CesR Final Conference
Mr. Fergal Gough
Cork County Council, Ireland.
Cork is largest County in Ireland
Total Area 7,500 sq km
Total Population of 518,000
3 Innovative Tourism
Self-Catering Business Models from County Cork, Ireland
1. Ballymaloe Country House
2. Cork Harbour Angling Hub
3. Vienna Woods Hotel
Ballymalloe Country House

Best practice example of Integrated and Sustainable Approach to Farming, Food Tourism & Self-Catering Accommodation
What is Ballymaloe?

- Estate consists of a historic Irish Country house on a 400 acre organic farm
- Purchased by the Allen Family in 1948
- It is still a family run operation
- It is one of the best known brands in Irish Tourism
What are the elements of the Brand in 2014?

- A Country House Hotel (30 bedrooms)
- A Restaurant
- Kitchen & Craft Shop
- Grainstore Building Multi-functional Entertainments Facility
- Cookery School, Cookbooks, Food Festivals & Cookery programmes
Elements of the Brand continued...

- Self Catering Accommodation
- Café
- Range of Own Brand Food Products e.g. Ballymaloe Relish
- Disused Grain Store converted to multifunctional facility for up to 350 people
- Ballymaloe Lit Fest (Literary Festival on food)
Timeframe of development of Initiatives – 1964 to 2013

- **1964** – Restaurant opened in dining room of Ballymaloe House (achieved a Michelin star in the period 1975 – 1980)

- **1967** – Number of rooms converted to guestrooms which today total 30

- **1973** – Kitchen & Craft Shop opened

- **1978** – First cookbook published

- **1983** – Cookery School started (converted apple barn)

- **2002** – Self Catering Accommodation started

- **2004** – Café opened

- **2010** – Multifunctional Grain Store Opened, capacity for 350

- **2013** – Ballymaloe Lit Fest
Commencement of Self Catering Accommodation

- **1980’s** - 6 Self Catering Accommodation Units at Ballymaloe Cookery School located (4km from House) – used by Cookery School students and holiday lets

- **2002** – 4 Farm Cottages completed

- **2005** - 8 Wooden Chalets added

- **2007** - Conversion of Tower
Cookery School Self Catering Accommodation

- 6 units
- 4 – 8 bedrooms
- 90% single or twin rooms
- Used mainly by Cookery Students
Farm Cottages

- Opened in 2002
- Conversion of old farm buildings
- 4 units
- 1 & 2 bedrooms
- Located on grounds of Ballymaloe House
- Used for short & long term lets
- Can convert to 2 & 3 Bedrooms due to interconnecting doors
Wooden Chalets

- Opened in 2005
- 8 units
- 3 bedrooms in each
- Generally long term lets
- Recently renovated
- Located on grounds of Ballymaloe House
Ballymaloe Tower

Converted in 2007 to two bedroomed self catering accommodation unit
Ballymaloe Grainstore
Ballymaloe Grainstore

- Used as a multi-functional facility that can cater for up to 350 people for
  - Art exhibitions
  - Concerts
  - Weddings
  - Food and Craft fairs
  - Classes & Community Events e.g. Yoga; Parent & Toddler Groups etc.
Additional Services offered

- Meals delivered from the restaurant
- Provision of picnics
- Supply of garden produce, farm eggs & bread
- Linen changed weekly
- Babysitting
- Cookery Courses at reduced rates
Funding of Self Catering Accommodation

- Funded by own resources and 10 year bank loan
- Income from accommodation covers the repayments on the loan
Self Catering Accommodation

Organisation Structure

- Self Catering Enterprise is owned and managed by Allen Family as part of 400 acre organic farm

- However fully integrated into the Ballymaloe House Operation

- Self catering accommodation reservations managed with hotel reservations system
How marketed?

- Through Ballymaloe website [www.ballymaloe.ie](http://www.ballymaloe.ie)
- Promotional literature produced by the hotel
- Self catering marketing agency in Britain
Staff employed to service Self Catering Accommodation

- House-keeper employed full time
- Other staff attached to the Country House assist as required
- All staff locally employed – Ballymaloe maintains strong links with local community
Occupyancy

- 70% occupancy

- Limited mid week demand in the winter months
Success factors

- Ballymaloe brand represents high quality
- Quality of accommodation
- Preservation of old farmhouse buildings
- Support products (restaurant & other facilities at Ballymaloe)
- Personal involvement of owners, family based and businesses support and add value to each other.
- Sustainable Ongoing Future Expansion Plans for all aspects of the business including Self-Catering Accommodation
2\textsuperscript{nd} and 3\textsuperscript{rd} Generation businesses

- Literally 100s of people are now employed in a range of spin-off Ballymaloe family enterprises

- **Second Generation Enterprises**
  - Ballymaloe Shop and Cafe - Wendy Whelan
  - Ballymaloe Cookery School and Gardens - Tim & Darina Allen
  - Ballymaloe Farmlands - Darren Allen & Rory Allen
  - Ballymaloe Music Events - Rory Allen
  - Ballymaloe Country Relish - Yasmin Hyde
  - Jim Whelan Tours - Jim Whelan

