



**Chamber
Awards**

**2024
CHAMBER
AWARDS
MAGAZINE**

Advancing Business together.





AWARDS

- Local Authority Engagement
- Lobbying and Policy Campaign
- Supporting Business
- Sustainability & Biodiversity
- Digital Campaigns
- Community Support Initiates
- Best International Projects
- Event of the Year

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENGAGEMENT

Establishing an effective collaboration with the local authority is vital for Chambers, underpinning its effectiveness in our towns and cities.

Engagement with the local authority can help Chambers enrich their community and provide robust support for their members. Recognising the significance of this alliance, we highlight innovative means of working with local authorities which forge strong bonds that contribute to the collective growth and prosperity of our regions.

This year's nominees for the Local Authority Engagement award includes:

Ballina Chamber

*International Women's Day
Gathering*

Cork Chamber

Car Free Day

County Tipperary Chamber

Leveraging Local Supports

Shannon Chamber

*An Expanded Engagement with
Clare County Council*



Ballina Chamber

International Women's Day Gathering

Ballina Chamber presented its fourth International Women's Day gathering, hosted at The Cot & Cobble, Ballina, celebrating the diverse community of women in Ballina.

Supported by Local Enterprise Office Mayo, this year's event emphasised the theme of "Inspire Inclusion" and honoured the achievements of local women while fundraising for Mayo Mental Health Association. With a focus on fostering gender equality, diversity and women in business, the event featured guest speaker Síle Seoige, and celebrated the achievements of Martha Galvin, Allure Hairdressing (IHF) Irish Hairdresser of the Year 2022 and 2023, Marina Judge Millinery, Nicola Kennedy (Local Enterprise Office Mayo), and Jenna Walsh (Mayo Mental Health Association). The event was MC'd by Niamh Ryan (Ella and Jo Cosmetics).

The event included a fashion show showcasing a collection of clothes and shoes from Gerry McGuire's Shoes, Mary H's Ballina Fashion, and Carmels Fashions Ballina. 'Lady of The Moy' Lyndsay Golden, performed on the night.

Ballina Chamber President Tracey McCann Glacken and CEO Mags Downey Martin provided the opening and closing notes. Through collective action, attendees were invited to imagine and strive for a world free of bias, stereotypes, and discrimination, where differences are valued and celebrated. Forging women's equality and inspiring inclusion. #InspireInclusion.

Cork Chamber

Car Free Day



Cork's inaugural Car-Free Day, held on September 23rd, 2023, was a collaborative effort involving Cork Chamber, Cork City Council, Transport and Mobility Forum, and other stakeholders. Responding to research showing that 29% of the city's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions come from road transport and 86% of Cork residents desire more pedestrianised streets, the initiative aimed to reduce GHG emissions, air pollution, and traffic congestion while promoting sustainable travel and enhancing the city's vibrancy.

Members of the public came to Cork without their cars, using active travel and/or public transport to enjoy a traffic-free city and a pleasant street atmosphere. Public information stands on sustainable transport were made available along with an interactive performance by Carolina Erika Santos and facilitated by Claudia Renzi, where the people of Cork were invited to pin their dreams of a city full of nature rather than traffic to a line between the two rivers to "Fish for Dreams".

County Tipperary Chamber

Leveraging Local Supports



Michelle Aylward, leading the County Tipperary Chamber and part of Clonmel's town team, held an informative event for local businesses. This event highlighted support and resources from Skillnet, the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) operating in the region, and County Tipperary Chamber, aimed at helping local businesses grow and succeed.

This event with Minister Neale Richmond hosted a panel to discuss support and growth strategies with Clonmel's business owners. The event attracted over 120 business people and Chamber members and provided information on leveraging supports for local businesses.



Shannon Chamber

Fund the N17 Upgrade Now

Shannon Chamber has always maintained a linkage with Clare County Council on issues impacting its membership. In 2020, the Clare Economic Taskforce was established to bring engagement to a whole new level with the then President of Shannon Chamber invited to join the Taskforce representing the Chamber.

This Taskforce was informs and guides appropriate economic measures to stimulate job creation in County Clare, and Shannon Chamber formalised its engagement by arranging quarterly meetings with the Council CEO and senior executives.

As a member of the Taskforce, the Chamber engages and provides updates on issues pertaining to Shannon. They also identify areas where Shannon Chamber can assist in delivering key projects, for example via lobbying Government for funding or a change of policy on offshore wind projects. Shannon Chamber also supports the Council in delivering key infrastructure and helps incorporate rate payers' views. For example, this includes the upgrade of the N19 Shannon Airport Road Access Scheme; the Shannon Flood Relief Scheme through involving members in responses to surveys, and via consultation responses.

LOBBYING AND POLICY

Policy and lobbying are key Chamber activities advocating for the interests of our members and the broader region.

This category acknowledges the effort involved in orchestrating impactful policy campaigns. It highlights the behind-the-scenes work that goes into ensuring the success of these campaigns, which are instrumental in shaping and influencing crucial decisions.

This year's nominees for the Lobbying and Policy award includes:

Cork Chamber

*Cork Chamber of Commerce
Housing Advocacy*

Letterkenny Chamber

*North West City Region Value
Proposition*

Limerick Chamber

Better Regions Initiative (BRI)

**Northern Ireland Chamber of
Commerce and Industry**

Transformation of the Northern
Ireland Planning System

Sligo Chamber

Fund the N17 Upgrade Now

Cork Chamber

Cork Chamber of Commerce Housing Advocacy



In 2019 and 2021 concerns surrounding the viability/affordability of apartment development were demonstrated in two Cork Chamber/Construction Industry Federation solutions-based commissioned reports. Over the past year, Cork Chamber has lobbied at the highest level of Government for specific changes that would stimulate housing activity in the city region.

In June 2023, An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar visited Cork Chamber, where the impact of housing shortages were portrayed by industry representatives and the region's largest employers. At this meeting calls for the extension of cost-rental limits and a focus on 8,000 units with planning permission that await activation in Cork city were highlighted. Following the meeting, five proposed measures to alleviate housing shortages were presented to An Taoiseach.

