

# CROSS BORDER GROUPS CONFERENCE

East Border Region Ltd co-host Cross Border Connections Conference

East Border Region Ltd (EBR) co-hosted a joint conference entitled 'Cross Border Connections' with the North West Region Cross Border Group (NWRCEB) and the Irish Centre Border Area Network (ICBAN) on 2nd October in Buncrana.

The aim of the conference hosted by the three Local Authority led cross border networks working in the Irish Border and Northern Ireland Border Region was to look at ways to bring Local Authorities to the forefront of cross border collaboration and partnership. The three groups have all been involved in managing substantial amounts of INTERREG funding since 2003 and as a result the successful management of these funds has been the majority of their focus. The conference therefore sought to take a collec-

tive look at common concerns facing border regions and to look at a proactive way forward for the three groups collectively.

The timing of the conference was apt giving the reform process which both jurisdictions are currently undergoing.

During the conference delegates listened to Dr Anthony Soares, Centre for Cross Border Studies, Professor Greg Lloyd, Urban Planning and Built Environment, University of Ulster, and Mr Padraic White former Managing Director of the Industrial Development Authority (IDA).

Delegates were also delighted to listen to keynote speakers Republic of Ireland Minister of State for the Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht Affairs and the Department of Communication, Energy and Natural Resources



Mr Joe McHugh and Northern Ireland Minister for the Environment Mark H Durkin. Both Ministers demonstrated an understanding of the issues affecting border areas and the importance of ongoing collaboration between Local Authorities.



# East Border Region NEWSLETTER

NEWS AND UPDATES FROM EAST BORDER REGION LTD

11TH EDITION // SPRING 2015



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## OFFICIAL OPENING OF BARRY MCGUIGAN PARK

EBR were delighted to attend the official opening of Barry McGuigan Park in Clones, Co. Monaghan on 20th February. The Park received almost €84,000 of funding as part of the Tourism Development Plan and has been named after the local boxing hero.

The Tourism Development Plan has supported a number of tourism facilities across our region and these projects cover a range of themes which seek to build on the key strengths of our region from a tourist perspective. The key themes which have been identified by the Tourism officers within our Councils are: Countryside Tourism Marine, Watersports and Christian Heritage.



## EBR EUROPEAN DIMENSION



### ANNUAL BRUSSELS OPEN DAYS

A delegation from EBR including INTERREG IVA Project Managers attended the Annual Brussels Open Days in October 2014. EBR in conjunction with the three other cross border groups hosted a seminar which had contact points from the various EU programmes attend to brief delegates on future programmes. Delegates also attended an evening reception in the N.I. Executive Office which afforded the opportunity to network and partner search for future transnational projects.

### INTERREG V TRANSNATIONAL/INTERREGIONAL WORKSHOP

EBR hosted an extremely well attended workshop in November 2014 to inform Local Authority members of the new Transnational and Interregional programmes. Over 45 delegates attended and listened to Declan McGarrigle, SEUPB and contact point for the Northern Periphery Programme and Michael O'Brien, BMW Assembly and Atlantic Area Programme contact point. EBR staff are currently working with project steering committee's to develop potential transnational and interregional projects.

### STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Congratulations to EBR staff Joanne McCourt, Lissa O'Malley and Aileen McVeigh who attended the Irish Institute of Purchasing and Materials Management (IIPMM) Graduation Ceremony in Trinity College, Dublin on 17th January 2015 and have been awarded a Certificate in Public Procurement Level 6. Congratulations to the ladies in completing their studies and acquiring a valuable academic award.



## Welcome from the Chairman



**CLLR PETER SAVAGE**  
Chairman

Welcome to the 11th edition of the EBR Newsletter. The past few months have been a very busy period for EBR with the continued roll out of our 10 remaining live INTERREG IVA projects coupled with planning for post INTERREG IVA.

As the INTERREG VA programme has just been approved by the European Commission with the first funding call expected to open in

April, EBR staff are proactively working with Local Authority Officials in developing projects for submission under the various calls.

As opportunities for Local Authorities are somewhat limited under the new cross border programme EBR is also turning its attention to the INTERREG V transnational and interregional programmes and utilising its contacts in other European Border regions through the AEBR (Association of European Border Regions) to source potential project partners.

