



# Ten Year Review 1993-2002

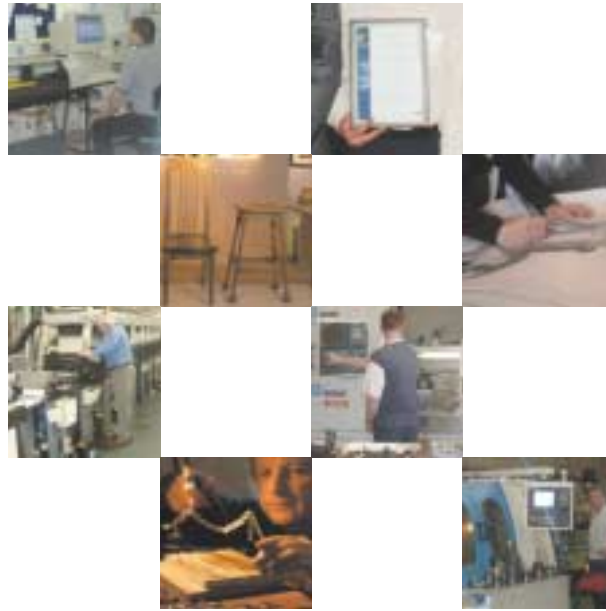


**Waterford City  
Enterprise Board Ltd.**

Funded by the Irish Government and part-financed by the European Union under the National Development Plan, 2000-2006.

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“To succeed in business one  
needs more than grant  
assistance, important and all  
that it is”



“The City Enterprise Board has a track record of pioneering innovative initiatives to address problems, as they arise, and will continue to build on its past achievements”



Bertie Rogers Chairman

The Waterford City Enterprise Board was established in 1993 under the City/County Enterprise Board Initiative and was subsequently incorporated as a company limited by guarantee. It was given formal statutory recognition under the Industrial Development Act, 1995.

The composition of the Board consists of 14 persons representing the local authority, state agencies, social partners, local business and community sector. The presence of four locally elected representatives on the Board which has the authority to allocate grants is unique and adds to the democratic accountability of the Board.

Decisions on expenditure are determined within the Board with emphasis placed on the promotion of enterprise initiatives and job creation at a local level.

The unique structure and composition of the Board provides a support structure to facilitate co-operation between state development agencies and the local authority on the one hand and local business and community groups involved in enterprise development on the other hand.

In its early years the City Enterprise Board could be viewed as a grant dispensing agency as all of its funds were distributed as grant assistance to micro business. It was not until 1996 that the Board was allocated funds to address the skills deficiency of micro business. As this review clearly demonstrates the Board has adapted and expanded a very comprehensive and varied capability development programme, in the interim period. All of the programmes were developed as a result of close consultation with its customer base. This is to ensure programmes were tailored to match their needs.

To succeed in business one needs more than grant assistance, important and all that it is. The review outlines the variety of programmes undertaken to create a conducive local environment where new, emerging and existing micro business can develop, grow, thrive and sustain into the future.

The initiatives developed cater for the different phases of the life cycle of a business idea.

- Promoting enterprise in schools
- An information service
- Mentoring support
- Skills development
- Training
- Networking
- An enterprise centre

The Board has evolved its assistance programme where it now may not only provide direct grant assistance but also refundable assistance, preference shares and ordinary shares. These supports coupled to the capability development programmes and the ability to certify Seed Capital and Business Expansion Schemes has resulted in a very comprehensive support package to micro business.

The economic climate is cyclical and is once again changing. One reads of recession, uncompetitiveness, closures and redundancies. The work of the Board is still important and will be needed in the future. The Board is well placed to address the problems encountered, along the way, by its customer base. The City Enterprise Board has a track record of pioneering innovative initiatives to address problems, as they arise, and will continue to build on its past achievements.

The success of the City Enterprise Board is due to many factors. One of these factors is due to the hard work, dedication, support and commitment of a Board working in harmony with its Evaluation Committee and staff.

The Board acknowledges the assistance, advice and guidance of the Minister and officials in the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Bertie Rogers'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a white background.

Bertie Rogers, Chairman.

“Waterford City Enterprise Board is comprised of fourteen members representing state agencies, social partners, local authority and community interests.”

