



YOUTH
CAN
DO IT



THE PRINCE'S TRUST NORTHERN IRELAND TRANSFORMING YOUNG LIVES

Partnership proposal for Mid Ulster Council 2020/21



Introduction

This proposal sets out a vision of a partnership between The Prince's Trust and Mid Ulster Council. We believe that by working together we can secure a better future for the young people living within Mid Ulster Council and make a significant contribution to priorities identified in the Council's Community plan "*Our Community plan – 10-year plan for Mid Ulster*". Our proposal and the work of The Prince's Trust cuts across all 5 themes of the plan however we can make a valuable and measurable impact to the following 2 themes and outcomes- Theme 1 – Economic Growth and Theme 3 – Education and Skills.

Furthermore, our work contributes to the Economic Development Plan "*Our plan for growth 2015 – 2020 – Enabling Employability and Skills*" particularly Theme 2: Employability and Skills. The Trust's work can help to address the skills requirements while at the same time ensuring that those not in employment or training have the opportunity and support, they require to find a job, apprenticeship or training scheme which meets their needs.

The Prince's Trust

For over 40 years, The Prince's Trust has been working with young people aged 13-30 helping them develop skills and motivation and supporting them into jobs, education and training through our range of personal development and employability programmes.

Of the 8,000 young people we supported in 2018/19, 221 were from Mid Ulster Council and 86% of the young people progressed into a positive outcome. Of the 221 young people we supported:

- 14% had a mental health issue;
- 21% had a disability
- 4% were Care Leavers

We believe that with the right support, all young people can find the confidence, strength and skills to help them to realise their potential. Our programmes offer personal development opportunities and financial support that bring tangible and lasting benefits to both our young people, and the communities in which they live.

Development Awards

Development Awards are small cash grants which aim to remove financial barriers that prevent young people entering education, employment or training. Factors such as travel costs or college fees can be significant barriers preventing young people from taking up education and employment opportunities.

The Development Awards programme would support **25** young people, aged 16-30 in Mid Ulster Council area with small grants averaging £175 to help fund course and professional fees, equipment needed for a qualification or job, interview clothes, short-term childcare or travel costs essential to help young people develop their skills and qualifications and enhance their ability to gain employment. (See Appendix 1 for case study)

Outcomes for Development Awards

- ☐ 25 young people aged 16-30 will receive a Development Award to support progression to enter employment, education or training.
- ☐ 22 (90%) young people aged 16-30 will progress to education, training or employment.

Business start-up support

The Prince's Trust Enterprise programme provides a wide range of support and funding to help unemployed young people, aged 18-30 explore and test their business ideas, write plans and start their own businesses or achieve other goals in education, training or employment.

The package of support available to the young people includes:

- ☐ Information session
- ☐ 3-day course
- ☐ Market research grants
- ☐ Start-up grants up

- ☐ Potential start-up loan funding
- ☐ Up to 2 years support from a volunteer business mentor

Will it Work grants

All young people must undertake market research if they wish to pursue their business idea. This should involve surveying customer opinions and reviewing competition to ensure there is a gap in the market for the proposed business.

A Will it Work grant is a grant of up to £250 that can be used for test trading. The test should be as close as possible to the business model the young person intends to launch. It can include testing marketing strategies. If possible, the young person should make some of their product and sell it through the method identified in their business plan, or to advertise and carry out their intended service

The Will it Work grants would support 15 young people in Mid Ulster Council area with a grant of £250 to help them test the market for their business. (See Appendix 1 for case studies)

Will it Work grant Outcomes

- ☐ 15 young entrepreneurs aged 18-30 will receive a Will it Work grant to test their business idea
- ☐ 13 (90%) young entrepreneurs will continue to receive support from The Prince Trust to progress their business or progress to alternative education or training.

Partnership approach

In return for an investment of £5,000 from the Council, The Prince's Trust would target 25 Development Awards at young people aged 16 -30 who live within the Borough and 15 Will it Work grants at young people from the Council area, aged 18 -30 who have completed the 3-day Enterprise programme.

