The Waterford Experience

two centuries of tradition
and a thousand years of history
The Waterford Experience

Waterford City Council’s iconic tourism project The Waterford Experience comprises two complementary elements the Waterford Crystal Visitor Centre and the Viking Triangle Project. By harnessing the internationally-renowned brand name of Waterford Crystal and coupling it with the city’s remarkable architectural, archaeological and historic treasures a truly unique and authentic visitor attraction will be created.

The promoters are confident that the relocation of the Waterford Crystal facility from the suburbs to the city centre site, adjacent to the historic quarter or Viking Triangle, the retail core of the city and a major city centre parking facility will create sufficient critical mass allowing Waterford city to become a tourism destination in its own right. This will end the malaise of corridor tourism, a consequence of which has been the under-performance of both the city and the region.

The promoters are also confident that the two elements, the Waterford Crystal Visitor Centre and the Viking Triangle Project are mutually complimentary. For example part of the Viking Triangle project will include a major display of historic Waterford glass housed in the former Bishop’s Palace built in 1741 and located immediately opposite the new Waterford Crystal facility. The historic quarter will therefore enhance the two centuries long sense of history and tradition that is associated with the Waterford Crystal product. In turn the Waterford Crystal brand will give Waterford City Council’s new tourism product the Waterford Experience immediate international brand recognition.

The Waterford Experience is devised to appeal to a broad cohort of the tourism market, the marketing of which will be tailored to suit particular requirements and preferences of the North American, European, Asian and Australian markets.
The Waterford Experience Creating an Iconic Visitor Attraction for the South East of Ireland

Retail Core
Shopping Centre

Viking Triangle

Waterford Crystal

Coach & Car Park
I. Waterford Crystal

Waterford Crystal, a leading brand recognised the world over, is a primary driver of tourism for both the south east and the country as a whole. The brand reflects an image of Ireland that is redolent of craftsmanship, sophistication and tradition. The relocation of the factory and visitor centre in the historic core of Ireland’s oldest city has opened up enormous possibilities for the creation of a truly authentic, all-weather visitor attraction.

Waterford Crystal Factory and Visitor Centre

The factory and visitor centre is being located where Viking traders and raiders, the city’s first inhabitants, moored their ships. Here visitors will be able to experience at first hand the magic of transforming molten crystal into handcrafted works of art that has made the name Waterford a by-word for sophisticated elegance. Expert guides steeped in the lore of fine crystal-making will take the visitor through the crystal-making process from the furnace to the finished, fine-cut and engraved masterpiece. The visitor will also be afforded the opportunity to buy into this two-centuries-old tradition at the Waterford Crystal retail showrooms also located on site.
Visitor Centre €4,200,000

Critical to the success of the Waterford Experience Project will be provision for the development of the visitor experience element in the newly relocated Waterford Crystal Facility in the city centre.

Works required:

A €3,450,000

- Purchase and fit-out of equipment to facilitate factory tour

B €750,000

- Visitor reception and orientation area.
- Audio visual presentation on the glass-making process and the international success of the product
- Provision of information panel and signage
- Development of photo opportunity areas.
II. The Viking Triangle

The second element of the Waterford Experience will be the Viking Triangle Project. The historic quarter of the city, known as the Viking Triangle contains within its three sides some of the oldest buildings in the city. History has been particularly kind to Waterford as the historic buildings have by coincidence been arranged in chronological order starting with Reginald’s Tower at the apex of the Viking Triangle. The sensitive treatment of the city’s built heritage will be central to the development of an internationally recognised authentic tourism attraction.

The compact nature of the Viking Triangle no more than 400 metres in length affords the visitor the opportunity to experience 1,000 years of Irish urban history in as little as a thousand paces.

Coupled with its remarkable architectural inheritance Waterford possesses a number of internationally important museum collections that also span a thousand years of the city’s history. A major objective of Waterford City Council is
to create within the Viking Triangle an iconic heritage-based tourist attraction that is complementary to and integrated with the relocated Waterford Crystal visitor facility.

**A Unique Project**

‘The Viking Triangle – A Thousand Years of History in a Thousand Paces’ tells the story of Waterford, Ireland’s oldest city by uniquely combining the city’s architectural heritage with its remarkable archaeological and historic collections of museum objects. This is not simply a restoration project. It is rather an urban programme which is multilayered and multifaceted and interweaves consolidation and conservation with economic regeneration to deliver an authentic tourist attraction that allows the city capitalise on its riverside setting, its architecture, its remarkable museum collections and its fame as the home of the internationally-renowned glass manufactory.
III. The Waterford Experience Project incorporating the Waterford Crystal Project and the Viking Triangle Project will:

- Deliver a project with the critical mass to become an iconic tourist attraction for Ireland while at the same time becoming the catalyst for the economic regeneration of Waterford’s historic core.

- Ensure the success and viability of the newly relocated Waterford Crystal plant and visitor centre

- Exploit the remarkable coincidence that within the Viking Triangle, an area less than 400 metres in length, the historic buildings are aligned chronologically spanning 1,000 years. This allows visitors to explore a millennium of Irish history in chronological order within a very compact and well-presented area.

- Present the museum objects within their appropriate architectural setting – in three site-specific museums. Viking Age objects in Reginald’s’ Tower, Medieval objects in a new museum building built above a 13th century Choristers’ Hall and a 15th century wine vault and 18th and 19th century objects, including a permanent exhibition of early Waterford glass housed in the elegant Bishop’s Palace built in 1741.
• Provide daytime and evening time leisure activities by incorporating both the 19th century Theatre Royal and the 18th century Christ Church Cathedral which also operates as a concert venue into its programme of events and activities.

• It maximises the potential of both City Hall dating from 1783 and the Theatre dating from 1876, to provide a much-needed and unique conference venue for the city.

• Provide restaurant and café facilities that will enhance the visitor experience thus helping to extend the time spent by visitors in the city / region.

