

# West Cork Development Partnership Case Study 2020

## West Cork District Lot 18 – 5

A Case Study on **Collaboration** and the Development of WC-19 as a means of communicating during Covid-19 with the Cocooning Community of West Cork

### Background

In 2020, the Coronavirus, Covid-19 invaded our shores and completely turned our lives upside down. Ireland went into a complete lockdown from 27 March until 18 May 2020. Whilst many enjoyed the seclusion, the slowing down of the pace of life, others were isolated and cut off from society. Remote work, ordering online and zoom all became household terms literally overnight.

Some people were told to cocoon because they formed part of the vulnerable or the older community. This was all very well if you had friends/family living locally who could shop for you. In some cases the local Supervalu or Centra offered deliveries but for the most part local groups took it upon themselves to offer delivery services to those cocooning. These groups included the GAA and the Red Cross among others. Latterly Town Teams were formed by the Council Councils but for the most part structures were already in place so Town Teams certainly across West Cork were quiet.

### Initial need / issue / challenge

In West Cork Development Partnership we cover a large area. We knew we needed to get the information about these wonderful supports out to people across the territory but with a 2km restriction how could we do it?

### Social Media

We started sharing the information on our facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/thewcdp>. From 5 March to 1 April we made more than 50 posts and reached over 26,000 people. There were 74 new page likes.



# Page Insights

5 March - 1 April

Last 28 days

<b>Post reach</b> <b>26.4k</b> ▲ 21.2k	<b>Post engagements</b> <b>7,491</b> ▲ 6.5k	<b>New Page likes</b> <b>74</b> ▲ 60
--	---	--

## Posts ?

[See More](#)

50+ posts published in the last 28 days.

### MOST ENGAGING POSTS



Beyond angry that in this time of crisis fire...  
 30 March

Reach	7k
Engagements	1.3k



Photo-only post  
 12 March

Reach	10.7k
Engagements	1k



https://www.jobalert.ie/blog...  
 15 March

Reach	2.9k
Engagements	826



### Encourage people to recommend your Page

Create a post that lets people know that they can leave feedback about their experience.



Over the same period we also made posts on our other facebook page West Cork Job Support <https://www.facebook.com/West-Cork-Job-Support-167852409919172>. People's minds however weren't on Job support though we were posting information on how to apply for the Pandemic Unemployment Payment, people were hungry for updates - for news. There were only 1799 people reached over the same period on WCJS.



# West Cork Job Support

469 ▼16%

Total Page views



## Page previews

26 March – 1 April



8 ▲60%

Page previews



## Page Likes

26 March – 1 April



3 ▼40%



## Post reach

26 March – 1 April



1,799 ▲3%

People reached



## Recommendations

26 March – 1 April



## Other channels YouTube

YouTube

We started to think about other ways of getting the information out and which different platforms we should use. The next platform we chose was YouTube. We have the skills and software for putting together a video in-house. For the West Cork area, we put together 2 videos. The videos again were predominantly to share the information about supports available during the lockdown.

Bantry, Beara, Mizen <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pMJ4ZT0SL5Q&t=7s>

Clonakilty and its environs <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jj4DeAnFWHM&t=14s>

The videos were well received but the reach was relatively low through our WCDP YouTube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/user/westcorkdp>:

Bantry environs 265 views

Clonakilty environs 235 views

Perhaps with only 19 subscribers this is not surprising. Increasing the numbers of subscribers has now been added to our to-do list as a growing number of people are turning to YouTube for entertainment and most importantly the 'how do I?'

Our most interesting comment however, was received by a local community garda who asked us to email him the information so that it could be included in the database they were building in the Garda Station.

## Challenges

Thinking of channels to reach our target audience, we decided that it was most likely that they would use Mr Google or other search engines so we decided that setting up a website would be valuable. At the same time, we were approached by a staff member from West Cork Animal Advocacy group and we jumped at the opportunity of collaborating. ***Our skills were lacking in-house*** but we had time, we were willing to learn and we could divert budget from another project to cover any costs.

