



# UL ENGAGE

## Community Briefing

2017 No. 1

### Adare Tourist Ambassador Project

Meghan Dion  
Nicholas Himann



UNIVERSITY of LIMERICK  
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

**UL Engage**

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# THE BRIEF

Starting this project, we were tasked with three main goals: (1) develop a questionnaire to audit the tourist needs of visitors to Adare across a range of ages, (2) make recommendation on information to be included in Tourist Ambassador programme, and (3) produce a report and present the findings to the community. Instead of using a questionnaire, we did our own participant research by going into the community and acting as tourists. We used this information to make a recommendation as follows: create a partnership between the Adare Tourist Ambassadors and the UL Engage programme to create a practicum allowing students to work alongside the Ambassadors in order to appeal to a younger demographic.

From idea, we modified our original goal. We are taking the idea of appealing to a younger demographic and making it into a five-phase plan spanning over two years. We are looking start by getting UL Engage students to act as Off-Site Ambassadors, following the next phase onto an Off-Site Promoter and an On-Site Ambassador. This will lead them into training other Ambassadors within the University of Limerick (possibly with the President's Volunteer Award Opportunities), and finally by learning to train transition year students in the role for volunteer work.



## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

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Adare is Ireland's prettiest village, located in County Limerick. The majority of the things to see are located on Adare's main street, including beautiful stone buildings, medieval monasteries and ruins, a scenic village park, and something right out of Irish history and heritage: Thatch houses. Adare's history dates back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century, being home to rich, detailed accounts by members of the community.

From our perspective, Adare is the scenic town that visitors expect to see in Ireland. Not only is it a very pretty place to look at and be in, the members of the community are friendly and enjoy talking to the guests in their town. If you are just going for a visitor or staying for an extended period of time, you begin to feel like you are part of the community. The community members have no problem helping guests out, showing them around the town if they'd like (especially during the tourist season with the Tidy Towns Tourist Ambassadors, who live in Adare themselves), and will recommend places to go in Adare and around Ireland as a whole. If you are looking for a place to stay for a night, a place to eat, planning a wedding, or just looking for a good time with good company, Adare is the village for you.

# COMMUNITY PARTNERS

## Eleanor Purcell

Eleanor Purcell runs a shop in Adare and is involved in the Tidy Towns Group. She initiated the Tourist Ambassador program in response to the loss of the Failte Ireland Office 3 years ago. She was delighted to engage with the Active Retirement Group especially for the local knowledge which they brought to the program and felt that their involvement with the large number of visitors would be of benefit to the Group. Eleanor is also involved with other projects with the Tidy Towns



## Rosemary Shier

Rosemary Shier lives on a farm outside Adare. She is very active in the community and is chairperson of the local Active Retirement Group and is on the national committee. She has been involved in the Tourist Ambassador Program since it started 2 years ago and is very happy to share her knowledge of Adare with the many visitors she meets.



# STUDENTS

## Meghan Dion

My name is Meghan Dion and I am from Boston Massachusetts. I attend Bridgewater State University and Major in Political Science with two minors in Social Welfare and Irish Studies. I choose to do the Practicum experience so I could become immersed in the Irish culture and fully embrace every aspect of it.



## Nicholas Himann

Hello! My name is Nicholas and at this point in time I was in my final semester of university. I am Canadian, and am taking Criminology at Wilfrid Laurier University in Brantford, Ontario. I decided to do this project because I have a background in tourism (as my hometown is Niagara Falls, Ontario). If you are reading this, you may be in one of the future pairs to do their practicum in Adare Village. If you are, then you are lucky because it is one of the nicest towns in Ireland and you will work with some of the nicest people you will meet here



# PROJECT RATIONALE

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Ever since starting our module with the UL Engage program, every minute spent at our practicum in Adare has been wonderful. Adare is one of the most beautiful towns and what we imagined when we thought of a small Irish town. Getting to help work with, and in ways, improve the community was a pure honour and pleasure for both of us. It has been fun exploring and spending time in Adare, but we also need to focus on what we were sent into their community to do: look at ways to improve tourism around Adare.

Both Meghan and I found ourselves trying to figure out the best course of action to take when it came to improving tourism. We started by reviewing what we had learned by our several visits to Adare. We found that many of the Tourist Ambassadors were of an older age and wanted to share what they knew about Adare. In contrast to that, many of the tourist were in younger or middle aged. That is where we felt there needed to be a shift towards catering to a younger demographic. As well, we started to notice that, for a tourist town, there was not really any incentive to get the student population out to Adare. There weren't any student deals or anything like that. So, in the spirit of catering to a younger demographic, we felt that creating an opportunity for students to be engaged in Adare, with the community, and with the tourists was the best course of action.

We decided that the best way of improving tourism in Adare was not to expand their reach and recognition externally, but rather get certain external demographics and bring them into Adare. We would partner international student with the older aged volunteers that are already in Adare. We saw a few benefits to this. First, this would allow Adare tourism to grow. Just from our experience, one of the biggest impacts for the tourism industry is word of mouth. Sure, anyone can read a review online, or watch a video about the place, but if someone you know and trust recommends that, while you are in a certain area, to visit a certain place, you are more likely to go. It is because you find them as a reputable source.

