



# Responsible Business Report 2015





Pictured on the front cover Pupils at BizWorld at St Brigid's Girls School, Cabinteely, Co. Dublin. An initiative supported by Bank of Ireland.

This is our second Responsible Business Report and it presents a comprehensive picture of what happened across the Group in 2015, through the lens of our customers, communities, colleagues and the environment. This year, as well as providing brief highlights and key statistics, we have included in-depth articles on some of our key initiatives.

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## Customers 24

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## Colleagues 62

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## Governance 90



# Making a difference 2015

2,628

Colleagues  
who acquired  
professional  
qualifications

c.€14bn

Group new  
lending for  
2015

c.€2.5m

Charitable giving  
in 2015

80

Recruits to our  
award-winning  
Graduate  
Programme in 2015

95%

General waste  
recycled

1,244km

Distance cycled in  
Big Blue Box  
Volunteer Challenge

1,000+

Volunteer Days  
given in 2015

8 OF 10

Irish mortgage  
applications  
approved

168

Be At Your Best  
Champions

7,400

Kilometres run  
during Couch to 5K



# 10 moments that made a difference

We asked our staff and stakeholders to select the moments during 2015 that they believed best expressed our commitment to Responsible Business. Here are the 10 they chose in the order they chose them.

## 1 50 Enterprise Towns opened

11 DECEMBER, CARLOW, IRELAND

Our Enterprise Town initiative hit a significant milestone this year. It began with one town, Kells, in 2013. We brought it to Rathdowney and Granard in 2014. In 2015, we held Enterprise Town events in 50 more communities. In support of the initiative, our colleagues across Ireland went out and about, and worked alongside local people to help bring businesses and community organisations together for their mutual benefit.

## 2 Sponsoring Dublin Pride 2015

12:45 SATURDAY 27 JUNE, DUBLIN, IRELAND

We sponsored Dublin Pride, the first Irish financial institution to do so. Over 60 of our colleagues took part in the parade, including our dance troupe, the Rainbow Twirlers. Colleagues at our O'Connell Street branch opened the premises to support the parade, while graduates from our Graduate Programme greeted people at our stand in Pride Village at Merrion Square. We are proud of everyone who took part and everyone who supported them.





### 3 Christmas Theatre Events

DECEMBER, DUBLIN, BELFAST & LONDON

A trip to the theatre to see a show at Christmas is a great treat. But for some people, unfortunately, it's not something they are likely to experience. For Christmas 2015, our colleagues volunteered to work with our charity partners Barnardo's, St. Vincent de Paul, Co-operation Ireland, Pieta House and the Irish Cancer Society. Together they brought 500 children, families, cancer survivors and long-term charity volunteers to see Mary Poppins in Dublin, Snow White in Belfast and Matilda in London helping to make Christmas a little bit more special.

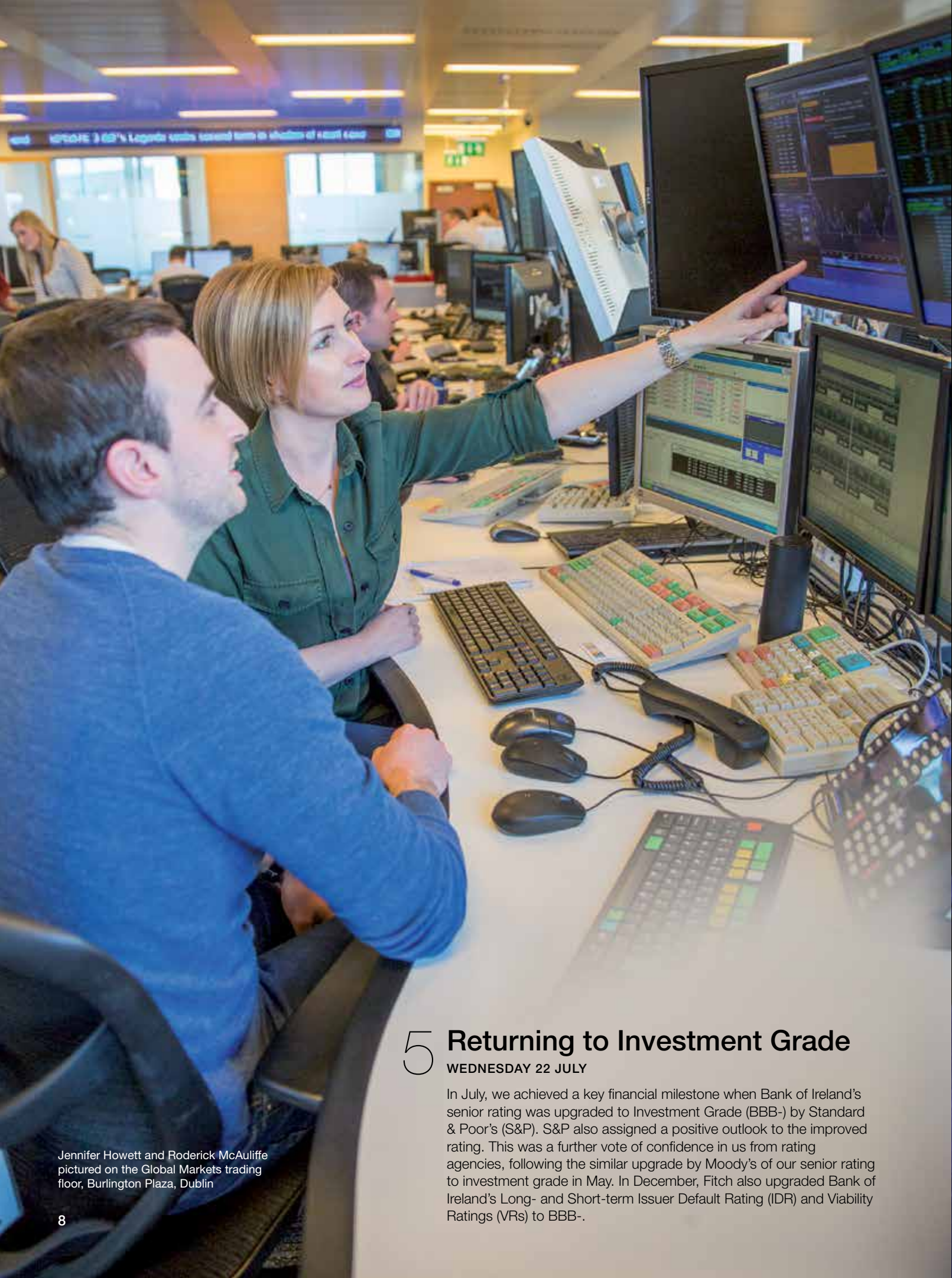


### 4 Staff Third World Fund

BANGLADESH

In 2015, over 4,000 colleagues donated from their salary to the Staff Third World Fund, founded by staff in 1983. During the year, €846,000 was given by the Fund to selected agencies in support of 43 projects in 26 developing countries. Every cent donated went to the charities, as administration costs are covered by Bank of Ireland. The Fund gave a grant to Concern to help educate 'pavement children' in Bangladesh.





## 5 Returning to Investment Grade

WEDNESDAY 22 JULY

In July, we achieved a key financial milestone when Bank of Ireland's senior rating was upgraded to Investment Grade (BBB-) by Standard & Poor's (S&P). S&P also assigned a positive outlook to the improved rating. This was a further vote of confidence in us from rating agencies, following the similar upgrade by Moody's of our senior rating to investment grade in May. In December, Fitch also upgraded Bank of Ireland's Long- and Short-term Issuer Default Rating (IDR) and Viability Ratings (VRs) to BBB-.

Jennifer Howett and Roderick McAuliffe pictured on the Global Markets trading floor, Burlington Plaza, Dublin

## 6 The 'Be Our Inspiration' Final

7:30 PM SATURDAY 3 OCTOBER, THE HELIX, DUBLIN, IRELAND

One night. 17 acts. €101,805 raised for Barnardo's. Be Our Inspiration was an innovative and challenging way for our colleagues to demonstrate to their colleagues in the Bank and to themselves that we can all go beyond our self-imposed limits and develop our potential at any age. Performing in front of over 2,000 people was an incredible test for the acts. Many of them had only taken up their chosen discipline again – singing, playing an instrument, photography or comedy – 12 months before.







## 7 The Coder Dojo Clubs

5.30PM TUESDAY 3 NOVEMBER, DUNDRUM BRANCH, CO. DUBLIN, IRELAND

In 2015, we worked with Coder Dojo Ireland to set up free coding clubs for children at our branches in the evenings. We began with clubs at eight locations and by the end of the year we had set up 20 weekly clubs reaching over 500 children a week. The clubs were run by volunteers from the local community who helped enable young people to get the skills they need for the workplace of the future using specially-designed software. The Dundrum branch hosted its first Coder Dojo in early November.

Children attending the Coder Dojo in Dundrum branch, Co. Dublin



## 8 Merchants' Academy

MAY - JULY, BRISTOL, UNITED KINGDOM

Bank of Ireland UK has worked with Bristol secondary school, Merchants' Academy, since 2007, providing its students with vital experience from the world of work. In 2015, an entire Year group of 160 children visited our Temple Quay offices, six colleagues supported Merchants' Academy's 'Future You' afternoon and four students spent a week at our offices getting valuable work experience.

Pupils from Merchants' Academy, Bristol, Great Britain (Photo: Merchants' Academy)





## 9 Big Blue Box Volunteer Challenge

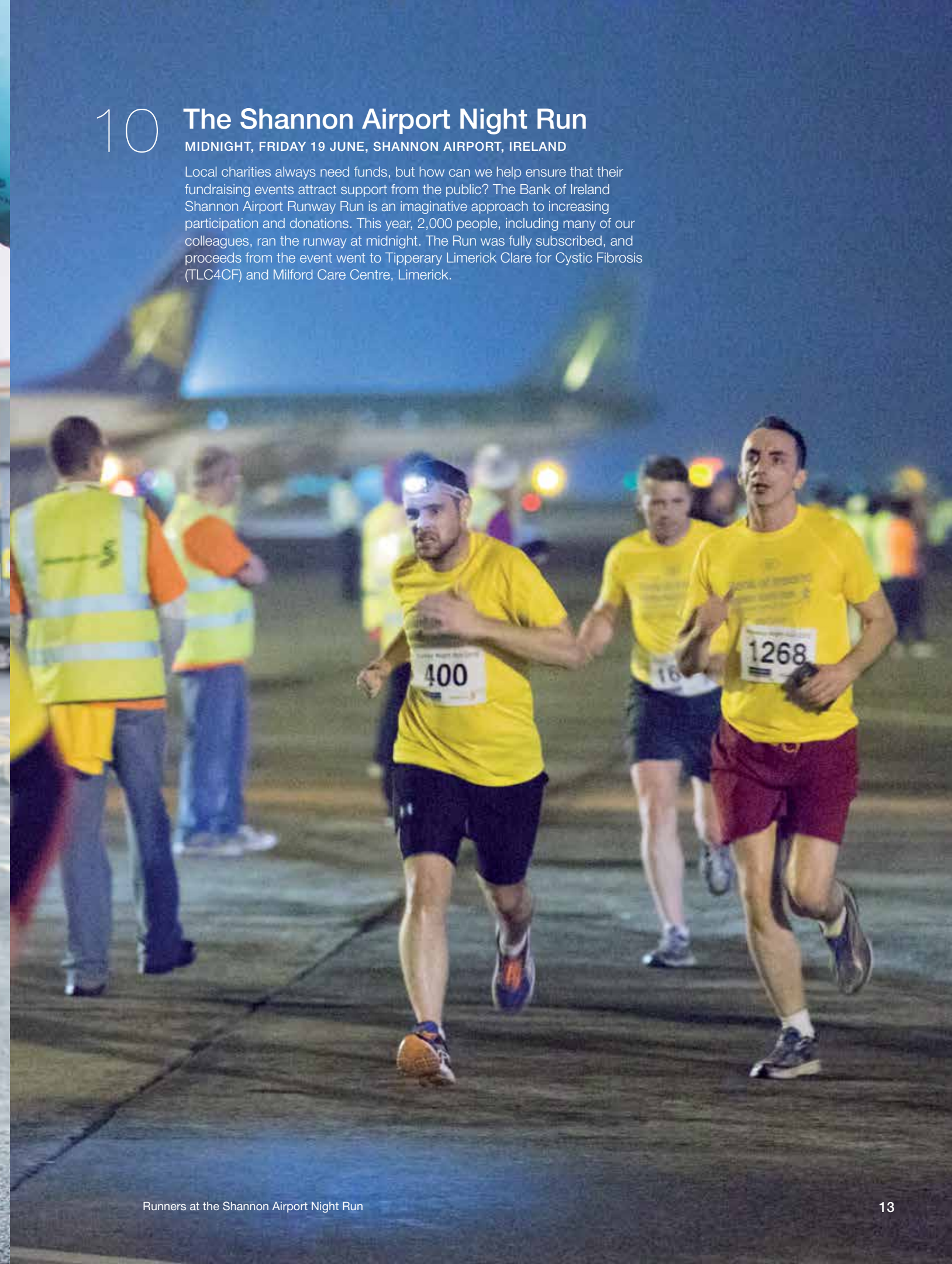
5 – 19 JUNE, MOVILLE, CO. DONEGAL AND KINSALE, CO. CORK TO CLIFDEN, CO. GALWAY

Over the course of 14 days in June, 200 cyclists covered 1,244 km as they visited 35 local communities along the Wild Atlantic Way, helping to raise €80,000 for St. Vincent de Paul. On Friday 5 June, the northern leg began in Moville, Co. Donegal, while the southern leg began in Kinsale, Co. Cork. Both ended in Clifden, Co. Galway 14 days later.

## 10 The Shannon Airport Night Run

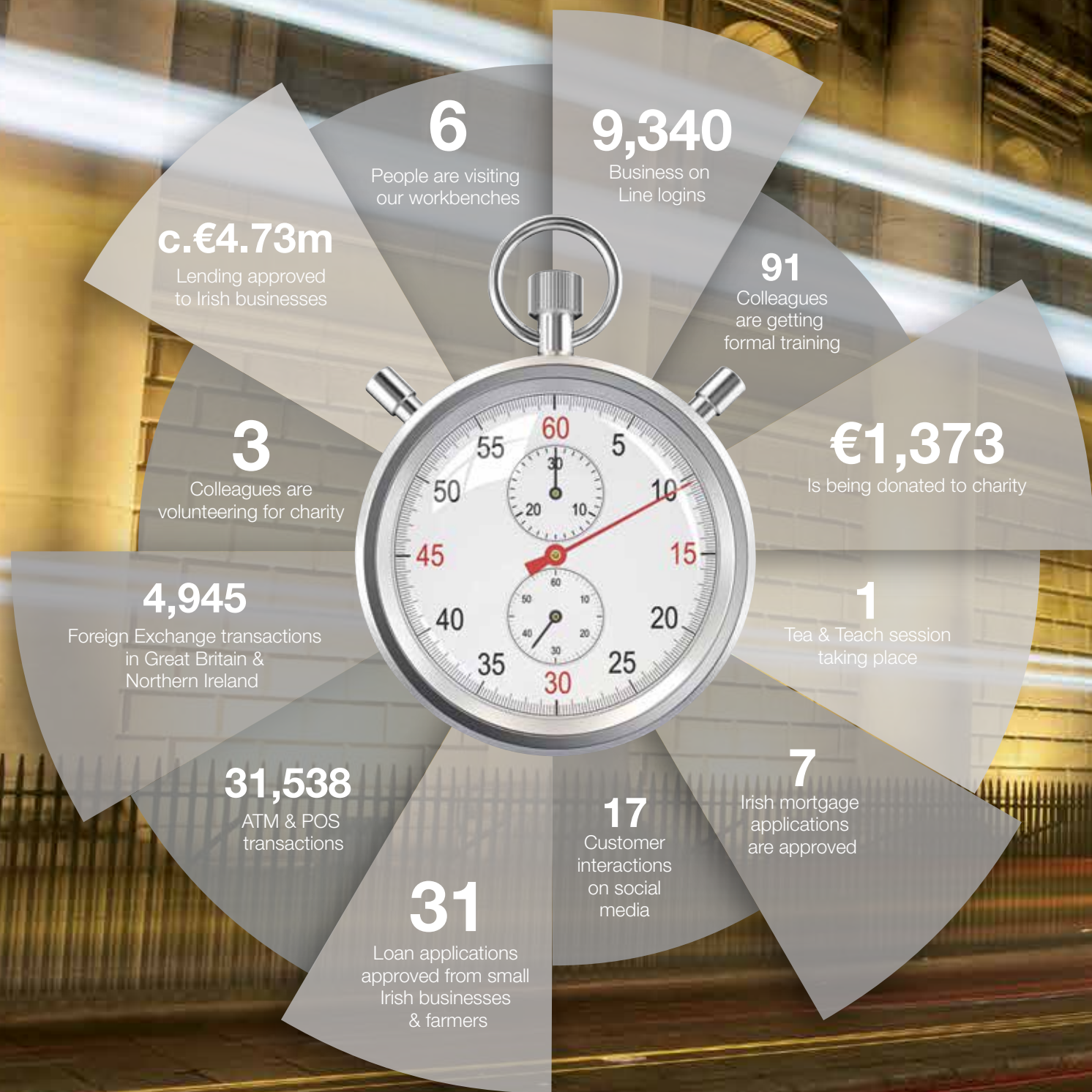
MIDNIGHT, FRIDAY 19 JUNE, SHANNON AIRPORT, IRELAND

Local charities always need funds, but how can we help ensure that their fundraising events attract support from the public? The Bank of Ireland Shannon Airport Runway Run is an imaginative approach to increasing participation and donations. This year, 2,000 people, including many of our colleagues, ran the runway at midnight. The Run was fully subscribed, and proceeds from the event went to Tipperary Limerick Clare for Cystic Fibrosis (TLC4CF) and Milford Care Centre, Limerick.





# Bank of Ireland in 60 minutes\*



Bank of Ireland Group is one of the largest financial services groups in Ireland. The Group provides a broad range of banking and other financial services. These services include: current account and deposit services, overdrafts, term loans, mortgages, business and corporate lending, international asset financing, leasing, instalment credit, invoice discounting, foreign exchange facilities, interest and exchange rate hedging instruments, life assurance, pension and protection products. All of these services are provided by the Group in Ireland, with selected services being offered in the UK and internationally.

The Group has the largest network of retail branches and ATM outlets in Ireland, as well as partnerships in the UK with the Post Office and the AA, engaged in the provision of consumer financial services. Corporate Banking and Global Markets conduct the Group's international business, with offices in Dublin, London and the US, as well as branches in Paris and Frankfurt.

The Bank of Ireland Group is incorporated in Dublin, Ireland. Our Group Head Office is located at 40 Mespil Road, Dublin 4, Ireland.

Lending criteria terms and conditions apply.  
Bank of Ireland is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland.