The contribution from Mid Ulster Council will be matched by support from an individual philanthropic donation. The Trust's work is supported by a private donor who has an active interest in supporting young people from the Mid Ulster Council and is also keen that his investment in the area will leverage public sector money. The donation will contribute match funding to the value of £5,000 demonstrating a firm commitment to supporting the skills

development of young people in Mid Ulster Council are. In total £10,000 will be invested into the Mid Ulster area to supporting young people into education, training or employment.

Budget

Programme	Philanthropic investment	Mid Ulster Council	TOTAL INVESTMENT IN MID ULSTER COUNCIL AREA
Delivery and Administration of 25 Development Awards and 15 Will it Work grants to young people in Mid Ulster Council area.	£5,000	£5,000	£10,000

Next steps

To progress the opportunities further or discuss any aspect of the proposal in more detail please contact: Orla Major, orla.major@princes-trust.org.uk. 02890 895025.

Appendix 1

Development Award case study

Richard is 17 years old. His Dad is incapacitated due to a series of back operations. His Mum is a carer for his Dad and is therefore unable to work. Richard also helps with caring for his Dad. Richard is working towards completion of Level 2 Brickwork and Trowel course at Belfast Metropolitan College. The lack of income in the family means that Richard was unable to buy the tools he needs for his work placement.

A Development Award from The Prince's Trust supported Richard to purchase tools for his brickwork course and he is now well on his way to completing his Level 2 qualification. Richard is enthusiastic and hardworking and has not let the challenging situation at home prevent him from pursuing his career goals

Will it Work grant - case study

Mark applied for a Will it Work grant to purchase car valet materials to help him test trade his idea of opening a Car valeting service in his local area. He also used the funding to produce some flyers and business cards to promote his business. Mark distributed the flyers in his local area and was fortunate to gain some customers. This gave him the confidence to pursue his research, complete a business plan and apply for start-up funding from The Prince's Trust.

APPENDIX 2 – ORCHARDVILLE PROPOSAL



Proposal to Mid Ulster District Council to deliver a specialist employment service for people with learning disability and/or autism November 2019

