

Tourism Recovery Taskforce

Ruth Andrews

Chair of Tourism Recovery Taskforce

CEO - ITOA and special advisor to AVEA



Background:

With a career spanning over 30 years in Irish tourism, Ruth commenced her career in the Hotel sector in the mid-eighties working as a marketing/sales professional in some of Ireland's then largest hotel chains – Doyle Hotel and Great Southern Hotel Groups. She established her own tourism marketing/sales consultancy service in the late '90's, providing marketing communications, coaching & mentoring and business development expertise to a wide range of Irish Tourism industry businesses in almost all sectors.

Ruth is Chief Executive of the ITOA – Incoming Tour Operators Association, a position she has held since 2006. ITOA represents the leading inbound tour operators in Ireland who bring in excess of 750,000 international visitors to Ireland annually.

In 2017 she was appointed Special Advisor to AVEA – The Association of Visitor Experience and Attractions to establish the association and now manages the executive function of the organisation with over 100 members. She has served and continues to serve on many industry advisory boards.

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Eoghan Corry

Travel Industry commentator



Background:

Eoghan Corry is a Travel Industry commentator, historian, author and broadcaster. He has extensively travelled as a journalist and travel writer, speaker and moderator at tourism and aviation conferences across Europe, USA, Africa, Asia and Australia.

He is a former national newspaper business editor, literary editor and sports editor, author of more than 40 books on travel, history and biography.

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Martin Dalby

CEO – Center Parcs



Background:

After qualifying as an accountant, Martin joined Scottish and Newcastle Breweries in 1978 where he held various accounting positions before joining Center Parcs Ltd in 1995 as UK Financial Controller.

In 1997 he became Finance Director of Center Parcs UK, going on to be promoted to Chief Executive Officer in July 2000.

Martin has led the UK business through the change of company ownership from Scottish and Newcastle to Deutsche Bank Capital Partners (subsequently MidOcean Partners) in March 2001; as well as the acquisition and integration of a fourth Village, (now known as Center Parcs Whinfell Forest), into the business.

He subsequently led the float of the business onto AIM in December 2003; the transition to the London Stock Exchange's main list in March 2005; the purchase of the business by The Blackstone Group in May 2006 followed by the subsequent sale of the business to Brookfield Property Partners in August 2015.

More recently, Martin was heavily involved in Center Parcs' development of its first village outside of the UK, in County Longford, Ireland. Longford Forest successfully opened to guests in July 2019.

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Tom Enright

CEO – Wexford County Council



Background:

Tom Enright was appointed Chief Executive of Wexford County Council in 2014.

A native of Dungarvan, Co. Waterford, Mr. Enright worked in Limerick for almost 20 years where he held the posts of Director of Environment and Emergency Services with Limerick County Council and Director of Planning and Economic Development with Limerick City and County Council. He previously worked with Waterford and Wicklow County Councils and with consultants in the private sector.

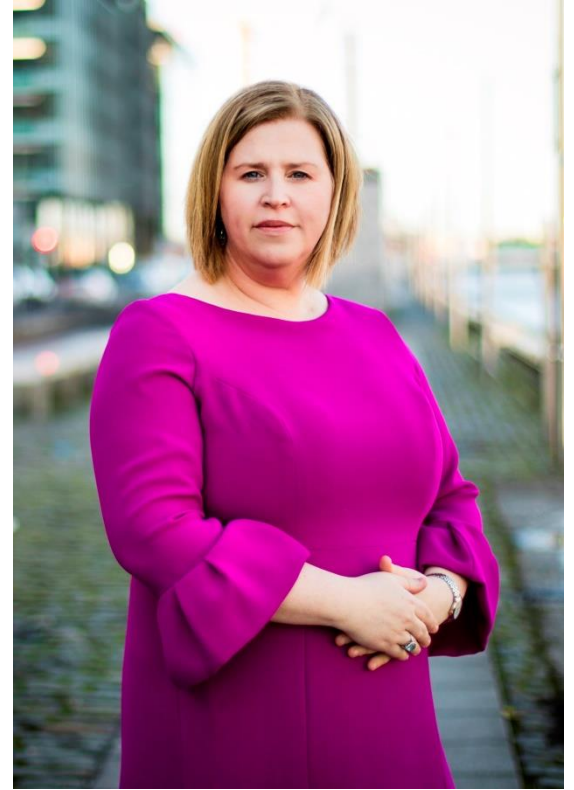
He Chairs the National Libraries Development Committee and the CCMA Land Use and Transportation Committee.