The Waterford City Enterprise Board is assisted in the assessment of applications for grant aid by an Evaluation Committee, which makes recommendations on the most appropriate level of assistance for projects. The Committee includes persons in banking, accounting, business expertise, local authority and experience in evaluation of locally based small business proposals. It is the function of the Evaluation Committee to consider projects in the first instance, to ascertain that they are commercially viable, meet the criteria laid down in the guidelines set by the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment, compatible with European Union regulations, to recommend the most appropriate form and rate of assistance in any particular case. The Board having considered the recommendations of the Evaluation Committee make the final decision in relation to the provision of grant aid.

### Past Directors:

Mr. Michael Doody	<i>Resigned 24th Nov. 1995</i>
Ms. Mary Dorgan	<i>Resigned 16th Dec. 1997</i>
Mr. Martin Arthur	<i>Deceased</i>
Clr. Brian Swift	<i>Resigned 25th Mar. 1997</i>
Mr. Jack Walsh	<i>Resigned 20th Mar. 1996</i>
Ald. Patrick Gallagher	<i>Resigned 25th May 1999</i>
Ald. Liam Curham	<i>Resigned 25th May 1999</i>
Mr. Terry O'Sullivan	<i>Resigned 30th July 1996</i>
Mr. Justin Larkin	<i>Resigned 30th Sept. 1997</i>
Clr. Patrick Power	<i>Resigned 25th May 1999</i>
Mr. Len Bell	<i>Resigned Sept. 2001</i>

## Board of Directors



**Bertie Rogers**  
Chairperson



**Margaret Bond**  
The private sector



**Pat Connolly**  
The private sector



**Betty Dillon**  
I.C.T.U.



**Conn Murray**  
City Manager



**Ald. Tom Cunningham**  
Mayor of Waterford



**Ald. Hilary Quinlan**  
Waterford City Council



**Sen. Maurice Cummins**  
Waterford City Council



**Clr. Tom Murphy**  
Waterford City Council



**Tony Power**  
FÁS



**Noel Frisby**  
IBEC/CIF



**Oliver Dempsey**  
Community Sector



**Michael Dee**  
Enterprise Ireland



**Gary Breen**  
South-East Regional  
Tourism Authority

Official opening of the Waterford City Enterprise Board Offices at New Street, Waterford in 1997.

Left to right: Eddie Breen-City Manager,  
Bill Rafter-WCEB CEO,  
Alderman Tom Cunningham-Mayor,  
Minister Martin Cullen and  
Bertie Rogers-WCEB Chairperson.



“The key objectives set for the City/County Enterprise Boards were to influence the employment opportunities at City and County level.”

### Review of Activities 1993 - 2002

Waterford City Enterprise Board was one of the 35 Enterprise Boards established nationally by the Government in October 1993. This was as a result of a radical review and analysis of national enterprise strategies which resulted in a reorganisation of the state support structures for the development of new and expanding businesses.

The primary rationale for the establishment of the City and County Enterprise Boards (CEBs) was to eliminate an identified support gap at the level of micro enterprise support, a sector which constitutes an important source of employment and economic activity. CEBs were empowered to support manufacturing and tradable services. This multi-sectoral approach was a departure from conventional industrial and enterprise policy.

The report of the Task Force on Small Business identified a gap in the provision of business information / advice and support for the development of management skills amongst the small business community. There was a recognition of the need to embed an enterprise culture at local level and to assist and actively promote the development of micro enterprise as a key part of this new policy. This led to the establishment of the CEBs. The CEBs were to be considered as locally controlled enterprise / development companies in each local authority area, their main function being to develop the indigenous enterprise potential and to stimulate local economic activity. The CEB initiative put into place a locally accessible service for small and start-up businesses, a sector that had traditionally been poorly supported which led to a high attrition rate.

### 1.1 Role and Functions

The key objectives set for the CEBs were to influence the employment opportunities at City and County level by:

- Developing a local Enterprise Action Plan.
- The creation of local enterprise awareness and thus to develop an enterprise culture.
- Providing financial support to individuals and local community groups to assist commercially viable small business projects.
- Influencing the allocation of resources for small enterprises from the European Union, private and public funding sources.