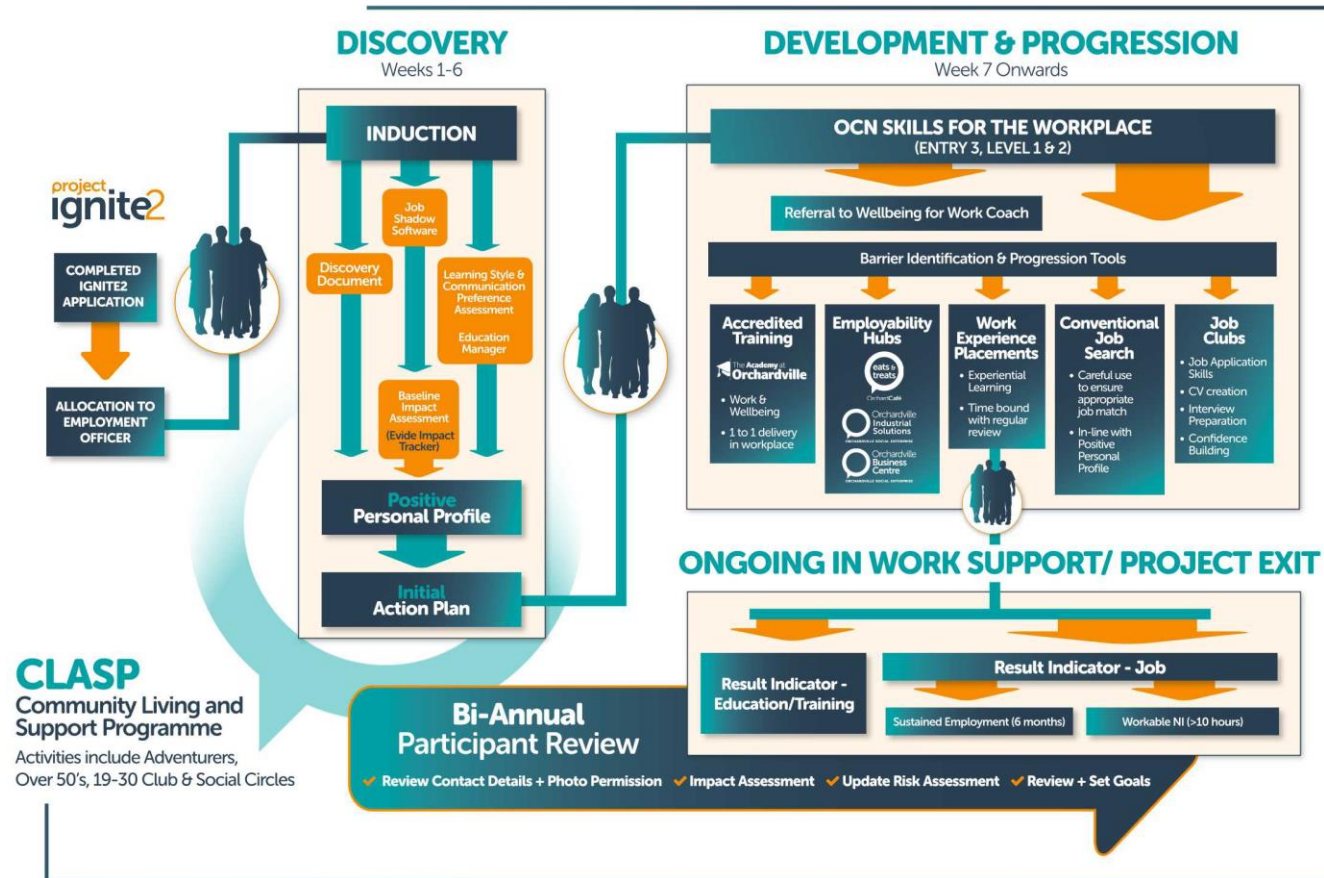
Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Orchardville was established in 1982 in South & East Belfast.• Founded by parents who believed that their children were capable of more than attending statutory day centres and wanted a genuine & sustainable employment offer.• Specialist learning disability/autism employment services are now offered across 6 councils' areas in NI including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Ards and North Down○ Belfast City○ Causeway Coast and Glens○ Derry City and Strabane○ Lisburn and Castlereagh○ Newry, Mourne and Down• Supporting 500 participants annually• Network of 100+ employers providing work experience opportunities and paid employment• Long history of creating sustainable employment for people with leaning disability and/or autism.• Recognised by the sector as the leading provider of excellent services with a recent SENI award for Education, Training and Jobs. Shortlisted for UK Award in December 2019
Strategic Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We believe that we can make a positive contribution to Mid Ulster's 10 year community plan, particularly to the Themes of<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Economic Growth - recognising the contribution to a vibrant economy of people with disability○ Education & Skills - our employment services will incorporate mental health and emotional resilience for participants○ Health & Wellbeing – we will contribute to ensuring increased quality of life and opportunities for people with disabilities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Vibrant & Safe Communities – our approach will support a vibrant and diverse community and increase the delivery of employment services by a community organisation. • We believe that we can support Network Personnel to achieve project outcomes on their “Up for Work” and “Jobmatch” ESF projects which are match funded by MUDC. Specifically, we can positively contribute to project outcomes by moving participants to education and training. • We believe that we can add value to Network Personnel’s Community Family Support Programme by offering disability support to those families who have family members with learning disability and/or autism.