Throughout this edition you will read of the successes of the current EBR INTERREG IVA projects which have been deemed to be very successful with which I hope you will agree. It has been heartening to attend the many

project closure events to hear first-hand from businesses who can report significant financial savings due to energy saving measures and to listen to graduates who have secured full time employment as a result of their project placement. The value of EBR's INTERREG IVA projects and the benefits they bring in helping our region recover from recession and prosper are clearly evident and long may this trend continue"

I hope you will inform yourself by reading this edition and I look forward to interacting with you all throughout my year as Chairman.

*Peter Savage*

Cllr Peter Savage  
Chairman

## Contact Us – Meet the team

The Secretariat of EBR comprises 7 members of staff covering Development, Finance, Project and Administration roles.

The team is led by Ms Pamela Arthurs, Chief Executive, Mrs Dette Hughes, INTERREG IVA Programme Manager, Mrs Sharon Digby, Development Officer, Ms Lorraine Stewart, Finance/Personnel Officer, Mrs Joanne McCourt, Assistant Finance Officer, Mrs Jessica Bennett, Project Finance Officer and Mrs Rachel Harrison, Administrator. Project staff also located at the East Border Region office include Mrs Lissa O'Malley, Tourism Project Officer, and Ms Margaret McAvoy, Project Co-Ordinator, iOTA.

Please feel free to contact us or log onto our website [www.eastborderregion.com](http://www.eastborderregion.com) for regular updates.

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## EBR AWARD WINNING PROJECTS

### STEM *(Sustainable Though Environmental Management) project scoops top Awards*

The EBR STEM project which works with over 450 businesses to help them cut their energy, waste and water has had their success recognised in winning not one but two prestigious awards. The first of these awards was the Sustainable Ireland 2014 "Leadership in Sustainable Development" award. The STEM team were presented their award at a gala celebration in the Ramada Hotel, Belfast. The STEM Project was further recognised for its "Environmental Best Practice" at the internationally recognised Green Apple

Environmental Awards held in the Houses of Parliament in November. STEM has helped businesses save in excess of £3m since it commenced its work back in 2004. A typical business will save in the region of 10% on their utility bills with many businesses reporting as much as 30% savings, which is money they can reinvest into their business and enhance their competitiveness and future security.

**To find out more about the STEM Project please contact 02837515810 or visit [www.stemproject.com](http://www.stemproject.com).**



### ACTION FOR BIODIVERSITY RECEIVES COMMENDATION

EBR were delighted to attend the Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards on behalf of the EBR Action for Biodiversity project. AFB was nominated in the "Best Joint Local Authority Initiative" and received a commendation in the category. The AFB project closed in 2014 having trained over 650 Local Authority members and officials, hosting 54 seminars/events and also produced the first ever regional biodiversity framework.



## PROJECT CONFERENCES/EVENTS

### IOTA hosts "Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Business conference"

The iOTA (Innovation, Opportunity, Training & Advice) Programme hosted a networking event "ENTREPRENEURSHIP and INNOVATION in BUSINESS" on Thursday 20 November 2014. The event took place in the Ballymascanlon House Hotel, Dundalk, County Louth with over 100 attendees. The event was organised to coincide with **Global Entrepreneurship Week**. The key speaker at the event was **Mr Bobby Kerr**, Founding 'Dragon' on **RTE's Dragons Den** and Chairman of **Insomnia Coffee**. Bobby offered his 10 top tips to survive in business to delegates with a focus on opportunity. The Director of Global Entrepreneurship Week Ireland, Mr David Bradley gave an overview of

how he views the economic recovery of the island of Ireland coming from its entrepreneurs and innovators, the job creators and problem solvers of tomorrow. There were case studies from climote, AssetIQ and SlackPress informing delegates how they set up in business and have embraced innovation to grow their business.

Michael Farrell from PKF-FPM delivered a workshop on "Raising funding for innovative products" and Paul Millar from HorizonTwoSix delivered a workshop on "Managing Innovation - Risk and Reward". Delegates visited exhibition stands including InterTradelreland, Enterprise



Ireland, SRC, DKIT, Local Enterprise Offices and Enterprise Agencies, all offering advice and guidance on business start-up, training and SME assistance that is currently available. For more info on the iOTA programme visit [www.iotaprogramme.com](http://www.iotaprogramme.com)

## TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PLAN

### KILBRONEY PARK DEVELOPMENT

A new multi-purpose building in the heart of Kilbroney Park, Co. Down has received significant funding from the EU INTERREG IVA Programme through the EBR Tourism Development Programme. Officially opening the new building Mayor of Newry & Mourne District Council, Councillor Daire Hughes said "This new building will provide a much needed resource at a key tourism facility in the District. The building will assist in attracting a wide range of new uses to the Park whilst improving the

facilities available to the existing event organizers". Also speaking at the launch Cllr Alan McDowell, Chairman of East Border Region said "East Border Region is delighted to have been in a position to fund this facility through the Tourism Development Programme; the building will provide a valuable resource to the area and contribute to the visitor offering which has been greatly enhanced over recent years. I wish Newry & Mourne District Council every success with this facility in the future".