The activities of the CEBs were confined to projects where the capital investment did not exceed €127,000 and employment up to 10 persons. The CEBs were empowered to assist start-up and expanding projects in the manufacturing, craft, tourism, food and service sectors.

### 1.2 Waterford City Enterprise Board

The Waterford City Enterprise Board (WCEB) held its inaugural meeting on Friday 29th October 1993. It was subsequently incorporated as a company limited by guarantee and given formal statutory recognition under the Industrial Development Act, 1995.

Since its establishment WCEB has made a major contribution to the economic well being of the City. This has been achieved through ongoing initiatives to stimulate enterprise awareness and entrepreneurship, provision of ongoing support to the business community and the promotion of the overall economic development of the City.



**Bill Rafter** CEO  
Waterford City Enterprise Board



**Michael Barry** Assistant CEO  
Waterford City Enterprise Board



**Jacquie Gaule** Administrator  
Waterford City Enterprise Board

## “Waterford City Enterprise Board plays a proactive role in seeking out and promoting new development opportunities.”

### 1.3 Micro Enterprise Support

Particular focus is placed on the development of the micro business sector by means of the following:

- The development of a business information service with WCEB now being recognised as the first point of contact for emerging entrepreneurs as well as existing micro businesses.
- The provision of advice, counselling and mentoring. This service is provided directly by WCEB staff and by means of externally contracted business counsellors / mentors.
- The delivery of management and capability development programmes aimed at improving the skills of owner managers with the objective of improving the survival rate of small business and facilitating future growth.
- The provision of financial interventions to support business development.

### 1.4 Economic Development

WCEB plays a proactive role in seeking out and promoting new development opportunities which is achieved through:

- Provision of support whenever possible, to strategic projects.
- Promoting linkages between large and small business.
- Influencing resources from external sources
- Development of partnerships with state agencies.

These activities are undertaken in collaboration with a variety of agencies. The process is facilitated by the WCEBs positive relationships with government departments, state agencies and support from various funding bodies such as EU Programmes, Interreg etc.

### 1.5 Accountability

WCEB is a company limited by guarantee, a state agency which is co-funded by the Irish Government and the European Union.

Public transparency and accountability are of critical importance in service delivery and operational management of the WCEB. The WCEB is highly visible / transparent and locally accountable.

WCEB is formally accountable in a variety of ways and the interaction between the WCEB and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and the business practices within these parties is governed by the following:

- The Industrial Development Act, 1995.
- The Memorandum of Association of the WCEB.
- The Articles of Association of the WCEB.
- The CEB Operating Agreement.
- The Manual of Accounting Procedures for CEBs.
- The Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2001).
- Relevant Company Law provisions under the Companies Acts 1963 -2001.
- The Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995, which applies to the CEO of the CEB.
- The State Aid Rules of the European Union.
- The requirements of the Managing Authority for the European Union Co-Funded Operational Programme.
- The WCEB is subject to regular internal audits and inspections, is subject to EU compliance audits and is audited annually by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General.
- The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989.
- The Prompt Payment of Accounts Act, 1997.



▶ Participants and organisers pictured at the launch of Enterprise Encounter.

## Performance 1993 - 2002

### 2.1 Achievement Highlights

#### Enterprise

- A total of €5,294,941 of direct financial assistance was allocated to 525 projects.
- This investment assisted in the creation of 840 net new jobs in the city.
- Over the review period 1884 students participated in schools programmes and initiatives in which WCEB was involved.
- 'Enterprise Encounter' was developed to support teachers in delivering an active student centred programme in enterprise awareness. This initiative was a partnership between CEBs the Leaving Certificate Applied and the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme. The programme provides an opportunity for small groups of senior students to plan, organise and make once-off investigative visits to local small businesses.

#### Capability Development

- 899 clients participated on training programmes and seminars.
- 459 clients participated on management development programmes.
- 421 clients availed of business mentoring / counselling / consultancy provided by WCEB.
- 136 clients availed of detailed business information provided by WCEB.

#### Total Public Funds Administered 1993 - 2002

Activity	Amount €
Enterprise Capability Development	1,329,529
Management Development	247,706
Empower Initiative	132,045
Interreg Funded Export Programme	219,326
Direct Financial Assistance	5,343,825
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,272,431</b>



◀ Christ Church Cathedral, Waterford.