# Welcome from Richie Boucher

Group Chief Executive,  
Bank of Ireland

Through its activities, as an international financial services business, the Bank of Ireland Group interacts with our customers, communities, colleagues and the environment in a number of different ways.

As a financial services business, we comprehensively formally report on the full range of our business activities at specific points in the financial year.

This communication with our financial stakeholders is an extremely important demonstration of our business performance. However, we recognise that it does not paint the fullest picture of the breadth of our activities as a Group for other stakeholders.

This report – the Bank of Ireland Responsible Business Report – attempts to further develop our structured formal communication with our various stakeholders.

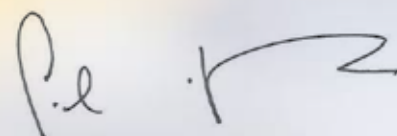
This is the second year of our formally publishing our responsible business report which seeks to further report our interactions with customers, communities, colleagues and the environment for 2015:

- It charts the partnership we have with our customers: from encouraging enterprise and supporting jobs and growth, to – as Ireland's largest lender – helping customers to meet their financial needs;
- It sets out how we are an integral part of the communities we do business in: from supporting good causes and developing skills, to promoting inclusivity, commerce and social interactions with them;
- And, it documents the way our people work: from encouraging new entrants to join the Group to supporting our colleagues to be at their best in the workplace.

This report also sets out our approach to governance and the steps we take to hold ourselves to high standards, in line with the expectations of all of our stakeholders, including our customers, investors, and colleagues.

We are a business, and, as with any business, we must be profitable. However, that cannot be a short-term goal – a responsible business follows a strategy that delivers sustainable profitability. This report seeks to communicate broader aspects of our approach to responsible sustainability for Bank of Ireland Group.

I hope the readers of this report – whether colleagues or those from outside the Group – learn a little more about how we view, and do, responsible business. I hope our colleagues see themselves reflected in this report. And, I hope our customers recognise our activities from their own experience of partnering with us – in both their personal and business lives, and in their communities.



Richie Boucher  
Group Chief Executive

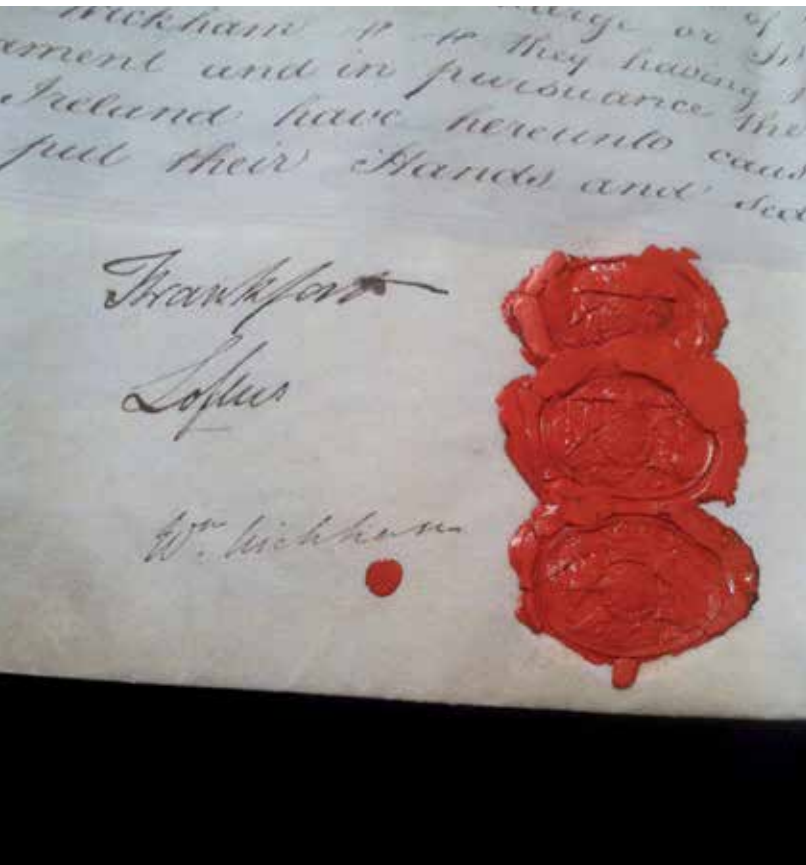


In February 2016 Bank of Ireland Group Chief Executive, Richie Boucher participated in a training session with leaders from the charitable sector at Learningzone, Bank of Ireland's dedicated training facility.

Throughout the year, Bank of Ireland makes Learningzone available to charities and community groups, so that they can benefit from the investment we make in training our colleagues. This enables access to formal training modules, in order to support the positive impact that these charities and groups can make to the communities they support.



# A history of the Bank in 10 objects



## 1 Royal charter 1783

In 1783, Bank of Ireland was established by Royal Charter and founded along the same lines as the Bank of England to help stimulate and regulate the Irish economy while providing it with a stable currency.

## 2 Hand printing press for bank notes

Bank of Ireland was granted the right to issue sterling banknotes in Ireland. Notes were printed by hand, using metal plates which were inked before pressing the note design onto the paper.

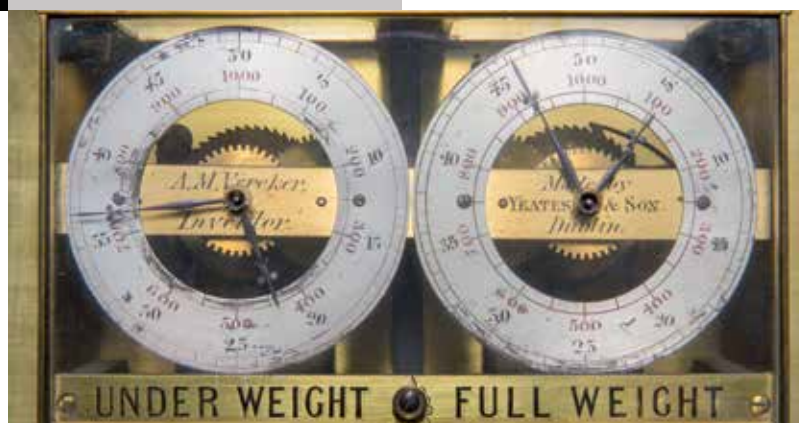


## 3 The portico

The portico outside our College Green branch has often been used as a stage for momentous events in history. In 1922, for example, Michael Collins addressed a public meeting on the Anglo-Irish Treaty here.

## 4 Sovereign weighing machine

In 1870, Bank of Ireland employed a new machine to check that sovereign coins were the right weight. Thieves used to 'sweat' sovereigns by shaking them in a bag and selling any fragments of gold left behind.



## 5 Florin

In 1942, the Florin Fund was established to help alleviate hardship for disadvantaged families at the time of The Emergency (1939-1946). Bank colleagues were encouraged to contribute a florin from their pay to contribute to the Fund, which is still active over 70 years later.



Photo: History of Computing Collection, Swansea University

## 6 ICL 1904A computer

Acquired in 1967, the ICL 1900 series computer was the beginning of the change that ultimately led to computerisation of all branches, including the first fully computerised branch in Leeson Street in 1974 and to all future digital options.

## 7 Ireland's first ATM

Ireland's first ATM was installed in Stillorgan by Bank of Ireland in 1980. Today, we have 1,391 ATMs and Lodgement ATMs in Ireland and Northern Ireland.



## 8 2003 Special Olympics medal

In 2003, we sponsored the 11th Special Olympics World Summer Games, with 900 of our colleagues co-ordinating the host town programme covering 177 towns and villages.



## 9 Temperature sensor

This sensor (since upgraded) at our IT centre in Cabinteely, Co. Dublin helped us to measure local temperatures in the building in order to manage the environment there which led us to being the first financial institution in the world to be awarded the ISO 50001 standard in 2010.



## 10 Bushmills series bank note

In 2013, Bank of Ireland UK began to issue the Bushmills series banknotes in Northern Ireland, continuing a tradition that stretches back 230 years.





# Responsible Business

Audrey Nolan, Head of Corporate Social Responsibility & Reporting, describes the Group's approach to socially responsible business

## Why Bank of Ireland reports

The publication of our first Responsible Business Report in 2015 was an important milestone for the Group. For the first time, we presented a comprehensive account of all the activities taking place across Bank of Ireland, creating what we hoped would be an interesting and transparent narrative for all our stakeholders. What we found was a belief that doing the right thing is part of the ethos in Bank of Ireland and resonates strongly with our colleagues across the organisation.

In a survey conducted in March 2015, we asked our colleagues for their views about the report and 91% agreed that it was a fair and honest account of the Group in 2014. They also told us that the Report helped to create a better understanding of all that was happening across the organisation, with 79% agreeing that they had a better awareness of corporate social responsibility initiatives taking place compared with the previous 12 months. More importantly, 83% of colleagues told us that the report had helped to reinforce their pride in the organisation.

In line with best practice internationally, in this our second report, we continue to highlight our business practices through the pillars of Customer, Community, Environment and Governance. In compiling the report, we have consulted widely with colleagues and stakeholders. We know from feedback, that responsible business practice is best highlighted through individual case studies and we've included more of these in this report. We also include a supporting business rationale and further background information alongside each individual article to provide further detail and transparency for the reader.

While the Responsible Business Report has become an important way to communicate to stakeholders about our activities, we are clear that it is not an end in itself. Instead it is a staging post as we strive to continuously improve our business and its impact on our customers, the communities where we live and work, our colleagues and the environment. We will continue to work with our colleagues throughout 2016 to address areas that need further attention and develop our plans for improvement. Future reporting will allow us to keep you updated on our progress.



## Guest reviewers

When we were putting together this report, we approached the five people below, who are familiar with the broad range of our activities, to act as guest reviewers. As you read through the report, you'll see the initiatives that particularly resonated with them.



### Nichola Mullen

Nichola is Head of Fundraising for The Society of St Vincent de Paul (SVP). Founded in Ireland in 1844, SVP is the largest voluntary charitable organisation in Ireland. They have a practical approach to dealing with poverty, alleviating its effects on individuals and families through person-to-person contact. SVP is one of Bank of Ireland's five flagship charities.

### Henry Shefflin

Henry has been called the greatest hurler ever to play the game. He won 11 All-Star awards and is the only player to have been named Hurler of the Year three times. He won a record 10 All Ireland medals for Kilkenny, 13 Leinster medals and six National Hurling medals. Henry has worked for Bank of Ireland since 2002 and is our Give Together Ambassador.



### Katie Taylor

Katie is the current Irish, European, World and Olympic women's boxing champion in the 60 kg division. She is generally recognised as the best female boxer in the world, and is credited with establishing women's boxing as an Olympic sport. Katie signed a three-year sponsorship deal with Bank of Ireland in December 2014.



### Declan Egan

Declan is the founder of 100minds, a social enterprise that connects third level students with a chosen charity and encourages them to run fundraising projects. By participating in 100minds, students put theoretical learning into practice for the benefit of children's charities. Bank of Ireland supported the 2015 launch of 100minds and supplied eight mentors to the initiative.

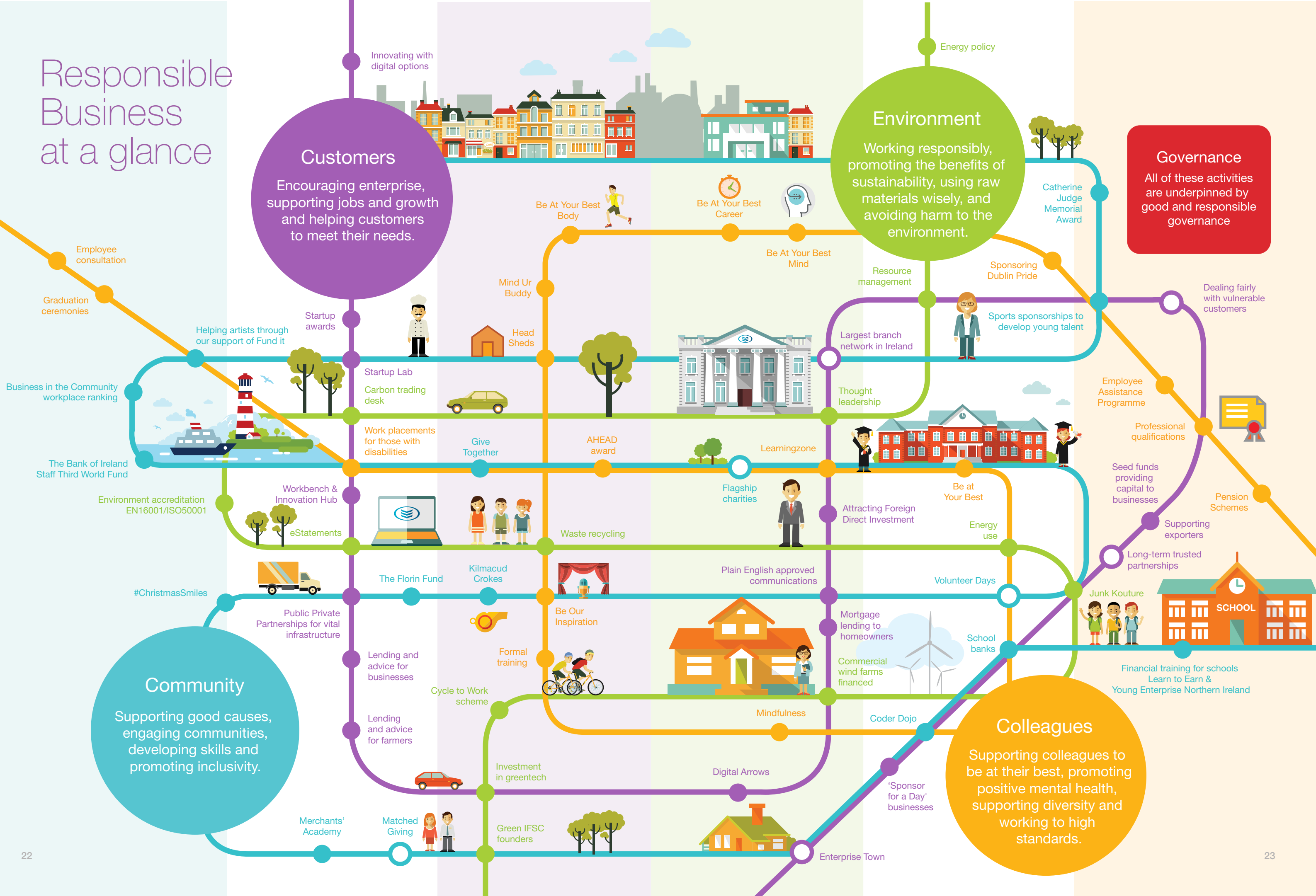
### Paul O'Connell

Paul played rugby 175 times for Munster and 108 times for his country. He also captained the Lions. His international career highlight came with the 2009 Six Nations Grand Slam. He has two Six Nations gold medals, two Heineken Cup medals and four Triple Crown medals as well as a Lions tour series winner's medal from 2013. Paul, a Bank of Ireland Brand Ambassador, attended two Bank of Ireland Enterprise Town events in 2015.