## ASPIRE HOSTS NETWORKING AND CELEBRATION EVENTS

The EBR ASPIRE programme hosted a networking event for businesses and graduates in October 2014 with John Teeling, founder of Cooley Whiskey Distillery as guest speaker. Attendees enjoyed listening to the inspirational words of John as he outlined his entrepreneurial journey and imparted some words of wisdom.

In the afternoon session business representatives and graduates attended a series of seminar sessions looking at topics of interest such as Digital Marketing, opportunities beyond ASPIRE, Public Sector Tendering and Cross Border Trade.

A Celebration Event to recognise and celebrate the achievement of the first tranche of completed ASPIRE projects was also held on February 2015. 34 ASPIRE business representatives and graduates were in attendance on the night and were presented with certificates of achievement.

Chairman of EBR Cllr Peter Savage praised the achievements of the ASPIRE programme to date: "East Border Region view the Aspire Programme as one of the major and successful initiatives of the INTERREG IVA programme. This success can be attributed to ASPIRE's

unique nature in that it combines business support with the creation of Graduate Employment".

We are delighted to report that the ASPIRE programme is currently exceeding its programme targets - 70% of graduates who have completed their one year graduate post have been offered full time employment with their ASPIRE business.

For more information on the ASPIRE programme visit [www.aspireprogramme.com](http://www.aspireprogramme.com)



## ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROJECT GENERATES £90K OF ANNUAL SAVINGS FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The three year EBR Energy Efficiency & Micro Generation project which closed in late 2014 held a celebratory closure event in the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Dundalk in November 2014. The findings of the project were presented and delegates had the opportunity to meet with the project steering committee and some of the contractors responsible for carrying out the building modifications, as well as viewing detailed case studies of three of the exemplar buildings. Paul McArtain, technical partner in the project from Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT) presented some of the significant savings which the monitoring of the exemplars has already shown. The nine exemplars have already shown savings of

£90,000 per year and reduced their carbon footprint by more than 365 tonnes annually. Councillor Alan McDowell, Chairman of East Border Region Ltd stated, "A significant project achievement has been the establishment of nine visitor experiences at each exemplar site. These visitor experiences showcase the work of the project across all nine sites with a display screen giving real time energy consumption data which compares current usage with historical figures - it's a fantastic tool for visualising the changes for the public and I'd encourage everyone to visit buildings to see the savings being made every day as part of this scheme." Anyone interested in learning more about



these real world examples of energy efficiency and how it could apply to their own premises or home can go to [www.sustainandbuild.com](http://www.sustainandbuild.com). Video case studies of all of the exemplar buildings have been produced and are now available to view on the project website.

## EAST BORDER REGION LTD HOST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

At its Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 11th December 2014, in the Canal Court Hotel, Newry, East Border Region were delighted to provide members with an overview of the success of the Organisation during the past year.

Speaking at the conference Ms Pamela Arthurs, Chief Executive provided members with an overview of the activity of EBR over the year and of the 11 INTERREG IVA funded projects which EBR administer. The 11 projects total just over €15.5 million and span the fields of Enterprise, Tourism and Environment. The focus of this year's AGM was on the promotion of the East Border Region as a smart, sustainable and inclusive

partnership which is aligned with the current EU2020 targets. During proceedings members were informed of the success of EBR projects through dissemination of the tangible results which already have been achieved. Benefits experienced range from cost savings through energy management, new job creation, collaborative business opportunities and networking, tourism promotion and energy savings through employment of renewable technologies. For a full breakdown of East Border Region projects please see [www.eastborderregion.com](http://www.eastborderregion.com) The East Border Region Board appointed Cllr Peter Savage from Louth County Council as Chairman for the incoming year while Cllr

Arnold Hatch from Craigavon Borough Council and Cllr Gillian Toole from Meath County Council were elected as Vice-Chairs.