## Economic Development

- Prepared an 'Economic Analysis of Waterford City' in 1996, subsequently updated in 2000.
- Was a partner with other South East CEBs and Welsh Partnership in three Interreg Projects, two of which entailed bringing small businesses into export markets for the first time.
- Participated with the South East Regional Authority and other partners in ATTAS, CATPIE, Finestra, SEISS, and SEEDS.
- Part funder of the Waterford Tourism Plan.
- Commissioned a database of businesses located in the City in 1997 subsequently updated in 2002.
- Part funded 'A Dining Guide to Waterford City & Environs'.
- Provided direct financial assistance and enterprise capability assistance to the Waterford and Suir Valley Railway project.
- Allocated grant assistance to the Christ Church Cathedral Tourism Project Conservation 2000
- Allocated grant assistance to the Craft Workers Section in the Waterford Museum of Treasures at the Granary.
- Allocated grant assistance to Waterford Spraoi towards the costs of their new custom built facility at Carrickpherish.
- Approved Feasibility grant assistance to a number of city based organisations to facilitate a wide variety of studies and research.
  - Waterford Youth Drama
  - Garter Lane Centre
  - Waterford Spraoi
  - W.I.R.E.D.
  - Ballybeg Development Company
  - Waterford Chamber of Commerce
  - Waterford International Festival of Light Opera
  - South East Regional Tourism Authority
  - Waterford Show
- Actively involved with Waterford City Council and Waterford Chamber of Commerce in the construction of the City Enterprise Centre. The centre located on the Waterford Business Park provides 27 high quality office units for start-up and emerging service businesses.



▲ Suir Valley Railway project



▶  
*Participants at the 10th Annual Waterford Schools Enterprise Programme.*

## 2.2 Investment in Enterprise

As shown in the previous section WCEB invested a total of €7,272,431 on enterprise promotion and development activities in the period 1993 to 2002. This investment assisted in the creation of 840 net additional full time jobs in client businesses. Other jobs have been stimulated in the local economy by means of increased employment in businesses which participated in the WCEBs management development programmes but not recipients of financial assistance.

While the average project employment may be low the collective impact on job creation has been very significant.

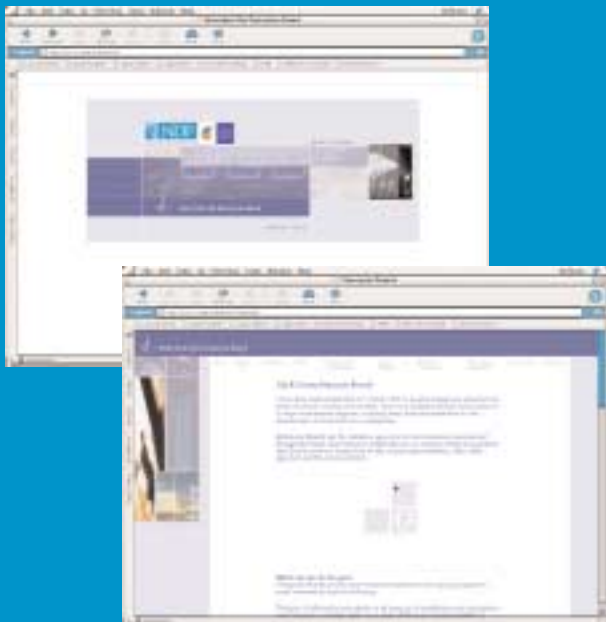
## 2.3 Enterprise Awareness and Culture

As outlined in previous sections one of the objectives given to the CEBs was to assist in the development of enterprise awareness and culture. WCEB has worked intensively with the second level schools by facilitating students' exposure to enterprise and to gain a good understanding of how business works. The degree to which city based schools adopted these programmes is a reflection on the interest and encouragement of teachers and parents alike.

WCEB commissioned 'Enterprise in Action' (Tara Shine, 1998) a workbook for use as a set of guidelines to help direct a mini-company or enterprise programme in schools. The text was well received not just locally but nationally.

The board endeavours to provide excellent customer service and ensure that the service it provides is available to as wide an audience as possible. It has continued to develop its information services over the years and embraced ICT as another means of achieving these objectives, by the development of the [www.waterfordceb.com](http://www.waterfordceb.com) web site. This website is a vital information channel for our customer base as it provides details of our service, criteria for assistance, downloadable application forms along with a lot of useful information for the would be entrepreneur or those already in business.