Recommendations on housing based in Cork Chamber's Budget Submission 2024 presented to Minister Michael McGrath. In November 2023 Housing Minister Darragh O'Brien T.D. was welcomed by Cork Chamber to a meeting with business leaders for discussions on housing and planning. Throughout 2023 and into 2024 meetings have been held with leading construction companies to better understand ongoing challenges. These activities and the actions of Government thereafter were the culmination of several years of focused work to encourage appropriate Government interventions to stimulate the housing market.

Letterkenny Chamber

North West City Region Value Proposition



Building on the foundation of Cross Border collaboration established by Derry City & Strabane District Council and Donegal County Council, Letterkenny Chamber of Commerce and Derry Chamber of Commerce are developing and leading on a Value Proposition project for the North West City Region.

The shared goal is to mobilise greater private sector contribution to the collaborative effort aimed at unlocking the vast potential of the North West Cross Border Region of Ireland.

Central to this is defining the value proposition of the North West Region so that all private sector stakeholders can consistently explain the persuasive set of benefits unique to this cross jurisdictional region.

This strategy is vital to effectively convey the region's value to prospective citizens, investors and partners.

The North West Region of Ireland has been downgraded to a region in Transition, and all reports point to its infrastructure deficits as being the main cause. The North West City Region of Derry, Strabane and Letterkenny takes its place as the 4th largest centre of population on the island of Ireland and has serious ambitions for growth.

This value proposition will energise engagement, attract investment and contribute to fostering sustainable innovation, ensuring we can deliver on our ambitions.



Limerick Chamber

North West City Region Value Proposition

The 'Better Regions Initiative' (BRI) is essentially an evidence-based economics and policy think tank established to produce focused policy assessments of issues pertaining to the Mid-West. Much of the research produced in critical areas is at a national level, making it difficult to assess issues at the regional level, and therefore advocate for members.

Thus, we took the proactive approach to begin producing in house research under the BRI banner where research is not only guided by members, but also key regional stakeholders, and of course, the people living in the region. This mean that the BRI goes far beyond advocating for just members, but at its core is a community-based programme. Knowing that a better working region results in a better outcome for all our members, we deployed a holistic engagement programme allowing us to get a wide array of feedback on how the region is functioning.

The remit of the initiative is broad, but overall we aim to address UN SDGs at a regional level, namely; Good Health and Wellbeing, Quality Education, Clean Water, Affordable and Clean Energy, Decent work and Economic Growth, Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, Sustainable Cities and Communities and Climate Action.

Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Transformation of the Northern Ireland Planning System

Northern Ireland is faced with a planning system which does not serve economic growth or decarbonisation. In response, following extensive research and stakeholder engagement, NI Chamber in collaboration with Turkey developed and published a "Planning Improvement and Reform" position paper in January 2024. This document provided a step plan of immediate actions, and cultural and system improvements to the NI Planning System to accelerate Northern Ireland's progress towards net zero, facilitate economic growth and deliver much needed affordable housing.

This initiative was driven by member demand across a range of industries and sectors, including renewable energy, whose trade body, an NI Chamber member, "Renewable NI" identified planning as a key barrier to investment in decarbonisation in a report published in summer 2023.

Through its role on the Interim Regional Planning Commission, NI Chamber identified a clear platform to influence Planning Reform underpinned by expert led research, with cross sector and political buy in.



Sligo Chamber

Fund the N17 Upgrade Now



Sligo Chamber of Commerce and Ireland West Airport Knock jointly called on the Government to fund the upgrade of the N17 between Collooney and Ireland West Airport. Failure to do so, would represent a significant failure to honour repeated promises to advance economic development and make Sligo a compact growth centre.

In 2021, the National Development Plan was published and identified 55km of new high-standard dual-carriageway between Collooney and Ireland West Airport Knock.

The road is essential for the economic development of counties including Sligo and Mayo and all along the Western and North Western Atlantic seaboard. However, it has become unsafe, unsuitable for the traffic using it and in dire need of State intervention to support a long-planned transformation.

SUPPORTING BUSINESS

This award recognises projects which support our Chamber Business members.

Retaining current members and increasing the intake of new members is carried out through a range of initiatives by our members, including targeted communication campaigns and marketing initiatives which highlight our Chambers' relevance to the business community.

This year's nominees for the Supporting Business award includes:

Arklow & District Chamber

Empowering Arklow's Workforce: A Collaborative Training Initiative

Ballina Chamber

A Taste of Ballina Christmas Hamper

Cork Chamber

Connecting Cork

County Tipperary Chamber

Clonmel Community Conversations on Substance Use - Commercial Interests Workshop

Galway Chamber

Culture Connects Series

Kilkenny Chamber

The power of Kilkenny Chamber networking!

Letterkenny Chamber

ShopLK - Leading the way in Town Gifting

Arklow & District Chamber

Empowering Arklow's Workforce: A Collaborative Training Initiative

The Arklow Chamber of Commerce (ACC), recognising the critical role digital and management skills play in today's business environment, partnered with the Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB) to deliver a comprehensive training program specifically designed to upskill Arklow businesses, particularly addressing the needs of smaller firms.

This program tackled the challenge of limited resources and expertise by offering accessible and practical training modules in MS Office, social media marketing, leadership and management, and e-commerce. The program catered to diverse learning preferences and ensured minimal disruption to business operations by incorporating a blended learning approach with online modules and flexible in-person training options.

Ballina Chamber

A Taste of Ballina Christmas Hamper



"The Taste of Ballina Christmas Hamper" is a collaborative initiative between Ballina Chamber and local providers based in Ballina and North Mayo. This initiative promotes local businesses and highlights the quality and diversity of products available in the region.

Three hamper sizes and budgets were identified. The Corporate Christmas hamper is designed for corporate gifting and larger budgets. It contains a curated selection of premium local products suitable for business clients, partners, and employees. The Classic hamper is ideal for personal or family gifts, offering a balanced assortment of local delicacies at a moderate price point. The Deluxe Hamper is the ultimate option, featuring a luxurious high-end local products, perfect for special occasions. Such was the success of the initiative, it has continued throughout the calendar year.

Ballina Chamber has created variations, for example the "Taste of Ballina Valentine Hamper", and also the "Mother's Day" and "Father's Day Hamper," which cater to various occasions and audiences.