Local need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NI School Census shows that the number of post primary pupils in Mid Ulster with special educational needs attending mainstream schools are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cookstown - 1322 ○ Magherafelt - 585 ○ Dungannon – 13577 <p>(Source Dept for Education response to FOI question, June 2015)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevalence of autism in NI continues to increase from 1.2% in 2008/09 to 3.3% in 2018/19 • Recent conversations with Kilronan Special School in Magherafelt, suggests a gap in meaningful employment opportunities for students leaving the school. • Recent conversations with Network Personnel have suggested that several participants with learning disability and/or autism have approached them for support into employment which they have not been able to meet as they are not a disability specialist provider.
Local Liaison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orchardville has a long and well established referral pathway, including NI Careers Service; HSC Trusts; Further Education Colleges; Jobs/Benefit Offices. This referral pathway would be replicated in Mid Ulster. • Recent conversations locally with Network Personnel, suggest a referral pathway from Network Personnel to Orchardville for participants with learning disability and/or autism. • Meadowlane Shopping Centre, Magherafelt, managed by Lambert Smith Hampton, have chosen Orchardville as their charity partner for 2020/2021 • Charity Partnership will facilitate opportunity to raise awareness about Orchardville and referrals to both Orchardville and Network Personnel through advertising and fundraising within the shopping centre. • Orchardville has well established relationships with employers, some of whom have a Mid Ulster presence including B&M, Four Seasons Healthcare, Henderson’s (Spar, EuroSpar and Vivo), McDonalds, O’Neill’s International Sportswear, Savers and Tesco.

