by the 10th April 2025.

2. City Centre Regeneration URDF Projects

Munster Express (Project F & H) – The design team, led by Butler Cammoranesi Architects, are progressing the detailed design and technical specifications for the building, works are due to be tendered in the summer with demolition works being included under the main contract.

3 & 4 Georges Street (Project B & C) – Following the statutory Part 8 Public Consultation process, a revised proposal is being prepared taking on-board the issues which were raised. The consultant team are preparing documentation with a new Part 8 Consultation to commence in early May 2025.

The Art House / 7 & 8 Thomas Street (Project I & J) – A Consultant team, led by Drake Hourigan Architects are progressing the project design. A Part 8 application is expected to commence in the coming weeks and will involve community engagement to inform proposals. The community engagement piece has completed and received constructive and enthusiastic feedback on proposals. These are now under consideration by the design team for the project proposals.



Parade Quay (URDF Projects P & Q) – The proposed development is for housing, public realm and commercial use at 124-130 Parade Quay. Opening up and investigative works are ongoing for review and approval by the National Monuments Service. Tender documents are currently being prepared. Refurbishment work to 123A Parade Quay (aka; Central Hall; URDF Project R) is ongoing and is due to open Q3 2025 and linked to the adjacent Museum of Time building.

18 Lady Lane Concept designs are being developed in coordination with the project and funding partners for 18 Lady Lane, to create a new children's experience, Tír na nÓg, @ Lady Lane, Waterford. Enabling works have commenced on site with asbestos materials removed from the main structure. Scaffolding is now in place to facilitate the removal of the dormitory roof. Demolition of the dormitory building is scheduled for early May allowing further archeological investigations prior to proceeding to Part 8 Public Consultation in June 2025.

City Hall & Bishops Palace Re roofing and external rendering works to both buildings is ongoing and intend to complete all works during the summer 2025.

Derrick Crane All survey works now complete, consultants now carrying out sampling and testing of paints and metals to further inform the Structural Assessment report. Repair/Refurbishment recommendations/report expected shortly and a decision will then be made on the extent of works to be undertaken.

3. **Tramore**

Metal Man

Conservation works are due to commence in June, it will include, repointing, lime washing of all three beacon structures and repainting of the Metal Man statue. Works are expected to continue until September 2025.

Tramore Water Activity Centre

Following the approval of the Part 8 Process the design team have completed revised layout and contract documents. The Project will be tendered once the revised layout has been approved by Fáilte Ireland.

4. **Regional Sports Centre**

Two items of work at WRSC are in progress:

1. Upgrade of the Public Toilets – works include removal of the existing facilities, and rearrangement of floorplan to allow installation of Part M compliant Changing Places shower room and toilet. The tender process is complete and the contract was awarded to ABS Construction who commenced in early April. Works are due to be complete at the end of May.
2. Upgrade of Sprinkler System – these works are being tendered and submissions are due to be returned on tenders by Friday 18th April.

5. **Waterford City Centre Management Group**

There was a meeting of the Waterford CCMG on Thursday 10th April. The main focus of the meeting was a presentation from KPMG on the Draft Waterford Metropolitan Area Strategy. There was also a discussion on actions in City Centre Management Plan.

New content on Waterford City centre including information on the CCMG, city centre projects and supports has been added to Waterford Council's website at [City Centre Management Group](#). Any comments or feedback on the content can be forward to mfitzsims@waterfordcouncil.ie

The next meeting of the CCMG is scheduled for Thursday 5th June.

6. **Trails and Outdoor Recreation**

2024/2025 OUTDOOR RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE SCHEME (ORIS)

ORIS Funding applications submitted to DRCD for Metropolitan District before end March 2025 as follows:

1. **Lacey's Wood, Dunmore East:** Upgrade the existing informal trail through this section of woodland to the north of Dunmore East – Upgraded trail surface similar to trails within main woodland, improved drainage, access improvements, new boardwalk sections and native planting - €39,510
2. **Crooke:** Improvement of an existing walking route and provision of safe access/steps and handrail onto the beach to complete a walking loop between Passage East and Crooke, Co. Waterford -€40,000
3. **Dunmore East Coastal Walk:** Following a detailed trail assessment conducted in April 2024, construct new trail surface to ensure safe and enjoyable walking experience impacted sections between Portally and Ballymacaw Coves - €200,000.00.
4. **Waterford Estuary Tourism and Recreation Strategy:** Study into the sustainable development of outdoor recreation infrastructure and amenities along the Waterford Estuary coastline to benefit local communities and the economy. Enhance the user experience for locals and visitors, with protection of the environment as a key guiding principle -€50,000.