Cork Chamber

Connecting Cork

Connecting Cork is an initiative designed to develop international relationships and promote Cork for business, investment, talent, and collaboration. Connecting Cork is a Chamber-led project that engages with members of the Irish business community overseas while promoting Cork to a targeted international audience, with a focus on International Financial Services.

Cork Chamber works closely with the Diplomatic Corps, both at home and abroad, to support the promotion of bilateral trade and foster international relationship-building. The Chamber frequently welcomes delegations to Cork, providing them with insights into a thriving business community and vision for the region.

FDI is very important to the economic success of the region, with over 216 foreign investors choosing to establish themselves in Cork, who now directly employ over 50,000 people in the region. Connecting Cork aims to complement the work of the IDA by focusing on Cork's offering.

County Tipperary Chamber

Clonmel Community Conversations on Substance Use - Commercial Interests Workshop

CLONMEL COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS



The 'Clonmel Community Conversations on Substance Use' initiative by County Tipperary Chamber focused on the impact of substance use on local businesses in Clonmel. Through community conversations, it identified key challenges such as safety, revenue loss, and increased stress on staff. The initiative emphasised the need for collective action, better support from law enforcement, legislative changes, and increased community engagement to empower businesses and improve the overall environment for commerce and public well-being in Clonmel.



Galway Chamber *Culture Connects Series*

Cultural organisations firmly believe that their work is exceptional and are baffled as to why they struggle to attract large-scale investments from business leaders across the private sector. Many business leaders are culturally curious but before agreeing to a partnership; they want to understand what their return on investment will be, how they will get value for money, what governance structures are around potential partners and whether can they trust the relationship.

The Culture Connects series helps create an understanding of where each side is coming from and creates a safe environment for these questions to be answered so businesses can curate more partnerships, helping both communities.

Kilkenny Chamber

The power of Kilkenny Chamber networking!



In 2023, Kilkenny Chamber devised a series of events aimed at combatting stress in the workplace. This is an issue affecting everybody in different ways and the Chamber provided a safe space to facilitate knowledge-sharing, leading to better understanding, learning and finding solutions that work. The Chamber partnered with member MindaClient to run an information event on wellness in the workplace to outline their solution ideas.

At that event, they met with Teac Tom, a charity providing suicide support services and wellness counselling. A collaboration ensued between both organisations, leading to the creation of the Éist Liom programme. A subsequent Chamber event furthered the conversation and facilitated a connection between Teac Tom and the Head of HR in local business, Asgard Cleanroom Solutions. Subsequently, an Éist Liom pilot programme was run in Asgard, culminating in their 9 trained employees receiving certificates.



Letterkenny Chamber

ShopLK - Leading the way in Town Gifting

Letterkenny, with a population of 22,000, is the only urban centre of scale in County Donegal. As Donegal's central administrative hub, the population is boosted each day by a minimum of 50% with commuters accessing employment, retail services, education and leisure. Letterkenny is home to many national chains and has a thriving independent offering.

Recognising its importance as the regional retail centre and wanting to encourage local economic development, Letterkenny Chamber developed ShopLK 20 years ago. Starting as a local shopping initiative, the voucher scheme was added in 2006.

The voucher scheme evolved and has been in gift card format since 2015. The gift card is supported by a fully regulated company, EML payments that run some of the largest gift card programmes in the world. From humble beginnings, gift card annual sales have reached a staggering €5.7m.

SUSTAINABILITY AND BIODIVERSITY

This award recognises projects which support our Chamber Business members.

Retaining current members and increasing the intake of new members is carried out through a range of initiatives by our members including targeted communication campaigns and marketing initiatives which highlight our Chambers' relevance to the business community.

This year's nominees for the Sustainability and Biodiversity award includes:

Ballina Chamber

Communities Creating Change & Ballina Climate Action Weekend

Cobh & Harbour Chamber

No Time to Waste

Dundalk Chamber

Park n Stride Scheme in association with Louth County Council

Shannon Chamber

Mid-West Sustainability Week 2023

Tralee Chamber

Tralee Chamber Working with Businesses to Deliver Meaningful Biodiversity and Climate Action

Ballina Chamber

Communities Creating Change & Ballina Climate Action Weekend



The two major sustainability and biodiversity events in Ballina in 2023 showcased and amplified ongoing grassroots work in the community, supported by Ballina Chamber and strategic partners. These events served as platforms to raise awareness, celebrate achievements, and inspire further action toward sustainability and biodiversity conservation in the county.

The Mary Robinson Climate Conference, themed "Communities Creating Change," held in July, brought together voices from academia and society to discuss pathways for a sustainable future. This inclusive forum, supported by Ballina Chamber, highlighted the importance of sustainability to businesses and showcased successful engagements with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with local enterprises like Coca Cola Ballina and Topline Archers.

Organized by Ballina Chamber, LA climate action staff enjoyed a bike buffet; delegates travelled by bike for a networking dinner, visiting some of Ballina's climate action projects.

The Ballina Climate Action Weekend in November, now in its third year, featured meaningful climate action initiatives aligned with grassroots efforts. Organized by Ballina Chamber & MRC this event prioritized funding opportunities for businesses and communities and promoted responsible consumption and production through the circular economy. These events inspired community action, raised awareness, and fostered collaboration, driving positive change for a transformative future in Ballina.

Cobh & Harbour Chamber

No Time to Waste



Cobh and Harbour Chamber in partnership with AIB, Cork County Council, Local Enterprise Office South Cork and MyWaste.ie, successfully hosted an informative event entitled “No Time to Waste”.

The event brought together members of the business community from across the Cobh and harbour area to hear from AIB about sustainability from an SME’s perspective, recent changes to regulation and its impact, and the range of supports and advice available to businesses locally. LEO outlined the “LEO Green for Business” initiative which is a free programme that helps small businesses take the first step towards becoming more sustainable, giving access to a consultant who will identify the small changes that can have a big impact and potentially lead to grant support for more energy efficient systems and equipment. A key part of the evening was an informative interview with the owner of a dry-cleaning business who were successful in receiving expert advice and funding from the LEO towards the provision of new energy efficient equipment for their business which will lead to significant savings on the business’s energy costs.

The event also recognised 16 businesses for their participation in the Cobh Green Hubs initiative, a programme promoting waste segregation and recycling.



