



**Longford
CHAMBER**
IN BUSINESS FOR BUSINESS



Longford Chamber of Commerce are delighted to hear the news of the Centre Parcs development in Newcastle woods, Ballymahon. Congratulations to all involved including Ballymahon Traders and Mr Michael Nevin of Co. Enterprise Board.

Chamber were disappointed to see from the recent meeting of the Municipal Council that the decision has been made to remove the 30 minute grace period for parking.

Our members feel that they benefited greatly from the 30 minutes grace before needing a ticket.

We note that the original 10 minutes will be reintroduced and 30 minutes after the ticket runs out remains.

We hope to meet with the Municipal Council in the near future to discuss this and other issues.

Chambers Ireland

Competitive Start Fund - Call for applications Opening Soon Enterprise Ireland will launch two calls for applications to the Competitive Start Fund on 1st April 2015 and will close on 15th April, 2015 at 3pm. • CSF 23 – Graduate Entrepreneurship Open for applications from recent graduates active in the Manufacturing & Internationally Traded Services sectors including the following subsectors: Internet, Games, Apps, Mobile, SaaS, Cloud Computing, Enterprise Software, Lifesciences, Food, Cleantech and Industrial Products. Additional eligibility criteria applies for this call only: Must be a graduate within the last 3 years (from date of application) of a third level qualification with NFQ level 8 accreditation or higher; Please note individuals who are currently sitting their NFQ Level 8 exams this year are eligible to apply for Enterprise Irelands Graduate Competitive Start Fund. Applicants must have prior to legal's written notification from their educational institution of final results indicating that they will be conferred with a degree of at least NFQ level 8 or equivalent. • CSF 24 – All Sectors A call for applications for those active in the Manufacturing & Internationally Traded Services sectors including the following subsectors: Internet, Games, Apps, Mobile, SaaS, Cloud Computing, Enterprise Software, Lifesciences, Food, Cleantech and Industrial Products.

The Joint Oireachtas Committee on Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation has published a report outlining 15 practical options to support business growth, job creation and retention in town and village centres. A number of Chambers Ireland proposals to best support local businesses are included in the final recommendations, which can be accessed <http://www.oireachtas.ie/parliament/media/committees/Final----Policy-Options-to-Support-Business-Growth-and-Job-Creation-and-Retention-in-Town-and-Village-Centres.pdf>

REDEDICATION OF ST MEL'S CATHEDRAL



Sunday, 17 May will mark the hugely anticipated Rededication of St Mel's Cathedral. This will be a momentous occasion for Longford and ties in with the Cathedral's original dedication on 19 May, 1840. Guests in attendance will range from representatives from each of the parishes in the diocese, the Bishops of Ireland and even President Higgins has received an invitation. This joyous celebration has already gathered phenomenal media attention, both locally and nationally, giving Longford a huge opportunity not only to demonstrate our appreciation for and pride in our beautiful Cathedral, but also to

showcase and promote our town and surrounding areas. We should all seize this opportunity and ensure that our town joins together in creating a wonderful atmosphere in celebration of our restored sacred home. We would be grateful if businesses and shops in Longford town would display papal flags and bunting which are available to buy at Durkins' shop on Ballymahon Street. Perhaps also, shops and property owners in the town might consider some floral displays to further enhance the environs of the Cathedral. Thanking you in advance for your help and support in the lead up to the Rededication of our beloved St Mel's Cathedral.

Ezine.

NEWSLETTER

Volume No 3. April 2015

St. Patrick's Day Parade



Chamber would like to extend a big "THANK YOU" to the people who made the Abbott St. Patrick's Day Parade such a great success. Firstly our sponsor Abbott Diagnostics, John Duignan and the Longford Publicans.

Pat Keenan and his staff at Longford Municipal Council. Sgt Derek Duggan and the Gardai, Seamus Kiernan and Civil Defense. Orlagh Reynolds and the staff of the Longford Arms. Anna Delaney, Longford Tourism, Orla Barry, Barry Express. Laura Shaw, Longford Garden Centre. Jane Meade Architect. Sean Mulroy & Doug Fox Roberts, Backstage Theatre. Peter Dolan, Christine Treacy, Michael O'Rourke, John Kelly, Edit Print, Vincent Casey & Longford Vintage Club

Tommy Sherlock, Tom Harvey, Skott Kenny, Dermot Deeley, Martina Glennon, Liam Fenelon & Family. The judges who shall remain unnamed. Joe Flaherty MC, who again was brilliant. A special note to Andy O'Dowd and Tidy Towns, who not only provided stewards for the parade, they met up at 5pm and cleaned up the town after the parade. Without them we would be lost.

Without all of these volunteers and the Parade would not happen. We send a big well done to those who entered floats, the bar is high for next year!

Finally we at Chamber endeavour to serve the Business community of the town and are always open for ideas and new members.



Homestays required for cyclists taking part in this year's Cycle Against Suicide

- Provide an overnight for cyclists and play your part in breaking the stigma of suicide in Ireland -Cycle Against Suicide in partnership with Homestay.com, is looking for homeowners throughout the island of Ireland, to provide overnight accommodation for the thousands of cyclists taking part in this year's event, as part

of the hugely successful Homestay programme. The cycle which begins in Belfast on Monday April 27th and ends in Dublin on Sunday May 10th, covers 1,400 kms and over the two week period, the Homestay programme provides an opportunity for people across the island of Ireland to open up their homes to the participants, providing them with a warm meal, a chance to freshen up and a bed for the night. Research shows that this is a hugely rewarding experience for both the homeowner and the cyclist alike. It provides a chance to lend support in a very tangible way to Cycle Against Suicide without necessarily taking part in the cycle. This year, Cycle Against Suicide is partnering with Homestay.com to facilitate homestay recruitment and allocation of beds for the cyclists. On Thursday, April 30th, the Cycle will be arriving into Longford and we are looking for 300 beds to host this year's participants of Cycle Against Suicide. To play your part in spreading the message, that 'it's ok not to feel ok; and it's absolutely ok to ask for help', contact the Local Homestay Coordinator, Lisa Brady; lisabradyl1@outlook.ie or on 087 7786834



Municipal Council Notes:

Longford Town's Pop-Up Shop initiative makes use of empty commercial property in the Town Centre to offer temporary low-cost space for community benefit, social enterprise and local business entrepreneurs. The initiative is an opportunity try out new retail or exhibition space that offers economic and social benefits to the area.

The main aims of the initiative are to:

- Reduce the visual impact of empty property in the Town Centre.
- Increase footfall and attract new visitors to the Town Centre by providing a range of exciting businesses, activities and exhibitions.
- Generate publicity for Longford Town Centre.
- Offer reduced cost space for community organisations, social enterprise and local business entrepreneurs to try out new ideas and/or reach new audiences. Showcase empty properties to potential tenants to help them be relet. The Pop-Up Shop initiative is hoping to support unique exhibitions, events and retail experiences across different premises. These can range from community groups, local craft workers, artists, business entrepreneurs and social enterprise. The activity must not contravene planning or licensing regulations or conflict with Council objectives. The initiative will seek to complement the existing and well established local businesses in Longford Town.

The item was referred to the next meeting of the Economic Development SPC together with the fine points of the scheme such as the guidelines and

the application process Information provided by Cllr Gerry Warnock.