# Responsible Business at a glance





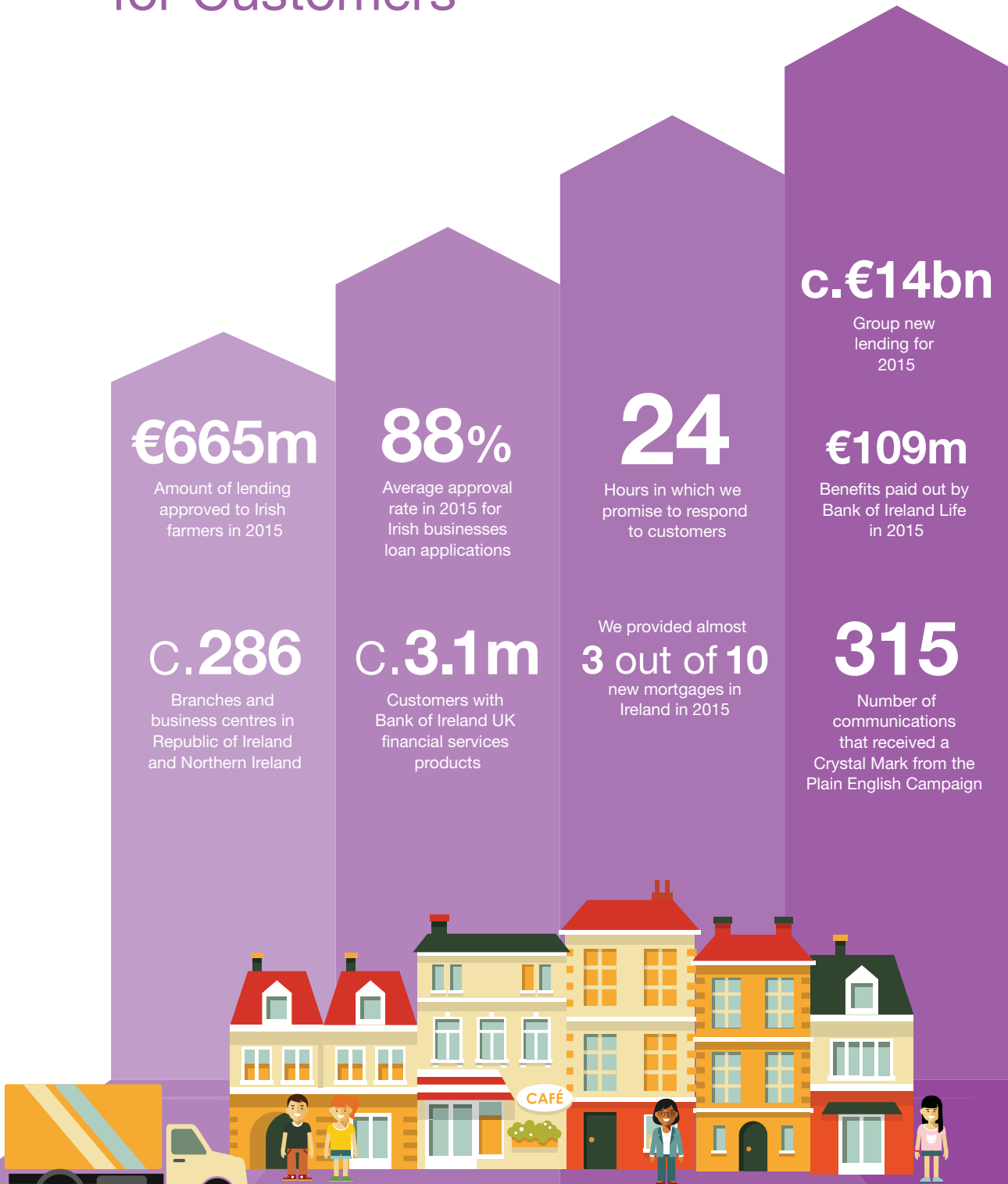


# Customers

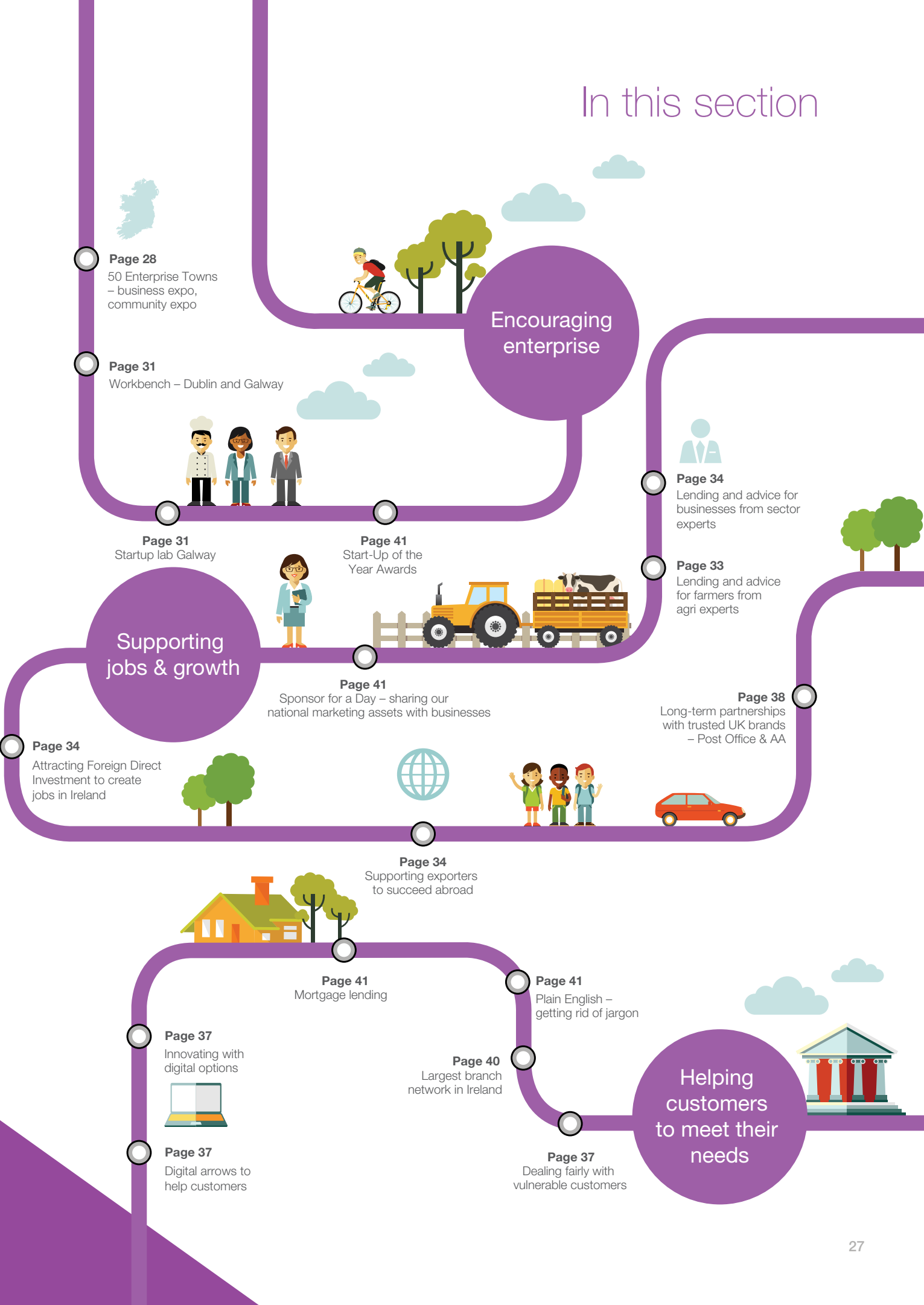
We're supporting communities to come together to support their own local businesses, clubs and organisations. We're providing expert support and funding to help entrepreneurs to start up, small businesses to grow, and established businesses to export and expand. We're always innovating to make banking easier for customers, while providing practical assistance so that they can make the most of new digital options.



Making a difference  
for Customers



In this section





# Encouraging Enterprise

We're encouraging local businesses and communities to make new connections.

“67% said they discovered community groups they did not know existed

Derek Shannon, Carlow Branch Manager at Carlow Enterprise Town (left) & Alan Gilbert, Gilbert's Orchard

## ENTERPRISE TOWNS

### It takes a town

In 2015, we held Enterprise Town events in 50 communities across Ireland. In each town, our colleagues worked with local people to help bring businesses, charitable and community organisations together. Typically, each event ran over a weekend, starting with a business expo on a Friday and finishing with a community day on Saturday. Our aim was to help people grow their local economies while helping to foster a renewed sense of purpose and identity for the whole community. The Enterprise Towns initiative has grown from one town to over 50 in just three years and we continue to develop it further. In every town we reached, local people told us it provided a spark that is igniting further action in the community.

#### How helpful is Enterprise Town?

**97% strongly agreed**  
It's good for local networking

**94% strongly agreed**  
It's a good opportunity to showcase businesses, charities, local sport and community organisations

**84% strongly agreed**  
Businesses and charities gain a lot from the event

#### The most surprising thing we learned\*

Even in seemingly tight-knit local communities there are many people who know their neighbours by sight and to chat to, but do not know who they work for and what they can do to help each other. Enterprise Town helps reveal the 'hidden' resources that small towns have but are not yet fully utilising.

\* The Enterprise Town initiative was studied by market research agency Red C. Base: Adults 18+ in Gort, Celbridge, Ardee – 180 adults)

“75% of people said they discovered local businesses they didn't know existed



I was at the Askeaton and Longford Enterprise Towns in 2015, and saw, first-hand, how they brought the community together.

PAUL O'CONNELL

Helping communities to thrive enables us to maintain a local presence and, in turn, finance local businesses.

**50**  
Enterprise Towns delivered

**28,000**  
'CONNECTIONS'  
facilitated in 2015







## OUGHTERARD ENTERPRISE TOWN

# Game of Drones

Paul Naessens trained as an archaeologist, completing his degree and PhD as a mature student at NUI Galway and Glasgow University. In 2009, he set up his archaeological survey business, winning contracts for clients such as Galway Co. Council and the Heritage Council of Ireland. Up until 2013, all his survey work was conducted on the ground but the arrival of drone technology rekindled his boyhood interest in flying remote control model aeroplanes and led to a more accurate way to survey from the air.

After buying and testing drones from DJI, the world's biggest supplier of drone technology (they provide the drones that took some of the most spectacular shots on *Game of Thrones*), Paul took his surveying business airborne. While he was attending the Oughterard Business Expo he happened to meet the head of PR for SSE, the energy provider, and got talking.

That conversation eventually led to a contract to provide his services to the largest onshore wind farm in Ireland, Galway Wind Park, which will comprise 69 wind turbines and will provide enough renewable energy to power 90% of the homes in Co. Galway. Paul's challenge now is to manage the growth of his successful drone survey business, Western Aerial Survey. However, his biggest limiting factor is out of his control - the Irish weather.

[www.westernaerialsurvey.ie](http://www.westernaerialsurvey.ie)



## START-UPS AND ENTREPRENEURS

# Our branch, your bench

In 2015, we decided we were going to invite start-ups and entrepreneurs to come into our branches, take a seat and get to work on their business ideas. They didn't have to be Bank of Ireland customers, they just had to be starting or thinking about starting a business and in need of support – we offer a desk, WiFi, a coffee and a friendly face to welcome them. We opened our first Workbench in Dublin at our Grand Canal Square branch and added a second in our Mainguard Street branch in Galway city.

## Tracy Keogh

Start-up Community Manager (Galway)

Start-ups are often isolated. They're working really hard on their business idea but they're stuck in their bedrooms or kitchens and coming up against a whole range of issues that would be easier to solve if they had access to a wider support network. What we're doing is trying to create a community for entrepreneurs in Galway. Workbench gives them a shared space where they can come and work. Just spending time here means they will bump into people who may be able to help them to do things like set up a website or learn how to market their idea without spending much money.

## Edel Browne

Founder of Free Feet

Edel first popped in to Workbench in September after hearing about it on Twitter. Her invention, Free Feet, is an award-winning medical device designed to treat gait freezing in Parkinson's Disease. About 38% of Parkinson's sufferers fall each year and their falls are often related to 'freezing' and being unable to continue walking. Free Feet is a laser device

attached to the side of a shoe which is designed to help reduce freezing. The laser places a red dot on the ground in front of the wearer that acts as a guide for the person to follow. It reduces the severity and length of the freezing episode by forcing wearers to consciously think about walking. Edel is currently seeking the resources to run larger-scale clinical trials.

“What we're doing is trying to support the community of entrepreneurs in Galway



Great way to help start-ups

HENRY SHEFFLIN

## Nicola O'Sullivan

Co-founder of ExerWise

ExerWise is a wearable device for children aged 4 to 12, which tracks the exercise they get each day to ensure they get the recommended 60 minutes of moderate to intense physical activity. Nicola and co-founders Laura Hanlon and Ciaran Walsh do not have company premises and find that Workbench provides a space to come in and work together and discuss issues with other start-ups. 'Having Tracy [Keogh] here,' says Nicola, 'means we can be introduced to other people who can help us with issues.'

## Niall McCormick

Co-founder of Colmac Robotics Ltd

Niall has a background in electrical engineering, while Colman Munnely, his co-founder, trained as a teacher. Inspired by build-your-own kits like LEGO Mindstorms, they combined their skills and in 2013 they ran six summer camps for kids using robotics to teach a wide range of skills – from creativity and problem solving to using technology. By 2015, they'd increased the number of summer camps to 25, each teaching 20 children in two age ranges: 6-9 and 9-13 years. They have since partnered with Analog Devices in Limerick to help deliver their CSR programme in primary schools.

Enterprise Town gives local businesses a chance to connect and see how they could work together for their mutual benefit



- ▶ Over 300 Bank of Ireland staff took part in the Enterprise Town initiative in 2015
- ▶ 3,500 businesses took part in the Business Expos
- ▶ Approximately 2,000 sports and community groups participated
- ▶ Including some 100 first and second-level schools

By helping entrepreneurs to start up, we can help create the small businesses that will create the jobs of the future



55  
events held in  
Workbench, Galway



2015  
WORKBENCH  
OPENED



# Supporting Jobs & Growth

We're providing expert support and funding to help businesses start up and expand.



Florrie Purcell, owner of The Scullery (Photo: Anna Frins)

## THE SCULLERY

### A taste of success

The bank manager who Florrie Purcell went to see at the Nenagh branch of Bank of Ireland in Co. Tipperary did not, in her words, 'know her from Adam' but he did know her family. This was back in 2010. She was with another Irish bank but was unhappy with them and her accountant had suggested that she go down to Bank of Ireland.

Her company, The Scullery, makes pickles, relishes and sauces with no additives, preservatives or MSG, each of them the result of hours of experimentation by Florrie at her Aga cooker. In 2010, she was just a small business with 'no money' but what she did have were orders from very large customers such as Lidl and Tesco. She needed funding in order to buy ingredients to get cooking and fulfil her orders – the recession had wiped her finances out.

When the bank manager, Tom O'Keeffe, asked her what kind of collateral she could put up she replied, "my four-year-old son and my shoe leather." When Tom had stopped laughing he asked Florrie a lot of questions about her business and then said, "leave it with me, I will help you."

Forty-eight hours later, he told her she had the funding she needed, but what she couldn't have anticipated was that her customers would increase their orders by 50%. Florrie had to shoot down to the Bank to talk to Tom again. "Place your orders and start cooking," he said. Florrie paid this loan back within 90 days.

Florrie's products are currently in Lidl stores in the UK and South Korea and will be in Bulgaria, Romania and the Czech Republic in 2016. Her 'Wacky Wings' sauces are sold in Harrods. The Scullery has won numerous awards and is

expanding, but it's still Florrie who slaves over the Aga to create new products

Florrie enjoys telling the story of the day she first met Tom down at the branch in Nenagh – a day they both say they will never forget. "He listened to my story and he saw the potential," says Florrie.

Lending criteria terms and conditions apply.  
Bank of Ireland is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland.

“I needed someone to believe in the business as much as I did.”

## AGRI INSIGHTS

### Preparing for growth

By bringing expert insights on key issues such as the impact of the abolition of milk quotas to farmers, we can help them make the most of new opportunities.

Professor Patrick Wall, Professor of Public Health at University College Dublin, spoke at one of our 'Preparing for growth, planning for success' Agri seminars in April, 2015.

"Many people in Ireland are only one or two generations away from farming, so we have a good understanding of what farming involves."

"Here, the people that own the farm are on it milking the cows, so they get first-hand knowledge that owners who do not work on their farms simply don't."

"What business are farmers in? It's not simply farming any more. Farmers have to be in the bovine genetics, ruminant nutrition, bovine health, animal welfare, food safety and human nutrition business. In other words, they're in the human health business."

"Farmers are the first step in the food chain, so their compliance has to be exemplary to avoid health scares, which in the internet age go global instantly and can damage reputation fast."

"From 'fork to farm' traceability is now more complicated because elements of feed – for example added vitamins and minerals – may be imported from all over the world."



Professor Patrick Wall (Photo: Jack Kennedy)

Supporting sustainable local businesses with potential for growth means we can help communities to thrive

In 2015 total lending approvals to SMEs  
**€5.3bn**  
Rate of loan approvals  
**88%**

**€665m**  
IN AGRI LENDING APPROVALS  
**€1bn**  
SIZE OF AGRI FUND

**12**  
Agri seminars held across Ireland







Dave Arnold VP of Finance & Operations, Udem

## FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT

### Sharing knowledge

“Udem is an online education marketplace with over eight million students. Our course content and instructor community are constantly growing, with more than 32,000 courses taught by 18,000 instructors. We offer students the ability to learn as they go and succeed on their own terms, while instructors have a way to share their knowledge with the world. Today’s jobs require ever-changing skills – traditional education can’t keep up and most employers don’t invest enough in training.

Udem gives individuals the power to shape their own futures by putting on-demand courses within reach. We’re headquartered in San Francisco and our newest office is in Dublin, Ireland. Europe is a huge opportunity for Udem’s global expansion. We picked Dublin because it is a technology hub.

Bank of Ireland not only advised us on setting up our accounts in Dublin but also helped us to set up a successful operation.”

Dave Arnold VP of Finance & Operations, Udem

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## SUPPORTING EXPORTERS

### The farm beneath the sea

Gallagher Brothers, based in Killybegs, Co. Donegal, is a family-owned business founded by two brothers, Jack and Phil Gallagher, in 1919. Gallagher Bros continues to this day catching and processing pelagic fish. In 1984, Ocean Farm Ltd was developed to rear Irish salmon in the clean clear waters of Donegal’s Atlantic Coast. In 2010, with the assistance of Bank of Ireland, Ocean Farm became completely committed to rearing Irish organic salmon. Growing fish in unpolluted exposed sea sites means that the ocean constantly replenishes the water, ensuring healthy fish in a very natural environment.

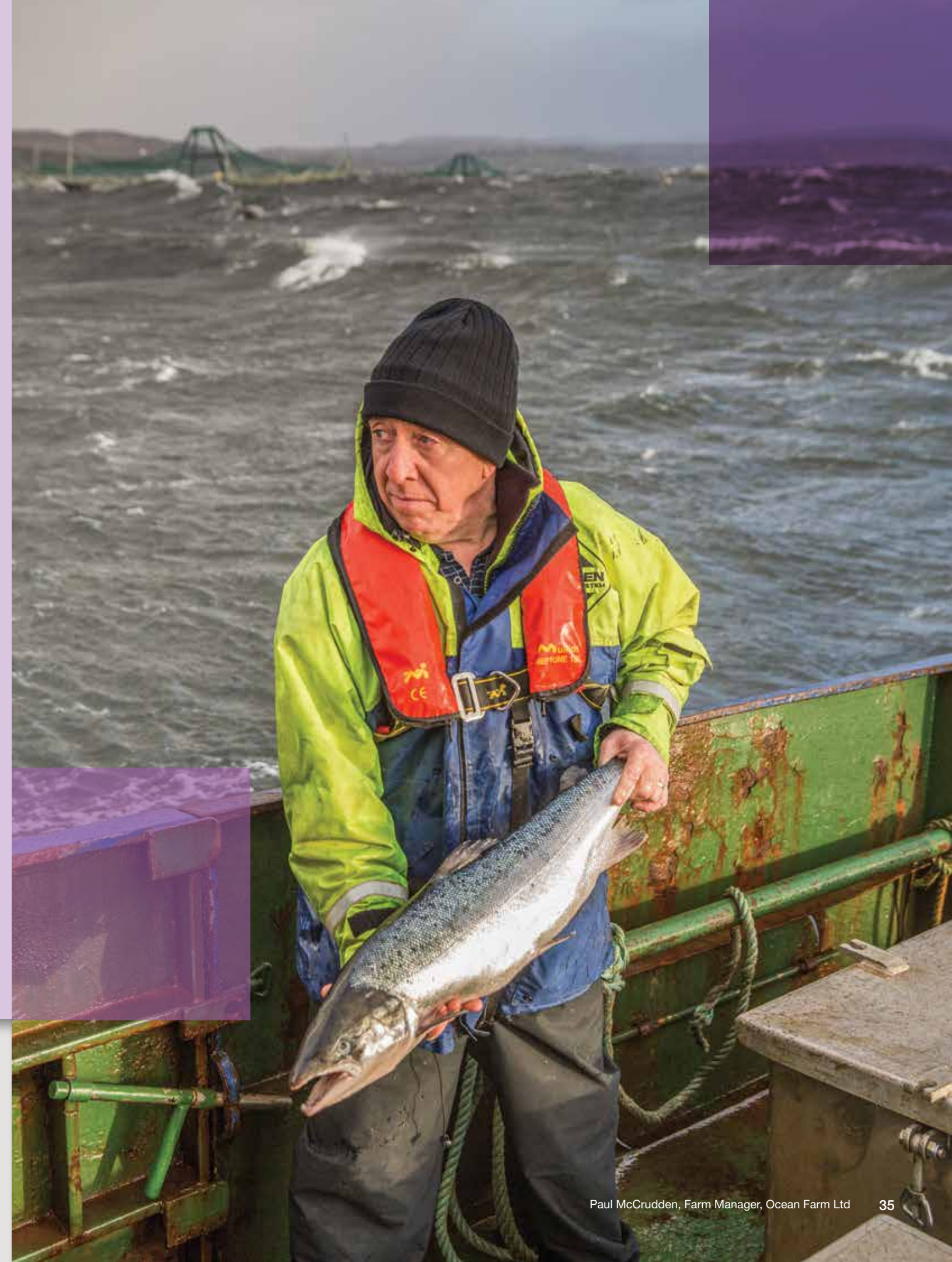
All the salmon are fed on a completely organic marine-based diet. Ocean Farm was the first salmon company to be awarded the ‘Irish Quality Salmon Scheme’ under the IFQC approval. When Ocean Farm first began its organic salmon farming operation in 2010, as well as providing financing Bank of Ireland introduced it to organic experts from Stirling University’s Institute of Aquaculture, who helped ensure that its ways of working matched best practice. “Paddy Leydon from Bank of Ireland has been very supportive,” says Anne Gallagher, Gallagher Bros. “He saw the potential of the organic business from the start.” Ocean Farm now sells high quality organic salmon to the home market in Ireland as well as exporting to the American and Canadian markets and to highly-discerning European salmon smokers.