Dundalk Chamber

Park n Stride Scheme in association with Louth County Council

We are all familiar with the increased levels of traffic on the roads following the return of schools after the summer break. Dundalk Chamber's The Park 'n' Stride initiative allows pupils travelling in cars to be dropped close to the school to complete the remainder of the journey on foot. It's an alternative option for those who cannot change their travel patterns entirely but who want to avoid the traffic bottlenecks in the vicinity of the school gate.

Children travelling to school by car can increase congestion at schools. Walking or cycling together with options such as Park 'n' Stride, carpooling and public transport are all excellent ways of incorporating low carbon transport and exercise into our daily commutes allowing us all to enjoy cleaner air.

Park 'n' Stride permit holders can avail of up to two hours free parking per day after dropping their children to school in designated car-parks displaying the distinctive blue Park 'n' Stride logo, consisting of up to 60 minutes between 8:30am and 9:30am and a further 60 minutes between 1:00pm and 4:00pm.

Shannon Chamber

Mid-West Sustainability Week 2023



Mid-West Sustainability Week 2023, delivered by Shannon Chamber via its member-led Mid-West Sustainability Network, comprised daily in-person and online events.

The first four days were dedicated to a specific SDG theme – Waste, Water, Energy, Biodiversity. A one-day conference was held on the final day.

Day 1 focused on the 'Circular Economy' with international speaker, author and business advisor, Catherine Weetman, delivering 3 events. Day 2 focused on Water with online presentations from Uisce Éireann. Day 3 focused on Energy with 3 speakers (over 3 events hosted in Zimmer Biomet) from ESB Smart Energy Services. Day 4 focused on Biodiversity. The first event was Natural Capital Ireland's Lucy Gaffney which was held online. The second event was held by Sarah Kelly, the National Biodiversity Data Centre and Sinead Murphy, Shannon Airport Group's Head of Sustainability. Day 5 comprised of a full-day conference which involved speakers from Analog Devices International, Analog Devices, Ireland, Fine Grain Property (Ireland) Ltd, Ei Electronics, ESB, Tipperary Energy Agency, Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce, Skillnet Ireland. Keynote address was delivered by Julie Sinnamon, Council Member, The Climate Change Advisory Council.

Tralee Chamber

Tralee Chamber Working with Businesses to Deliver Meaningful Biodiversity and Climate Action

Tralee Chamber has worked collaboratively with a range of town stakeholders to highlight, promote and execute impactful sustainability and biodiversity projects for the last 8 years.

The GLAN Tralee programme was the starting point and led to a more synergistic relationship with Tralee Tidy Towns (TTT), which inspired Saturday Chamber litter picks and the two initiatives we will highlight for this application.

Firstly: the Cup-to-Earth pilot project involved a range of town stakeholders including Chamber members Higgins Waste and several coffee shops and converted used coffee grounds to gardening compost with support from the MTU Circular Bioeconomy Research Group, the LA and TTT.

Secondly, they have been very successful in working with Chamber members and TTT in a host of CSR events, resulting in significant numbers of trees being planted to take climate and biodiversity action simultaneously.

Many of their corporate Chamber members and partners had approached them, wanting to give back to the town. Their close collaboration with TTT converted this into several positive projects, from flower bed revamps to painting to extensive planting projects. At least one Chamber board member was present at all events and facilitated new and traditional media coverage to promote the work.



DIGITAL CAMPAIGNS

This award recognises projects which support our Chamber Business members.

Retaining current members and increasing the intake of new members is carried out through a range of initiatives by our members including targeted communication campaigns and marketing initiatives which highlight our Chambers' relevance to the business community.

This year's nominees for the Digital Campaigns award includes:

Ballina Chamber

Empower Your Business in 2024

Drogheda & District Chamber

"Shop, snap and tag"

Dublin Chamber

The Dublin Business Collective Podcast

Dungarvan & West Waterford Chamber

Beyond A Million

Letterkenny Chamber

Letterkenny Chamber
Communicating with Excellence

Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Growing Membership through HubSpot: One system for multiple member needs

Sligo Chamber

"Sligo, Find your Place"



Ballina Chamber

Empower Your Business in 2024

The "Empower Your Business in 2024" initiative, as part of the "Lunchtime Learning" Micro-Business Support Workshops organised by Ballina Chamber aimed to equip business owners and professionals with essential knowledge and support to thrive in the current business climate.

Covering topics such as finance for SMEs, human resources, budgeting, goal setting and planning for 2024, each weekly session featured a guest speaker who was a member of Ballina Chamber. The workshops were held from 1-2pm on Mondays and were conducted both online and in person to accommodate different preferences and accessibility needs.

Beyond enhancing business skills, the workshops provided attendees with opportunities to connect with peers, network (for those attending in person), and stay ahead in the ever-evolving business landscape. By offering practical insights and fostering a supportive learning environment, the initiative aimed to empower micro-business owners to overcome challenges, capitalise on opportunities and achieve success in their endeavors.

"Empower Your Business in 2024" identified topical issues that can impact SMEs from planning ahead. Recognising that knowledge is power, the initiative aimed to provide valuable insights and resources to help businesses navigate the challenges and opportunities of the evolving business landscape.

Drogheda & District Chamber

"Shop, snap and tag"



"Shop, snap and tag" is an innovative digital campaign spearheaded by Drogheda & District Chamber, aimed at invigorating the local economy and fostering community connections. Embracing the power of social media, the initiative encourages locals throughout Drogheda and its district to actively choose local businesses when making product or service purchases.

The campaign's mechanics are simple yet impactful: participants are urged to support local businesses by making purchases, capturing a photo of their chosen product, and sharing it on social media platforms. By tagging the respective business and including the hashtag #ElevatingDrogheda, participants automatically enter into a competition for a chance to win one of three €50 LoveDrogheda gift cards.

This inclusive approach not only celebrates the diverse array of businesses within Drogheda but also amplifies their visibility and reach on digital platforms. By empowering residents to actively engage with their local economy, "Shop, snap and tag" cultivates a sense of community pride and solidarity, reinforcing the Chamber's commitment to nurturing Drogheda's economic vibrancy and social cohesion.