We secured the domain name <https://wc19.info/> and bought the security certificate €58. We began working on a simple wordpress template. It was populated initially with the information about the available support services. We then started inputting the local pharmacies and the essential retail outlets as they were open.

As additional businesses began to diversify offering takeaway's / postal options or began to open up we started promoting the services. We trawled through social media looking for information and were quick off the mark replying to queries such as 'Is the Fish Kitchen in Bantry open? We replied with the information and gave the link to their information on our website <https://wc19.info/listing/the-fish-kitchen/>. It was ***labour intensive*** inputting the information and ***keeping it up to date*** as new announcements were made. Time wise the 2 of us (SICAP staff) devoted over ***160 hours each*** to getting the website up and running and maintaining it.

The next section we completed was information around subject areas. We included Staying Sane; Children and Families; Events and Activities. Again this was the SICAP Staff members trawling the internet looking for suitable information with which to populate the site.

Our next challenge was **functionality**. The site was a little clunky and difficult to navigate. Our internal knowledge was growing but limited. We reached out to web designers locally and received some free support and guidance. The greatest support however came from a Dublin based company called **Matrix Internet** who had worked with West Cork Music and who gave their time freely.

Once the site was working well, we then worked on **Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)** and trying to get the site found through searches. We were watching the stats and it was **not being found organically**. We decided to use themes and stories as people relate to stories. We engaged with local individuals, agencies and businesses to write the articles and in total we published 15 articles between 4 April and 7 June.

The **thematic areas** under which the articles are categorised are as follows:

- \*Introduction / About Us (2)
- \* Travel & Transport
- \* Animal Welfare (2)
- \* Health & Fitness (3)
- \* Mental Health
- \* Psychological Wellbeing (3)
- \* Growing & Gardening
- \* In Memoriam
- \* Domestic Violence

The final article that we published just before the end of lockdown was about checking your car before you got back on the road. This article was particularly aimed at older and vulnerable people who had been cocooning since the middle of March. It was written by a local garage owner O'Donovan Motors in Kilcrohane. <https://wc19.info/check-your-car-before-driving/>

Each time we published an article (15 times between 4 April and 7 June), we wrote an introduction and shared the link to the article on the website. This was circulated on facebook noticeboards including Bantry, Skibbereen, Clonakilty, Dunmanway and Castletownbere among others. There was a spike in visits to the website each time as the articles were heavily shared.

One article often led to another article. For example, the article we wrote about Vets on World Veterinarian Day prompted an article about death as one person who saw the post commented to say that a vet in Union Hall had died that morning. We amended the listing immediately and the next article we wrote was about Death and Funerals during Covid-19. <https://wc19.info/grieving-in-a-time-of-crisis/>