#### Ways we help exporting companies

- ▶ Trade finance facilities, such as Trade Letters of Credit
- ▶ Timely, relevant market data and access to GM Treasury Specialists and advice
- ▶ FX payments capacity to suit all customers – via branches, online (Banking365, Banking On Line, FXPay), GM Dealers

Supporting foreign companies to choose Ireland as a destination, and supporting Irish companies to succeed abroad, helps both to reach new markets

Our Foreign Direct Investment team have worked with over 70% of international companies setting up in Ireland and launched a new dedicated website for FDI companies in 2015







# Helping customers to meet their needs

We're always innovating to make banking easier, while helping customers to adopt new options.

## DIGITAL OPTIONS

### Getting comfortable with digital

The range of digital options for customers is increasing. From online banking to mobile and tablet apps, customers have never had so much choice as to how they bank with us. But for some the prospect of going online to bank or using new machines is daunting. It's not simply a question of which buttons to press or options to select, it's also a matter of confidence.

It's only human to fear the unknown, but when we asked them, customers told us that when they became familiar with our new digital options, by and large, they liked them. The first step was all-important.

So we brought together a central team of advisors – our Digital Arrows – whose mission is to bring digital training, support and knowledge to community groups and customers across Ireland. The Arrows engage with active retirement groups, transition year students, business customers, farmers, and community groups, often holding events at local hotels, community halls and rural libraries.

Our 'Tea & Teach' sessions give the Arrows time to sit down with customers over a cup of tea, listen to their concerns, reassure them and help get them comfortable with the technology. As a result of these hands-on sessions, we learn a lot from customers and they are able to confidently take the first steps to using our digital banking solutions.

For example, in November we visited Cavan library, where Digital Arrow Aidan Lennon explained the reasons behind introducing the new technology before he, Bank Manager Sean Smith, and Sinead McManus from Cavan branch, demonstrated how to get started and how to carry out everyday transactions such as transferring money online. We help anyone who needs assistance to use the banking facilities in our branches.

## DIGITAL BANKING

### Continuing to innovate for customers

Digital banking is always improving, as technology becomes more sophisticated and more widely available. Here are some of the ways we improved things this year.

#### Helping customers avoid unnecessary fees

More and more customers carry a smartphone, making it quicker for us to communicate with them. This can even help them avoid unnecessary fees and charges. This year, for example, we began sending text reminders to over 50,000 of our credit card customers every month to help them pay on time and avoid late payment fees - a simple solution to a familiar issue.

#### Making it easier to open a current account

Until recently, customers could apply for products online but still had to go to a branch to present the identification and proofs of address we need to open an account for them. This year, we became the first Irish bank to offer fully online current account applications for new customers.

#### Enabling wider use of debit cards

We introduced Contactless payment on our debit cards in 2014. Customers can now pay for items up to €30 by tapping their card against a contactless terminal. But what about the retailers? We launched Bank of Ireland Payment Acceptance, under our marketing alliance with Evo Payments International, to make it more cost effective for businesses to manage their payments and accept lower value transactions.

#### Simplifying international payments

To meet the need for a powerful online foreign exchange solution that is easy to use, we asked customers what they wanted and designed a solution with their needs in mind. The solution was FX Pay. FX Pay is low cost, easy to use and comes with the security of Ireland's longest-established bank. It takes two clicks to book a deal and make a payment straight away.

Lending criteria terms and conditions apply.  
Bank of Ireland is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland.

Supporting customers to make the most of digital options for everyday banking means they can decide how they choose to bank

  
**1,700**  
'Tea & Teach'  
sessions

Text reminders to over  
**50,000**  
of our credit card  
customers every month

Customers can now pay for items up to €30 by tapping their card against a contactless terminal





## THE POST OFFICE AND THE AA

# Trusted partnerships

In the UK, we have chosen to develop long-term partnerships with a select number of well-established, highly-trusted brands. Our strategy is to select partners whose vision and customer ethos we share, as they seek to expand and develop their presence in financial services.

We began our long-term relationship with the Post Office over a decade ago and together we serve around 2.4 million customers. With over 11,500 branches, the Post Office has more than all the banks and building societies combined. Around 99% of the UK population lives within three miles of a Post Office, 17 million customers visit a Post Office branch each week, and over the course of a year, there are over 68 million visits to their website.

When Post Office customers visit their local Post Office or go online, they find a wide range of simple and transparent Post Office Money financial products, provided by Bank of Ireland UK. They range from savings to credit cards to mortgages and travel money – offering consumers a genuine and accessible alternative to large UK retail and commercial banks. We also provide over 2,500 free-to-use ATMs, which are located throughout the Post Office branch network. During 2015, the majority of the top 10 busiest ATMs in the UK Link Network were Post Office / Bank of Ireland



Photo: UK Post Office

“Our strategy is to select partners whose vision and customer ethos we share...”

machines.

Building on our successful partnership with the Post Office, in 2015 we announced our new financial services partnership with the AA.

The AA is a familiar sight on UK roads and is an instantly recognisable, trusted brand. With nearly four million members, it is the UK's largest provider of breakdown assistance, with 3,000 patrols attending over 10,000 breakdowns per day.

The AA have a long track record of providing financial services dating back to the 1980's. Our new partnership means that, as their single provider of financial products, we will enable the AA to offer a competitive and attractive range of products, ranging from credit cards, personal loans, savings and mortgages to both existing and new AA members.

So partnership is at the heart of everything colleagues do in the UK. It's how we treat and connect with people, whether we're responding to our partners and their needs, listening and engaging with each other, or guiding customers through product information they need to understand.

Partnership is what we deliver because we're focused on our partners' and customers' interests and goals. Their success is our success.

\* The list, which excludes brands from the British armed forces and charities, was compiled from a survey of over 3,000 people in the UK between the ages of 18 and 74 by Rainey Kelley Campbell Roalfe/ Y & R's in-house database, BAV and was reported on in *Marketing*.



Photo: AA

## GRAND CANAL SQUARE

# Community building

When most banks are closing for the day, our new Grand Canal Branch is only just getting started, providing the hub for a whole range of local business, community and charitable events. Here is a flavour of some of the over 160 events the branch hosted in 2015.

## Launch of the Grand Canal Residents' Association

A packed branch, including Minister of State for Social Protection, Kevin Humphries, hosted the launch of the local residents' association, dedicated to enhancing the quality of life of the residents in an inclusive way. Many speakers commented on how young and vibrant the area was but, at the same time, how this sometimes brought problems of noise and traffic in the evenings. "We're your branch, in your community," Janet Cooke, from the branch, reminded all those who had attended at the end of the evening.

## Python Ladies (Dublin)

Vicky Twomey-Lee, the founder of Python Ladies Dublin uses the branch to bring women together once a month to chat and learn about coding. Python is a high level programming language, she explains, used across a range of industries from R&D to Finance, created to teach people how to code. "Once you've set up your machine, you can be writing lines of code within 30 minutes," she adds. Nadja, a regular at Python Ladies, sums up the group's feelings like this, "at home, on your own, you might get stuck and frustrated just because you placed a comma in the wrong place in a line of code. Here, you can just ask someone."

## Association of Chinese Professionals in Ireland (ACPI)

Founded in 2004, the Association ACPI is a non-profit organisation which acts as a forum for Chinese professionals to exchange ideas and further their career or business interests. It is composed mainly of highly-educated first generation immigrants to Ireland, with at least a degree, who are excited by the prospects of trade between Ireland and China. The main issues they are keen to discuss relate to taking the big step of setting up their own business in Ireland and getting a better understanding of Irish tax and accounting rules.

Grand Canal Square branch, Dublin

“We're your branch, in your community”

## Entrepreneurs Anonymous

Entrepreneurs Anonymous is an informal monthly meet-up for actual and aspiring entrepreneurs, where attendees can get inspired by talks, make energetic 'unpitches' to their peers, enjoy Q&A sessions with experts and network with fellow entrepreneurs. What is an 'unpitch'? It's a chance to explore your idea in a supportive, no-pressure environment where you talk through your business idea for five minutes and then get five minutes of feedback and questions to help you get to the next stage. "Original ideas are overrated," says Silviu P. who runs EA. "Better to share your idea with your peers to avoid going down blind alleys."

## Raft Race Against Homelessness

In September, two Bank Of Ireland teams crewed by four of our colleagues raised a total of €3,220 for Depaul, a charity that works to help the homeless, by participating in a raft race in the canal basin just yards from the Grand Canal Square branch. Kerry Anthony, CEO of Depaul, said, "The Raft Race Against Homelessness symbolises the importance of working together on rebuilding the lives of those who are affected by homelessness."

Groups like Entrepreneurs Anonymous help prevent founders becoming isolated.

DECLAN EGAN

By establishing strategic partnerships in the UK we can make our financial products and services available to a wider range of customers



POST OFFICE  
& AA VOTED  
#1 & #2  
most trusted  
brands in the UK\*

Minimum  
**10**  
year arrangement  
with AA, commenced  
in 2015

Opening branches up  
for wider local events  
helps businesses and  
organisations to help  
communities to flourish



DATE OPENED  
**16 February  
2015**

**163**  
Number of events  
held in Grand Canal  
Square Branch





Inis Mór branch, Aran Islands, Co. Galway

## INIS MÓR

# Our smallest branch

Our smallest branch is on the island of Inis Mór (permanent population approximately 850) about 30 miles out from Galway city. The branch is open on Wednesdays throughout the year and on Wednesdays and Thursdays from June to September, when the population can double as tourists start to arrive on the island. Our ATM, the only one on the island, is in Powell's supermarket. Colleagues from our Eyre Square branch in Galway take the eight minute Aer Arann flight over – although the weather often means visibility is too bad to

fly and they have to take a 45-minute ferry trip, sometimes in rough winter seas. "Some of the staff do get a bit green on the boat," admitted one bank assistant who works in the island branch.

The branch has many personal and business customers, including the local pubs, guesthouses and supermarkets. It exchanges currency for the tourists who are drawn to the tiny island in the summer. The weather also sometimes means that our colleagues can't get back to the mainland by boat or plane after work and they need to find a bed for the night – sometimes at short notice. They have to ask around among the locals in the winter, when most guest accommodation is closed for the season, but the islanders always seem to come up with a place for them to stay for the night.

Where local communities continue to support us with their business, we will continue to support them with a local banking presence



## Number of ATMs

c.1,221 in Republic of Ireland  
c.170 in Northern Ireland



We have the largest branch network of any Irish bank

**c.286**

Branches and business centres in Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland

## Some more highlights

### Gathering

Bank of Ireland supported the first-ever Gathering held during the week beginning 5 October 2015. It featured over 50 events in Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford showcasing Ireland's start-up sector to more than 15,000 people.

### Plain English

At the end of 2015, we had been awarded more Crystal Marks for our customer letters than any other Irish organisation by Plain English, the world's most respected plain language organisation.

### Life Online

In 2015, we launched Life Online. By displaying your pension and life insurance details online beside your current account details, Life Online makes it more likely that you'll stay on top of life's bigger financial commitments.

### Sponsor for a Day

Acutrace (Leinster) and Celgentek (Munster) won Sponsor for a Day 2015. The initiative supports the winning company through display of their logo during a high profile European rugby game and is part of a broader programme to help our small business customers grow their business.

### Opening hours

All our branches in the Republic of Ireland now open at 10 am, Monday to Friday, making our opening hours simpler and more convenient for customers.

### Startup of the Year 2015

Gael Form won the Bank of Ireland Startup of the Year 2015. Located in Ashbourne and London, they are fast becoming Europe's leading supplier of quality formwork, formwork accessories and refurbishment.

### Welcome programme

In order to support colleagues working as Welcome Advisors in our branches, we put in place a new training programme to help to proactively support customers. The percentage of customers who felt welcomed rose from 46% in May 2014 to 85% in July 2015.

### 2% Mortgage cashback

In 2015, we launched our 2% cashback offer for first-time buyers, movers, switchers and investors, providing homebuyers with a convenient lump sum when they take out a mortgage with us.\*

### Coin service

We listened to customer feedback and extended our times for accepting coin from charities and personal customers in all our outlets.

### Open Farm Weekend

In June 2015, 21 farms across Northern Ireland took part in the Bank of Ireland Open Farm Weekend, promoting the local agri-food sector to a non-farming audience and educating the public on the realities of farming and food production.

### Enterprise Week

In May and November, we ran our 12th and 13th National Enterprise Weeks, with a total of 1,254 events nationwide and over 6,277 businesses exhibiting their businesses in our branches. In November, we added Enterprise in Education for the first time.

### Think Business

In May 2015, we launched a comprehensive new website for businesses in Ireland - both start-ups and growing businesses - providing free tools, templates, checklists, case studies and guides. Visit [www.thinkbusiness.ie](http://www.thinkbusiness.ie)

### Cashflow Planner

We now provide a free cashflow planner, which you can download from our website, to help make the credit application process as simple as possible for our agri customers.

### Taste of Dublin

The Little Milk Company won a promotion package worth €50,000 at our Big Break initiative at Taste of Dublin 2015. We also gave two food enterprises, Patel's and My Organics, the opportunity to host stands at the event.

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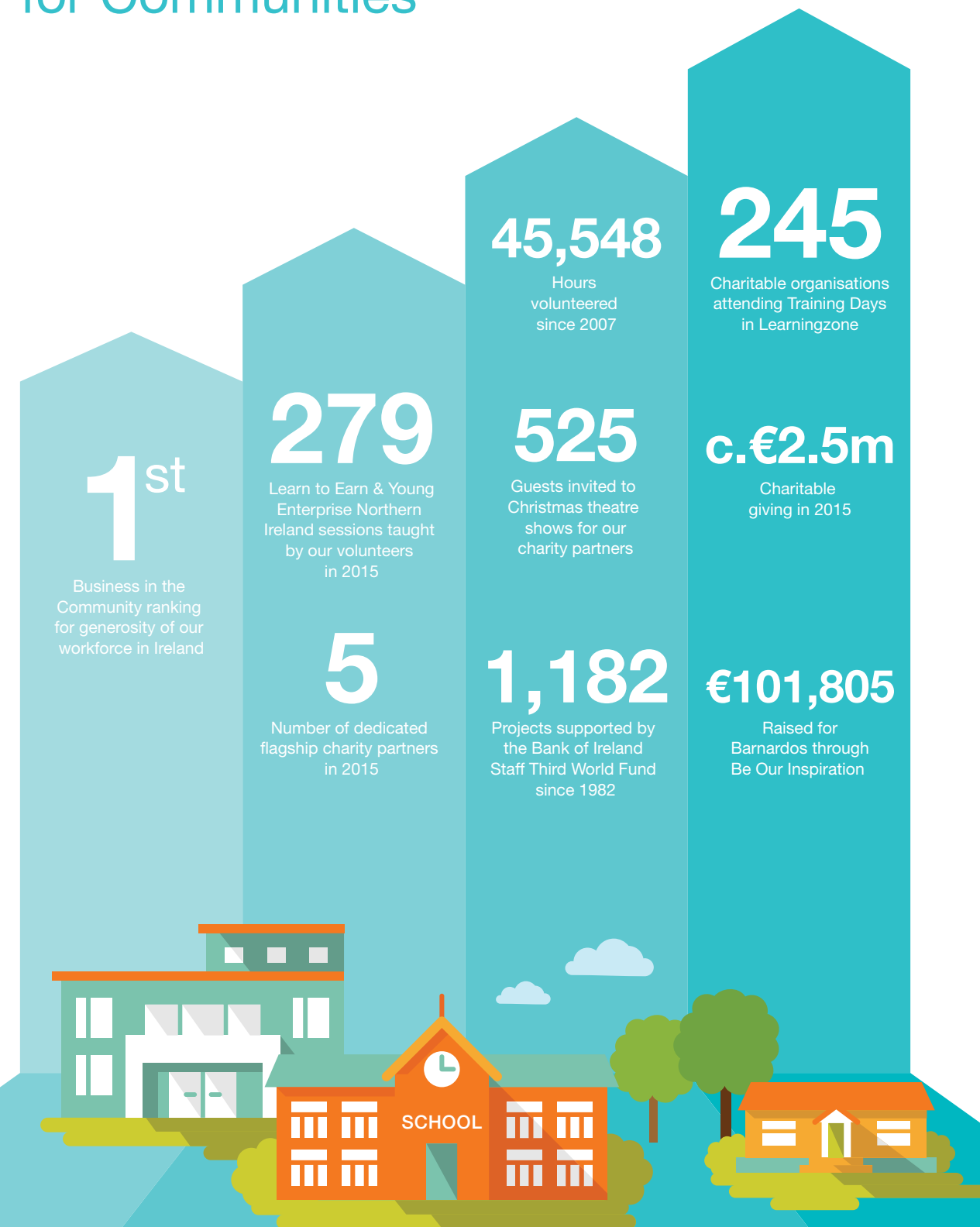


# Communities

We have been part of local communities in Ireland for over 230 years and, today, we're continuing to play a positive role in creating thriving communities in the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and Great Britain. Our colleagues are volunteering and providing donations to our five flagship charity partners, passing on our financial expertise to schools and community groups, and supporting social entrepreneurs and social inclusion.



# Making a difference for Communities



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# Supporting Good Causes

We're continuing to support good causes to help disadvantaged groups in local communities.

## GIVE TOGETHER

# Supporting charities and communities

Our colleagues have always been keen to support their favourite charities and good causes, whether through local initiatives or large-scale events. Our charity and community investment programme, Give Together, supports colleagues who wish to fundraise or volunteer for causes important to them. They can avail of one day's paid leave each year to volunteer and can also apply to have any fundraising matched up to certain limits. In 2015, our colleagues volunteered over 1,000 days and matched fundraising and payroll giving, together with other charitable contribution, amounted to €2.5m. In 2015, Bank of Ireland ranked first among companies in Ireland for the generosity of its workforce.

## Flagship charities

Alongside the causes chosen by colleagues, we also work with five flagship charities St Vincent de Paul, Barnardo's, The Irish Cancer Society, Pieta House and Co-operation Ireland which help to galvanise larger-scale volunteering and fundraising events. These partnerships have been hugely important, not just for the support provided to the charities, but also for the benefits we have experienced through these relationships. A great example of this in 2015 was the introduction of a new Mind Ur Buddy programme in the workplace, which was facilitated by Pieta House.