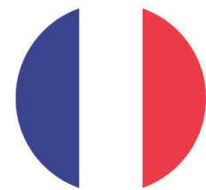
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Second, we felt it would help international tourists in Adare. If we have international students working on this practicum, we would prefer that they did not only speak English. According to our community partners, the three most common languages that come through Adare (besides English) are French, German, and Spanish. If we could get students who speak these languages or are from France, Germany, or Spain, it would help the tourist feel more comfortable and make their trip overall more comfortable because they could speak in their own language to these students. As well, the students would act as translators to with their volunteer partner. This would all, in turn, improve word of mouth promotion, and bring more tourists in. Third, it would allow better tourist care. By having two volunteers on at once, they would be able to not just tell them where to go, but to show them as well. This way, one person could stay at the Heritage Centre while the other could show the tourist to their destination. It will most likely be the student showing the person to their destination, as they are more able-bodied. Considering all these facts, this is what led Meghan and myself to creating our ideas and suggestions to further the Adare Tourist Ambassador Program.





**AdareVillage**  
County Limerick, Ireland



## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q1: Où est la station de toilettes? (Where is the closest restroom?)**

*F: Les toilettes se trouve dans le Heritage Center autour de la cabine*

**E: The restroom is in the Heritage Center around the kiosk.**

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**Q2: Est-ce qu'il y a parking gratuit? (Is there free parking?)**

*F: Oui. Il est situé derrière le Heritage Center*

**E: Yes. It is located behind the Heritage Center**

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**Q3: Où puis-je obtenir un café ou thé? (Where can I get a coffee or tea?)**

*F: Vous pouvez obtenir un café ou thé dans le Heritage Center à Dovecote Restaurant*

**E: You can get a coffee or tea in the Heritage Center at Dovecote Restaurant**

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**Q4: Où puis-je trouver quelque chose à manger? (Where can I get something to eat?)**

*F: Il y a beaucoup de restaurants à Adare. Nous vous recommandons le Dovecote Restaurant dans le Heritage Center.*

**E: There are many restaurants in Adare. We recommend the Dovecote Restaurant in the Heritage Center.**

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**Q5: Où puis-je obtenir une bière? (Where can I grab a pint?)**

*F: Il y a beaucoup de pubs de Adare. La plus proche est Aunty Lena's.*

**E: There are many pubs in Adare. The closest one is Aunty Lena's.**



**AdareVillage**  
County Limerick, Ireland



## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q1: Wo ist die nächste toilette? (Where is the closest restroom?)**

*G: Die Toiletten sind im Heritage Center um den Standfuß.*

**E: The restroom is in the Heritage Center around the kiosk.**

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**Q2: Gibt es kostenfreies parken? (Is there free parking?)**

*G: Ja. Es ist hinter dem Heritage Center entfernt.*

**E: Yes. It is located behind the Heritage Center.**

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**Q3: Wo kann ich einen kaffee oder tee? (Where can I get a coffee or tea?)**

*G: Sie können sich bei einem kaffee oder tee in der Heritage Center bei Taubenschlag Restaurant*

**E: You can get a coffee or tea in the Heritage Center at Dovecote Restaurant**

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**Q4: Wo kann ich essen? (Where can I get something to eat?)**

*G: Es gibt viele Restaurants in Adare. Wir empfehlen den Taubenschlag Restaurant im Heritage Centre*

**E: There are many restaurants in Adare. We recommend the Dovecote Restaurant in the Heritage Center.**

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**Q5: Wo kann ich ein Bier holen? (Where can I grab a pint?)**

*G: Es gibt viele Pubs in Adare. Der nächste ist Aunty Lena's*

**E: There are many pubs in Adare. The closest one is Aunty Lena's.**



**AdareVillage**  
County Limerick, Ireland



## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q1: *Dónde está el baño más cercano?* (Where is the closest restroom?)**

*S: El baño está en el Heritage Center alrededor del quiosco.*

**E: The restroom is in the Heritage Center around the kiosk.**

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**Q2: *Hay aparcamiento gratuito?* (Is there free parking?)**

*S: Sí. Está situado detrás del Heritage Center*

**E: Yes. It is located behind the Heritage Center.**

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**Q3: *Dónde puedo conseguir un café o té?* (Where can I get a coffee or tea?)**

*S: Usted puede conseguir un café o té en el Heritage Center en el Dovecote Restaurante*

**E: You can get a coffee or tea in the Heritage Center at Dovecote Restaurant**

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**Q4: *Donde puedo conseguir algo de comer?* (Where can I get something to eat?)**

*S: Hay muchos restaurantes en Adare. Recomendamos el Dovecote restaurante en el Heritage Center.*

**E: There are many restaurants in Adare. We recommend the Dovecote Restaurant in the Heritage Center.**

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**Q5: *Dónde puedo coger una pinta?* (Where can I grab a pint?)**

*S: Hay muchos pubs en Adare. La más cercana es Aunty Lena's.*

**E: There are many pubs in Adare. The closest one is Aunty Lena's.**



# Adare Tourist Ambassador Project

## Introduction

The Adare Tourist Ambassador Project aims to provide a new perspective to the tourist engagement practices in Adare. We got to work closely with many of the community partners to help us embrace this new experience and bilaterally work to bring in a new demographic into the Village.