He is a graduate of University College Cork and Cranfield University in the UK and holds a Masters degree in Business Administration from Dublin City University.

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Elaina Fitzgerald Kane

Director – Fitzgerald's Woodlands House Hotel



Background:

Elaina Fitzgerald Kane, a second generation hotelier with over 20 years' experience.

Ms Fitzgerald Kane is a Director of the Fitzgerald's Woodlands Hotel and Spa, a family-owned, four star hotel at Adare, Co Limerick. The 89 bedroom hotel, which currently employs 200 people, was established by her parents, Mary and Dick Fitzgerald in 1983. Mary Fitzgerald is a former President of the Irish Hotels Federation (IHF).

Elaina is the newly elected President IHF. The IHF is the leading representative tourism body in Ireland representing almost 1,000 hotels and guesthouses which employ over 60,000 people throughout the country.

A graduate of the Shannon School of Hotel Management, National University of Ireland, Galway and University College Dublin's Smurfit Business School, Elaina has worked in Switzerland, the UK & the USA and her passion is for sales, marketing and pr. She is also a huge believer in continuous development of her team and herself and more recently has taken some courses from Cornell. Elaina's passion is to create a better hotel world!



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Niall Gibbons

CEO – Tourism Ireland




Background:

Niall Gibbons is Chief Executive of Tourism Ireland. He oversees the marketing of the island across the world, leading a team of over 160 staff in 22 markets, whose work is underpinned by sustainable destination marketing principles. Over 11 million overseas visitors in 2019 contributed over €5.8BN to the island economies and supported 325,000 jobs.

He led Tourism Ireland's expansion into new markets such as China and the Middle East and oversaw the organisation's emergence as a leader in digital marketing and social media. He developed ground-breaking partnerships with LucasFilm and HBO which allowed Tourism Ireland to leverage the global success of Star Wars and Game of Thrones to showcase the island of Ireland overseas in a new way.

He led the development of Tourism Ireland's Global Greening initiative, which has brought tourism to the heart of St Patrick's Day celebrations across the world. The World Economic Forum has ranked Ireland 3rd in the world out of 136 countries for 'effectiveness of marketing and branding to attract tourists'.

Niall is a business graduate of Trinity College, Dublin and a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland. He sits on the Irish Government's Export Trade Council, is a member of Culture Ireland's Expert Advisory Committee and an Honorary Fellow of the Institute of Hospitality in Ireland.



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John Herlihy

VP – EMEA and LATAM, LinkedIn



Background:

John leads LinkedIn in EMEA & LATAM, driving the company's strategic direction in those regions, fostering business and member growth. He joined LinkedIn in November 2015 and is based at its EMEA headquarters in Dublin.

John was formerly Vice President at Google, where he held several international roles and scaled its EMEA business, also serving as Head of Google Ireland from 2005 - 2015.

Over 25 years, John has held senior management positions at global technology companies including First Data, PeopleSoft, Adobe Systems and Oracle Corporation.

A Chartered Accountant, John holds a Bachelor of Commerce from University College Dublin and was awarded an honorary Doctorate in Economic Science by University of Limerick.

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Stephen Kavanagh

Non-executive Director of Aer Lingus and CDB Aviation



Background:

Mr. Kavanagh currently serves as a Non-Executive Director of Aer Lingus and CDB Aviation Lease Finance. He was previously on the Board of Tourism Ireland.

Mr. Kavanagh spent over three decades in leadership roles at Aer Lingus. Most recently, he was Chief Executive Officer and Accountable Manager, leading the airline through its sale to International Consolidated Airlines Group, S.A. ("IAG"). He championed the development of a successful value model strategy that saw the carrier grow in size by a third to over €2 billion in revenue, doubling operating margin and delivering an industry-leading return on invested capital.

During his time with Aer Lingus, Mr. Kavanagh also held a number of executive roles, including Chief Strategy and Planning Officer, Chief Commercial Officer, and Corporate Planning Director. Born in Dublin, he was educated at UCD and Smurfit Graduate Business School.

Mr. Kavanagh was awarded UCD Smurfit Business School Alumnus of the Year in 2017.