Proud to be part of such a generous workforce

HENRY SHEFFLIN



One of Bank of Ireland's Christmas choirs at College Green, Dublin

## #ChristmasSmiles

In 2015, we co-ordinated all our Christmas giving, volunteering and branch activity under one Group-wide campaign called #ChristmasSmiles. Colleagues hosted customer welcome and community events in each of our branches in Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland; we filled hundreds of food and clothes hampers as well as buying wish-list presents for distribution through St Vincent de Paul; we formed choirs and performed in a Christmas market in College Green and other locations across the organisation. The highlight of our Christmas Smiles campaign came when we brought children and volunteers from each of our flagship charities to the theatre to see *Mary Poppins* in Dublin's Grand Canal Theatre, *Matilda* in London's West End and *Snow White* in Belfast's Opera House. Over 40 Bank of Ireland volunteers helped at a pre-theatre party to make sure our invited guests had a memorable experience.

By facilitating volunteering and donations we support charities and give our colleagues a way to demonstrate their support for them

€2.5m  
IN CHARITABLE  
GIVING IN 2015

5 Flagship charities

- ▶ Barnardo's
- ▶ Irish Cancer Society
- ▶ St Vincent de Paul
- ▶ Pieta House
- ▶ Co-operation Ireland



Ireland's most generous workforce





Kathryn Cooney,  
Lisburn Road branch

“You go through a period of mourning for the healthy child you used to have

says Kathryn, “for the healthy child you used to have.” That change meant that it was difficult to be as spontaneous as the family had been before. “You need to plan everything. It’ll not stop you doing anything but if you say ‘let’s go to the beach’ you have to remember that sand gets in needles so you need to have them in a plastic bag.” Meeting other mums with diabetic children provided a sense that Kathryn was not alone, and her relationship with Diabetes UK grew after being invited to one of their meetings in 2009. As one of their Service Champions she works to improve services and care in Northern Ireland. She used her Volunteering Day to contribute to a strategy meeting with Diabetes UK in Belfast. [www.diabetes.org.uk](http://www.diabetes.org.uk)

### The UK Executive team volunteered for Barnardo’s

Bank of Ireland UK’s Executive team got together for their Give Together Volunteering Day, supporting Barnardo’s Child Sexual Exploitation programme in Islington, by giving the Barnardo’s lounge area a makeover. The Barnardo’s Service works with children who have been sexually exploited or are vulnerable to exploitation, and with children who regularly go missing from home or care. The majority of their work is done on a one-to-one basis in the lounge area, which was specifically earmarked for redecoration by the team.

Des Crowley, Retail UK CEO said, “It was a privilege to work with the team to give a little back to the incredible movement that is Barnardo’s. The people who get help at Islington deserve the best, as they confront personal challenges that far exceed anything I have ever experienced.” [www.barnardos.com](http://www.barnardos.com)



UK Executive team  
supporting Barnardo’s



Maeve Power & Orla Cunningham  
from Group Finance

### Our Group Finance team volunteered for St Michael’s House

The reason Group Finance chose St Michael’s House in Dublin was because of the great work they felt they did for people with intellectual disabilities. Almost every one of our Group Finance colleagues personally knew someone with an intellectual disability or knew a family with an intellectually disabled child. The team had also heard that St Michael’s House was looking for new volunteers at the centre to help motivate them to become more active.

From 10am until 2.30pm, the team assisted the service users in games such as soccer, tag rugby, table cricket, archery and the 2km challenge. It was on the 2km challenge that they really got to know the service users as people, as they went around the track and got speaking to each of them.

After continuing with more sports for another hour after lunch, medals and certificates were presented to everyone on the day. [www.smh.ie](http://www.smh.ie)

### MATCHED FUNDRAISING

## Walking the Darkness into the Light

In 2015, over 500 of our colleagues walked the Darkness into Light at locations across the world, raising over €12,625 for Pieta House – which was matched by the Bank to bring the final total to over €25,000. Many of our colleagues knew people who had self-harmed or committed suicide and had their own personal reasons for walking.

“The reason why I took part this year was due to a close friend of mine. He has been going through a dark time, so much so he attempted suicide. Since then he has been out in Pieta House and seems to be doing very well. A few weeks before the walk he asked a group of friends to do the walk with him. In the end, 11 of us did the walk with him out in Bray.” Anonymous.

[www.pieta.ie](http://www.pieta.ie)

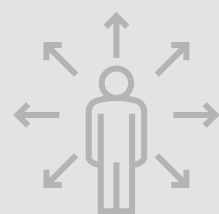
This is such a great way to raise money and awareness and massively supported in my home town of Bray

KATIE TAYLOR



Darkness into Light, May 2015

Providing colleagues with paid leave to volunteer enables them to express their support for a chosen good cause for the benefit of disadvantaged groups



1,000+  
Colleagues who  
volunteered in  
2015



Bank of Ireland  
matches the  
amounts raised by  
our colleagues

1 day’s  
paid leave  
to volunteer every  
year for a cause  
of their choice



€703K  
Matched award  
for fundraising in 2015





# Engaging with Communities

We're working alongside people from local communities to help support disadvantaged groups.

## BIG BLUE BOX VOLUNTEER CHALLENGE

### Riding the Wild Atlantic Way

The Wild Atlantic Way is the world's longest defined coastal touring route. It joins together areas of outstanding natural beauty and connects stunning Irish coastal towns. However, it's also true to say that the west of Ireland is not yet benefiting as much from the Irish economic recovery as the east.

The aim of the Big Blue Box Volunteer Challenge was to bring together these Wild Atlantic Way communities and to raise funds for St Vincent de Paul, one of our charity partners who work locally in the communities, by cycling the Way. A Big Blue Box travelled from town to town with the cyclists on both the northern and southern legs of the journey, bearing a symbolic item that each local community wanted to share with their neighbouring town. For example, Máire Mhic Aodha in our Oranmore branch knitted a Galway shawl which she put in the Box that went from Oranmore to neighbouring Salthill.

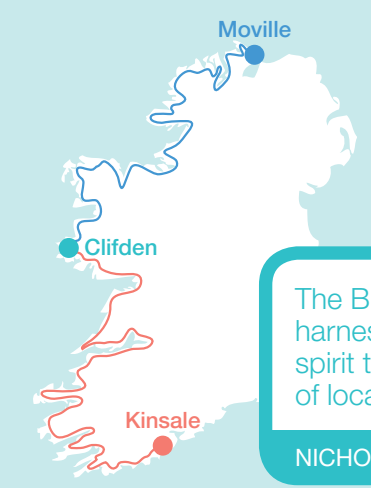
Two hundred of our colleagues, along with members of the local community, took part. There was also strong participation across all of the 35 local communities involved which was evident on the streets when the cyclists arrived bearing the Box. All donations raised locally were matched by us and went directly to support the work of the local St Vincent de Paul organisation.

#### The Route

The cycling event ran along the Wild Atlantic Way, beginning in Moville, Co. Donegal in the north and Kinsale, Co. Cork in the south at the same time - 11am on Friday 4 June - and finishing in Clifden, Co. Galway at 5pm on Friday 19 June.

“I'd love to see more initiatives like this happening around the country. It's clever, it's heartwarming and, hopefully, when they are finished on June 19, they will have a ton of money raised as well.

SILE SEOIGE, IRISH BROADCASTER



The Blue Box really harnessed community spirit to support the work of local SVP Conferences.

NICHOLA MULLEN

#### Communities on the route

THE NORTHERN LEG	Moville, Carndonagh, Buncrana, Letterkenny, Falcarragh, Bunbeg, Dungloe, Glenties, Killybegs, Donegal Town, Ballyshannon, Bundoran, Sligo, Ballina, Belmullet, Westport, Clifden.
THE SOUTHERN LEG	Kinsale, Clonakilty, Skibbereen, Bantry, Kenmare, Cahirciveen, Killorglin, Dingle, Tralee, Listowel, Ballybunion, Kilrush, Kilkee, Miltown Malbay, Ennistymon, Oranmore, Salthill, Oughterard, Clifden.



Sile Seoige taking part in the Big Blue Box Volunteer Challenge

Our colleagues are delighted to show their support for initiatives like this and to strengthen the local communities where they live and work

€80,000  
raised for the Society of St Vincent de Paul

- ▶ 1,244 km cycled
- ▶ 400 cyclists involved
- ▶ 35 communities
- ▶ 14 days
- ▶ 9 counties
- ▶ 1 team







Nichole and Dearbhail

“Oh, it’s not my hat,” Dearbhail tells us as she takes off the beanie she has been wearing since she turned up to meet us, “it’s Nichole’s.”

that aims to build positive and lasting relationships between young people from different communities. We support Co-operation Ireland as one of our five flagship charities and by helping the young people on their Fair Chance programme start to think about how they might get into the world of work.

Jonathan Reilly, the manager of our Newtownabbey branch has been helping 14- to 16-year-olds on the Fair Chance programme understand what businesses like the Bank look for in young people seeking a career. As he explains, “some of the young people may not have family members who are in work and they can lack role models which often means their confidence is low.”

Jonathan and his staff at the branch help young people start thinking about what they might want in life, rather than what skills and qualifications they may need. Jonathan follows this up by inviting the youngsters to visit the branch and learn about the variety of different roles his staff carry out every day. He then goes on to help them to develop their CVs and to practise interview skills, giving them feedback on how they come across to employers.

As Nichole says about Fair Chance, “the best bit is getting to know everyone and their personalities – it’s interesting to learn what both groups think.” When asked ‘are you different?’ she thinks before replying ‘not really’. But it’s when our photographer asks Dearbhail if she could take off her hat for the photographs outside the Titanic centre that we get a glimpse into what the programme can really achieve.

“Oh, it’s not my hat,” Dearbhail tells us as she takes off the beanie she has been wearing since she turned up to meet us, “it’s Nichole’s.”

[www.cooperationireland.org](http://www.cooperationireland.org)

## CO-OPERATION IRELAND

### ‘Fair Chance’

Nichole and Dearbhail, each from different Northern Irish traditions, probably wouldn’t have met if it wasn’t for the Fair Chance programme. The two girls, aged 14 and 15, were born two years after the Good Friday Agreement was signed, but there are still barriers in the way of young people from different traditions meeting socially. What can be done to help break down these longstanding divisions?

Co-operation Ireland’s Fair Chance programme is a good relations and employability programme designed for 16- to -24-year-olds from Belfast, Lisburn, Lurgan and Portadown

## MERCHANTS’ ACADEMY

### A sense of pride

Principal Anne Burrell points out of her office at a tower block across the road and says, “I used to live in that council flat there when I was young.” She’s proud of her roots and passionate about lifting the aspirations of local children.

Bank of Ireland UK has worked with Merchants’ Academy since 2007, providing their students with vital experience from the world of work. Even though the UK economy is growing, some communities are being left behind. The local areas that Merchants’ Academy serves are among some of the most deprived in the country. 30% of adults locally are either unemployed or on disability benefits. 44% of children qualify for free school meals (the national average is 15.7%).

The motto of Merchants’ Academy, however, is ‘Be Proud’. The school has gone from being ranked as the 80th worst school in the country to the 30th most improved school. In 2015, an entire year group of 12- to 13-year-olds - more

than 160 children - visited Temple Quay in Bristol to get insight into working for a large organisation. Our colleagues spoke to them about their own work-life journey and impressed upon students the importance of working hard at school.

Six of our colleagues also supported the Academy’s Year 10 ‘Future You!’ mock interview afternoon, a way of preparing young people for job applications and interviews. In addition, this year four students spent a week in July getting work experience across a number of our departments.

Since they began working with the students from Merchants’ Academy, colleagues Jamie Lockett and Nikki Ball have noticed a change. Their aspirations have risen beyond what was expected in their local community and perhaps beyond what they were previously encouraged to achieve.

[www.merchantsacademy.org](http://www.merchantsacademy.org)



Pupils at Merchants’ Academy, Bristol (Photo: Merchants’ Academy)

“This is an exceptional opportunity for our young people to engage with the world of work. They really are life-changing and help our students achieve more than they ever thought possible.

ANNE BURRELL, PRINCIPAL, MERCHANTS’ ACADEMY



Supporting communities in which young people, regardless of their background, can develop their potential, helps create a more sustainable society.



# 240

Children who have participated over the 2 years

The Fair Chance programme is one of many programmes run to help young people from different backgrounds and traditions get valuable workplace experience.

By helping the pupils of Merchants’ Academy, we are supporting a new generation of children to make the most of their potential

# 160 school children

visit Bol offices in Bristol

# 10

year partnership with Merchants’ Academy

# 30

MOCK INTERVIEWS





# Developing Skills

We're helping youngsters to develop their potential.

Children at Coders Dojo, Dundrum branch

## CODER DOJO

### Creating coders

The demand for skilled computer programmers is ever increasing. Kids are interested in learning to code, but the traditional school environment can't always help them to succeed. What's the solution?

Coder Dojo is a not-for-profit that runs a global network of free coding clubs for children aged between 7 and 17. They are set up to make learning to code simple, clear and fun. To help make Coder Dojos more widely available right across Ireland, we are working with Alan Murphy from Coder Dojo Ireland to see how they can use our branches in the evenings to teach coding and create pop-up Dojos at events such as Enterprise Towns.

"There are an estimated 40,000 technology jobs in Ireland that can't be filled by young Irish people," Alan Murphy explains. "Coder Dojo is a not-for-profit that aims to change that."

A Tuesday evening in central Dublin and Alan is explaining the basics of coding to Rebecca (10) and Grace (10). "Walk me around this desk simply by issuing commands," he says.

"Two steps forward," Rebecca directs him. "Turn right. No - the other way."

"The instructions you gave me," Alan explains, when they are done, "are just like code."

Pretty soon, the girls are tapping on their keyboards getting Elsa from *Frozen* to move across the icy wastes of Arendelle by dragging and dropping lines of code called scripting blocks to create a program.

The genius of this approach is the way it transforms dry lines of code into colourful building blocks that click together satisfyingly. It's a great way to get sophisticated concepts understood more easily.

As the father of a 5-year-old who's already playing Minecraft, I think Coder Dojo is a great initiative.

PAUL O'CONNELL

That's not to say the girls don't get frustrated at times. "What could you possibly want now, Elsa?" Rebecca utters when one coding task ends with the Snow Queen hopping on the spot instead of gliding over the ice as she's supposed to. But with volunteers on hand to help them, they get back on track fast.

Forty-five minutes later, Grace and Rebecca are effortlessly sliding blocks of code together on screen that have Elsa skating complex snowflake patterns over the Arendelle ice with similar poise and expertise. The spell of coding has the two girls in its grip.

[www.coderdojo.com](http://www.coderdojo.com)



Alan Murphy, Coder Dojo

“Coding is the new literacy

MARY MOLONEY,  
CODER DOJO

“Estimated 40,000 technology jobs in Ireland that can't be filled by young Irish people

ALAN MURPHY

By encouraging children to code, we hope to address a skills gap so that businesses can get the staff they need to succeed

Pop-up Dojos at

- ▶ 6 Enterprise Towns
- ▶ 1 Start-Up Gathering
- ▶ 3 days at the Ploughing Championships
- ▶ The TY Academy
- ▶ Kids Code For Christmas event in College Green

1,000+  
children reached





Pupils at BizWorld at St Brigid's Girls School, Cabinteely, Co. Dublin

BIZWORLD

## Primary entrepreneurs

The world needs entrepreneurs to come up with the products and services of the future and to create jobs. While business skills are taught in secondary schools, why not challenge young children to develop these skills earlier?

BizWorld is a business skill development and entrepreneurship programme for 11-12 year olds that takes place in the classroom. During a two-day workshop each child experiences the entire entrepreneurial cycle - from forming a company, to applying for a job in it, to market research with younger 4th classes to bringing their new product to market.

Children learn about design, production, marketing and sales in this fun and informative initiative. They even learn to pitch to a visiting 'Dragon in the Den' from the business world, usually their local branch manager. It's worth saying again, these children are only 11- to 12-years-old, but their ability to come up with new business concepts and their talent for negotiating is remarkable.

[www.bizworldireland.org](http://www.bizworldireland.org)

BizWorld is the kind of event I wish we'd had when I was at school.

PAUL O'CONNELL

### LEARN TO EARN

## Practical financial skills for students

There are 20 Transition Year students arranged in three groups at three long tables in the library of Holy Family Community School in Rathcoole, Co. Wicklow, considering how Charlie and Margaret Small should invest their savings.

The discussion goes back and forth.

'What about keeping their cash under the bed?'

'Better still, in a safe at home?'

'But what if robbers know they have a safe?'

'Prize bonds - they're like a raffle!'

'Yes but you might have them for 20 years and still win nothing!'

The Smalls in this example are a fictional couple. The students are on their fourth of six 'Learn to Earn' sessions, 'From dreams to reality', taught by two volunteers, Tracey and Patrick, from the local Bank of Ireland Rathcoole branch. They run through the scenarios and ask the students to suggest the best financial solutions for couples facing specific financial decisions at different stages in their lives.

The exercise draws on what the students have learned about deposit accounts, savings accounts, shares, managed funds and bonds, but they have to use their imagination as well, especially when asked to put themselves into the heads of a couple who have reached the, to them, unfathomable age of 60!

The opportunity for students to work through practical applications of business and finance is appreciated by their teacher Maureen, who has been with the school for 30 years, as it supports the theory they go through in a double class each week.

[www.jai.ie](http://www.jai.ie)

Managing finance is an essential element of self-sufficiency - a key aim of SVP for the families it helps.

NICHOLA MULLEN

### SPORTS SPONSORSHIPS

## Not just a name on the jersey

Sports sponsorships help organisations to maintain customer awareness of their brand by associating it with successful sports stars. In return, they provide funding for the sport. However, our relationship with sport goes beyond simply placing our name on famous jerseys and supporting successful teams financially. We're helping the sports we sponsor to invest in talented youngsters to help them make the most of their abilities and to sustain the sport in the long term. That means providing training camps for youngsters, supporting cup competitions and volunteering to train young teams.



“We're helping the sports we sponsor to invest in talented children

Karl Manning coaching Kilmacud Crokes



Sean O'Brien coaching kids at Leinster Summer Camp (Photo: Sportsfile)



Senior Girls Cup Final last season. Dominican College, Taylor's Hill, Galway celebrating their victory (photo courtesy of the FAI)

We support BizWorld to encourage young people to develop into the business leaders of the future

17  
BIZWORLDS  
SUPPORTED  
IN 2015

In 2015:

- ▶ 137 Learn to Earn sessions in Republic of Ireland
- ▶ 102 Young Enterprise Northern Ireland sessions



By encouraging talented children to develop to their full potential, we help them to express their talents and help ensure the futures of the sports they play



In 2015, we became the financial partner of the Football Association of Ireland and of Kilmacud Crokes GAA club, to add to our existing official sports sponsorships of Leinster, Munster and Ulster Rugby clubs.





# Promoting Inclusivity

We're providing opportunities for people with disabilities.