• Highlight the 200 year old history of the city’s internationally famous craft industry, Waterford glass, through an exhibition of early Waterford glass housed in the Bishop’s Palace.

• Incorporate a strong family / child element to ensure that various attractions have a broad appeal.
• Co-operate and work closely with street traders, art-based groups and festival organisers to ensure the vitality of the district on a year-round basis.

• The Viking Triangle will be managed as a distinct unit within the city with its own maintenance regime.

• Provide a cohesive marketing strategy for the city as a tourist destination by coordinating all of the attractions within the city and selling the Waterford Experience as a single comprehensive attraction. The management will also work in cooperation with the other stakeholders in the region, focusing on marketing and cooperative ‘selling on’ of the region’s attractions and facilities.

• Be market-driven with a dedicated marketing executive employed to promote the Waterford Experience, remuneration will be performance based to ensure that the target visitor numbers are reached

• There will be common ticketing in operation throughout all the attractions with well-promoted discounting to incentivise ‘buy-in’ to additional attractions, particularly evening-time entertainment to encourage overnights in the city and region. The attraction will operate on year-round seven days per week.
The marketing and promotion of this product is greatly enhanced by:

- The international brand recognition of Waterford Crystal
- Improved accessibility to Waterford and the South East region thanks to its own regional airport, its proximity to Europort at Rosslare, the soon-to-be completed motorway to Dublin which incorporates a second river crossing
- The compact nature of the project on offer and the fact that its success is not weather-dependent
- Provision of adequate parking facilities
1. **Waterford Crystal Visitor Experience**  €4,200,000  
Purchase and fit-out of equipment to facilitate manufacturing tour. Develop and fit out a visitor experience and reception areas.

2. **Reginald’s Tower**  €90,000  
Develop this robust stone, fully conserved 800 year old monument as a National Viking Centre and Museum of Viking Waterford.

3. **Medieval Franciscan Friary**  €50,000  
Integrate the substantial ruins of this medieval friary into the medieval streetscape and make it an integral part of the visitor experience by providing an additional access route through the monument and to the bell tower which will also be reroofed. Works undertaken in partnership with the OPW.

4. **Museum of Medieval Waterford**  €4,055,000  
Incorporate two of the city’s hidden architectural gems, the 13th century Choristers’ Hall and 15th century wine vault into a state of the art newly-built medieval museum housing Ireland’s finest collection of medieval urban artifacts.

5. **Bishop’s Palace Museum of Modern Waterford**  €2,700,000  
Restoration of the finest 18th century ecclesiastical palace in Ireland and its gardens in the style of a typical grand Irish house of the period complete with period furniture. This will be the home of the city’s museum of the 18th and 19th century including the world’s largest display of historic Waterford glass.

6. **Christ Church Cathedral - Concert Venue**  Work complete.  
Site of the most important marriage in Irish history, that of Strongbow and Aoife, the recently conserved cathedral will function as a place of worship, historic visitor attraction and concert venue.

7. **Art Crystal Craft Centre**  €80,000  
Development of an art crystal craft centre in Cathedral Square on a site owned by Waterford City Council and developed in partnership with other agencies.

8. **City Hall - Art Gallery**  €200,000  
Built in 1783 the year the Penroses built the original Waterford glass factory in the city, this fine Georgian building will incorporate the municipal art collection featuring Yeats, Le Brocquy, Jellett and Keating.

9. **Theatre Royal - Phase I**  Work complete.  
This recently conserved Victorian horseshoe shaped theatre, part of the City Hall complex will function both as a theatre and together with City Hall as a conference centre with a capacity for 500 persons.

10. **City Hall and the Theatre Royal – Phase II**  €570,000  
Additional works to the rear of the Theatre Royal will see the provision of improved access and facilities for stage props and performers. This work will be undertaken in conjunction with the development of the new medieval museum so as to make a seamless architectural statement.

11. **Temporary Exhibitions Gallery**  No costs involved  
The present Municipal Art collection will be moved to City Hall where it will receive greater exposure and the present gallery will become a temporary exhibitions gallery adding vibrancy to the Viking Triangle.

### Public Realm Works

| A. Boy Soldier Memorial - Cathedral Square | €110,000  
Commemorating the youngest recorded casualty of the First World War. |
| B. Commemorating the National Flag | €60,000  
Commissioning of a suitable memorial to commemorate the first display of the Tricolour as a proposed national flag in 1848 at 33 the Mall |
| C. Signage | €100,000  
Custom designed information panels, destination signs to create an awareness of the Viking Triangle and the relocated Waterford Crystal facility, retail core and parking facilities. |
| D. Parking & Public Realm Works | €1,410,000  
Located immediately adjacent to the new Waterford Crystal facility a new coach and car parking facility will be developed with a capacity to accommodate 17 coaches and 102 cars. Upgrading paving on The Mall, visitor reception areas, bus setdown and creating visitor friendly linkages between various attractions. |
| E. Decoration of Buildings | €135,000  
To create a more welcoming environment within the Viking Triangle and enhance the visitor experience it is proposed to work in co-operation with the private sector to ensure that buildings on the main routes through the historic quarter are given a facelift. |

**TOTAL**  €13,760,000
IV. Viking Triangle Attractions

1. Waterford Crystal Visitor Experience

2. Museum of Viking Waterford – €90,000

   Reginald’s Tower, completely restored in 1999, this robust four-floored tower overlooking the River Suir is named in honour of the Viking founder of the city. On display here will be the remarkable collection of archaeologically excavated Viking Age objects from both the city centre excavations (1986-1992) and from the recent excavations at Woodstown 5 kilometres west of the city. The Woodstown site, dated to c.820 is considered to be the earliest Viking site outside of Scandinavia.