Dublin Chamber

The Dublin Business Collective Podcast



The Dublin Business Collective Podcast was created to share the real stories of Dublin's founders, business owners and entrepreneurs. It's an opportunity for listeners to hear directly from business leaders who have created businesses and are successfully scaling them.

The conversation format is relaxed, informal, and always ends with asking the guest what piece of valuable advice they would offer a fellow business owner. It covers various topics, such as sustainability, motivation, business supports and valuable lessons learned along the way. The podcast allows the guest to speak openly and personally about their businesses, allowing the listener to hear these valuable conversations at times and places convenient to them. Each episode is approximately 35 minutes or so and is inspiring, bite-size micro-learning for Dublin Chamber members.

Dungarvan & West Waterford Chamber

Beyond A Million



Chamber shopping vouchers play a crucial role in the Dungarvan and West Waterford's local economy. In 2022, over one million euros worth of vouchers were purchased and used. In 2023, the Chamber wanted to keep energy up around vouchers and match the sales of the previous year to ensure that money continues to circulate through the area, especially in the off-season, which supports businesses, employment and strengthens the community into the future. This led to the launch of the 'Beyond A Million' campaign in 2023.

The 'Beyond A Million' campaign asked employers, individuals, groups and organisations to support, purchase, request, and gift Dungarvan Chamber Shopping Vouchers to reach the goal of keeping more than one million euros in the local economy.

Through a digital marketing campaign using Chamber email and text alert platforms, multiple social media channels and local advertising, the D&WW Chamber connected with members and the public around the Shop Local, Support Local, Purchase Chamber Vouchers message.

Letterkenny Chamber

Letterkenny Chamber Communicating with Excellence



Letterkenny Chamber continues to make effective use of digital media in its interactions with members and stakeholders. This starts with regular posts on LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram welcoming new members, promoting events, sharing members' successes and the regular and consistent Chamber Newsletter that is delivered to inboxes every two weeks.

Letterkenny Chamber also operated a WhatsApp Group with over 170 members. This is a peer support group where members can share information, ask for support and recommendations. Administered by the Chamber, it is a rich source of data and is an instant method of communication.

The social/digital media strategy for the Chamber has a number of facets. It ensures new members are welcomed to the network, enables the sharing of information and events, and supports existing members in the work they do. In turn, this activity encourages new member enquiries on a consistent basis.

This digital plan ensures posts are consistent, branded and planned to ensure maximum impact and are in turn shared on the Letterkenny Chamber website giving fresh content every day. The branded newsletter is delivered fortnightly and always includes current information and member news. It has a regular open rate of 40%.

Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Growing Membership through HubSpot: One system for multiple member needs

In its latest Strategic Plan, NI Chamber set a challenging target of reaching 980 members by the end of 2023. In order to achieve this figure, which equated to 240 new members in the year, NI Chamber invested in HubSpot - a digital platform designed to help align the sales and marketing functions of an organisation to grow sales and generate more, qualified leads.

NI Chamber first implemented HubSpot in March 2023, and having now completed a full year of this digital approach, it has generated almost 200 new business leads which translated into 101 of the 269 new members recruited by the sales team last year.

The end result was the organisation exceeding its target ahead of schedule and concluding 2023 with 1,019 members. This equated to 20-30 new members per month - NI Chamber's fastest member growth rate in its 240-year history.

At the same time, HubSpot has also allowed the NI Chamber team to automate many of its membership processes (e.g. onboarding and renewals), providing a seamless customer journey from the very first interaction as a potential member, through to joining and beyond.

Sligo Chamber

"Sligo, Find your Place"



 Sligo Chamber
Advancing business together

"In the heart of innovation, surrounded by inspiring nature and heritage, Sligo fuels my research and my soul. Find your place, ignite your passions."

#SligoFindYourPlace

Stephanie White
Researcher and Conservator, ATU

Sligo | find your place

2023 was Sligo Chamber's Centenary year and, to celebrate, they launched a new campaign called 'Sligo, Find Your Place'.

It is designed to illustrate that flexible working and the energy of the town and region can combine to give individuals and families a vision for new possibilities and opportunities.

The video includes scenes of what makes living and working in Sligo so rewarding, whether that's inside one of ATU's lecture theatres, on the floor of a cutting edge MedTech or pharma company, or working in retail or hospitality.

It offers people the perfect base for a relaxed pace of life with many new career options that are now open based on new and emerging technologies.

It illustrates that flexible working and the energy of the region can combine to give individuals and families a vision for new possibilities and opportunities.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT INITIATIVES

This award recognises projects which support our Chamber Business members.

Retaining current members and increasing the intake of new members is carried out through a range of initiatives by our members including targeted communication campaigns and marketing initiatives which highlight our Chambers' relevance to the business community.

This year's nominees for the Community Support Initiatives award includes:

Ballina Chamber

RISE: A Ballina 2023 Legacy Programme

Dungarvan & West Waterford Chamber

Dementia Inclusive Dungarvan

Ennis Chamber

Schools Engagement - Climate Action /Offshore Energy

Galway Chamber

Galway Pride Campaign

Tralee Chamber

Collaborative Tralee Heritage Trails

Waterford Chamber

Waterford Rising GAA Dinner

Ballina Chamber

RISE: A Ballina 2023 Legacy Programme



"RISE: A Ballina 2023 Legacy Programme" is a strategic initiative supported by Ballina Chamber of Commerce, aiming to create lasting positive impact within the community beyond 2023. Through upskilling, empowerment, and capacity building, the programme seeks to establish a sustainable legacy.

Ballina 2023 commemorates the town's 300-year history with a series of public events fostering community connection and celebration. The "RISE Legacy Programme" includes initiatives such as youth programmes, community sports, volunteering opportunities, and sustainability assemblies. These efforts culminated in events like "Communities Creating Change" and "This Giant Tent," showcasing multiculturalism and community cohesion, during the year.

By investing in human capital and fostering empowerment, the programme aims to inspire hope for the future. Through collaboration and targeted efforts, it equips individuals and organisations with tools for ongoing growth and development.

Following were the projects that were undertaken Ballina 2023 Youth Programme, Community Sports Programme, Volunteer Programme, Blue Bus Broadcaster in association with Ballina Community Radio, Communities Creating Change - Ballina 2023, The Mary Robinson Centre, This Giant Tent - the project developed into a public multicultural event rooted in community and celebration of Traveller culture in Ballina.