## PROFILE

### Mei Lin Yap

I found out I had Down Syndrome when I was about 14 years old up to then although I knew people who had intellectual disabilities it never occurred to me that I may have one too. When my mother explained it to me, I was really upset. It took me a while to come to terms with it. Once I did, I was determined to live as full and independent a life as is possible.

I don't think of myself as any different to anyone else. I have the same hopes, dreams, and expectations as any young woman of my age. I understand that having Down Syndrome affects some aspects of my life. The most frustrating thing I face is not being accepted by people, especially when looking for work.

But with some help and support I feel there is no reason why I can't achieve what I want to achieve. My mother, Aine, is really supportive of me, and has given me the support and freedom to live the life I choose.

“I have the same hopes, dreams, and expectations as any young woman of my age

I have been involved with The Irish Down Syndrome Sporting Organisation for about 12 years now, and this has given me wonderful opportunities to travel, meet new friends and have fun. I've represented my country on many occasions.

I was even asked by Neil O'Sullivan from Special Olympics Ireland to speak with prisoners at Wheatfield and Mountjoy about the challenges I've faced to help give them

confidence. "Are you serious?" I replied when he asked me. But although I was nervous giving a talk in a big hall with the spotlight shining on me it went well and I got five standing ovations at Mountjoy.

Overall, I think that supports are really important for people with all disabilities. Some of us just need support in different aspects of our lives in order to live our lives fully.

Mei Lin's story is just so inspiring

KATIE TAYLOR



John, June and Deirdre

## PROMOTING INCLUSIVITY

### Willing & Able

#### June Fitzgerald

June lives in Tullamore and commutes to our offices on Mespil Road, Dublin, where she works as a HR Coordinator. June was born with albinism which means her long distance vision is impaired. As a HR Co-ordinator, she is responsible for looking after the graduates on our Graduate Programme. June is used to the issues that albinism brings but can easily manage them.

#### John O'Grady

John, who hails from Doonbeg, Co. Clare, has Retinitis Pigmentosa. He was short sighted from birth but his eyesight deteriorated about the time he was completing his Leaving Cert. His placement was in Group Accounting Services. His greatest challenge? Simply learning the layout of buildings so he could find his way around.

#### Deirdre Scanlon

Deirdre, who has a mental health disability, is from Listowel, Co. Kerry, and joined a new regulatory and compliance function at the Bank. Deirdre used Electronic File Management to ensure that scanned documents were all filed correctly, had the right staff numbers and that all names were correct.

[www.ahead.ie](http://www.ahead.ie)

Our colleagues tell us that they get a great deal of satisfaction and enjoyment from giving work experience to students like Mei Lin each year

Bank of Ireland supports the Centre for Inclusion and Intellectual Disability at Trinity College Dublin

4  
Willing & Able placements in Bank of Ireland in 2015

OVER  
10 years  
WORKING WITH  
AHEAD



## Some more highlights

### Ireland's most generous workforce

In a Business Impact Map published by Business in the Community Ireland (BITCI) in 2015, Bank of Ireland was rated as having the most generous workforce in Ireland for the second year running.

### Splash for Cash

Last summer, colleagues in Northern Ireland raised £1,420 when Stormont Estate in Belfast was transformed into the Splash on the Hill with a giant 100m waterslide in aid of Co-operation Ireland and Cash for Kids.

### 100minds

In 2015, we sponsored the launch event of the third annual 100minds campaign. Six of our colleagues volunteered to mentor 30 students over the coming months of the campaign. Each student was set a fundraising target of €1,000 for Childline.

### Fund it

In 2015, we announced a three-year investment and partnership with the Irish non-profit crowdfunding platform Fundit.ie to further its support of Ireland's innovative and creative sectors.

### Lap the Lough

More than 60 colleagues from across the Group joined the 2,000 cyclists who took part in Northern Ireland's largest cycling event – the 140km Lap the Lough on Sunday 30 August, raising funds for the Bank's charity partners, Barnardo's and Co-operation Ireland, as well as for other good causes.

### Bond Trader

Over 200 5th and 6th year students from schools all across Leinster gathered in the Presidential Suite at the Aviva Stadium in April for the Bond Trader Challenge, an event designed to promote understanding of the way that global developments affect the economic world. The challenge was won by Loreto College, Swords, Co. Dublin.

### Catherine Judge

Violinist Mairéad Hickey won the Bank of Ireland Catherine Judge Memorial Award 2015, which is an All-Ireland award open to exceptional solo classical musicians who wish to pursue third level musical education. She received a bursary of £5,000 (€6,800) and her nominated school received £1,000 (€1,400).

### Audiobooks for the blind

In spring 2015, New Ireland Assurance and the National Council for the Blind Ireland (NCBI) worked together to produce an audio version of Frank O'Connor's *Collected Stories* – containing the best of his short fiction – which is now available to NCBI library members.

### Philanthropic Award

Asma Ahmed, who works at Bank of Ireland UK, won the Philanthropic Award at the London 2015 PA Awards for the eight years she has dedicated to making a difference for vulnerable people through her charity and voluntary work.

### TY Academy

Our Transition Year Academy launched in 2015. 60 students from 20 schools across Leinster took part in an action-packed five days, responding to a challenge from the Irish Cancer Society to come up with innovative ways to combat increasing cancer rates.

### Charity and customer training

In 2015, we delivered training courses to 245 members of charity and community groups.

### Funding new school buildings

Between 2010 and 2014, 18 schools that we funded or part funded through Public Private Partnerships opened, ensuring nearly 13,000 students had new premises in which to learn.



Nichole and Dearbhail outside the Titanic Centre, Belfast





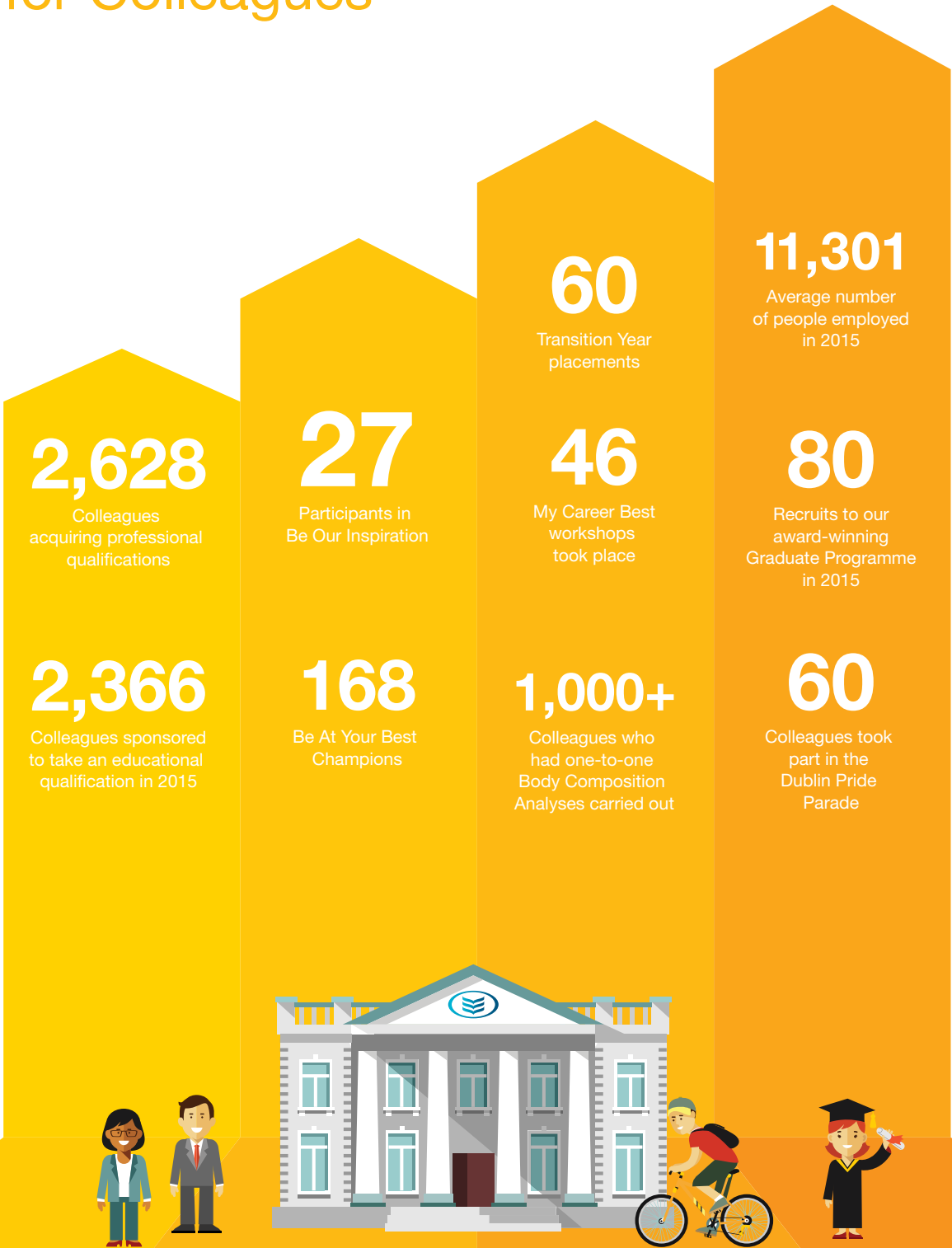
Henry Shefflin, Aidan Lennon, Ben Kelly, Anne Dalton, Killian Young, Tommy Walsh, Keith Higgins, Owen Duffy, Mick O'Dowd at the Olympia Theatre in Dublin

# Colleagues

We're providing our colleagues with opportunities for learning, education and professional development, while supporting them to look after their physical and mental wellbeing. We're a proud supporter of diversity in the workplace reflecting the communities we serve. We're helping to put our colleagues in control of their careers.



# Making a difference for Colleagues



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# Working to high standards

We're supporting colleagues to take control of their careers.

## CAREER PORTAL

### Take control of your career

Following on from the introduction of the Career & Reward Framework in 2014, we launched a new Career Portal in 2015. The portal provides colleagues with a wide range of resources to help them take ownership of their career development. It has a wealth of information and resources under the themes of Discover, Plan, Learn, and Act.

In Discover, colleagues are encouraged to answer questions such as 'what do you want to achieve in your career?' and 'what do you value in your current role?' In Plan, colleagues can find help on how to plan their career journey. A great career doesn't happen by accident, it needs a plan. In Learn, the interactive e-learning hub has hundreds of courses, articles and tutorials on how to develop career and workplace skills. In Act, colleagues can prepare their CV and keep it updated, take a mock interview on the Interview Simulator using a webcam, and sign up for a Learningzone or Institute of Bankers course.

Importantly, colleagues can access the career portal from their home PC or mobile devices as well as on their work computer. Any personal information they create on the portal – assessments, CVs, mock interviews – is kept confidential.

## PROFESSIONALISATION

### Continuous learning

Enhancing the capability and professionalism of our people continues to be a priority. During 2015, our colleagues completed 167,000 hours of learning, covering a broad curriculum of over 400 programmes, 64% of which were delivered through digital channels. 2,628 colleagues have achieved professional accredited qualifications, while we sponsored 2,366 colleagues to start education programmes in the last year.

“A wide range of resources to help them take ownership of their career development



Claire McGuinness, UK Treasury

## GRADUATE PROGRAMME

### Claire McGuinness

Claire was born in Hong Kong where she learned to speak Cantonese on a daily basis and studied for her BSc. in Quantitative Finance at the University of Hong Kong. She completed a summer internship at Hang Seng Bank in Shanghai, China, where she knew no-one, had to find her way in one of the world's largest and busiest cities, and had to attend meetings where only Cantonese was spoken. Claire flew in to London for her interview for the Bank of Ireland UK Graduate Programme 2013 and ended up working three rotations. The first two, Current Accounts, Consumer Banking UK and UK Treasury, were based in London while the third, Operations and Change NI, was based in Belfast. During the Programme, she worked on subjects as diverse as liquid assets and credit ratings, and projects in Northern Ireland such as the Northern Irish migration from Maestro to Visa debit and the Banking On Line refresh. She rejoined the UK Treasury team, full-time, in September, based in Belfast, a smaller city than Shanghai but one which she finds very friendly.

The new Career Portal puts all the resources for building a career at our colleagues' fingertips

**4,000+**  
Colleagues who had used the Career Portal by the end of 2015



**80**  
Graduates who were welcomed onto our award-winning Graduate Programme



# Supporting colleagues to be at their best

## BE OUR INSPIRATION Inspired & inspiring

Some of us have a talent that has fallen by the wayside, because the competing demands of job and family often leave little time for skills we used to love. Time goes by and all of a sudden it seems too late to rediscover them. But the talents are still there – they’re just not expressed. How do we find the courage and the willpower to go beyond our limits and develop all our abilities at any age?

Be Our Inspiration was our innovative way to enable our colleagues to rediscover lost talents and to inspire us by doing so. The 17 acts that passed the audition stage spent 12 demanding months re-learning their chosen talent. We provided them all with a weekly session with a tutor who helped them through their toughest days and gave them all the direction they needed in rehearsals. A trained psychotherapist, Isobel Mahon, was on call to help them find the strength to conquer their fears about performing. Musical director Ivan McKenna provided leadership and inspired them to be the best they could be.

But working for a year to prepare for a concert knowing they would have to perform in front of over 2,000 people wasn’t all they had to do. Each act also worked with a campaign manager and participated in multiple fundraising events across Ireland and Northern Ireland for 12 months and eventually raised over €100,000 for Barnardo’s – a sum which Fergus Finlay, CEO Barnardo’s Ireland, said would permanently change the lives of hundreds of vulnerable children.

### Jennie’s story

I played the keyboards when I was younger and always regretted not pursuing it more. When I saw the ad for the programme I knew this was my chance. I soon realised that I knew very little and it was going to be harder than I thought. I learnt so much over the year, loads about music but also how to apply myself. If it wasn’t for Be Our Inspiration I think I would still be sitting at home thinking, I’d love to do that but actually not doing anything.

**Seamus’s story**  
I am the youngest of four. I think when you are the youngest you always want the attention; I learned I could get it by being funny. I expected I would have training with a comic but it has been so much more – vocal coaching, stage coaching. With the confidence I have gained from this I have gone out and performed at venues all over Dublin. I’ve learned that confidence is easy, once you step forward.



Seamus Stackpoole,  
Direct Channels

### Wonder Child

Our colleagues taking part in Be Our Inspiration also performed on a charity single with X-Factor contestant Mary Byrne. Wonder Child reached the Top 5 in the Irish download charts.

#### The colleagues who inspired us were:

- Joe Brennan, traditional Irish musician
- Jimmy Stafford, Susan O'Reilly, Martina Doherty, Lucia McCauley & Denise McMahon, Wild Atlantic Waves band members
- Tony Victory, singer
- Susan Kane, singer
- Seamus Stackpoole, stand-up comedian
- Zofia Lankiewicz, singer
- Elaine Page, singer
- Dawn Noble, singer
- Keith Gill, singer
- Sarah Kemp, singer
- Brian Trainor, singer & pianist
- Veronica Kennedy, singer
- Laura McDonnell, singer
- Rory Murphy, Mary Moulds, Caitriona Farrell, Aimee Nolan, Maria Sherman, Sara Kearney, Mars Attack band members
- Viktorija Lemtjugova, photographer
- Jennie McCahill, pianist
- Gillian Larmour, flautist

Be Our Inspiration shows that with help and hard work you can achieve your dreams.

KATIE TAYLOR

Be Our Inspiration helped demonstrate that with the right support, hard work and dedication, learning anything is possible

€101,805  
raised for  
Barnardo's



- 93 applications
- 29 acts auditioned
- 17 acts chosen
- 2 shows
- 1 night to shine





Couch to 5K, Dublin (Photo: Mel MacLaine)



## COUCH TO 5K CHALLENGE

### 1.5k do 5k

The first step is the hardest. Just summoning up the willpower to take up exercise can be challenging. Recent figures from member states of the European Union (EU) indicate that six in every 10 people over 15 years of age never or seldom exercise or play a sport, and more than half never or seldom engage in other kinds of physical activity, such as cycling, dancing or gardening. It seems that we need a helping hand to get active. Our Be At Your Best initiative provides our colleagues with a way of gently adopting a healthier lifestyle.

As part of Be At Your Best, approximately 1,480 colleagues each ran 5k in races spread across the Republic of Ireland, Great Britain and Northern Ireland. That adds up to 7,400 km, or the distance from London to Miami.

The Couch to 5k Challenge catered for all colleagues, including walkers, joggers, and runners of all abilities. But it was especially targeted at those who might not currently exercise. No matter what level of fitness, anyone could join in. Four training plans for differing levels of ability, along with running tips, advice on setting goals, nutrition hints and recipes plus a food and exercise diary were sent to participants beforehand – then it was up to them on the day to get their running shoes on, and nearly 1,500 of them did just that.

## PROFILE

### David Robinson

When I started with Be At Your Best I was doing zero exercise and I was a smoker.

I began with the Step Challenge in early 2014 by putting on one of the pedometers that the Bank supplied and increasing my level of physical activity to 15,000 steps a day for 100 days. After that, I went to the talks given by Maureen Gaffney on The Art & Science of Being At Your Best and by Karl Henry who introduced the Couch to 5k initiative in the autumn of 2014 which got me from walking to jogging. I live close to Ormeau Park in Belfast so I began training there following Karl's programme for first-time runners.

I ran and completed the 5k and then I thought, well what's next? Running was going well for me and making a difference to my lifestyle so I decided to step up to a 10k run by taking part in the Run in the Dark at Stormont, which started at 8pm on a November evening. I did the 10k in 56 minutes which wasn't bad, considering I'd been doing absolutely no exercise a few months before.

I did my first half marathon, the Larne Half Marathon down the Antrim coast, in March 2015 and it was tough. It was a very hilly coastal course but I managed to get it done in two hours 13 minutes. Well, then I wanted to get below two hours. In July I did another one, the Belfast Titanic Half Marathon, and finished in 1 hour 55 minutes. I was a bit sore in my hip afterwards but like Karl Henry says you have to manage your injuries, recognise when they're coming on and use Rest, Ice, Compression and Elevation (RICE).

At the start of 2015 I became convinced that as well as running, cycling was for me. I saw an ad for the Cycle to Work scheme and thought I'd get a bike and sign up for the Belfast to Newry leg of the Co-operation Ireland Belfast to Dublin Maracycle in June. It was 40 miles and I hadn't been on a bike since I was 16. In August, I completed another Be At Your Best event – the 85-mile Lap the Lough cycle that the Bank sponsors – with my training colleagues Michael Coyne and David Walker and 50 others from across the Bank of Ireland.

In June 2015, I decided to quit smoking with my fiancé Kyle who also works in the Bank after having a 20-a-day habit for years. We got through it. The amount of pride I felt for quitting something I'd done for half my life was amazing. Before Be At Your Best I would have just sat down in front of the TV but now I might go for a cycle down to Lisburn or Comber. My fitness has improved and now I'm more likely to spend time kicking a football around with kids.