3. Medieval Franciscan Friary – re roofing tower – €50,000

   Located mid-way between Reginald’s Tower and the Museum of Medieval Waterford are the substantial ruins of the 13th century Franciscan Friary. It is planned to create an additional access route through the Friary so that it becomes an integral part of the Viking Triangle experience. Re-roofing the tower of this monument will also be undertaken as part of this project in order to enhance its presence and status as an integral part of the medieval streetscape and to protect the fabric of the monument.
4. **Museum of Medieval Waterford – incorporating a 13th century and 15th century wine vault – €4,055,000**

The Medieval Museum will be housed in a state of the art iconic museum building that incorporates two subterranean medieval undercrofts, namely the 13th century Choristers’ Hall and the 15th century wine cellar that once belonged to a medieval mayor of Waterford. Waterford’s medieval collection, the largest and most remarkable collection of any city in Ireland will be housed in this new museum. One of the highlights of the collection are the medieval manuscripts including the 4 metre long illuminated Charter Roll c.1372 featuring some of the earliest illustrations of medieval kings of England in existence. Another stunning element of the collection is the complete set of Italian 15th century cloth of gold vestments the only complete set to survive the Reformation in Northern Europe.

5. **Museum of Modern Waterford – Bishop’s Palace – €2.700,000**

The Museum of Modern Waterford 1700 – 2000 will be housed in the magnificent Bishop’s Palace built in 1741. The highlight of this exhibition will be the remarkable collection of early Waterford glass dating back to 1783. The Bishop’s Palace will be fitted out in the style of a typical grand Irish house of the mid-18th century with the emphasis being on gracious living and the role that Waterford cut glass played in the creation of that elegant and opulent lifestyle of late eighteenth century Ireland. This museum will underline and add gravitas to the whole Waterford Crystal Experience by giving it a pedigree that is deeply rooted in the city’s history. The museum will complement the Waterford Crystal Visitor Centre experience where visitors are afforded an opportunity to experience the modern glass making tradition and are invited to purchase their own piece of a tradition of fine glass making that spans over two centuries.
6. **Concert Venue – Christ Church Cathedral**

Visitors to the Bishop’s Palace will also be guided through the magnificent classical style 18th century Christ Church Cathedral that is located next to it. This Church of Ireland cathedral was built and designed by the local architect John Roberts who also built and designed the city’s Catholic cathedral giving Waterford the distinction of being the only city in Europe to have two cathedrals of different religious denominations built and designed by the same architect. Christ Church Cathedral is the site of the most important marriage in Irish history when on 24th August 1170 Aoife the daughter of an Irish king married the Anglo-Norman lord Strongbow, a union that heralded the beginning of the political links between England and Ireland the consequences of which are still evident today.

The cathedral is more than a very elegant historic building. It is also a place of worship and has recently been completely restored and fitted out so that it also functions as a concert venue with a seating capacity for over 400 persons. With a professional staff and a very active events programme the venue attracts large audiences throughout the year.

7. **Art Crystal Craft Centre** €80,000

Development of an art crystal craft centre in Cathedral Square on a site owned by Waterford City Council and developed in partnership with other agencies. This will function as an incubation unit for the development of a city based art glass studio.

8. **Art Gallery – City Hall** €200,000

Located also beside the Bishop’s Palace is City Hall built by John Roberts in 1783, the same year as the Penrose family established the famed glass manufactory. This building will remain the ceremonial headquarters of the City Council and it will also house the Municipal Art Gallery which boasts a fine collection of 20th century Irish art including works by Yeats, Le Brocquy, Jellett and other renowned Irish artists.
9. Theatre Royal – Phase I – Complete

Within City Hall is a Victorian horse-shoe shaped theatre. This building is the venue for the city’s International Light Opera Festival which had been running for over half a century. With seating for almost 500 people it has a very intimate ambience and is an ideal venue for the performing arts and is much loved by both visitors and locals.

Phase II of this redevelopment will see the rear of this building modernised to provide easy access for props and performers.

10. Conference Venue – City Hall and the Theatre Royal – Phase II €575,000

The Viking Triangle Project will see the theatre complex fully integrated with both City Hall and the proposed new Medieval Museum. This integration will ensure that all three venues are served by the same restaurant facility (that will occupy part of the space over the 13th century Choristers’ Hall) facing on to Cathedral Square. The integration of these buildings will also allow both City Hall with its numerous meetings rooms and the Theatre Royal to function as a much needed conference venue for the city.
11. Temporary Exhibitions Gallery

To maintain the vitality of the Viking Triangle the present Municipal Art Galley located in an early 20th century Gothic Revival style church, built next to the 13th century Franciscan Friary, will be developed as a Temporary Exhibitions Gallery. The Gallery will encourage local and international artists to exhibit in the city and provide a venue for a wide range of other exhibitions thus adding to the vibrancy of the area.

Creating Permeability – enhancing the visitor experience

While the main entrance to the Medieval Museum will be on Cathedral Square it will also be accessible from Bailey’s New Street via the 15th century wine vault, and from the Mall via City Hall. Consequently visitors will have access to the 13th century Choristers’ Hall, the 15th century wine vault, the Medieval Museum, the 18th century City Hall and the 19th century Theatre Royal without ever having to go outdoors.
V. Public Realm

Central to the establishment of this cohesive iconic cultural tourism attraction is the upgrading of the public realm.

A. Cathedral Square – Boy Soldier Memorial – €110,000
   A third entrance to the Viking Triangle will be created by developing Cathedral Square and the commissioning of a monument to mark the life of the boy soldier John Condon, the youngest recorded soldier to have died in the First World War.

B. Commemorating the National Flag – €60,000
   On the Mall just opposite City Hall and close to Reginald’s Tower and the equestrian sculpture of Thomas Francis Meagher upgrading works will include the development of an area commemorating the national flag. The area designated for the commemorative feature will be located outside number 33 The Mall, the building from where in 1848 Thomas Francis Meagher, hero of the American Civil War, unfurled the Tricolour for the first time.
C. **Signage – €100,000**

A series of bespoke bronze tourist information plaques placed on buildings, set into the pavement and freestanding will be commissioned to encourage visitors to explore the area.