- **Third Generation Enterprises**
  - Sacha Whelan Furniture - Sacha Whelan
  - Rachel's Website - Rachel Allen
  - FH Wetland Systems - Féidhlim Harty
  - Healthcare & Healing - Féidhlim Harty & Elinor Hitching
  - Jobs for Cooks - Toby Allen
  - Cully & Sully - Cullen Allen
  - Malachy Harty Photography - Malachy Harty
  - Wildside Catering - Ted Berner
  - Farmers' Markets - Rupert & Lydia Hugh Jones
  - Robyn Allen Design - Graphic Design
Main conditions for the transfer of the practice

- Location of the site, close to established tourism attractions, area of scenic beauty but close to Cork City

- Relevance to location – products & services offered are directly linked to the rural location

- Quality Rural Product

- Personal involvement of the owner

- Sustainable Business Model
Cork Harbour Angling Hub & Bella Vista Hotel

Best practice of Integrated Community-Led Approach to Angling Tourism & Self-Catering Accommodation
Cork Harbour - 2nd largest natural Harbour in the world
The Cobh/Cork Harbour Angling Hub

• Importance of Angling to Irish tourism
• Cork Harbour identified as an Angling Hub of excellence
• Fáilte Ireland Led Initiative
• Local Community Steering group
• Set Hub formation objectives
• Target Markets
• Publicity
What we achieved so far...

Product Development

2010-2014

• Cork Angling Hub Charter
• ‘Anglers Welcome’
• [www.corkharbouranglinghub.com](http://www.corkharbouranglinghub.com)
• Develop Seafood Market
• Deep Sea Fishing Festival
• Attend trade shows which have already proven successful and ‘try out’ new shows
• Fam trips for angling journalists and tour operators
• Shared Angling database
• Develop –value- added’ packages
• Develop ‘off-season’ product
Bella Vista Hotel
Basic Operating Data

- 2 Star Hotel
- 10 Self-Catering Units of varying sizes from 1 to 4 bedrooms.
- Prices €60 - €90 per room per night. Price includes bed linen, towels, heating and electricity.
- Markets: UK, Republic of Ireland, Netherlands, France, Belgium and North America.
- Much focus on the angling market for the self-catering accommodation.
- Occupancy: c. 80% in season (May - October) c. 50% out of season (November – April)
View from the Bella Vista
2 Star Self-Catering Units
The principal success factors of Angling Hub may be summarised as follows:

- Community Driven – Has backing of local community
- Not in itself a significant employer (4 FT 4 PT in Bella Vista Hotel) but generates spin off benefits for local community
- Investment in good quality self-catering accommodation
- Responsiveness to market demands and emphasis on good service
- Focus on angling market
- Cork Harbour Angling Hub / Centre of Angling Excellence
- Location – views over Cork Harbour
- Entertainment – nightly traditional music sessions and a genuine ‘Irish’ Experience
Other Local Businesses have benefitted from designation of Cork harbour as an Angling Hub.
Main conditions for the transfer of the practice

- Location of the Site Cork Harbour
- Tourism agency began initiative but now Community-led
- Potential to identify any EU geographic location as a Tourism Hub e.g. Food Hub; Equestrian Hub
- Personal involvement of the owner
- Sustainable Business Model
Vienna Woods Hotel

Combined Hotel & Self-Catering Accommodation
**Fitzgeralds Vienna Woods Hotel and Villas**

- Fitzgeralds Vienna Woods Hotel, Cork, is an 18th century country house set in a wooded backdrop near the village of Glanmire on the outskirts of Cork City, Ireland.
- Hotel has eight four-star self-catering villas.
- Each of the self-catering villas is approved by Fáilte Ireland standards and contains four en-suite double bedrooms and a fully equipped kitchen.
Vienna Woods Hotel
Additional services

- Family Weddings are very popular
- Among holiday-makers, the hotel’s babysitting services and family friendly atmosphere are popular
- For pet lovers, the outdoor kennels which accompany some of the self-catering units are essential.
- Dining facilities are provided in the self-catering villas by the hotel chefs; hot, full Irish breakfasts can be served at the kitchen table or outdoor BBQs can be cooked for guests on the patio
Employment

• The self-catering facilities at Fitzgeralds Vienna Woods Hotel created a demand for additional staff within the House Keeping Department.

• Additional staff are brought in at peak times and provide additional services such as hairdressing; massage; guided woodland walks

• [www.viennawoods.ie](http://www.viennawoods.ie)
Section 23 Tax Breaks

• Throughout the 1980’s and 1990’s Irish Government introduced generous schemes that allowed hotel investors achieve significant savings in their income tax

• Many Irish hotels developed self-catering facilities on their grounds to avail of this tax relief

• These self-catering units are very popular with longer stay tourists and domestic visitors – Advantage for the tourist is that all the services of a hotel are available but at a much lower cost.

• Tax Reliefs have been phased out since 2008.
Any Questions?

www.cesr-project.eu