Waterford City and County Outdoor Recreation Plan

Work is well underway on the preparation of the Waterford Outdoor Recreation Plan. It is an objective of 'Embracing Ireland's Outdoors – The National Outdoor Recreation Strategy' that each county prepares an Outdoor Recreation Plan and forms a stakeholder grouping the County Outdoor Recreation Committee. In this regard recent progress has included:

- Project team met with Outscape (consultant team) to finalise the actions and objectives of the plan on 10th April.
- It is anticipated that the CORP will be finalized by late Q2 2025 following SEA screening.

Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) 2023:

WCCC submitted a number of successful ORIS applications under the 2023 scheme with works planned to take place throughout 2025:

Measure 1:

- Biodiversity hot spot and pocket recreation area on the Waterford Greenway, Carriganore - €30,000.
- Passage East Walking Trail – steps leading towards church – path repairs, drainage, install new steps - €30,000. Damage caused by heavy rainfall during February 2025 is being assessed and will have to be incorporated into the project plan. Path is currently closed to the public.

Measure 2:

- Dunmore East Coastal Trail Project – Upgrade of steps at Portally Cove. Upgrade of section of trail between Dunmore East and Portally - €108,000.

Waterford Trails

- Continuing to engage with Sport Ireland Outdoors and local trail development groups around Waterford regarding ongoing monitoring, maintenance, development and promotion of Waterford's existing recreational trail network. www.visitwaterfordtrails.com

7. Tourism

Waterford Rural Tourism Network

Work with the Waterford Rural Tourism Network (WRTN) continues this year, together with Fáilte Ireland and Runda Hospitality & Tourism Solutions.

Following the very successful Network wide event in Gardenmorris Estate in February, a WLR campaign was launched. This campaign has three elements:

Five Interviews recorded at the event were broadcast on The Big Breakfast Blaa

Five competitions, each highlighting a different area of the Network was launched

A campaign with five different ads (one per cluster) were written & recorded and are now being broadcast to promote each area



The Waterford Rural Tourism Network had its third Learning journey in March, this was to Gaeltacht na nDéise. Over 40 participants were guided along their journey through Gaeltacht na nDéise by Éimhín Ní Conchúir.

The third Leave No Trace Training was delivered on the 27th March with 15 members attending. This now brings the total number of network members trained in Leave No Trace to 45. There are further meetings/events planned for 2025 including a Learning Journey to the Waterford Estuary.

Waterford Destination & Experience Development Plan (DEDP) Launch and Implementation Group

The Waterford Destination & Experience Development Plan (DEDP) was launched on the 12th March at Mount Congreve Gardens. Senior members of Fáilte Ireland, including Paul Kelly Chief Executive & Paul Keely Director of Regional Development, and representatives from Waterford City and County Council & local businesses were present to listen to the plan & its benefits for the county.



A workshop took place on Tuesday 25th March with the Waterford DEDP Implementation group. This meeting, the fourth of its kind, included a workshop facilitated by Mark O'Connell from Repucon that explored the role of the Implementation group in activating the Destination Experience & Development plan.

Visit Waterford

Visit Waterford remains at the forefront of marketing and promoting Waterford as a world-class tourism destination, driving national and international visitor growth through impactful campaigns and strategic collaborations.

Media:

Visit Waterford delivered a very successful campaign for the St. Patrick's Day Festival, which showcased Waterford's vibrant festivities on an international scale, reaching an audience over 350,970. This campaign included features in publications such as The Irish Times, The Avondhu & Irish Country Magazine, with a total media reach of 138,579.

On the 3rd March a press release was delivered to mark the celebration of Waterford's 1111 anniversary highlighting Waterford's hidden gems.

With the addition of the word 'Blaa' into the Oxford English Dictionary, Visit Waterford have delivered a press release on the 27th March, 'The Ultimate Blaa Road Trip' highlighting the Visit Waterford members that offer the blaa on their menu.

Membership

A members meeting was held on 21st March where the 2025 campaign was presented to the members as well as the new Digital Concierge service that is being created. At this meeting it was also announced that Sara Dolan, who has been a tremendous asset to Visit Waterford, has decided to step down after serving her time as chairperson. The members were informed that Clare Barrett, of Fiskars, has now assumed the position of chairperson.

Visit Waterford now has a total of 70 members. This number has increased by over 44% since March 2024.

Cruise Tourism

VW continues to work with key stakeholders in the newly formed Cruise Tourism working group. The view of this group is to co-ordinate the arrival of Cruise ships. The first ship of the season will dock on 30th April.