D. **Parking & Public Realm Works - €1,410,000**

Located immediately adjacent to the new Waterford Crystal facility a new coach and car parking facility will be developed with a capacity to accommodate 17 coaches and 102 cars. Upgrading paving on The Mall, visitor reception areas, bus setdown and creating visitor friendly linkages between various attractions.

E. **Decorating Buildings – €135,000**

It is propose to decorate the Widows’ Apartments (1702), St. Olaf’s Church (1736), the 19th century houses on Bailey’s New Street and refurbish the Deanery Building façade.

**Grand Total €13,760,000**
A Thousand Years of Irish History in a Thousand Paces
A walk through a thousand years of Irish History – The Viking Triangle brings to life the architecture and artefacts that link the visitor with the events that shaped Ireland over a millennium.
VI. Historic Period: Viking Age Waterford

1. Reginald’s Tower – National Viking Centre

Story Line: Sea Pirates and Merchants – Ireland’s First City

Storyteller / guide / re-enactor: Reginald, one of the two Viking leaders of the city to avoid execution when the city fell to the Anglo-Normans under Strongbow in 1170.

Reginald’s Tower is unique in Ireland, having the distinction of being the only monument in Ireland that is named in honour of a Viking. An exhibition in the Tower traces the development by the Vikings of the first towns and cities in Ireland using Waterford, Ireland’s oldest city, as the prime example.
The main focus of the interactive exhibition will be the founding of the Viking-age town of Waterford and its 9th century predecessor at the nearby recently-discovered and internationally-important Viking site at Woodstown. Using models and audio-visual presentations the exciting story of the Viking adventurers who founded Ireland’s first towns and cities will be brought to life.

The highlights of the exhibition will include:

Woodstown Viking Site:

- A complete set of Viking Age warrior’s armour dating to about 830
- A Kufic coin minted at Wasit near Baghdad in Iraq in 742, brought to Woodstown by Viking traders around 830
- A collection of hack silver
- The largest collection of Viking lead weights found anywhere in the world outside of Scandinavia

Waterford City:

- Viking Age gold jewellery
- The largest collection of Viking stick pins found anywhere in Europe
- Household goods
- Leather sword scabbard and shoes
- Gaming pieces

Using the large internationally-recognised collection of archery material the exhibition will end with the fall of the Viking-age town to Strongbow and his Anglo-Norman mercenaries in 1170.
VII. Historic Period: Medieval Waterford - Franciscan Friary

1. Franciscan Friary 1240-1540

Story Line: The arrival of the Anglo-Normans saw the introduction of continental religious orders into Ireland. The Franciscan monastery was built by an Anglo-Norman knight within the precincts of the former Viking-age fort.

Order in Europe and founding two Irish colleges in Rome as well as having the 17th March designated as the official feast day of St Patrick. He was also the only Irishman to have been considered as a possible Pope.

The story begins with Wadding reminiscing how as a child he worshipped illegally at the friary, though it had officially been dissolved in 1540 by Henry VIII of England and how his father was buried there. He also tells of some of the highlights of the friary’s history:

- 1240 founded by an Anglo-Norman knight
- 1394 and 1399 provided lodgings to King Richard II during his two visits to Waterford
- 1540 suppressed by King Henry VIII
- 1541 conversion into a Catholic almshouse, known as the Holy Ghost Hospital, under a charter of King Henry VIII
- 16th century reoccupied by the Franciscans when it had strong connections with the eminent scholar and Ireland’s first diplomat to Rome, Fr. Luke Wadding OFM
- 1649 the venue for a synod convened by the famous Papal Nuncio, Cardinal Rinnucini just weeks before the city was besieged by Cromwell
- 1693 shared use by both the inmates of the Catholic almshouse and French Protestant Huguenot refugees in 1693 following the victory of William III (of Orange) at the Boyne

Leaving the friary a new guide takes the visitors fifty paces, down some steps and in through an old oak door to a ‘Hidden Gem’ of medieval Waterford – the 15th century Mayor’s Wine Vault.
VIII. Historic Period: Medieval Waterford – Choristers’ Hall and Wine Vault

1. The 15th Century Mayor’s Wine Vault: The life of a medieval merchant

Story Line: The history of the wine trade in Waterford - since 1232 Waterford was recognised as the chief wine port of Ireland paying only half the importation tax of any other port. The museum still possesses the original 1232 charter confirming this. As early as 1170 Gerald of Wales the chronicler of the Anglo-Norman invasion was surprised to find that ‘the vine was neither grown nor cultivated in Ireland’ given that wine was so plentiful and popular. In the early medieval period wine was mainly imported from the Bordeaux region in France and later from Spain and Portugal.

It is planned to host an annual wine barrel race starting at Reginald’s Tower and up Bailey’s New Street to the Wine Vault on the 6th July, the anniversary of the charter of Henry III designating Waterford as Ireland’s chief port for the importation of wine.
Storyteller / guide / re-enactor: Catherine Brown the wife of James Rice, wine merchant and eleven times Mayor of Waterford between 1468 and 1488 narrates the story of the Mayor’s Wine Vault. Mayor Rice imported wine from Spain and in fact went on pilgrimage twice to Santiago de Compostella in northwestern Spain which in the late Middle Ages was one of Europe’s primary pilgrim destinations.

This perfectly-preserved wine vault was built by Rice and was later gifted in June 1468 to the Dean of the Cathedral, John Collyn. The Wine Vault will be set out to replicate a medieval wine cellar.

Visitors’ attention will be drawn to the fact that James Rice’s limestone cadaver tomb, regarded as the finest in the country and showing his partially decomposed cadaver and decorated with religious imagery, is one of the treasures in the nearby Christ Church Cathedral.