Delivery Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orchardville uses the Supported Employment Model. • The model is internationally recognised as the most appropriate delivery model for people with disability. • The model provides high quality, personalised and often long term support to secure, maintain and progress into paid employment
Proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orchardville would propose employing 2 specialist disability Employment Officers, each working 20 hours per week, based in Mid Ulster. • Locally based Employment Officers would develop strong relationships with referrers, employers and participants. • Employment Officers would follow Orchardville's established and successful delivery model (info graphic attached) • We will aim to support 15 - 20 people with learning disability to enhance their employability and soft skills through accredited training and work experience opportunities, moving 10-15% into paid employment and supporting them to remain in paid employment.
Funding Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projected Employment Costs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ £27,016.00 per annum inclusive of employer national insurance and pension contributions • Staff travel estimate - based on similar model in Derry City & Strabane Council area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ £1,300.00 per annum ○ Total Funding Requested - £28,323.00



April 2018 - March 2022
Participant Journey



APPENDIX 3

ICBAN Progress against Action Plan (01 April 2019 - 31 March 2020)

PROGRESS REPORT FOR PERIOD 1 APRIL 2019 - 31 DECEMBER 2019

ICBAN TARGETS/OUTPUTS 2019/20	ACTIVITIES	PROGRESS
Platform for Cross Border Cooperation in the ICBAN Region.	<p>Facilitate and service Board Meetings, CEO/CM Meetings, other Sector Specific / Thematic Meetings</p> <p>Facilitate and service meetings with key stakeholders and assist in establishing better cross border working relationships and arrangements.</p>	<p>ICBAN Management Board Meetings were held on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 09th April 2019, 19th June 2019, 18th September 2019, 16th October 2019, 20th November 2019 <p>ICBAN Annual General Meeting was held on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 20th November 2019 <p>Officer Group Meetings were held on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 11th June 2019, 06th August 2019, 10th September 2019, 03rd October 2019, 07th November 2019 <p>The Financial Sustainability Sub-Committee was convened on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 09th April 2019 <p>Meetings/Events from 01 April 2019 - 31 December 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 01st May 2019: Meeting with NILGA re cross-border collaboration on services; - 11th July 2019: Meeting with Mid Ulster District Council Officers to discuss current work priorities and EU projects delivery and benefits to Mid Ulster; - 11th July 2019: Meeting with the Consumer Council re broadband; - 15th August 2019: Meeting with ICLRD re Border Navigator Project; - 21st August 2019: Meeting with Ofcom re 5G and Project Stratum; - 21st August 2019: Meeting with QUB to develop 'The Border into Brexit' initiative; - 05th September 2019: Meeting with Armagh City Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council Officers on ICBAN priorities and EU projects; - 03rd September 2019: Meeting with cross-border groups and CCBS; - 03rd September: Meeting with ICLRD re Border Animator Project application; - 06th September 2019: Attendance at the ComReg Annual Conference in Dublin; - 06th September 2019: Meetings with Officials in Dublin from Depts. of An Taoiseach and Foreign Affairs and Trade - 09th September 2019: Facilitation of Senior Council Officers' Forum in Enniskillen (including MUDC Director); - 11th September 2019: Meeting with Údarás na Gaeltachta to discuss the delivery of the Digi-2-Market Project in the Central Border Region. - 18th September 2019: Meeting with Cavan County Council Officers on ICBAN priorities and EU projects.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 08th-10th October 2019: Hosted the Digi-2-Market Project International Partnership Meetings in Enniskillen. - 11th October 2019: Attended the Manchester University Technology & Spatial Conference. - 29th November 2019: Met with a Sinn Féin Policy Group in Stormont re broadband provision. - 06th November 2019: Attended the ICLRD Planning Conference in Ulster University, Magee Campus. - 07th November 2019: Met with SEUPB CEO regarding the PEACE Plus Programme.
Contribute to the effective and efficient running of ICBAN.	Ongoing operation of Internal Control System. Annual Financial Statement / Accounts. Supporting the employment of an Administrator.	<p>Internal Control System: The agreed Internal Control System is fully operational. The Accounts and Audit Statement for 2018/19 were ratified at the Board Meeting held on 16th October 2019.</p> <p>Executive Assistant employed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the development and implementation of ICBAN's corporate aims and objectives, through the provision of administration and secretarial services. • Providing competent, reliable and efficient secretarial, administrative and support services for ICBAN. • Corporate Administration: arranging appointments and service meetings for the ICBAN Management Board and Sub-Committees, Working Groups and others as required. • Financial & Company Administration: including banking, payroll, Assets Register, procurement etc. • Project Administration: maintaining a management information system for all project related documentation.
Support the employment of the ICBAN CEO to lead the organisation moving forward.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership, management & development of ICBAN. • Develop strategic focus of ICBAN in partnership with Member Councils. • Maintain and grow ICBAN's position in cross border development and promote cross border cooperation. • Communicating the benefits, successes and awareness of ICBAN within the region and beyond. • Establish, develop & maintain robust structures and systems to ensure effective and 	<p>CEO Principal Accountabilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Acting as a figure head for ICBAN. ▪ Developing and managing new relationships with Councils (elected representatives & officials). ▪ Working with Partner Council Chief Executives and County Managers. ▪ Maintaining ICBAN's position in cross border development through effective influencing at community, local and central government level. ▪ Providing leadership, managing and developing the ICBAN operational team. ▪ Contributing to the development and implementation of strategic, operational and project plans, in partnership with ICBAN member Councils and other stakeholders as appropriate. ▪ Overseeing systems and procedures to ensure effective and efficient delivery of agreed outcomes. ▪ Facilitating collaboration between stakeholders in the field of strategic regional development in the cross-border area. Reporting to the Management Board. ▪ Managing public relations and maximising exposure to and awareness of ICBAN's work throughout the central border region. <p>Promoting cross border cooperation through - activities included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 11th July 2019: Meeting with Mid Ulster District Council Officers to discuss current work priorities and EU projects delivery and benefits to Mid Ulster; - 15th August 2019: Meeting with ICLRD re Border Navigator Project; - 21st August 2019: Meeting with QUB to develop 'The Border into Brexit' initiative;