Waterford City Enterprise Board periodically publishes a full colour newsletter 'Enterprise News'. The newsletter is circulated to all households in the city and acts as a medium to promote the role of the Board while publicising upcoming events and courses.





▲  
*Participants who graduated from the second Plato Programme  
 organised by Waterford City Enterprise Board.*

## **2.4 Business Advice / Counselling and Enterprise Development**

WCEB has identified those businesses which are at that stage of development which permits them to market products/services regionally, nationally and internationally.

Such businesses have been facilitated to exhibit at major national and international exhibitions to enable them to promote their products/services to a global customer base.

The Board in conjunction with its sister boards in the South East Region and Wicklow County Enterprise Board successfully applied for funding for the 'Export Opportunity Programme' under Interreg II. This project assisted small businesses from the South East to enter export markets for the first time.

Plato South East was established by WCEB and four other CEBs in collaboration with the South East Chambers of Commerce, I.B.E.C. and major companies in the region. The Plato programme involved large companies becoming 'parents' to small businesses. It is a management development programme specifically designed for owner-managers with the objective of assisting small businesses to expand, deal with new challenges and become more secure. The programme was established in the latter half of 1999 and is ongoing.

The WCEB aims to fill a gap in enterprise support by providing a locally accessible service to micro and start-up businesses. There has been a high attrition rate among start-up businesses with over half failing in the first five years. WCEB recognises one of its key objectives is to improve the long-term survival and growth of the fledgling enterprise entrusted to its care.

To succeed in business involves much more than simply allocating grant assistance. The WCEB has endeavoured, in line with its customer needs, to provide its customer base with relevant training programmes to enable them to maximise business potential and encourage growth.

The overall objective of WCEB is to identify those businesses that have the capacity and potential to grow and expand. One method identified by WCEB is to assist small local business to expand by means of becoming suppliers of the major businesses in the area. In the realisation of this objective, the Board has assisted 12 businesses to achieve accreditations under ISO 9001:2000

Since 1993 these programmes have spanned all sectors and business disciplines.

Business information, advice and counselling are provided on an on-going basis. This facility embraces pre start-up and post start-up phases. The service provides assistance with market research, preparation of business plans and specialised one-to-one advice as appropriate. The topics covered are varied and cover the whole spectrum of business topics. The total spend in the review period was €1,577,235.

Nutriscience Waterford  
 Winners of The National Enterprise Awards 2000.



▲ Waterford Swiftprint

### Women in Business

Waterford City Enterprise Board recognises that a greater participation of women entrepreneurs needs to be nurtured and encouraged. The Board has collaborated with the local branch of Network Ireland, the organisation for women in Business, the Profession and the Arts. It has sponsored 'Connect', the monthly newsletter published by Network along with the Network 'Women mean Business' Exhibitions.

The Board has also been represented by the Waterford City Winners in the Young Business Woman of the Year Awards in association with the National Federation of Business and Professional Women. Board staff have attended national training programmes on 'gender mainstreaming' as a strategy to promote equal opportunities under the NDP 2000-2006.

Activity	Participants	Males	Females
Mentoring / Counselling / Consultancy	421	251	170
Training Programmes	217	101	116
Management Development Training	459	253	206
Business Seminars	772	436	336
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1869</b>	<b>1041</b>	<b>828</b>
	100%	56%	44%



◀ ECDL Training Programme 2001  
Jacquie Gaule - Course Tutor

“The Empower Initiative ranks amongst the most successful programmes undertaken by Waterford City Enterprise Board.”

### 2.5 Empower Initiative (July 2000 - December 2001)

This national pilot initiative received special funding from the Department of Enterprise Trade & Employment. The objective was to encourage support and assist CEB customer base to explore, understand and adopt those parts of e-business and e-commerce, relevant to their business resulting in an increased efficiency, competitiveness and improved customer service.

The programme, based on the effective transfer of knowledge and skills was specifically designed to take account of local circumstances and responses. The Empower Initiative ranks amongst the most successful programmes undertaken by the Board with a total of 192 businesses availing of a wide range of initiatives.