From here the visitor descends further underground into a 13th century Choristers’ Hall which could function as one of the dining areas of the museum restaurant complex, affording the visitor an opportunity to dine in the style of a medieval bishop and order a bottle of wine from the conjoined medieval wine vault.

2. 13th Century Choristers’ Hall (c.1280) – an atmospheric dining experience

Discreet graphic panels on the walls of this magnificent Choristers’ Hall will tell the life of the person to whom the building of this monument is attributed, Stephen de Fulbourn, Knight of St. John of Jerusalem, Bishop of Waterford and Governor of Ireland. He used his influence to open a mint in Waterford and it is proposed to set up a replica medieval mint in the museum situated above the Choristers’ Hall allowing visitors to make exact replicas of the coins Fulbourn had struck in Waterford in 1281. Rising through a 13th century Dundry stone staircase or using the elevator the visitor is brought to the foyer of the Museum of Medieval Waterford.
IX. Historic Period: Medieval Waterford - Medieval Museum

1. Museum of Medieval Waterford

Waterford’s cultural and material inheritance from the Middle Ages is unsurpassed in any other city in Ireland. Many of the objects which will be on display here are of major international significance and deserve to be showcased in a building designed to the highest architectural standards.

This Museum of Medieval Waterford will:

- Protect and bring into public use the 13th century Choristers’ Hall over which it is built
- Incorporate a new service entrance to the rear of the Theatre Royal replacing the nearly derelict and unsightly buildings which now occupy
the site and adding greatly to the theatre as a venue
- Fill an unsightly void at the east end of Cathedral Square
- Will become a new focus and attraction for Cathedral Square, thus reclaiming this ancient square as an integral part of the city and becoming a catalyst for the economic regeneration of this area.

The Museum of Medieval Waterford is at the very heart of the Viking Triangle, both physically and metaphorically. The museum will form a physical link with both the Theatre Royal and City Hall and will act as the hub or ordering device at the centre of the Viking Triangle.

Two exhibition galleries will be located above the entrance lobby and accessible by a glass-walled elevator:
- Gallery 1: The Royal Port City – Waterford and Ireland, 1170 – 1536
- Gallery 2: The Art of Devotion – Art and Religious Practice in Waterford and Ireland, 1170-1690

2. Gallery 1: The Royal Port City

An interactive exhibition examining the lives of mayors, merchants and artisans in medieval Waterford.

Starting in 1170 with the marriage of Strongbow and Aoife and the designation by England’s King Henry II of Waterford as a royal city and one of the great ports of Ireland, the exhibition chronicles the development of the port to the reign of Henry VIII.

The centrepiece of this gallery will be the Great Charter Roll of Waterford, dating from 1372. This document is unique with its sixteen coloured portraits including the earliest contemporary images of English kings in existence in Britain or Ireland and the earliest view of an Irish city - Waterford - in 1372.

Waterford can boast Ireland’s most extensive civic collection from medieval times.
The highlights will include:

- The Waterford gold ring brooch, 1270
- Medieval pottery from the Low Countries, France, Germany and England
- Medieval coins minted in Waterford – visitors will be able to strike exact replicas of medieval coins in a mint which will be recreated in this gallery
- An array of household objects from the Medieval period
- Great Parchment Book: An illuminated manuscript of municipal records – with intimate details of how the city was governed dating from the 14th to the 17th century
- Ireland’s greatest collection of medieval city charters
- Ireland’s oldest cannon: Used in the siege of Waterford in 1495
- The Cap of Maintenance: A gift to the city of Waterford from Henry VIII in 1536. This is the only piece of clothing of any medieval king of England
- The bearing sword Henry VIII granted to the city in 1536

3. Gallery 2: The Art of Devotion in Medieval Waterford

Religion dominated the life of everybody in medieval Europe and this gallery chronicles the art of devotion from the 13th century up to the Reformation, including the religious wars of the 17th century.

Waterford is the only city in Ireland where such an exhibition could be convincingly mounted, thanks to the discovery over 200 years ago of a complete set of Italian cloth of gold High Mass vestments, with panels embroidered in Bruges and with scenes from the Scriptures. Dating from c.1450 this collection of 11 pieces is unique in Northern Europe. The decorated panels on the vestments are ‘veritable stories in silk’, created in the great embroidery workshops in Bruges and inspired by the great Renaissance artists such as Van Eyck. They are work of the highest craftsmanship and have been ranked by experts as being among the greatest treasures of Medieval Ireland.

The highlights of the exhibition will include:

- The largest and most important collection of medieval statues in Ireland
• The only complete set of medieval cloth of gold vestments to survive anywhere in Northern Europe
• Medieval pilgrim badges and amber prayer beads
• 17th century church plate
• 17th century vestments and chalice of Fr. Geoffrey Keating, Ireland’s first historian
• Fr. Luke Wadding OFM, death mask, 1657
X. **Historic Period: Modern Waterford - Bishop’s Palace**

1. **The Bishop’s Palace, 1741 – Museum of Modern Waterford**

   This elegant 1741 jewel, described as the finest eighteenth century episcopal palace in Ireland will function both as an historic house and as a Museum of Modern Waterford. The palace will be fitted out as an elegant 18th century episcopal residence, featuring fine examples of historic Irish furniture and fittings, with the museum displays seamlessly integrated.

   The Bishop’s Palace was designed by Richard Castles, the renowned architect of Carton House and Leinster House. Castles died before the palace was completed. His successor was the Waterford-born architect John Roberts, one of Ireland’s most noteworthy 18th century architects. A member of the Church of
Ireland he designed Waterford City Hall, the Church of Ireland cathedral and the Roman Catholic cathedral, the first Catholic cathedral to be built in either Britain or Ireland since the Reformation.

The palace represents the desire of the 18th century ruling class to escape the confines of the medieval town walls. Although built on the site of its medieval predecessor its orientation was reversed so that the front of the palace overlooks the town wall out onto the newly-developed Mall which occupied the site of the former Viking harbour.