Ultimately, "RISE" strives to leave a profound and enduring legacy, enriching the lives of Ballina community members for years to come.

Dungarvan & West Waterford Chamber

Dementia Inclusive Dungarvan



A Dementia Inclusive Community is one in which people living with Dementia and their families fully participate in society and have a place in it, They enjoy respect, freedom, dignity, equality, accessibility and quality of life. They are empowered to live independently, free from stigma, discrimination, exploitation, violence or abuse. A community where they feel included and involved, with choice and control over their day-to-day lives. Dementia Inclusive Dungarvan ensures people with dementia and their families and carers are understood, respected and supported, and confident they can contribute to community life. Businesses, organisations and people in the community will be aware of and understand Dementia. Dungarvan is now a Dementia Inclusive Community.

Alzheimer's Ireland have been empowered to build awareness around Dementia, working with the D&WW Chamber, they can connect with the businesses and tourism communities, also with schools and organisations. A Memory Café in Dungarvan has been created and there has been increased awareness of the Dementia specific Saturday Day Centre Service. Dementia Inclusive Dungarvan has happened in record time.

Ennis Chamber

Schools Engagement - Climate Action /Offshore Energy



Ennis
Chamber
Advancing business together

The Galway enterprise space is thriving, particularly for start up companies, however through engagement with members and industry, Galway Chamber found that once companies transition from start up to scaling there were challenges. In particular it was relating to costs of new market entry, navigating the support structures, the VC community and also building and reinforcing the confidence of leaders to go through with their international expansion.

Galway Chamber in partnership with the Atlantic Technological University iHubs and Platform 94 have created a programme that brings structure to the international journey. This work has also been supported by the British Embassy, the US Embassy, the Select USA team and Enterprise Ireland. Also support in terms of meetings and engagement has come from the American Chamber of Commerce, the Manchester Chamber, the Halton Chamber and the Knowledge Quarter Liverpool.

Galway Chamber

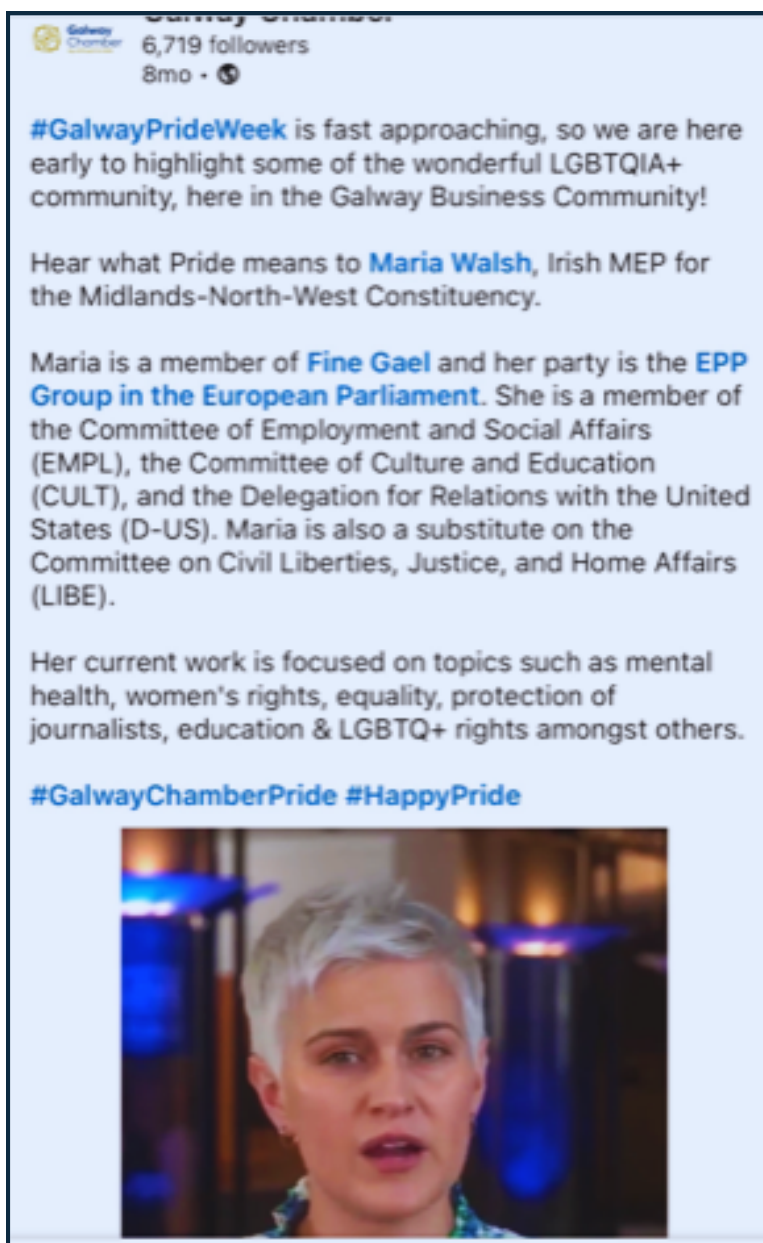
Galway Pride Campaign

Galway Chamber identified through member engagement and their own internal surveys that fear was still prevalent within a cohort of employees in the LGBTQ+ communities. Equally there are others in companies from those communities who are leaders, confident and successful people.

Galway Chamber wanted to build a campaign that 1) celebrated those and provided a safe space for them to tell their stories, 2) this highlighting would provide confidence and showcase role models to those who were in fear and 3) further bring employers on the journey of celebrating diversity in all its forms but also understanding the power of diversity in building culture and teams.

The initiative involved getting 20 willing individuals to do pieces to camera, telling their story, releasing those videos across five social channels, building a diversity briefing for members, participating in Pride, hosting the launch base of Pride in PorterShed and then providing more nuanced guidance to those employers who needed help in the language of diversity and in putting more inclusive policies and procedures in place.

The Chamber's ability to do this stemmed from its accreditation with the Irish Centre for Diversity.