These included Introductory Training, ECDL Accreditation, Intermediate E-Business Course, Mentoring Technical Assistance, Website Design etc.

Each of the 35 participating Enterprise Boards prepared a local Action Plan for the delivery of interventions funded by Empower. The plans were assessed by the Empower Committee, assisted by representatives of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and an individual budget was allocated to each Board. Based on its Action Plan, Waterford City Enterprise Board received the third highest allocation nationally.

The table (above right) demonstrates how well the funding was targeted.

Activity	No.
Introductory Training	8
ECDL	26
Intermediate E-Business Course	14
Networking	17
E-Business Strategy Course	15
Mentoring and Technical Audits	88
E-Commerce / Web Training	6
Websites (incl. domain / hosting support)	18
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>192</b>

Due to the success of the Empower Programme and feedback from our client businesses Waterford City Enterprise Board continued its commitment to e-business supports by implementing an ongoing Empower Initiative.

Indeed the Board became an accredited ECDL test centre in 2000. WCEB offers ongoing subsidised ECDL training programmes to owner managers of local micro enterprises at our training facility in our New Street Court offices.



▲ Participants of one of the 2003 Start Your Own Business Programmes at the purpose built Training and Conference Centre in the City Enterprise Centre at Waterford Business Park

## 2.6 Direct Financial Assistance

Direct financial assistance is allocated to eligible projects to support development, growth and competitiveness. Assistance is provided in compliance with the criteria as set down in the relevant Operational Programme. The WCEB must take into account Government and European Union Policy on displacement and deadweight.

This assistance may be in the form of Employment, Capital and Feasibility Study Grant Aid both refundable and non-refundable. The Board may also invest in Preference Shares and Ordinary Shares.

In the period 1993 to 2002 the Board paid €4,633,923 in grant aid to eligible projects.

### Grants Approved 1993 to 2002

Year	Grants Approved (€)
1993/94	698,999
1995	481,741
1996	501,263
1997	653,043
1998	622,603
1999	515,435
2000	711,182
2001	663,120
2002	496,439
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,343,825</b>

### Direct Financial Assistance Approvals

	No.	% No.	Value €	% Value
Capital	112	21	1,869,053	35
Capital - Refundable	32	6	485,672	9
Employment	268	51	2,581,915	49
Employment - Refundable	3	1	9,523	-
Feasibility Study	110	21	397,662	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>5,343,825</b>	<b>100</b>

*A total of €495,195 of refundable assistance was approved which equates to 9% of total approvals.*

### Sectoral Analysis of Grant Aided Projects 1993-2002

Sector	%
Service	56
Manufacturing	23
Craft	10
Tourism/Leisure	7
Food	4



▲ *Tara Blinds*  
manufacturers of vertical, roller,  
venetian and wooden blinds.

▼ *Waterford City Enterprise Centre*



▲ *Peter Vereker*  
*Southern Comfort Furnishings*

### **Enterprise Capability Development**

Some WCEB programmes organised:

- Book-Keeping
- Computer Training
- Computerised Accounts
- Euro Implications for Small Business
- Finance for the Non-Financial Manager
- Health & Safety
- Human Resources in Small Business
- Internet and Small Business
- Introduction to Computers
- Marketing for Small Business
- Patents & Copyright
- Running Your Own Business
- Search Engine Promotion
- Selling Techniques
- Start Your Own Business
- Successful Exhibiting
- Time Management
- Web Design
- Y2K Implications for Small Business

### **Management/Business Development**

Typical WCEB programmes organised:

- Business Development Programme
- Cert Tourism Programme
- Craft Council of Ireland Networks Programme
- Foundation Mark
- Furniture Technology Programme
- ISO9002 Accreditation
- Strategic Business Planning
- Strategic Marketing
- World Class Manufacturing

Exhibits at the Waterford  
Designermakers Exhibition ►



## Exhibitions

Businesses were assisted in exhibiting at:

### Ireland

- Beyond the Hall Door
- Brighter Homes
- E-Ireland Experience
- Enterprise
- Enterprise Ireland
- Home Design
- I.F.E.X.
- Ideal Homes
- Our House Ireland
- Showcase
- Plan Expo Symposium

### U.K.

- Hearth & Home (Harrogate)
- London International Jewellery Exhibition
- Manchester Furniture Show

### Europe

- International Lighting Design (Milan)
- Salone Internazionale Del Mobile Design Exhibition (Milan)
- Silmo Eyewear Trade Fair (Paris)

## Waterford Designermakers Annual Exhibition

The Board organises this event annually to promote the craft businesses operating in the City. The exhibition gives local craft workers the opportunity to showcase their products in a commercial environment.