The palace is surrounded by one of the finest collections of 18th century urban buildings in Ireland namely the Widows’ Apartments 1702, St. Olaf’s 1736, Christ Church Cathedral 1773, City Hall 1783 and the terrace of fine 18th century town houses on the Mall. A number of important early 19th century houses also stand close by – some having strong associations with national figures such as the operatic composer William Vincent Wallace and the Young Ireland orator and American Civil War hero, Thomas Francis Meagher.

The 18th century Bishop’s Palace will:

• Become the world showcase for the city’s remarkable collection of historic Waterford glass, highlighting this 200 year-old tradition of superb craftsmanship for which the city has become famous throughout the world.
• It will also highlight the fact that Waterford is probably unique among Irish cities during this period of the Penal Laws against Catholics and Dissenters. The city was remarkable for its spirit of religious tolerance.

Story Line: The building of the modern city:

• The development of the city under the Church of Ireland Ascendancy
• The struggle for Catholic Emancipation, using the local Wyse family as an example including the marriage of Sir Thomas Wyse to Letitia Bonaparte, the niece of Emperor Napoleon I of France.
• The contribution of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) to the industrial development of Waterford focusing on glassmaking and with particular emphasis on the Penrose family who established the glass manufactory in the city in 1783.
• The story of 19th century Waterford - Newfoundland migration and emigration with emphasis on key figures such as the famous Irish American Thomas Francis Meagher.
• Twentieth century topics such as the First World War and the founding of the state.

Story Teller: A servant in the Bishop’s Place. The story will begin as he/she returns from the gruesome hanging of a fellow servant found guilty of poisoning his brother, the bishop’s gardener and then on into the story of working in the palace.
2. The Bishop's Palace – Museum of Modern Waterford

Ground Floor: Age of elegance and industry

Room 1 / Reception

Visitors will be welcomed to the palace in an elegant reception room under the watchful eye of Bishop Charles Este (1696-1745), who commissioned the palace. The bishop’s portrait by Jean Baptiste Van Loo (1684-1745) will be the centre piece of the reception area

Room 2: Ticketing and Shop.

Room 3: Café

Room 4: Kitchens

Room 5: Grand Entrance Hall and Staircase

The grand entrance hall and staircase will feature portraits of Bishop Mills and other 18th century bishops as well as period furniture and fittings

Grandfather clock made by William Maddock of Waterford, a Catholic watchmaker, 1783

Visitors will ascend the grand staircase to the 1st floor – elevator also available

Room 6: Toilets

External lift will provide disabled access
XI. Historic Period: Modern Waterford - Bishop’s Palace

1st Floor – piano nobile

The landing:

Overlooking Christ Church Cathedral, this landing will feature period furniture and will be dominated by a portrait of King William III (William of Orange) by Sir Geoffrey Kneller (1646-1723). The reign of King William marks the beginning of the Protestant Ascendancy in Ireland. Also a full-length portrait of King George I by Kneller who heralded the Georgian period in British and Irish history.
Room 1: Catholic Waterford – Industrialists, Reformers and Emigrés:

This room will be set out as an 18th century library.

Although Catholics made up the majority of the population they lived under the shadow of the Penal Laws which made them in effect second-class citizens. This room deals with those of the majority religion using two examples:

- The famous and ancient Wyse family of Waterford who not only survived during this period but actually prospered. The 200 year old story of this family will also include the marriage of Sir Thomas Wyse to Letitia, the niece of Napoleon. This section of the exhibition will feature unique examples of Bonaparte memorabilia.
- The Carew family, who left Ireland because of religious persecution and prospered in Cadiz in Spain, where they were co-founders of an almshouse for women that survives to this day.

Objects in this room will include:

- A large decorated bronze mortar inscribed ‘Michael Tonnery, Apothecary, in Waterford 1707’. Michael Tonnery was a Catholic and flourished during this period of the Penal Laws
- A very rare and early piece of Irish furniture – a Wyse family chest, dated 1693
- 7 Wyse family portraits, from the early 18th to the mid 19th century
- 2 unique paintings on copper, featuring members of the Wyse family in Newtown House – rare interior views of an Irish Georgian mansion
- Napoleonic memorabilia including:
  - a lock of the emperor’s hair
  - a lock of his mother’s hair
  - a jet gold-decorated mourning cross commissioned by his mother and gifted to the females of the family commemorating the death of the emperor – the only example to survive anywhere in the world
- A large collection of church silver gifted to Waterford churches by Irish émigrés living in Cadiz, Spain
- Verge watch, made by William Maddock, the Catholic watch making family
• A collection of 18th century Waterford silver made by the Catholic Waterford silversmith, Anastasia Fleming

Room 2: Ascendancy Waterford: Bishops, Bankers, Mayors and Merchants

This room will be set out as an 18th century drawing room.

The ruling class, both locally and nationally were members of the Church of Ireland. They began the transformation of Waterford into a modern European city from the early eighteenth century, creating elegant streetscapes and fine public buildings. This story is told through the contemporary paintings and watercolours that decorate the walls of this room.

This room will also feature the Congreve family – thus creating a link with the world-famous gardens at Mount Congreve, just 5km from the city.

Objects on display here will include:

• A View of Waterford by William van der Hagen, 1736. Commissioned by Waterford Corporation, this large canvas is the earliest landscape view of an Irish city

• Interior and exterior views of Christ Church Cathedral, 1736, also attributed to van der Hagen. These are very rare paintings and the interior view is the only one in existence of an 18th century Irish cathedral.

• View of Waterford Bridge, 1796, and Entrance to Waterford Harbour, both by the Waterford artist, Thomas Sautelle Roberts, the son of John Roberts the architect

• An extensive collection of Irish 18th century silver

• Gold freedom box, 1790, presented by Waterford Corporation to John Fane, Earl of Westmorland

• A pair of silver urns made by Anastasia Fleming and presented to Mayor Alcock in 1779

• Period furniture and furnishings
Room 3: Quakers

This room will be set out as an 18th century dining room.