Tralee Chamber

Collaborative Tralee Heritage Trails



This project involved the collaboration of a range of community group representatives, local authority representatives, heritage experts and Tralee Chamber to: Form a heritage development team, Agree on a set of points of interest on a looped walk around Tralee Town Centre to form the foundation of a Tralee Heritage Trail, Research the history and stories behind each point of interest. Apply for funding, Research and appoint a provider of heritage interpretation services. Work with them over a period of two years to create a digital, freely accessible, mobile accessible, multi-media self-guided tours of the Tralee Heritage Trail and the Family Heritage Trail, Create an activity booklet to animate the family heritage trail experience for users. The team also created a free map leaflet to promote the heritage trails at the information kiosk.

The team members have since continued to meet and to collaborate on a range of interpretive experiences for the community to benefit from living in Tralee by giving them a greater sense of place and, in doing so, building town pride. The trail also benefits the tourism and hospitality businesses as it is a free tourist amenity.

Waterford Chamber

Waterford Rising GAA Dinner



The Waterford Rising GAA Dinner was held in Croke Park to raise funds for the grassroots development of Waterford GAA.

The evening, which was hosted by RTE's Marty Morrissey, saw two of Waterford's finest sons and GAA fanatics, Dan Mulhall, former Ambassador to the US and John Moloney, former MD of Glanbia, honoured with Special Recognition Awards by Mayor of Waterford, Cllr John O'Leary. Marty was also joined on stage by Chair of the Waterford GAA Commercial Group, Seamus Kilgannon, County Board Chairman, Sean Michael O'Regan, and Ger Ryan, Chairman of the Munster Council, all of whom said they were overwhelmed by the support of the business community for this high profile event.

Organised by Waterford Chamber, in collaboration with Waterford GAA and Deise in Dublin, the event saw over 300 people enjoy a sumptuous meal, which featured Waterford producers Dawn Meats, Blue Butterfly Coffee and Anchor Irish Spirits.

Hilarity followed as Marty was joined by GAA legends Ken McGrath, Paul Flynn, Kevin Moran and Michelle Ryan, who all spoke passionately about underage development of the GAA. Music was provided by Waterford native, David Flynn, and concluded with an incredible performance by David and the Mount Sion Choir.

BEST INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS

This award recognises projects which support our Chamber Business members.

Retaining current members and increasing the intake of new members is carried out through a range of initiatives by our members including targeted communication campaigns and marketing initiatives which highlight our Chambers' relevance to the business community.

This year's nominees for the Best International Projects award includes:

County Carlow Chamber
"International Carlow"

Dublin Chamber
ESG-UP: Strategic partnership to up-skill European SMEs in the development of Environmental, Social and Governance strategies

Dundalk Chamber
Embassy visits to Dundalk

Galway Chamber
Galway Scaling Internationally

County Carlow Chamber

“International Carlow”



'International Carlow – An Exploration of the International Reach and Connections of Companies Around Carlow' was focused on gathering further information in relation to exports, imports, supports and the importance of communication (languages) in international trade to companies around Carlow.

County Carlow Chamber works with companies in a range of ways to support them locally and internationally. The aim of this research was to further assist in the development of supports to aid in their international ambitions.

When taking about international markets, the focus is mainly on exports, however through this research County Carlow Chamber wanted to further explore imports by local companies; current supports and whether they were working and also communications, to give an insight into the importance of international languages and perhaps how the Chamber can aid the development of language skills in companies with international ambitions.

Dublin Chamber

ESG-UP: Strategic partnership to up-skill European SMEs in the development of Environmental, Social and Governance strategies



To prepare for a greener economy, EU SMEs must embrace drastic changes during the recovery phase. Education and training in Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) fields are crucial for holistic business strategies, enhancing sustainable practices across sectors. Clear ESG strategies offer competitive advantages, resilience against economic shocks, and financing and growth opportunities. Enhanced ESG understanding fosters supply chain responsiveness and financing adaptability.

ESG criteria screen investments based on sustainability. Environmental aspects gauge green performance, while social criteria assess relationships with stakeholders. Governance focuses on leadership and internal procedures.

The ESG-UP project addresses the need for better SME support in implementing ESG strategies. Targeting SMEs, CEOs, and sustainability-related departments, it delivers operational training tools to enhance sustainability efforts. Dublin Chamber led the project with six international EU partners, funded by the Erasmus KA2 mechanism through Lergas.

Dundalk Chamber

Embassy visits to Dundalk



 Dundalk Chamber
EMBASSY VISIT SERIES 2024
Portuguese Embassy



 Dundalk Chamber
EMBASSY VISIT SERIES 2024
Portuguese Embassy

Dundalk Chamber invited the Commercial and Economic Counsellor from various Embassies in Ireland to come to Dundalk to meet local companies on a one-to-one basis. These events have been a huge success as local companies can create trade links with foreign companies.

Dundalk Chamber saw a need among member companies who were looking for suppliers abroad or would like to find new markets for their products/services. These meetings provide the company with a one to one meeting opportunity to create these links in a formal yet confidential basis.

Dundalk Chamber also link in with Louth County Council and the Local Enterprise Office Louth who provide a room for the meetings. They also organise a lunch for these representatives and the Attache after the event is over so they can discuss issues which may help members.

Galway Chamber

Galway Scaling Internationally



The Galway enterprise space is thriving, particularly for start up companies, however through engagement with members and industry, Galway Chamber found that once companies transition from start up to scaling there were challenges. In particular it was relating to costs of new market entry, navigating the support structures, the VC community and also building and reinforcing the confidence of leaders to go through with their international expansion.

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EVENT OF THE YEAR

Events are pivotal to the role that chambers play in their local business communities, providing valuable opportunities for connecting, networking and sharing knowledge.

Chambers organise a diverse range of events, both in-person and virtual, all year round. Recognising the significance of events, this category aims to honor the most exceptional, accomplished, and immersive experiences within our network.

This year's nominees for the Event of the Year award includes:

Ballina Chamber

Ballina 2023- A year of celebration, a lifelong connection

County Carlow Chamber

Creating Inclusive Employment

County Meath Chamber

The Apprenticeship Expo - Meath

Dublin Chamber

Dublin Chamber Annual Dinner

Shannon Chamber

Maintaining Lean Momentum: Mid-West Lean Network Conference, 2023

Waterford Chamber

Dublin Diaspora Dinner



Ballina Chamber

Ballina 2023- A year of celebration, a lifelong connection

Ballina 2023 marks 300 years since the formal establishment of the town by O'Hara, Lord Tyrawley. To mark this milestone, a series of public events took place throughout the year, offering opportunities for the communities of Ballina to connect, to celebrate Ballina and communicate a new narrative about the town and its people. Honouring the past, celebrating the present and inspiring hope for the future.