The Waterford Designermakers Exhibition was initiated, like the website [www.waterforddesignermakers.com](http://www.waterforddesignermakers.com), in response to consultations with local craft workers.

The Waterford City Enterprise Board has seen the exhibition evolve by changing its focus, timing and location year on year in response to the changing requirements of client craft businesses.

This willingness by the Board to embrace change will continue into the future, evolving as necessary to meet changing trends.



▲  
*Lisa Cody, Artist.*

*First Steps Crèche,  
Ballybeg. One of the  
community projects run  
by the Ballybeg  
Community  
Development Co.*



### Childcare

The shortage of quality childcare centres has inhibited not only the re-entrance of women into the workplace but also mitigates against those women who have a desire to start a business.

To alleviate these barriers Waterford City Enterprise Board has since its establishment addressed this problem by allocating a total of €213,448 to 13 childcare businesses, spread throughout the City. All of those assisted were new start-up projects.

*Martin Fitzpatrick, Jeweller.*



The State gets back the grant assistance invested in direct job related taxation i.e., PAYE and PRSI in less than a year

### [www.waterforddesignermakers.com](http://www.waterforddesignermakers.com)

Following consultations with the City based craft businesses the [www.waterforddesignermakers.com](http://www.waterforddesignermakers.com) web site was developed and launched. This site is to promote awareness of the wide range of quality craft products made locally. It is difficult to sell some type of products over the internet such as craft products which are very much a touch and feel product. However the web site is an endeavour to create awareness amongst tourists prior to arriving in the city to entice them to seek out the products on arrival. Each business has its own personalised section of the website.

The site is successfully receiving 11,000 hits per month.



Rodarim Consultants Ltd.,  
software consultancy.



### Results achieved 1993 - 2002 compared to set targets

In the period 1994 to 1999 the Board was funded by the Irish Government and part financed by the European Union under the Operational Programme for Local, Urban and Rural Development 1994 - 1999.

In the period 2000 - 2002 the Board was funded by the Irish Government and the European Union under the National Development Plan 2000 - 2006.

Each of these Operational Programmed entailed objectives and targets set under a number of main headings. To compare actual results to targets set, the objectives set under each of these programmes, have been combined for the review period 1993 to 2002.

Activity	Target	Result
Jobs Created	677	840
Businesses Assisted	183	525
Participants on Training Progs.	493	1,869
Cost per job	€ 7,444	€5,516

The results highlight the Board's success in exceeding the targets cost effectively.



▲  
Eddie Butler - B&G Enamelling  
pictured at new premises in the  
Northern Extension Industrial Park.

### 3.0 Future Policy

The advent of the National Development Plan 2000 - 2006 heralded further changes for the CEBs and outlined the role of the CEBs as follows:

'the local support and development function for small business has been centralised in the CEBs with effect from 1st January 2000'.

This policy statement clearly places the CEBs as the primary support agency for micro-business. This will ensure that scarce public resources are applied in a focused and cost-effective manner. Micro business will be provided with a comprehensive and dedicated programme of supports tailored to their needs.

The National Development Plan 2000 - 2006 also envisaged a shift from direct financial assistance to a mixture of direct and refundable financial assistance. The Board welcomed those changes but at the same time is convinced that direct financial assistance is essential to micro business, particularly at the start-up and early growth phases. Direct financial assistance can be a means by which additional loan finance may be levered from financial institutions.

Indeed the European Union recognises that for 15 to 20% of small business, insufficient access to finance is a barrier to growth and many small businesses employ creditors as a means of short term finance. This is explained by difficulties in access and the cost of short-term loans or overdrafts.

In this context the imposition of a blanket quota of refundable aid mitigates against those CEBs with a high level of start-up and early stage development businesses. There is a strong case to be made for flexibility, common sense and good judgement coupled to local knowledge when attempting to achieve refundable quotas.