Quakers constituted 2% of the population of Waterford in the 18th century and made an enormous contribution to the commercial and industrial development of the city. By the 1780s they were among the leading families involved in overseas trade, becoming so wealthy that they began to diversify into glassmaking and shipbuilding.

- A large collection of historic Waterford Glass dating from 1783 when the local Quaker Penrose family first established their glass manufactory in the city.
- Paintings of ships built in Waterford shipyards in the 18th and 19th century. These were owned by 3 Quaker families in Waterford – the Whites, Malcomsons and Penroses – ensuring that Waterford was the dominant shipbuilding city in Ireland until the 1870s. In fact for a number of years in the mid-19th century the Malcomsons owned the largest fleet of ships in the world and were also involved in coal mining in the Ruhr Valley in Germany with one of these mines remaining in operation until 1986.
- Mahogany brass-bound turf bucket, made in Waterford c.1820.

Room 4: Waterford and the North American Connection.

This room will be set out as an 18th century study.

This room overlooks the home of Thomas Francis Meagher No. 33 the Mall. He was arrested in this house in 1848 and it is here also that he wrote many of his speeches including the Famous ‘Sword Speech’ – hence the sobriquet ‘Meagher of the Sword’. Using the story of the Meagher family the exhibition will explore the links with Newfoundland, Australia and the United States of America.

The son of an Irish emigrant, Thomas Meagher Jnr. was born in St John’s in Newfoundland where over half the population are of Irish descent – most coming from within 30 miles of Waterford. He operated an overseas provisions business
with Waterford. In 1819 he moved to Waterford. He became involved in Daniel O’Connell’s struggle for Catholic Emancipation and Repeal of the Act of Union and following the reforms of 1830s and 1840s he was elected the first Catholic mayor of the city since 1689. His son Thomas Francis Meagher also became involved in politics but unlike O’Connell he was an advocate of the use of physical force to achieve independence. For his involvement in the 1848 Rebellion he was transported to Australia from where he escaped to the United States of America. He went on to become a hero in the American Civil War where he fought on the Union side. In 1963 President John F. Kennedy on a state visit to Ireland presented the flag of Meagher’s Irish Brigade – the ‘Fighting 69th’ – to the Irish people and in 2008 the Taoiseach presented one of Meagher’s swords to the Friends of Ireland in the United States Congress.

Objects on display here will include:

- Silver Urn presented to James O’Donel, Newfoundland’s first Catholic bishop
- Portrait of Bishop Lambert of St John’s
- Book, Gros Morne Time Lines, presented by the Hon Danny Williams, Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador to the Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern in 2005
- Objects associated with the historic Newfoundland cod fishery
- Life size portrait of Daniel O’Connell (1775-1847)
- Memorabilia of Thomas Meagher:
  - Portrait of Thomas Meagher, Mayor of Waterford
  - Silver chalice, paten and a monstrance presented to the Sisters of Charity by Thomas Meagher
  - Walking stick
  - Memorabilia of Thomas Francis Meagher:
    - Portrait of Thomas Francis Meagher in Major General’s uniform, Union Army
    - Print of Meagher while in prison awaiting trial, 1848
    - Clarinet
    - Green uniform coatee
• The famous last letter written by Meagher in Ireland on the night before his transportation to Australia
• Sword used by Meagher during American Civil War
• American Civil War medals
• American officer’s sash
• The famous ‘Sprig of Green’ worn by the soldiers in Meagher’s Irish Brigade at the Battle of Fredericksburg
• 2 regimental flags, Irish Brigade

Room 5: Waterford and the Arts.

This room will be set out as a 19th century music room.

Celebrating the life and achievements of composer William Vincent Wallace, the actor Charles Kean and bringing the story up to the present day with the late actress Anna Manahan who died in 2008 and donated her papers and trophies to the museum.

2nd Floor: Into the 20th Century: John Redmond, World War I and the Road to Independence

A temporary exhibition gallery will also be located on this floor – Rooms 2 and 3. These rooms are interconnecting and as well as being used to mount temporary historical exhibitions this gallery space will be available for rent by artists etc.

Room 1: Waterford in 1914

The MP for the city was John Redmond, the successor of Ireland’s great Nationalist icon Charles Stewart Parnell known as the ‘Uncrowned King of Ireland’. During the long hot summer of 1914 the dream of O’Connell and Parnell had finally been realised with the passage of the Third Home Rule Bill and the country was poised, in Parnell’s own words ‘to take its place among the nations of the earth’. John Redmond was at the height of his popularity and was set to become the first Prime Minister of an independent Ireland. However, events in far away Sarajevo
plunged Europe into the First World War and the rebellion of Easter 1916 ended Redmond’s vision of an independent Ireland within the British Empire. To quote the poet William Butler Yeats

All’s changed, changed utterly: A terrible beauty is born.

Objects in this room will include:

- Late 19th century and early 20th century photographs of the Waterford
- Bust of John Redmond
- Address presented to John Redmond in 1891
- Redmond and Irish Parliamentary Party memorabilia
- Irish Volunteer memorabilia
- World War I memorabilia:
  - Personal possessions of men who fought in the trenches
  - War medals
  - Letters
  - Photographs
  - Souvenirs from the trenches

Rooms 4 & 5: Offices
XII. 18th Century Christ Church Cathedral

1. Christ Church Cathedral: Historic Monument, Place of Worship and Concert Venue

Storyline: The story of this great cathedral where according to tradition the most important marriage in Irish history took place, that of Strongbow and Aoife.

Story Teller: The wife of John Roberts, the architect who built this Church of Ireland cathedral, the fourth cathedral to be built on the site. The story will begin just after the funeral of Roberts who died while building the nearby Catholic
Cathedral in the city – building both Protestant and Catholic cathedrals was a unique achievement in the late 18th century. The link to the Franciscan Friary is maintained as Roberts is buried in the old friary.