David Robinson, UK Savings, Bank of Ireland UK



David Robinson, fiancé Kyle and children Ethan and Jude

“No matter what level of fitness anyone could join in

“I decided to quit smoking with my fiancé Kyle, who also works in the Bank, after having a 20-a-day habit for years

Our Be At Your Best programme helps colleagues support their physical health and mental wellbeing while taking positive steps in their career

70

#### REPUBLIC OF IRELAND:

26 September  
Dublin, Sligo, Galway,  
Kilkenny, Cork

#### GREAT BRITAIN:

9 May  
Ashton Court Estate

#### NORTHERN IRELAND:

26 September  
Belfast



7,400 km  
covered

(distance from London to Miami)

1,480  
colleagues

9  
events

By participating in Be At Your Best activities, our colleagues benefit from increased health and wellbeing at home and at work

The Be at Your Best initiative combines supported exercise and nutritional programmes backed by ...



... changing  
lifetime habits

tips from motivational speakers such as Maureen Gaffney and Niall Breslin ('Bressie')



... health and  
exercise talks

from experts Paula Mee and Karl Henry





# Supporting Diversity

We're a proud supporter of diversity in the workplace, reflecting the diversity in the communities we serve.



## DUBLIN PRIDE 2015

### From here to diversity

In 2015, we became the first Irish financial institution to sponsor Dublin Pride. Over 60 of our colleagues took part in the parade, which began in Parnell Square and made its way past our O'Connell street branch which opened for the day in support, handing out flags and inflatables. Our own Rainbow Twirlers dance troupe kept the crowds entertained along the route, while Junk Kouture-winning outfit, Le Paon Majestueux, modelled by Sarah Cox and sporting enormous peacock feathers, proved extremely popular. We ended at Pride Village in Merrion Square where our stand was busy with visitors ably managed by colleagues from our Graduate Programme.

Sponsoring the parade enables us to recognise the contribution of the whole community to society and allows our colleagues to show their support

60+

COLLEAGUES TOOK  
PART IN THE PARADE

20 colleagues

opened O'Connell Street branch for the afternoon to show their support and represented the bank at our stand in Pride Village

Several colleagues wore their national costumes at a multicultural celebration organised by Financial Services in Dublin in May

## MULTICULTURAL CELEBRATION DAY

### Valuing difference

Thursday 21 May, Dublin, Ireland

Colleagues wore their national costumes at a multicultural celebration organised by Financial Services in May. Events included classes in Tai Chi, Chinese paper cutting, Indian head massage and Nigerian hairdressing, while entertainment was provided by Polish dancers, Chinese musicians, Nigerian drummers and a Flamenco dancer. The celebration provided our colleagues with the opportunity to acknowledge the large number of nationalities working alongside their Irish co-workers, contributing to the Bank's success while learning more about their different cultures.

Grace Olayiwola,  
Group Finance





# Promoting positive mental health

We're finding innovative ways to help colleagues manage their mental wellbeing.

## MIND UR BUDDY

### Mind Ur Buddy

Many people get stressed at work at one time or another. What if there was a formal network of trained colleagues who could help other colleagues cope better with the pressure when they hit stressful times?

Mind Ur Buddy is a way of enabling colleagues to support colleagues. We first trialled it in the south-east region of Ireland, where 18 of our colleagues attended a workshop to be trained by Pieta House's qualified and experienced therapists to become a Buddy Support Person. They were taught how to notice the telltale signs of changes in the behaviour of people in their workplaces and what to do when they spot it. It's important to note that the initiative supports colleagues (and their families) undergoing differing levels of stress, and not just those who are in an extreme state.

Buddy Support Persons are not trained to be therapists. They are short-term confidential helpers – the link between a person in distress and Pieta House. A counsellor network was also set up so that Buddies could share experiences and support each other as they support others.  
[www.pieta.ie](http://www.pieta.ie)

## HEAD SHEDS

### Talking about mental wellbeing

What's the best way to cope with the pressure at work? Stress balls, yoga, counting to 10? In the spring, our UK colleagues built Head Sheds in our Belfast, Bristol and London offices, creating a focal point where employees could take a break, meet to discuss issues relating to mental wellbeing and leave any tips of their own.

“One of the hardest, yet most liberating things a person can do, is admit they are not emotionally invincible

NIALL BRESLIN



Good way to create a culture of support and openness in times of stress.

DECLAN EGAN

The Headshed at our Bristol office  
(Photo: Julian James)

The Head Sheds took the form of actual garden sheds constructed on a site containing a wealth of information about mental wellbeing for employees to sit down and read or take away, as well as brainteasers and games. The surprise of seeing a Shed appear got people talking about a subject that doesn't get aired.

For colleagues working elsewhere in our branch network in Northern Ireland and at offices in Manchester and Birmingham, we supplied Head Shed drawer units, containing similar materials, articles and activities. At the end of the initiative, all the Head Sheds were donated by us to local Barnardo's projects or other chosen local causes and the drawer units to local schools.

The Head Sheds initiative was also rolled out in Republic of Ireland and at the end of the initiative donated onwards. One donation went to St Augustine's School in Blackrock, Co. Dublin, where staff provide education for approximately 160 students, aged 8 to 18, with mild learning difficulties. The work can be rewarding but sometimes challenging, and taking time out to manage their own wellbeing so they can continue to be at their best is sensible. Their Head Shed sits in a courtyard just outside the main classrooms – close enough to be accessible when teachers and staff need time out, but far enough removed so they won't be disturbed.

Mind Ur Buddy enables our colleagues to get training to support each other through times of stress

90

Buddy Support Persons

have been trained by Pieta House, the charity based in Ireland that campaigns for the prevention of self-harm or suicide

8

HEAD SHEDS WERE OPENED

4,400

STAFF HAD ACCESS TO HEAD SHEDS



## Some more highlights

### My Career Best Workshops

In 2015, we ran 46 workshops, helping 555 colleagues take charge of their careers by identifying what they are good at, finding opportunities to excel in that skill and building a career plan based on it. Sustainable succession continues to be a strong focus for the Group.

### Continuous Professional Development

We support colleagues registered with the Institute of Bankers wishing for Continuous Professional Development, by providing learning opportunities through Learningzone, making it easier for them to log their approved hours.

### Marriage equality

Following the referendum in May when 62% of Irish people voted in favour of same sex marriage, Sarah Kemp became our first colleague to celebrate a same sex marriage when she married Ciara McCarthy on 12 December, 2015, in Dublin.

### Bestival 2015

This year's Bestival took place in the RDS on 8 June in aid of the Irish Cancer Society, raising €21,056. This was a day for our colleagues and their families to come together and enjoy a great day out.

### Paula Mee Nutritional Programme

Paula, a writer and member of the Food Safety Consultative Council of Ireland, delivered talks on nutrition in over 20 locations in Ireland, Northern Ireland and Great Britain, and conducted one-to-one Body Composition Analyses for 450 colleagues.

### Eat Yourself Healthy by Catherine Fulvio

Catherine Fulvio, TV Chef, Cookbook author and proprietor at Ballyknocken House & Cookery School, gave colleagues the opportunity to 'Cook Yourself Healthy' for Christmas over an eight-week programme.

### Trail Trek 2015

On Sunday morning 19 April over 450 trail trekkers from as far away as Wexford, Carlow and Monaghan took to the Dublin mountains for the BAYB Trail Trek.

### Graduation ceremonies

We formally recognised the education achievements of colleagues who attained qualifications, by holding graduation events across Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and Great Britain.

### Pension schemes

Bank of Ireland introduced a new defined contribution scheme (RetireWell) in September 2014 for new entrants to the Bank. In 2015, RetireWell won an award for best communication strategy at the Irish Pension Awards and received a Pension Quality Standard Award (with merit) from the Irish Association of Pensions Funds. RetireWell has also been nominated in three categories for the 2016 UK Pension Awards.

### Trade Unions

The Bank of Ireland Group engage with all employee representative bodies (Irish Bank Officials Association, SIPTU and Unite) in an open and transparent manner. During the course of 2015, we engaged in a number of constructive consultation processes, with agreement reached with representative bodies.

### Partners' Council

Partners' Council was established in 1992 in the Bristol & West Building Society – which was acquired by Bank of Ireland in 1996 – as a staff council dealing with business-as-usual issues. Our Partners' Council is recognised as one of the top three work councils in the UK by independent experts, the Involvement and Participation Association.

### Health & Safety

The Health and Safety Centre of Excellence provides support and guidance to all employees in the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and Great Britain. In 2014, we redesigned our Health and Safety Management system at our Operations Centre and were awarded an internationally recognised OHSAS 18001, Occupational Health and Safety Management Certification. In addition, during 2015, we also redesigned and implemented a more robust risk management framework for monitoring of Construction works across our portfolio which has proved very effective.



Colleagues at graduation ceremony in the House of Lords, College Green, Dublin



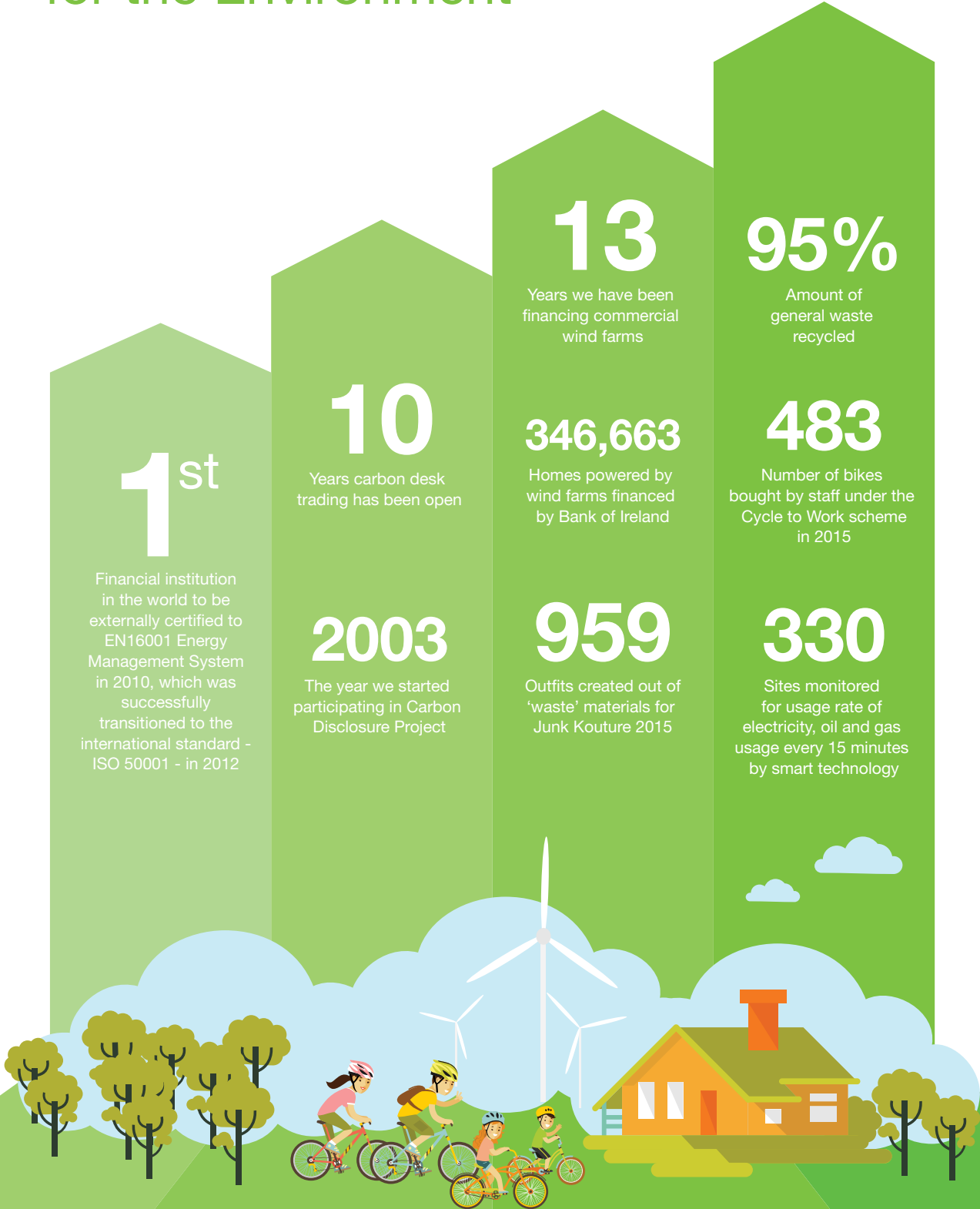


# Environment

We're working responsibly across all our activities from the products and services we provide to the buildings that we work from and the way we work with suppliers. We're promoting the benefits of sustainability to our colleagues and local communities. We're using raw materials wisely, doing all we can to protect natural habitats and avoiding harm to the environment.



# Making a difference for the Environment



**Page 83**  
1st financial institution to attain EN16001/ISO50001

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Green IFSC founders

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Junk Kouture

**Promoting sustainability**

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Energy policy

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Resource management  
Cabinteely ITC

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Carbon trading desk

**Using resources wisely**

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Investment in greentech & cleantech

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Commercial windfarms financed

**Investing in sustainability**

## Protecting the environment

**Page 87**  
Cycle to work scheme





## Using resources wisely

We use raw materials wisely, doing all we can to protect natural habitats and avoid harm to the environment.

Data centre, Cabinteely, Co. Dublin

### ENERGY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

## Managing our use of resources

In 2010, we became the only financial institution in Europe (and one of only 50 companies worldwide) to attain EN16001 (ISO50001) accreditation for the Energy Management Systems at our IT and Operations centres in Cabinteely, Co Dublin.

In 2015, our Energy Management systems at our IT and Operations centres had their ISO50001 certification renewed to December 2017 and extended to cover a further three buildings – Mespil Road, Burlington Plaza and New Century House (all in Dublin). Together, these five buildings account for more than a third of our total energy use.

The ISO50001 standard is a continuous improvement initiative, aimed at understanding where energy is used within an organisation's operations and whether it's appropriate. For example, ensuring that air conditioning only runs during business hours and isn't left running through the night.

One of the measures we introduced at our Cabinteely IT centre included increasing the temperature set points from 19°C to 23°C in the Data Centre, reducing the energy used for cooling without compromising the efficiency of the computer hardware.

We also installed LED lighting in office areas, replaced older fluorescent lighting, introduced a more efficient air conditioning system serving our office areas, and purchased three super-efficient condensing gas boilers, replacing the use of oil and electricity to heat the building.

### EMISSIONS TRADING SCHEME

## Carbon Trading

The EU's Emissions Trading Scheme is the largest greenhouse gas emissions trading system in the world. When it was launched in 2005, we became the first Irish bank to offer the 100 Irish companies included in the scheme the capability to sell their emissions allowances. We currently help transact approximately 450,000/CO<sub>2</sub>e each year. We are still the only Irish bank offering this facility.

### How it works

Before 2005, greenhouse gases emitted by European companies were not regulated now they are. Companies must measure and report their carbon emissions. They are given allowances up to a cap and must hand in one allowance for each tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> they release into the atmosphere. They can sell their remaining allowances, providing an incentive for them to reduce their emissions. How does that work in practice?

### Example

Burning coal creates more carbon in the atmosphere than burning gas. Power companies have a choice over what fuel they use to generate power, so they're now more likely to choose gas over coal. They can then sell the allowances they have left over from switching to the lower emitting alternative.

### What we do

We provide a way for people to trade allowances and, in this way, support the regulation of greenhouse gases by the EU.

“We are still the only Irish bank offering this facility

The ISO50001 standard has encouraged more sustainable ways of working, delivering benefits to the environment while reducing our building running costs

### 5 Buildings certified to ISO50001 to 2017

- ▶ IT Centre Cabinteely
- ▶ Operations Centre in Cabinteely
- ▶ Mespil Road
- ▶ New Century House
- ▶ Burlington Plaza

# 1<sup>st</sup>

Financial institution in the world to be externally certified to EN16001 Energy Management System in 2010, which was successfully transitioned to the international standard - ISO 50001 - in 2012

8,968,907

tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> transacted through our Carbon Trading desk since 2005





# Investing in sustainability

We're investing in 'green' businesses.

Conor O'Neill, Hybrid Energy

## SUSTAINABLE ENERGY

### HYbrid energy

In many developing economies, rural communities are often a long way from the national grid. Fewer than 10% have electricity. It's often too expensive to extend the grid to the many small and widely spread communities in these areas. This is a real issue, because the local areas desperately want better communications in order not to remain isolated yet the phone masts they need to get mobile phone coverage need power. How can this situation be solved?

Hybrid Energy is an Irish-based company with offices in Kilkenny, Dublin and Dubai and is mainly focused in the developing countries of the Middle East, Africa, Asia, Central and South America, where the electricity networks are inadequate. They are currently working in Nigeria with a telecoms provider to construct phone masts in remote areas and they are doing it in an innovative way.

Their main product, the HYbrid Energy Station (HES), is a hybrid generator that works in a similar way to a hybrid car. The HES uses a lithium ion battery from global giant LG in Korea, which is charged by energy supplied by solar panels or wind power. When renewable energy isn't available, HYbrid's software first ensures that it uses the existing energy stored in the battery before switching to diesel until renewable is available again. In this way, the generator combines green energy and reliability.

By combining solar with diesel in this way the HYbrid generator – currently the only one of its kind in the world – reduces fuel consumption by almost 80% for a standard

telecommunications base station and CO<sup>2</sup> emissions by approximately 50 tonnes a year, making it economically viable and sustainable to build new base stations in even the most remote of areas. The current project in Nigeria will see CO<sup>2</sup> emissions reduced by almost 100,000 tonnes per year.

“The HYbrid Energy Station (HES) is a hybrid generator that works in a similar way to a hybrid car

The Bank of Ireland Kernel Capital Venture Funds, investing in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, are one of the largest and most active sources of equity finance for technology companies on the island of Ireland

By investing in early and growth stage companies, Kernel Capital enables them to grow while providing a return for their investors



Hollyford wind farm, Co Tipperary

## SUSTAINABLE ENERGY

### Raheenleagh Wind Farm

Generating power from 'green' sources such as wind supports a broader base of energy provision and reduces dependency on carbon-based fuels like oil and coal. Located west of Arklow, the 35MW Raheenleagh Wind Farm will generate enough power for approximately 22,500 households using 11 wind turbines. Construction is under way, with commercial operations planned to begin in October 2016. The project is a result of a co-development agreement between ESB and Coillte and is being financed by Bank of Ireland and Nord LB. Two Irish companies – Gridpower Ltd and Denis Moriarty The Kerries Ltd - have been contracted to construct the wind farm with turbines supplied by Siemens.