Founding Legacy Partners: Ballina Chamber of Commerce, Mayo County Council, Moy Valley Resources & Ballina Lions Club.

The project set out, to increase civic pride and create new narratives around the town, as well as ensuring there were sustainable legacies. It was, a platform for Ballina to celebrate itself and to look at how the people of the town could be brought together. With its community-led approach, combined with the delivery of a fantastic year-long series of events, it has, as people everywhere says, put Ballina on the map.



County Carlow Chamber

Creating Inclusive Employment

The Charity Partner of County Carlow Chamber for 2023/2024 is the Carlow Branch of Down Syndrome Ireland. Their support of DSI as their charity partner extends beyond fundraising, they are also focused on awareness and encouraging more employers to look beyond disabilities and create Inclusive Employment within their workplaces.

Subheading

To mark world Down Syndrome Day, they hosted an event focused on creating Inclusive employment with a presentation from DSI, but more importantly the event had input from some employers and employees who are already involved in and supporting the programme.

Attracting talent to the workplace is challenging for many businesses, however looking beyond the disability creates a world of ability. Since their partnership was launched, they have seen several employers move forward and look at roles within their organisations to see how they can adapt and support.

County Meath Chamber

The Apprenticeship Expo - Meath



The Meath Chamber Apprenticeship Expo is a showcase of 'All Things Apprenticeship'. It's a dynamic platform connecting business/employers with potential candidates and bridging the gap between aspiring apprentices, school-leavers and key stakeholders in Ireland's workforce development landscape.

This initiative brings together three primary stakeholders: Business/industry representatives actively seeking apprentice talent, education providers offering specialised training programs, and Louth and Meath ETB/ National Apprenticeship Office overseeing apprenticeship management. At the apprenticeship expo, industry leaders showcase diverse opportunities across various sectors, providing valuable insights into apprenticeship roles, skill requirements, and career pathways. Attendees engage directly with employers, gaining first-hand knowledge of industry demands and networking for potential opportunities.

Education providers play a pivotal role, offering information on accredited apprenticeship programs tailored to meet industry needs. They present comprehensive curricula designed to equip apprentices with practical skills and theoretical knowledge essential for success in their chosen fields. Moreover, the ETB is there to provide overarching guidance, ensuring alignment between industry demands and educational offerings. They facilitate dialogue between stakeholders, disseminate information on apprenticeship policies, and support the seamless integration of apprentices into the workforce.

CV Clinics & Career Advice is also available, free of charge to those attending.

Dublin Chamber

Dublin Chamber Annual Dinner

The Annual Dinner is one of the most celebrated events in the Dublin business calendar. The 2023 event featured keynote addresses from Michael McGrath, TD, Minister for Finance and Rosheen McGuckian, CEO, NTR and attracted an audience of 1000 plus politicians, diplomats and leaders from Ireland's multinational and indigenous businesses.

The event is an important opportunity for Dublin's business community to come together to network and to support the on-going work of the Chamber, to advocate for continued investment into the region and to support business as we face the opportunities and challenges ahead.

The theme for the Annual Dinner was Global Ambition. As we move towards 2050, Dublin Chamber envisions a positive future for Dublin city and their members. The Greater Dublin Area continues to have a critical role to play in Ireland's continued prosperity and growth and they continue to lobby their policymakers and provide leadership to encourage forward and long-term thinking to realise their vision of Dublin as a sustainable city that is globally renowned as a place to live, work and do business.



Shannon Chamber

Maintaining Lean Momentum: Mid-West Lean Network Conference, 2023



The Mid-West Lean Network Conference 2023 was the 5th such annual conference organised by Shannon Chamber via its Mid-West Lean Network. The aims of this member-led network are: To strengthen and increase the existing culture of lean within companies in Shannon and the wider Mid-West region; and To enable member companies to broaden and strengthen their competitiveness through knowledge sharing and benchmarking against each other and different industries.

This annual conference, organised by a committee of 16, representatives of the sectoral spread of membership – AMC, LBS Partners, Analog Devices, Cook Medical, ATC Group, Regeneron, AMCS, Takumi Precision Engineering, Loughnane's Family Butcher, AAG, and Shannon Chamber – was the culmination of an active schedule of events organised by this committee in 2023.

The conference theme was 'Maintaining Lean Momentum'. Given that: The advantages gained from lean deployment can easily be lost if everyone in the organisation is not committed to continuous improvement; and maintaining momentum in lean implementation requires the involvement of everyone in the organisation, from the senior leadership team to the front-line employees.

This conference was structured to demonstrate how this can be achieved. Speakers were selected for their ability to demonstrate the theme in practice.

Waterford Chamber

Dublin Diaspora Dinner



'Think Waterford First' was the message delivered loud and clear at Waterford Chamber's Dublin Diaspora Dinner, sponsored by EY and Waterford Chamber Skillnet, at Lansdowne Football Club, with over 70 business influencers with connections to Waterford in attendance.

Economist and Waterford native Jim Power acted as MC for the event and offered an economic overview of Waterford and introduced a panel of speakers, including Paul Nolan, Waterford Chamber President; Michael Walsh, Chief Executive, Waterford City & County Council; Prof Veronica Campbell, President, SETU; Brian McGee, Regional Director, IDA Ireland; Martin Corkery, Regional Manager, Enterprise Ireland and Simon McAllister, EY Ireland Strategy and Transactions Partner.

The panel offered insights into their various remits, ensuring guests were left no doubt that Waterford was a city of collaboration, with key stakeholders working hand in hand to develop the region and that ambitions were high but not unattainable. A robust interactive Q&A followed with extensive engagement from the audience.

Waterford Chamber launched its 'Think Waterford First' USB key, which contained economic reports commissioned by Waterford Chamber by EY and RIKON, along with various documents on business supports available. Each guest left armed with a number of USB keys to share among their networks.



Chambers
Ireland
Advancing business together



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