	<p>efficient delivery of agreed outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report to the ICBAN Management Board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 05th September 2019: Meeting with Armagh City Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council Officers on ICBAN priorities and EU projects;- 03rd September 2019: Meeting with cross-border groups and CCBS;- 03rd September: Meeting with ICLRD re Border Animator Project application;- 09th September 2019: Facilitation of Senior Council Officers’ Forum in Enniskillen (including MUDC Director);- 11th September 2019: Meeting with Údarás na Gaeltachta to discuss the delivery of the Digi-2-Market Project in the Central Border Region.- 18th September 2019: Meeting with Cavan County Council Officers on ICBAN priorities and EU projects.- 07th November 2019: Met with SEUPB CEO regarding the PEACE Plus Programme- 02nd December 2019 - Presentation to ABC Council Committee on projects and initiatives- 04th December 2019 - Meeting with Monaghan County Council Officers on ICBAN priorities and EU projects.						
Sustain Existing Jobs	<p>Support the provision of a staff complement to enable ICBAN to achieve its goals.</p> <p>Projected: 3 full time</p>	<p>ICBAN Secretariat:</p> <table><tr><td>Shane Campbell</td><td>CEO</td></tr><tr><td>Joanne Breen</td><td>Executive Assistant</td></tr><tr><td>Andy Hallewell</td><td>Innovation Officer</td></tr></table>	Shane Campbell	CEO	Joanne Breen	Executive Assistant	Andy Hallewell	Innovation Officer
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ICBAN Strategic Development Function	<p>Digital Connectivity - Telecoms/High Speed Internet Provision</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Lobby stakeholders to address issues of inadequate broadband and telecoms connectivity/provision in rural areas▪ Monitor the progression of the roll-out of superfast broadband in Northern Ireland in respect of the £150m allocated under the Confidence and Supply Agreement▪ Lobby stakeholders to address cross-border roaming issues▪ Identify opportunities for businesses to source funding to improve broadband access, coverage and speeds in the Mid Ulster area <p>A position paper setting out key issues and challenges for the delivery of Project Stratum has been completed and shared with local authorities, political parties and other stakeholders in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>The investigative report by the Comptroller and Auditor General of the NIAO into the management of broadband contracts since 2012 by the Department for the Economy (DfE) is expected in the autumn of 2019. This investigation was initiated by ICBAN.</p> <p>Key Agenda items for meeting with Ofcom on 21st August 2019;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Delivery of Project Stratum and ensuring that rural areas must be key beneficiaries;2) With the UK set to leave the Digital Single Market through Brexit, that inadvertent roaming charges would not become a burden again for border region citizens and workers and that the current EU ‘Roam Like At Home’ legislation would be transposed to UK law; and3) Plans for Ofcom to host a 5G event in the autumn, which would examine the values of 5G services, the planning notifications process and publicity relating to health concerns.						

		<p>Attendance at the ComReg Conference in Dublin on 06th September 2019. The focus of this event was the ‘Digital Revolution’ and the safe use of data online. Met with Sinn Féin Policy Group to discuss Project Stratum and broadband provision in the Central Border Region. Actively lobbied that ‘lotting’ criteria should not be introduced into the Project Stratum procurement process, at the risk of rural areas not being bid for by providers meaning that infrastructure and services in these areas could be at risk. Through engaging with a wide range of stakeholders, including MUDC and other local authorities, this criteria has been dropped.</p> <p>Will be attending the Ofcom 5G Conference in Lisburn on 29th January 2020.</p>
	Roads Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lobby for roads infrastructure improvements to the A5 and A29 arterial routes Continued lobbying and representations, including participation in consultations, on the need or progress in delivering the complete planned A5 and A29 arterial routes.
	Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Boost the attractiveness of tourism destinations in Mid Ulster ICBAN is committed through the strategic objectives of the RSF (Regional Strategic Framework, 2014) to work in partnership with Councils to promote and develop the attractiveness and economic benefit provided by tourism destinations across the Region. The development of Literary Tourism as a niche, yet strategically significant aspect of the tourism offering in the Region, encompasses the support and added value we can bring to Mid Ulster over and above its already well-developed product through the Seamus Heaney Home Place. ▪ Progress development of regional literary tourism in Mid Ulster The Literary Tourism SME support element of the BLITZ project will commence in the Central Border Region (including Mid Ulster) in January 2020. This will be followed by a more extensive programme of business mentoring and support, which will complete at the end of 2020. ▪ Report on the progression of a Literary Tourism Project - Business of Literature Zones (BLITZ) Project for the Central Border Region <p>The BLITZ Project is focused primarily on the benefits that local SMEs can derive from an association with literary tourism. In the Central Border Region, ICBAN will recruit c.10 local businesses to participate in the business support elements of the project.</p> <p>The third international BLITZ partnership meeting took place in Wigtown, Scotland on 27th-28th August 2019.</p> <p>The BLITZ Project has been re-branded for publicity purposes as ‘Spot-Lit’ and the website and social media platforms, including an animated video were launched on 24th September 2019 and can be found at: https://www.spot-lit.eu/</p>