**107MW**  
Energy produced from wind farms that we financed in 2015



Enough to power  
**69,229**  
homes



SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

# The grass is greener

Dairy, beef and sheep farmers have always needed to manage the grass their animals need. With a large herd of dairy cows, for example, it's not uncommon for farmers to move them between paddocks twice a day over their 21-day rotation – which means keeping a mental map of the state of the grass in all the paddocks or walking the land to take a look. But there are two problems with that.

One is that some farmers simply don't have time to get out and take a look. They're milking twice a day, fertilising the land and helping out with family chores like picking the kids up from school (and that's on top of any other paid jobs they do to supplement their income). Time is precious. The second problem is that even if they do it's hard to be precise about the height of the grass simply by looking. The grass really does look greener depending on where you're standing, because the light reflects off the leaves differently.

The GrassOmeter takes the guesswork out of grass measurement to quickly give farmers the accurate figures they need to record and benchmark grass growth, paddock by paddock, across their whole farm. The GrassOmeter is mounted on a pole and used like a walking stick. It works by using ultrasound sensors linked to a nine-point orientation sensor, to measure both grass height and the topography of the land for greater accuracy. And it takes 20 height measurements a step creating hundreds of samples per field. Measurements are recorded and displayed on farmers' smartphones using Bluetooth. All farmers have to do is open the GrassOmeter app on their phone, link the device and start walking. But, helpfully, it doesn't have to be the farmer who walks the land – anyone can be sent to use the app to collect the data.

Farming smarter like this means more and better grass for cows to eat, less fertiliser used, less money spent on expensive feedstuffs, greater sustainability and greater profitability for the farmer.

“ The GrassOmeter takes the guesswork out of grass measurement



Steven Lock of Monford AG Systems

BIKE TO WORK

# The long commute

Gareth Irvine got his bike through the Bike to Work scheme over four years ago. He commutes 165km a week to and from work in the IFSC in Dublin. In the past four years he has cycled through rain, sleet, snow and the occasional moment of sunshine for over 28,000 km.

Along the way his bike has had:

32 new brake pads

8 new tyres

4 new wheels

2 new chain sets

1 new set of bearings

1 new seat

But just the 1 rider.

By cycling to work, he's saved 3,640 kg of CO<sup>2</sup> from being released into the earth's atmosphere.

Gareth demonstrates how a simple lifestyle change can benefit the environment & your wellbeing.

NICHOLA MULLEN



Gareth Irvine, Digital Marketing Manager



Andy Thompson

ANAEROBIC DIGESTION

# Turning waste into energy

Anaerobic digestion is a natural process which takes organic waste and breaks it down. This produces a gas which is turned into electricity. The process also creates a natural by-product which can be spread on the land as a fertiliser, saving famers money and returning nutrients to the land. However, until recently Northern Irish farmers were unable to make use of anaerobic digesters because their farms were too small to make them economically viable. However, in 2015, new 150kW units specifically designed for the Irish market became available after we approved £10 million to help fund them. The new units allow for higher moisture content and smaller scale farms than would be typical in the rest of Europe. As well as reducing their carbon footprint, the plants will also provide the farmers with a valuable new source of revenue.

Kernel Capital is currently investing in early and growth stage companies in the €0.5m to €5m range

Hybrid Energy and GrassOmeter were supported through **seed capital** provided by **Kernel Capital**



Bank of Ireland is a participant in Kernel Capital's €32m "Bank of Ireland Seed and Early Stage Equity Fund" which provided the funding to HYbrid Energy and Grassometer

The Bike to Work scheme not only supports colleagues wishing to commute in a sustainable way, it reduces the amount of CO<sup>2</sup> released into the atmosphere, thereby benefitting all of us



4,631

Bikes bought by staff under the Cycle to Work scheme to date

Providing finance for the anaerobic digesters helps small agri businesses become more efficient while providing a 'greener' source of energy



£10m

Facility approved by Bank of Ireland Business Banking NI in 2015 to help fund up to **16 small scale Anaerobic Digestion Plants** across Northern Ireland



# Promoting sustainability

We're communicating the benefits of sustainability to our colleagues and local communities.

Sarah Cox wearing the winning outfit, *Le Paon Majestueux*

## JUNK KOUTURE

### Junk rocks

They came, they roared, they catwalked. Following in the steps of Lady GaGa and Beyoncé, 80 students representing teams from schools across Ireland and Northern Ireland got to storm the stage to show off their creations in the 3Arena, Dublin. The event? The Bank of Ireland Junk Kouture Grand Final 2015.

Unlike their more famous style icons, their fabulous outfits weren't designed by top fashion designers, didn't involve a massive entourage and didn't cost thousands. Instead, they were made out of stuff we throw away every day and the creative inspiration behind each of them came from teams of three Transition Year students supported only by their teachers at local schools throughout Ireland and Northern Ireland. And these are just the top 10% of the 969 outfits originally submitted.

Take the Bandon Grammar School team behind *Coffeecomb*, who recycled used coffee cups to create the honeycomb appearance of their futuristic looking dress. Or *Sheer Glass*, the glittering outfit created by Carndonagh Community School out of 100 recycled green glass bottles ground into tiny grains and moulded onto the dress fabric. There were simple and elegant outfits like *Pearlection* from Scoil Mhuire, Strokestown, that wouldn't look out of place in high street fashion outlets. And then there were the spectacular concoctions like the Marie Antoinette-inspired *Gold Maiden*.

But does Junk Kouture make a lasting difference? The experience of past winners suggests it does. Several have gone on to become fashion design students, one is currently studying footwear design, one is a fashion blogger and one is studying TV, film and special effects make-up. But its greater legacy might well be that it shows all the young students that their creativity has no limits and they can use it to make a positive difference to the planet.

Indeed, when the judges announce the overall winner, *Le Paon Majestueux* from Elphin, Co Roscommon, designed by Luke McEvoy, Sarah Cox and Eimear Gill Hunt supported by teacher Susan Prendergast, amid a storm of ticker tape, it's hard not to start wondering how much tape you might need to create an outfit.

## GREEN IFSC

### Green shoots

In May 2015, our Global Markets colleagues hosted an Impact Investing breakfast seminar with the Green IFSC. Impact investment involves deploying capital to initiatives that offer a financial return as well as a social benefit. Examples of this include education, micro-enterprise, and housing, as well as environmental and sustainable ventures. The event was moderated by RTE's David Murphy, and speakers included Emma-Jane Joyce (Irish Strategic Investment Fund), Caroline Pope (KPMG) and Daniel Brookbank (Responsible Investor). Bank of Ireland was a founder member of the Green IFSC, whose mission is to promote and support Ireland's green economy both within Ireland and to global markets.

## BIODIVERSITY

### Grow it yourself

In May 2015 Ronan Douglas from Grow It Yourself (GIY) visited our New Ireland offices in Dublin to host a workshop on growing your own fruit and vegetables. Colleagues seized the opportunity to get 'hands on' and came away with easy-to-grow plants such as lettuce and basil, which they grew in the office 'al desko'. The Underwriting team took to growing herbs on their desks and on the five windowsills of their 2nd floor offices. Several of them were inspired by their experience to grow their own vegetables and herbs at home.

Still growing our own GIY plants in the office – great idea.

DECLAN EGAN



Grow It Yourself garden in New Ireland Assurance

## Junk Kouture,

in association with Bank of Ireland, is Ireland's leading fashion and art competition for Second Level students, using everyday junk that we normally throw away

959

Teams entered the competition in 2015 from

366

schools

80

TEAMS REACHED THE FINAL

Grow it Yourself supports over **65,000 people** each year, inspiring people to grow food at home, at school, in work and in the community







# Governance

We hold ourselves to the highest standards, in line with the expectations of our stakeholders including customers, regulators, shareholders, governments, colleagues, and employee groups. Good and responsible governance helps us maintain our high standards.



# Operating to the highest ethical standards

We seek to operate to the highest ethical standards by encouraging an environment where doing the right thing is embedded in the DNA of our organisation. We support this by setting clear expectations for behaviour and undertaking mandatory training each year for all our colleagues.

## Code of Conduct

Our key tool for setting standards of ethical behaviour and delivering good conduct across all jurisdictions is our Group Code of Conduct. The Code is a key building block for creating the right culture, and we expect the following standards and behaviours from everyone:

- ▶ Act with integrity and honesty
- ▶ Report wrongdoing
- ▶ Avoid disclosing confidential information
- ▶ Avoid conflicts of interest
- ▶ Comply with legislation and regulations

By maintaining these standards, we believe our colleagues can make sound decisions in everyday business situations, and when faced with complex dilemmas achieve good outcomes for all our stakeholders.

Across the Bank of Ireland Group, many businesses have put programmes in place to make life simpler and better for customers. By making products and services simpler

and clearer for customers, they help to reduce risks. For example, Bank of Ireland UK has committed to a Customer Charter based on being Fair, Accessible, Committed and Easy to do business with (FACE). And our retail business in Ireland is driving out its 'Easy' customer programme based on a promise to get back to customers within 24 hours on all requests, simplifying their products and processes, making their services more accessible, communicating in Plain English, handling complaints better for customers and providing an improved experience when customers join the Bank.

## Encouraging colleagues to speak up

To help ensure that we embed the Code of Conduct in every aspect of our business, we encourage and support our colleagues to speak out if they witness wrongdoing. By wrongdoing we mean a breach, or suspected breach, of our Code of Conduct standards, or any concern they might have in respect of potential improprieties – for example, in financial reporting, financial control, accounting and auditing.

We understand that our colleagues might feel anxious about raising an issue, especially if they feel it is only a suspicion or that they may be being disloyal to colleagues if they mention it. With this in mind, we reassure them that if they raise a genuine concern they will not be at risk of losing their job or suffering any form of retribution as a result. We do not tolerate the harassment or victimisation of anyone raising a genuine concern. It does not matter if they are mistaken in their concern, as long as they were acting honestly in raising it.

Managers have a crucial role to play in supporting our Speak Up policy. They help encourage staff to speak up if they have a concern about malpractice, and reassure them that they won't be adversely treated by them or colleagues, even if they are mistaken in their concern. Managers also let staff know that although they hope staff will come to them first, they will support their decision if they decide to raise their concern with one of the other parties listed in the policy or externally.

## Avoiding conflicts of interest

Our colleagues not only need to perform their duties with honesty and integrity, they also have *to be seen to do so*. To help them avoid compromising their ability to perform their

everyday duties with honesty and integrity, we have put in place systems and procedures to identify, report, manage and monitor potential or actual conflicts of interest.

For example, we support our colleagues' personal involvement in community interests, but it's only reasonable that they limit their time commitment to these interests so that they don't compromise the time they are required to spend on their duties. Similarly, if they are involved in external activities, some people may believe they are speaking, or can speak, for the Group and not just in a personal capacity.

To avoid undermining their integrity and that of the Group, we ask our colleagues to discuss all situations that might create an appearance of impropriety with their manager in advance. In some circumstances, we also ask that their manager get higher approval for their conduct. In this way, we ensure that there is oversight of any behaviour that may be seen as lacking honesty or integrity.

## Policies, standards and procedures

The Group has defined and implemented policies, standards and procedures to ensure that it operates to the highest of standards, both from the perspective of the Group's legal, regulatory and compliance requirements, and also in an ethical, fair and consistent manner. The Group's policies and standards set out clearly the Group's objectives and provide direction to its staff, management and Court in carrying out their various day-to-day activities.

## Keeping customer information safe

As well as supporting customers to avoid attempts by fraudsters to steal their account details, we are also aware of the importance of keeping the customer information we hold as safe and secure as possible, while complying with relevant data protection legislation. Our colleagues, across all jurisdictions, are required to complete training on information security each year to ensure that they are aware of how to keep customer information private and secure and to avoid breaches of data protection.



Katie McDonagh, Group Internal Audit

“Code of Conduct is the standard that we set ourselves for what we say and do



Denise Sheehy & Graham Douglas, Business Banking



Adhering to high standards forms part of all staff's annual performance objectives

All colleagues are required to complete the training on our **Code of Conduct** and pass the examination assessment

All colleagues are required to complete the training on our **Group Information Security** and pass the examination assessment



All colleagues are required to complete the training on **Anti Money Laundering** and pass the examination assessment



**5** mandatory training courses for all staff in 2015 delivered via an online interactive system





Bank of Ireland's Corporate Social Responsibility Steering Committee (left to right): Mike Butler, Orla Darby, Barry McLoughlin, Maureen Stanley, Pat Farrell (Chairperson), Ger Heffernan, Audrey Nolan, Emer Haughey, Neil Cubley, Mick Sweeney, Hilary O'Meara. Not pictured are Evelyn Carroll and Sara Holland.

# Responsible Business

## Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Steering Committee

In October 2014, we set up a Corporate Social Responsibility Steering Committee, with members drawn from across the Group and from a diverse range of backgrounds. The Committee is chaired by Pat Farrell, Head of Group Communications. Its members have overall responsibility for setting direction for the Responsible Business programme and delivering against key commitments.

## Oversight of the report

The Nominations & Governance Committee receives regular updates on progress and reviews the annual CSR report.

## Reporting approach

The Steering Committee agreed to adopt a running five-year reporting cycle. In our 2014 Report, published in February 2015 (year one), the report contained an overview of the Bank's position under each of the five pillars – Customer, Colleagues, Community, Environment and Governance, which are internationally recognised areas for CSR reporting. In this 2015 report, we continue this approach, with greater focus on responsible business practice through individual case studies and supporting business rationale.

## What's in this report?

This is our second annual Responsible Business report, covering Customer, Colleague, Community, Environmental, and Governance performance. Published in February 2016, it covers the period 1 January to 31 December 2015.

## A snapshot of 2015

In this second report, we have gathered together a comprehensive account of many of the diverse initiatives in 2015 under the overall heading of Responsible Business. We are aware that however wide-ranging our research, it is possible that we may have omitted some initiatives.

## Audience

As we compiled the report, we understood that it would be of interest to very many stakeholders with varying interests. We have included both a highlights section and a detailed section for each of the report pillars, to provide a choice for the reader.

## Report content

We have made best efforts to ensure that the information provided in this Report is complete and accurate. We have worked with Business in the Community Ireland for guidance and best practice in reporting. We will continue to develop the Report in line with best practice in future editions.

## Additional information

If you would like to contact us regarding this Report, please use the email address below:  
Email: [responsiblebusiness@boi.com](mailto:responsiblebusiness@boi.com)



# External recognition 2015

Award	Unit/ Recipient
CFO Awards 2015 <i>Finance Monthly</i>	Andrew Keating
Highly commended for Best Buy-to-Let lender – <i>Mortgage Finance Gazette Awards</i>	Bank of Ireland UK
Best use of Technology – Lenders – <i>Mortage Finance Gazette Awards</i>	Bank of Ireland UK
Deals of the Year 2015 in Mid Market Loans & Financing – <i>Finance Dublin</i>	Corporate & Treasury
Northern Ireland Corporate Bank of the Year – <i>Northern Ireland Dealmakers Awards</i>	Corporate & Treasury
Best Social Responsibility Reporting Award – <i>Published Accounts Awards</i>	CSR and Reporting Team
Winner of the 2015 Best Innovative App category – <i>Appster Awards</i>	First Rate & Post Office
Best Graduate recruiter in Banking, Investment & Financial services – <i>Grad Ireland</i>	Group HR
Three awards received for supporting diversity and inclusion – <i>Association for Higher Education Access and Disability</i>	Group HR
Three Awards Overall Excellence, Technology and Health and Wellbeing – <i>Ireland's HR Leadership and Management Awards</i>	Group HR
Second and Highly Commended Customer Service Training programme of the Year – <i>CIPD UK</i>	Group Learning/Learningzone
Silver Award, Customer Service Programme of the Year – <i>Training Journal Awards</i>	Group Learning/Learningzone
Gold Award - Learning and Development Team of the Year – <i>Training Journal Awards</i>	Group Learning/Learningzone
Retail Bank of the Year - Mainguard St Galway – <i>Interior Awards</i>	Group Manufacturing
Best Communication Strategy – <i>Irish Pension Awards 2015</i>	Group Pensions (RetireWell)
Pension Scheme Administrator of the Year – <i>Irish Pension Awards 2015</i>	Group Pensions (RetireWell)/New Ireland
National Procurement Award for People Development – <i>National Procurement &amp; Supply Chain Awards</i>	Group Purchasing
Deal Maker of the Year Award – <i>Finance Monthly</i>	IBI Corporate Finance
Number 1 Irish Corporate Finance Adviser – <i>Mergermarket</i>	IBI Corporate Finance
Chief Human Resource Officer of the Year, Lifetime Achievement Award – <i>HRO Today awards</i>	Julie Sharp
Top Spot (fourth year in a row) – <i>PIBA Broker Awards</i>	New Ireland
Best Finance Product – <i>Inaugural Motor Finance Europe Awards</i>	NIIB/Northridge's 'Joint Venture' product*
Award for the Excel-based APR Commission Calculator	NIIB/Northridge's Finance Department*
Best Finance Product – <i>Motor Finance Europe Awards</i>	Northridge Finance – Member of BoI Group*
Jointly awarded Silver Award for Best Foreign Exchange / Travel Money Retailer – <i>British Travel Awards</i>	Post Office / Bank of Ireland UK
Best Online Mortgage Lender – <i>Your Mortgage Awards</i>	Post Office Money (product provided by Bank of Ireland UK)
2015 Consumer Moneyfacts First Time Mortgage Buyer – <i>Moneyfacts</i>	Post Office Money (product provided by Bank of Ireland UK)
Best Use of Technology – <i>Mortgage Finance Gazette Awards</i>	Rome Mortgage system
AA ISA – <i>Moneyfacts "Excellent award"</i>	Bank of Ireland UK Deposits team
Highly Commended – Best learning and development initiative – <i>2015 CIPD People Management Awards</i>	Welcome to Bank Program – Consumer Banking
Second place sustainable business category – <i>EMFA Accenture Distribution &amp; Innovation Awards</i>	Workbench initiative – Innovation

## We want to hear from you

Please get in touch with any feedback or any questions you have:

**Email:** responsiblebusiness@boi.com

**Twitter:** @talktoBOI

**Facebook:** BankofIreland

## Find out more

For more information and to download this Report, please visit the Responsible Business pages on our website. [www.bankofireland.com/responsiblebusiness](http://www.bankofireland.com/responsiblebusiness)

## Credits

**Concept and copy:** Neil Cubley

**Main photographer:** Naoise Culhane

Additional photography as shown.

**Design:** Roomthree Design

In recording Community Investment, Business in the Community Ireland encourages member companies to include cash donations, in-kind donations and monetised value of both volunteer time and management time for community and charitable initiatives. In addition, when a company facilitates or incentivises their employees to fundraise they encourage companies to capture the value of such endeavours and record the amount as leveraged contribution of the company's overall activities. This methodology is closely aligned to the London Benchmarking Group's Internationally recognised standard for capturing Corporate Community Investment.





This publication is also available in braille  
and other formats on request  
[responsiblebusiness@boi.com](mailto:responsiblebusiness@boi.com)