- The Waterford cathedral is the second in Ireland after Christ Church in Dublin. It was established by the Viking settlers who had become Christian, hence the name Christ Church. Following the fall of Waterford to the Anglo-Normans it was here that Strongbow and Aoife were married – arguably the most important marriage in Irish history.

- King Henry II commanded that a synod be held here in 1173 where the Bull giving papal approval for the conquest of Ireland was read for the first time in Ireland. In 1394 King Richard II of England attended Mass here and installed the first bishop of the newly united dioceses of Waterford and Lismore. The cathedral became the property of the Anglican or state religion during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I and was repossessed by the Roman Catholics in 1641 only to be regained by the Anglicans when the city fell to Cromwell’s son-in-law Ireton in 1650.

- The story finishes with the demolition of the Medieval cathedral in 1773 and the building of the present neo-classical building by John Roberts. The story will also include the discovery during the demolition in a hitherto hidden vault of the internationally important collection of medieval vestments which will be on display in the Museum of Medieval Waterford.

Christ Church Cathedral is more than a historic monument. It is also the place of worship for Waterford’s Anglican or Church of Ireland community.

In recent years it has completed a €4.5 million restoration programme that included creating the facilities necessary for use of the cathedral as a concert venue. The cathedral, with a capacity of over 600 is now established as one of the finest and most imposing concert venues in the South East of Ireland.

It is planned that during the summer months historic pageants such as the marriage of Strongbow and Aoife be staged in the Cathedral.
XIII. 18th Century City Hall and 19th Century Theatre Royal

1. City Hall – incorporating the 19th century Theatre Royal

   Story Line: The life and times of William Vincent Wallace, operatic composer who was born just opposite the Bishop’s Place and whose bust is on display in the garden of the palace just outside the south entrance to the Theatre Royal will be told in the theatre, a beautifully-preserved 19th-century horseshoe-shaped theatre.

   City Hall

   Built by John Roberts as an Assembly Rooms in 1782 it became the administrative headquarters of Waterford Corporation in 1813. The visual arts in modern Waterford will be explored in City Hall which will become the home of the Municipal Art Collection. The collection boasts works by a number of internationally recognised artists - Jack B. Yeats and Paul Henry.
City Hall and the Theatre Royal will also act as a major conference facility giving extra life and vitality to the Viking Triangle and will be linked directly to the Museum of Medieval Waterford and the 13th century Choristers’ Hall.

City Hall will also be a venue for Civil Marriages.

Thomas Francis Meagher and the National Flag

The guided tour will complete the circuit at the Thomas Francis Meagher monument and the bow-fronted 18th century building opposite that housed the Wolfe Tone Club. From the windows of this building Meagher first flew the national flag, the tricolour. It is proposed to have a permanent commemorative national flag display here in recognition of this historic event in Irish history.

The tour ends with the visitor back again at Reginald’s Tower where the 1,000 year story of Waterford began.

Historic Interpretation: Bringing History to Life

One of the most important features of the Viking Triangle will be the way in which it is presented or engages with the visitor or potential visitor.

Docents

The voluntary guide system at present in operation in Waterford Museum of Treasures will be extended to the entire Viking Triangle, giving visitors an opportunity to interact with the local community and experience the story of Ireland’s oldest city first hand from those who live in the city.

Various Levels of Interpretation

The museum experience will be brought to life through the use of imaginative state of the art interactive and audio-visual presentations, giving the visitor the opportunity to hear and see the fascinating stories behind the city’s great treasures.
Living History

Historical re-enactments will be an integral part of the Viking Triangle affording the visitor a hands-on experience of the past, e.g. coin making, spinning, weaving, wood turning etc. There will also be special demonstrations by master craftsmen and women in a wide variety of trades and crafts.

Language Guides

As in the present Waterford Museum of Treasures audio hand sets will be available in a number of foreign languages. These will also be in both adult and child friendly format.

Family Orientated

Few attractions in Ireland are specifically designed with families in mind. The Viking Triangle will have various levels of interpretation to cater for both adult and child audiences.

Accessibility

The entire Viking Triangle will be wheelchair accessible and many objects in the museum sectors will be put on open display to allow tactile contact. Braille will also be used on notices and captions in the museums.

Connecting With the International Audience

The museum displays have been deliberately chosen to ensure a very broad audience appeal and to connect with as many people as possible. Consequently there are elements in the exhibitions which visitors from Britain, Scandinavia, Belgium, Holland, France, Germany, Spain, Italy, the United States of America, Canada and Australia can indentify with.

Street Theatre

The Viking Triangle management will work closely with the Waterford street theatre company, Spraoi, to organise a co-ordinated series of events over the summer months.
Animating the Public Realm

Street and Christmas markets will be an integral part of the Viking Triangle Project.

After Dark

A co-ordinated programme of events will be organised in conjunction with the two main concert and theatre venues, the Theatre Royal and Christ Church Cathedral.

Marketing and Promotion

The Viking Triangle management will co-ordinate the marketing and promotional activities for all attractions within the area, with a common website. There will also be common ticketing and discounting incentives to encourage longer stays in the city and region.

The facilities will operate on a seven day a week, 362 days a year basis as is currently the case with Waterford Museum of Treasures.

The promoters:

• have made an agreement with Waterford Wedgewood Royal Doulton for the joint branding and marketing of the facility.
• will organise an all year round calendar of cultural events in conjunction with the Theatre Royal and Christ Church Cathedral as well as with street theatre groups, open air markets including Christmas markets and community groups to ensure the vibrancy and vitality of the Viking Triangle
• will develop in partnership with the hospitality sector the Conference and Civil Marriage facilities in City Hall and Theatre Royal on a commercial basis
• will operate on a franchise basis both the restaurant and retail facilities as income generators for the Viking Triangle
• will engage with the restaurant and retail sectors within the Viking Triangle in branding and marketing the Viking Triangle