

## **CEC Northern Ireland Report 2024-2025**

### **Visit to Wright Bus factory, Ballymena**

Our first outing in 2024 after a quiet period was on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2024 to the Wrightbus factory in Ballymena. We had 15 people attending.

We were welcomed by Wrightbus staff and given a presentation on how Jo Bamford has developed the business since he took it over from the Wright family. In June 2024, it employed around 1800 staff, with additional staff being recruited every week. The buses are largely hand-built and range from some diesel models through electric models to hydrogen models. Bamford's vision for hydrogen buses extends to generating their own hydrogen with stations around the UK.

A tour of the factory floor to see the buses in various stages of build, from the basic chassis to the finished bus, completed the visit.



CEC members and friends at the Wright Bus factory, Ballymena, Co Antrim

Following the visit to the Wright Bus factory, most of the visitors enjoyed a carvery lunch at the nearby Tullyglass House Hotel.

### **Visit to Kilwaughter Lime Quarry, Larne**

On Thursday, 7<sup>th</sup> November 2024, we had a visit to Kilwaughter Lime Quarry, near Larne, Co Antrim, where Dr Andrew McIntosh, Head of Research and Development, explained the various products that have been developed and commercialised at the site.

The various types of render were explained in the laboratory, following which we were treated to a demonstration of the spray application of the render onto panels.

After the laboratory and the render application demonstration, we were able to look over the quarry site from a nearby vantage point.

At the time of the visit, the Kilwaughter business, which began in the 1940s, was in the process of being acquired by Saint Gobain.

Following the visit to Kilwaughter our members and visitors enjoyed lunch at Corrs Corner Hotel, Newtownabbey.





### **Planned visit to the Narrow Water Bridge Construction site on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2025**

We have just finalised details of a visit to the Narrow Water, Cross Border bridge site where a new \$83m bascule bridge is being constructed at the head of Carlingford Lough near Narrow Water Castle. The bridge will span over the UK/Ireland international border, which runs along the middle of the lough at this point. The contractor, BAM, will make a presentation on the project at The Four Seasons Hotel in Carlingford, which will be followed by lunch and a tour of the construction site, where we will visit the construction on both sides of the Lough.