Internal research indicates that 50% of City businesses have 1 to 10 employees, with a further 18% having 11 to 20 employees. These statistics underpin the relevance of micro business in local economic activity.

## Strategic Objectives

The City Enterprise Board has adopted the following strategic objectives:

- To promote an enterprise culture, disseminate information relevant to micro-enterprise in co-operation with other organisations, which have an interest in this area.
- To assist micro-enterprise and entrepreneurs prepare for the demands of modern business management through skills development.
- To improve the survival rate of start-up enterprises.
- To improve the trading relationship and linkages between large and small businesses.
- To assist the development of specific sectors where potential for high sustainable employment creation exists, e.g. locally provided and internationally traded services, ICT, food etc.
- To improve information access, quality and availability to entrepreneurs regarding support, funding and advice.
- To develop physical support structures for micro-enterprise with public and private sector partners and by so doing provide exhibition facilities, showcase events, workspace, incubation units and training facilities.
- To work with those organisations which can influence the general expansion of information and telecommunications technology and by so doing ensure that the micro-enterprise sector utilises the technology to increase its viability and competitiveness.
- To compile data at a local level regarding the nature and structure of micro-enterprise.
- To improve and develop cohesive action towards enterprise support by close co-operation with other enterprise support agencies.
- To expand and improve the quality and range of soft support services to micro-enterprise.

The strategic objectives were adopted to ensure micro enterprises in the City are assisted throughout the total cycle from idea to business plan to start-up to post start-up and into the growth phase. The Board will endeavour to identify those businesses which have the potential to move along the value chain and trade internationally. It will employ a range of financial instruments coupled to appropriate capability development programmes and close co-operation with Enterprise Ireland to build and grow strong and viable local indigenous business.

The work of the Board is dynamic, tailoring strategies/programmes etc., remaining relevant to current / future economic environment.

Small enterprises are a key element in all of the major economies, they serve as a vehicle through which new ideas for products/services make their way to the consumer. In the USA, many of the small enterprises of the 1970's are large enterprises in the 2000's. The very existence of small business and the fact that new ones are continuously starting, serve to increase competition and reduce monopoly.

The importance of small business would appear to be accepted by Forfás (Ireland's National Policy and Advisory Board for Enterprise, Trade, Science, Technology and Innovation) as it states 'new start-ups are essential in achieving a high growth future for the Irish owned sector. Healthy levels of start-ups ensure vibrancy and competitiveness of existing business and increase the population of companies in advanced sectors and new emerging areas of technology as part of the structural shift required to achieve a more competitive high productive Irish owned sector'. ['Enterprise 2001']

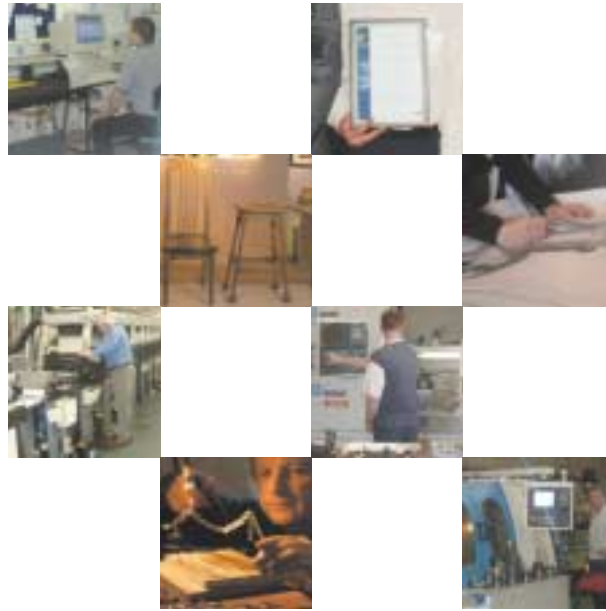
There can be no argument that the need for the support services provided by WCEB stretches way into the future and well past the 2006 date which is the end of the current National Development Plan.

Over the years there were numerous individuals who encouraged us and gave freely of their time and advice, to those we say a special thank you.

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- *Irish Exporters Association*
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- *Network*
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- *Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General*
- *Our colleagues in the other 34 Enterprise Boards throughout the country*
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