	Brexit	<p>Promotion of the Spot-lit workshops which will take place in early 2020 has commenced. One workshop will be held in the Mid Ulster area on 30th January 2020.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Report of the progression of 5 new Literary Tourism products/services (through the BLITZ Project) The BLITZ Project taps into the potential of literary tourism to enable SMEs to develop new products and services and to increase their market reach and export potential. A series of workshops and an incubation programme will be delivered in winter 2019 and spring 2020; the output of which will be new 5 new Literary Tourism products/services (by autumn 2020). ▪ Monitor evolving developments and submit responses to consultations in respect of Brexit issues ICBAN keeps abreast of Brexit developments, through monitoring of current affairs and governmental updates. ICBAN has given evidence to a number of committees in the past and takes the opportunity to make representations on behalf of the Central Border Region. An ICBAN delegation met with the SEUPB CEO on 07th November 2019 and will then formally input to the PEACE Plus consultation, which is due to open in December 2019 and will close on 25th February 2020. ▪ Report on the impact of Brexit on those living and working in the Central Border Region ICBAN was awarded €20k from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Reconciliation Fund for the Border Navigator Project. Work on this project has commenced with 'The Border into Brexit' initiative, delivered in partnership with Queen's University Belfast. This third research study projects a voice for border region residents and works on the impacts of Brexit on everyday life and the potential for a 'No Deal' Brexit scenario. The initiative includes an online survey, which has received over 470 responses, 4 focus group sessions (one of which was held in Caledon, County Tyrone on 22nd October) and 12 key stakeholder sectoral interviews. An interim findings document is now available to download from the ICBAN website (also attached), with the final report to follow mid-December. ▪ In collaboration with Queen's University Belfast progress preliminary study to examine existing good practice cross-border service delivery models Billy Vaughan, a student of MA in Global Security and Borders was assigned as an intern with ICBAN in spring 2019. A scoping study entitled 'Cross-Border Service Delivery: Towards Models of Best Practice' was completed in June 2019 and issued to key stakeholders in the Central Border Region (report attached). ▪ Respond to opportunities for joint project working/development A meeting of the Council Directors on Strategic Cooperation was facilitated by ICBAN on 09th September 2019 through a Council Senior Officers forum; with all eight Member Councils
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<p>Urban & Rural Development Cross-Border Linkages</p> <p>INTERREG VB</p>	<p>represented. The focus of the meeting was high level strategic factors in each jurisdiction; including the Mid South West Growth Deal, the final consultation into the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy of the NWRA and the pending consultation for the PEACE PLUS Programme. A second meeting of the forum was held on 21st November 2019. ICLRD attended this meeting and facilitated discussion on the development of a Strategic Action Plan for the Region. Other discussions focussed on the PEACE PLUS Consultation and developing an appropriate regional response.</p> <p>Oireachtas Committee Report</p> <p>A report was issued by the Joint Committee on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement. The report entitled ‘Communities and Cross-Border Cooperation: Challenges and Opportunities, references in detail the evidence given by the ICBAN Councils’ delegation which had attended in Leinster House on 14 February. The key recommendations noted in the report were raised as strategic priorities by the delegation, and this report will be an important reference point in the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan for the CBR.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Facilitate Cross-Border Community Planning Forums <p>ICBAN has facilitated two Cross-Border Community Planning Forums (since 01st April 2019) on 12th June and 13th September. The key subject for discussion at the 13th September meeting was on poverty and disadvantage across the Region and how Community Plans are responding. The next meeting is scheduled for 24th January 2020.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advise on the outcome of the ‘Border Navigator’ Project application to the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade <p>An application was submitted to the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade’s Reconciliation Fund on 11th April 2019. On 22nd July 2019, ICBAN received a letter of offer from the Fund of €20k and has since commenced project delivery.