**Comments that were received on the site included:**

**Aisling**

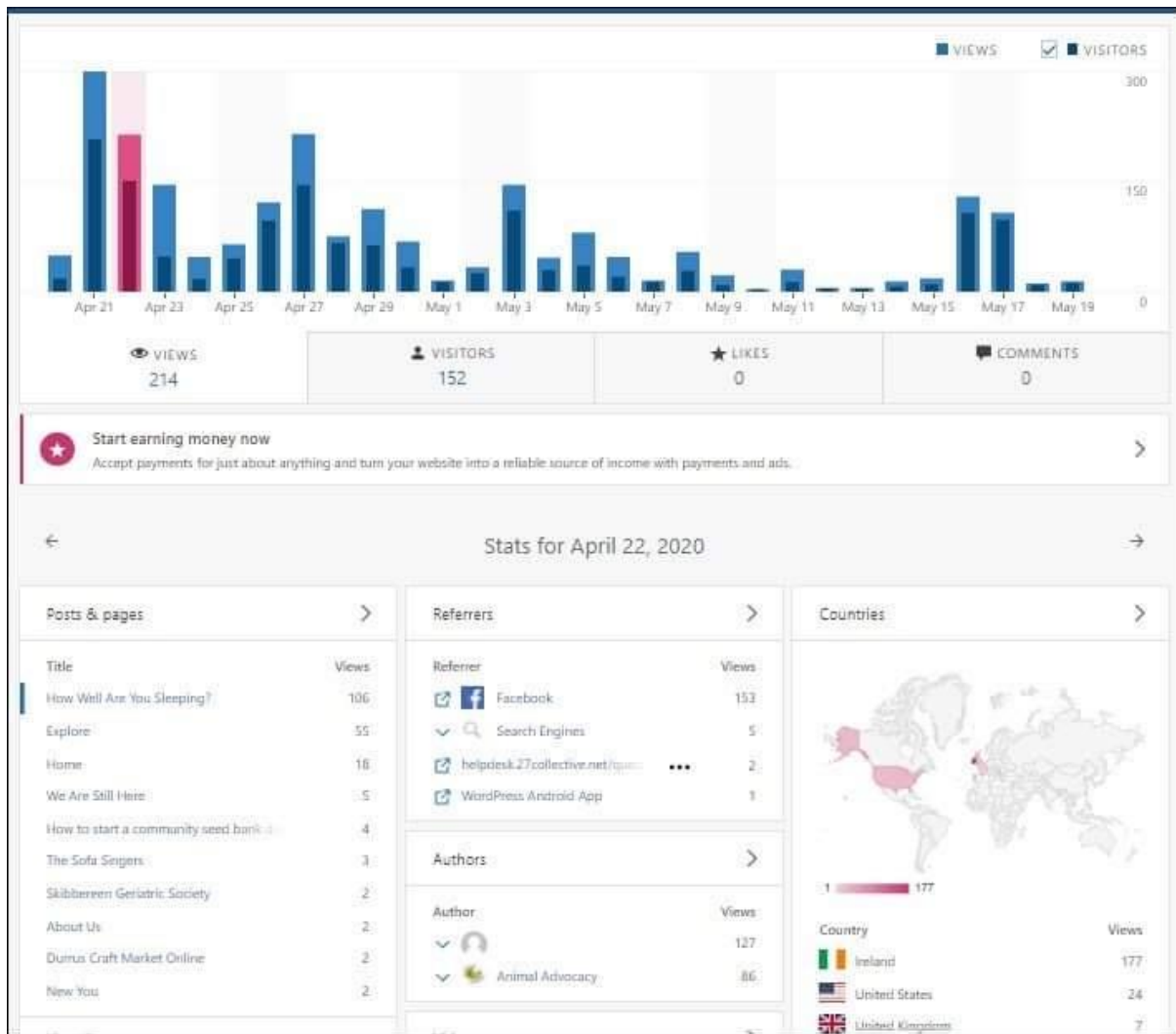
Sun 17 May at 09:50

Fabulous piece Clare and great advice! This was in response to <https://wc19.info/singing-your-way-out/>

**Sarah B**

Mon 20 Apr at 19:32

Great work, let's not forget that 'more than 40% of domestic violence victims are male (report reveals -<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2010/sep/05/men-victims-domestic-violence> ) The fixation on the perpetrator being a 'HE' might alienate and further vitimise already abused males and trans-males. God bless the work you do. This was in response to <https://wc19.info/we-are-still-here/>



## Conclusion

Though Covid-19 did not go away, once the country started to open-up, all 3 of us got busy with other activities and actions. We had a discussion before we went back to our regular roles and agreed that-yes, we should keep it going as it contained some very useful information. This however, has not happened. Now however as we head into a second lockdown, we will endeavour to get back to updating it and adding new articles.

Our knowledge of Wordpress grew exponentially, in a very short period. This will be useful as our own website is built using Wordpress and currently costs us €50 an hour plus vat to make any changes.

We became the 'Go-to' / the signposting for checking if a service/outlet was open. It was an intense piece of work but a very valuable way of bringing together information that was scattered all over the internet and in particular social media. Would we do it again? Yes but we would definitely source additional help to source and input the information from the different towns. We had contacts in Castletownbere and in Clonakilty respectively and they were both invaluable in gathering the information.

We have put together a video to go alongside this written case study. Please enjoy it as much as we have enjoyed putting it together.

<https://youtu.be/0MioZzOBrgE>