## Goals & Accomplishments

|   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| • <b>Multi-Lingual Brochures</b> - These are brochures designed to answer general frequently asked questions in different languages. Currently, we created them in German, French, and Spanish.         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| • <b>Bus Route Brochures</b> - The Bus Route Brochures were created to give tourists in Adare information about bus routes leaving from Adare, the time they leave and the type of buses they are.      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| • <b>Adare Tourist Ambassador Course Framework</b> - This is a suggestive guideline as to where we think the project should lead. This will focus on a two-year plan, broken down semester by semester. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

## Our Experience

- The project itself turned out to be a positive experience where we were able to get out of our comfort zones and grow as individuals. We showed resilience by overcoming the challenges we faces during the experience such as working across cultures, working in a foreign place, and merging our ideas with the ideas and guidance from our supervisors and community partners.
- This experience was able to open up our eyes to a alternative method of learning through engagement that we will be able to carry with us in the future and apply to future endeavors.
- This experience allowed us to build our team-working skills by working co-operatively on this adventure. We would meet weekly to plan what we needed to do that week, and if one of us were suddenly unable to do their part, the other would pick up the slack.





# Adare Tourist Ambassador Program

April 2017

A Course Framework

Meghan Dion &  
Nicholas Himann



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## Overview

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recommends that, while you are in a certain area, to visit a certain place, you are more likely to go. It is because you find them as a reputable source.

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## PHASE 1: SPRING 2017

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Essentially, this is a description of what has been done by the authors of this document, and the things we tried to accomplish.

- **Multi-Lingual Frequently Asked Questions Brochures** – These brochures were created in order to give tourist information in their language. They are currently in German, Spanish, and French as they are the most popular. The creation of new and updating of current brochures are encouraged.
- **Bus Route Brochures** – We created this to give the tourist ambassadors a quick way of giving tourists coming in and out of Adare information about when buses are arriving and where they can go from Adare (i.e. Dublin City, Dublin Airport, Limerick, and UL).
- **Adare Tourist Ambassador Program Course Framework** – The current document you're looking at (meta-points!). This was created to describe the suggestions and things we have done in order to complete the Adare Tourist Ambassador Project.
- **Adare Village Website** – *We did not complete this.* We attempted to, but with all the other things we were doing, we ran out of time to give our suggestions about the website. We have decided to leave it up to the next group of students that are picking up where we left off.



## PHASE 2: AUTUMN 2017

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This is an extension of what we started in the Spring Semester of 2017, taking the project from Adare to University of Limerick.

- **Off-Site Ambassadors** – This role is to help promote the village of Adare to the surrounding communities, specifically Limerick and UL. It is encouraged that the practicum students take groups of UL students out to Adare on day trips.
- **Adare Village Website** – In this capacity, practicum students will work with the website designer and manager in efforts to make a more user-friendly interface while keeping the tourists informed of the information on the website.

## PHASE 3: SPRING 2018

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This is the start of expanding the presence of the project from University of Limerick to Adare while working with the Adare Tourist Ambassador volunteers cooperatively.

- **On-Site Ambassadors** – This role is to get the practicum students to work with the current Tourist Ambassadors in Adare to see how they engage the tourists from the Ambassadors perspective and critique/redesign how future Ambassadors could appeal to a younger demographic.
- **Off-Site Promoters** – This is similar to the *Off-Site Ambassadors* but it is no longer their primary role. Here, practicum students are to promote Adare Village, but do not have to take student out to Adare themselves.

## PHASE 4: SUMMER 2018

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This will start building a rapport with the Ambassadors in Adare while learning about ways to train UL students in preparation for training transition year students from the secondary schools surrounding Adare.

- **Working with the Tidy Towns Tourist Ambassadors** – Practicum students will be working with the Tidy Towns representative and tourist ambassadors in order to keep the town's volunteers and other volunteers (possibly through the President's Volunteer Award students from UL) adhering to the way that they expect tourists to be greeted and treated.
- **Learn about training methods** – During the practicum student's time in this role, they should make a document describing how volunteers are trained by the tourist ambassadors in order to prepare for the next phase (Phase 5).

## PHASE 5: AUTUMN 2018

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This is the last phase planned and possibly involving UL Engage. If everything goes according to plan, these roles that have been created will continue to be done by transition year students.

- **Recruiting Transition Year Students** – Practicum students will go into surrounding schools to recruit transition year students as it is the beginning of their school year as well.
- **Training Transition Year Students** – Using the document created by the previous Adare Tourist Ambassador Project team, the Practicum students will train the transition year student in the ways the Tourist Ambassadors are trained, and monitor the transition year students throughout this trial period.





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