</p> <p>‘Border Animator’ Project</p> <p>A funding application was submitted to the Fund on 20th September 2019 for the ‘Border Animator’ project. On 29th November, ICBAN was advised that an award of €12k was approved. Delivery of this Capacity Building project will commence early 2020 and will complement the implementation and promotion of the Strategic Action Plan for the CBR, which is intended to be completed in February 2020. An Internship from QUB has been agreed and the focus of this work programme will be on implementation of the Navigator and Animator projects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Progress implementation of ‘Business of Literature Zones (BLITZ) Project <p>The third international partnership meeting took place in Wigtown, Scotland at the end of August. This included a full partnership meeting, the six-monthly steering committee meeting and two break-out sessions - addressing the LT Pilot Projects for each Region and the business support programme for participating SMEs.</p>
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	Other EU Projects	<p>The Risk Register for the project was updated at the recent steering committee meeting and included an upgrade of the risk rating for Brexit.</p> <p>Detailed discussions have been held on the support programme for businesses who wish to benefit from the development of LT in the project. In the ICBAN region, initial workshops will complete in the autumn. This will be followed by a more extensive programme of business mentoring and support concluding in November 2020. Five businesses from our region will be selected to receive Innovation Vouchers up to a maximum of €10,000 each, to assist businesses to develop 5 new LT products or services. The vouchers will be funded by each business contributing 50% of eligible costs, with the balance of costs coming from project funding, ICBAN and any potential additional supports from the Councils.</p> <p>The Digital App for the project being developed by Kajjaani University in Finland is proceeding to plan, with field tests now complete for Finland and Scotland. The Baseline Survey designed to assess and evaluate current levels of LT activity across the four Regions has now been distributed by Lapland University of Applied Sciences. In our Region, a public sector orientated version of the study is being sent to Councils and other stakeholders. A private sector version of the survey is being distributed to local businesses and literary associations</p> <p>The website, animated film and PR/Social Media Plan, were launched on 24th September 2019. Promotion through social media is ongoing.</p> <p>The initial engagement with the Region's SMEs will commence in January 2020, with three workshops being held in locations across the Central Border Region.</p> <p>The next Partnership Meeting is scheduled for 11th -13th March 2020 in Lapland.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Progress implementation of 'Digi-2-Market' Project <p>ICBAN has recently, in conjunction with Irish partner WestBic, completed a Digital Marketing assessment tool for SMEs in the project. This questionnaire will be filled in by businesses in the four project Regions to assess their current use of digital marketing and their interest in working with immersive technology marketing. The partners have agreed a project brand and logo with which to approach SMEs: 360° - <i>Immersive technology for SMEs</i>. Icelandic partner SSNV has now produced marketing resources for Digi2Market including pop-us and brochure leaflets. Development of the Green Business framework for SMEs has now been completed by Karelia in Finland and becomes a resource for all SMEs in the project. The development of a Model of Storytelling using immersive technology has now been completed by Ulster University.</p> <p>An International Partnership Meeting was held in Enniskillen from 08th - 10th October and included a best practice visit to businesses using AR and VR in the Region.</p> <p>With the exception of Interreg Europe, the three main other Interreg Programmes - NPA, Atlantic Area and NW Europe have all been applied to during the last period.</p>
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Events / Promotion / Materials		Updating Facebook, Twitter and the ICBAN website on project developments and promotion of project activities.
Cross Border Linkages - provide opportunities for shared learning and ensure a coherent impact of investment throughout the eligible area.	Continue to strengthen the working relationships with the East Border Region, and North West Region, to share learning and good practice	ICBAN has continued to build effective working relationships with the other Cross Border Groups. ICBAN works very closely with the other Cross Border Groups, sharing information on a range of topical issues relating to cross-border working and attended a meeting with the Centre for Cross-Border Studies and the other cross-border groups on 03 rd September 2019 to review the recent Irish Govt review of cross-border NGOs.
Role in wider EU Context.		ICBAN has continued to be a member of the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) and avails of the networking opportunities provided by Membership.