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Paul Kelly

CEO – Fáilte Ireland



Background:

Paul Kelly was appointed Chief Executive of Fáilte Ireland, the National Tourism Development Authority, in February 2017.

Paul began his career with Procter & Gamble UK and went on to hold senior executive positions with Diageo Ireland, Aviva and the UCD Smurfit Business School. During his career, he has developed many iconic Irish and international marketing campaigns.

Paul is a native of Wexford and a business and commerce graduate of University College Dublin.

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Eimear Killian

GM - Brassiere on the Corner & Blake's Bar, Galway



Background:

Eimear is the General Manager of Brasserie on the Corner Restaurant & Blake's Bar, Award winning Steak and Seafood Restaurant in the Heart of Galway City, since it opened in 2012.

Graduate of Hotel Management from DIT Cathal Burgha St., Eimear has over 20 years experience managing and operating hotels & restaurants in Ireland.

She is a current Council Member of the Restaurant Association of Ireland, member of the Irish Guild of Sommeliers and Women in Wine & Spirits, Past President of Skal Galway, Past Board member of the FSAI and Past Board member of Connemara Tourism.

Originally from Co. Meath, she is now living in Galway.

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John McLaughlin

CEO - North & West Coast Links Golf Ireland



Background:

John has been the CEO of North & West Coast Links Golf since 2000. The company was established 32 years ago, to carry out the International Marketing of its member courses and since then has developed into one of the leading Golf DMC'S (Destination Management Company) in the country.

The company targets International travellers from all over the world and puts together the "on the ground" packages for them, including Golf, Accommodation, Transport, Wild Atlantic Way Tours and other non golf activities.

They attend over 30 International Shows and Events each year in the US, Canada, Sweden, Denmark and the UK and they work with Tour Operators from these and other areas like Australia, New Zealand and South America. Some of the courses in the group have hosted big events in recent years with the Dubai Duty Free Irish Open at Portstewart in 2017, Ballyliffin 2018 and The Open at Royal Portrush in 2019.

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Pat O'Leary

Chair of Kerry Tourism Industry Federation



Background:

A Killarney native Pat O'Leary is chairperson of the Kerry Tourism Federation which was established in 2019. He is an electronics engineer who retired from the Liebherr Group at the end of 2019 after 42 years' service.

Having joined Liebherr in 1978 he held the position of Chief Electrical Engineer for more than 20 years. In 2001, he was appointed Technical Director of Liebherr Container Cranes and in 2006 as Managing Director of the International Maritime Division of the Liebherr Group which operates four European manufacturing facilities as well as a worldwide network of sales and service companies.

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Ken Spratt

A/Secretary for Tourism and Sport - DTTAS



Background:

Ken Spratt leads the Sport and Tourism functions at the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport. He has served in six government departments, including as a Diplomat in Washington.

Ken has a wide variety of experience in public policy development and implementation across a diverse range of sectors including energy, communications, environment, social protection, tourism and sport. His operational experience spans ICT systems design, HRM, industrial relations, corporate governance, regulation and international relations.

He served as Assistant Secretary for energy (2012-2015) and has been Assistant Secretary for Tourism and Sport since 2016. He was a member of the Government's Civil Service Renewal Taskforce in 2014.

He is a graduate of the Chartered Institute of Directors, the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, Letterkenny Institute of Technology and Ulster University (MSc).

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Jane Stacey

Head of Tourism Unit - OECD



Background:

As Head of the Tourism Unit, Jane is responsible for the work of the OECD Tourism Committee, and its Working Party on Tourism Statistics.

The OECD work on tourism helps member and partner countries develop integrated policies to address major challenges faced by the sector (e.g. digital transformation, competitiveness, quality jobs and skills, innovation, sharing economy, travel facilitation, taxation), engage reforms in tourism building on in-depth policy analysis (e.g. Mexico, effective policies for tourism growth), improve measurement and analysis of tourism services (e.g. Tourism Satellite Account, competitiveness indicators, tourism trade in value added, impacts of tourism at regional level), and enhance international co-operation in tourism.

Among other things, Jane is currently leading work on tourism policy responses to mitigate the impact and support the recovery of the tourism sector following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Jane has over 20 years experience working in tourism, in the public, private and academic sectors, and before joining the OECD she worked as an analyst, consultant and lecturer in Ireland.