WELLS HOUSE & GARDENS

Located 18km from Gorey, Co Wexford

Inherited the property in early 2011

Opened to the public July 2012
Opening the house, gardens and grounds to the public would ensure the future of the house

But where to start?

How does my husband’s family home become a tourist attraction, and a profitable one!
The start of the project

Feasibility study carried out by Tony Ennis from Ennis & Co Business Consultants

Funding sourced from Wexford Local Development with matched funding

Project approved and we received €150k (maximum funding)

Brand and Concept designed
Feasibility study listed 6 projects to start with

Restoration of the Terrace Gardens

Development of the House Tour

Playground

Visitors Centre

Woodland walk

Source third party activities
Development of the House Tour

Worked with the Doyne family who lived in the house for 260 years

Original Drawings from Daniel Robertson feature on the tour

Sourced a local historian to document and research the history of the house

Recruited and trained staff to ensure customer experience was one of the best in Ireland

Susan Croft organised by Failte Ireland to assist in delivery of house tour

Preparation of the house for the tour
The history of Wells House and Gardens

The house, grounds and gardens of Wells were all designed by the renowned architect Daniel Robertson.

Born in South Carolina in the US but moved to the UK and then to Ireland in the 1830s.

His work features in Powerscourt, Kilruddery, Lisnavagh in Carlow and Johnstown Castle in Wexford.

His work in Wells dates from 1836 to 1845.
The house and gardens in 2011
Restoration of the Terrace Gardens
Restoration of the Terrace Gardens
Restoration of the Gardens at Wells House & Gardens - The Parterre
Restoration of the Gardens at Wells House & Gardens - The Parterre
Restoration of the Gardens at Wells House & Gardens - The Arboretum
Woodland Walk

WELLS HOUSE & GARDENS MAP
Wells House & Gardens was designed by renowned architect, Daniel Robertson, who was also responsible for the iconic Penrith House in Co. Wicklow and Johnstown Castle in Co. Wexford. Perfect for the Green Acres' majestic oak trees, Wells House & Gardens has something for everyone to enjoy.

1. Gate Entrance
2. Car Park
3. Visitor Centre & Alex Bannister's Restaurant
4. House Pathway
5. Picnic Area
6. Wells House Anthony
7. Engenasal
8. Wellesden Terrace
9. Fountain
10. Lady Frances Walk
11. Wildling Walk
12. Wooden Sculptures
13. Craft Courtyard
14. Cafe
15. Animal Farm
Brand & Image

Invested in the design and creation of our brand with a focus on our logo, website, signage and identity.
Official Launch Date July 2012 – Our Victorian Garden Party
July 2012 – our focus was on opening and organising the day to day running of Wells House as a tourist attraction
September 2012 – Now What???

We had opened in July - peak season tourism

With a Buzz!

We had completed our operational focus for opening

We needed visitors and a strategy!
The dynamics changed from planning to operational!

We needed the phone to ring!

We had committed to being open all year

Internal strategy was the priority – recruitment of a marketing manager to assist in the growth of the brand bring new concepts to attract visitors.
The reality of managing a tourism venue business!

• Planning & strategy – we have built a strong management team who assist in the delivery of each area but are also cross-functional!

• Staff – focus on training, understanding of what is required to deliver their role, feedback and development

• Expenditure – privately run, income vs expenditure is a major focus

• Marketing – growing our name and reputation and promote new offerings
Mission & Vision Statement

To continue the restoration of Wells House and Gardens organically by being innovative and true to its historic value

Dedicated to providing first class customer service, a quality product and value for money

Provide an excellent day out for families and visitors of all ages to enjoy

Grow and maintain our status as the No.1 tourist attraction

Core Values

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<th>Reliability</th>
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<th>Respect</th>
<th>Commitment</th>
<th>Ambition</th>
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<td>Determination</td>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td>Honesty</td>
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Continuous development of the site to develop reputation and enhance visitor experience.
Mrs Stone’s Restaurant At Wells House & Gardens

Initial launch of catering facility was outsourced

Came back in house in October 2012 owing to customer feedback and Wells House reviewing its commitment to customer experience

Focus on quality & customer service. “Farm to fork” ethos being introduced from our beef & veg from our poly tunnel

2015 saw the “Food to Go” Catering Service launch
New Offerings at Wells House & Gardens

Craft Courtyard – Archery – Clay Pigeon Shooting
Our 4 years to date 2012 - 2015

Since opening in 2012 (6 months trading) we have steadily grown our visitor numbers.

We feature on Bord Failte’s Top Fee Paying Attractions based on 2015 figures!
We have become a recognised brand in Ireland.
Strong Social Media Presence
We have built a reputation based on quality, affordability and on-going development
Award Winning Wells House and Gardens

- Winner North Wexford Tourism Award 2014 & 2015
- Finalist in Irish Tourism Industry Awards 2015: 'Best Leisure Innovation' category
- Voted #4 Family Day Out of 'Top Ten Family Days Out in Ireland' by Aldi customers in January 2015
- Winner WLD Rural Tourism Award 2014
- Runner up in 'Attractions & Activities' category at the Wexford Business Awards 2014 & 2015
- Voted “Best Family Day Out” by TodayFM listeners October 2015
- Winner Agri Innovation Award - Women and Agriculture Awards October 2015
That’s the Wells House and Gardens story………

‘To date!'
Questions?