

Laois Public Participation Network

September 2020 Newsletter



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Laois PPN Crime Prevention Talk

Laois PPN held a Crime Prevention Talk with Garda Sergeant Graham Kavanagh, Crime Prevention Officer on Saturday 19th September. The socially distanced event took place at the MDA, Mountmellick.



Dan Bergin, Laois PPN Resource Worker said " This event is to assist community groups with crime prevention in their communities. Crime Prevention Officers encourage, promote and advise on crime prevention. Laois PPN are delighted to have Garda Sergeant Graham Kavanagh her today to share his knowledge with Laois PPN Member Groups. The Community Groups in attendance found the talk to be very informative and they feel it will be of benefit to their groups and members in the future."





Laois PPN Biodiversity Walk & Talk in Abbeyleix Bog



On a bright Sunday morning in September, Laois PPN member groups were led on a guided Biodiversity Walk & Talk in Abbeyleix Bog by Ecologist Fiona MacGowan and Chris Uys, both members of the Abbeyleix Bog Project.



Laois PPN Resource Worker Dan Bergin, who organised the event for PPN member groups said:

"Thanks to Fiona and Chris for showing us the treasure trove of biodiversity that exists in Abbeyleix Bog. Laois PPN have nearly 600 member groups registered under our 3 pillars, Community, Social Inclusion and Environmental. We had a large amount of interest in the Biodiversity Walk & Talk when it was advertised. It was great to see such a variety of groups represented at the event from around the county. Now in its 20th year, The Abbeyleix Bog Project is a testament to community-led conservation and a credit to all involved. The Abbeyleix Bog Project is a great amenity for the people of Laois and further afield."



This outdoor, socially distanced event took place on Sunday 20th September 2020 and was in line with the current Government guidelines.

Laois PPN Autumn Blooms At Castle Durrow



In the grounds of the stunning Castle Durrow, and guided by the head gardener, Laois PPN hosted an "Autumn Blooms" event for their members in the 55+ age group on Friday, 25th of September.

Dan Bergin, Laois PPN Resource Worker said:

"Laois PPN recognise the significant contribution that this age group makes in their communities. They form the back bone of so many of the nearly 600 community groups registered with Laois PPN."



Attendees at the "Autumn Blooms" event were given a guided tour of the wonderful gardens at Castle Durrow which form part of the Laois Garden Trail, followed by a full afternoon tea service.

The event was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended, with members expressing their thanks to Laois PPN for organising a great day.

This socially distanced event took place in line with the current Government guidelines.



Have a look at some of the photo's taken on the day by photographer Michael Scully.



Laois PPN Autumn Blooms At Castle Durrow





"Wild Food Wander" at Ballintubbert Gardens & House

On Saturday 26th September Laois PPN hosted a "Wild Food Wander" at Ballintubbert House and Gardens.

Those who attended got to "wander through the grounds of Ballintubbert House and Gardens and discovered the wild treasures Ireland has to offer in Autumn. This event was guided by wild food expert Mary Bulfin aka "Wild Food Mary" with attendees getting to pick their own apples to take home and explore the Ornamental Gardens soon to be Irelands first Organically Certified Gardens.



This was followed by a picnic and was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended.

See some of the photos from the event courtesy of Stan Henderson



Brid Brophy from Ballylinan



Mary Bulfin talks to the group



Deep within the ornamental gardens, the group watches as Mary comes across more herbs & plants.

More of the photos from the event courtesy of Stan Henderson



Fia Conroy from Clonad



Head Gardener at Ballintubbert House and Gardens Jennifer Taggart.



Ballintubbert House



Head Gardener Jennifer Taggart shows the group one of the standing stones in the 14 acre garden



Johanna McDonald of Camross Tidy Towns and Camross Development Association.



Laois PPN Resource Worker Dan Bergin



Wild Food Mary pictured with the Green Man Sculpture



Mary weaves Robin Run The Hedge into a nest



Patricia Carey from Portlaoise Tidy Towns and Head Gardener Jennifer Taggart with the Green Man



Wild Food Mary foraging through wild fauna.



The Conroy Family from Clonad are Seorsie, Leona, Aedan & Fia

Minister for Rural and Community Development announces almost €2.8 million funding for libraries to adapt to Covid-19.

Heather Humphreys also turns the sod on the new Library in Portlaoise, Co Laois

A €2.8 million package to assist libraries to adapt to Covid-19 has been announced by the Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD.

Minister Humphreys made the announcement as she turned the sod on the new Portlaoise Public Library.

The Department of Rural and Community Development will provide €2.5 million to support a Small Scale Capital Works Programme for public libraries.

The Department funding will be matched by local authorities to the value of approximately €280,000 giving a total investment of almost €2.8 million.

Turning the sod on the new library in Portlaoise, Minister Humphreys said,

" My Department's Libraries Capital Programme is investing €3 million in this build but without considerable investment and commitment from Laois County Council we wouldn't be here today commencing this exciting project.

I know this library will be a top-class facility located at the heart of your community and is going to be a huge boost to the town."



Announcing the new Small Scale Capital Works Programme, Minister Humphreys said;

" One of the key actions of our public library Strategy Our Public Libraries - Inspiring, Connecting and Empowering Communities, is to develop library buildings that are fit for purpose and reflect the quality of services on offer.

I am delighted to be in a position to announce a Small Scale Capital Works Programme which is a new investment in public libraries."

The Minister continued:

" We have in excess of 300 libraries across the country and this funding will support local authorities to transform many of their existing library buildings into modern, welcoming spaces that will leave a positive legacy for years to come.

" It will also allow libraries to be adapted to meet social distancing requirement and to provide additional remote working facilities.

Libraries provide a broad range of important services for their communities and it is imperative that they be well maintained to ensure that people not only wish to utilise the service but also view the library as a modern, well equipped facility."

Funding will be provided to upgrade facilities and technologies in libraries and make the buildings more sustainable and energy efficient.

In concluding, the Minister thanked local authority and library staff "for their continued energy and commitment, which has been especially evident during the past few months, and is key to the success of our public library service."



An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
Community Development



Laois County Council
Áras an Chontae, Portlaoise, Co. Laois

September 2020

Artist in the Community Scheme Bursary: Collaborative Arts and Human Rights



CREATE is delighted to announce the second Artist in the Community Scheme Bursary Award 2020: **Collaborative Arts and Human Rights**, in partnership with the Irish Council for Civil Liberties. This Bursary aims to support individual professional artists working in collaborative socially engaged arts practice. The Bursary is funded by the Arts Council's Artist in the Community Scheme, managed by **CREATE**.

The purpose of the award is to support and nurture professional arts practice; it is specifically aimed at an artist with a track record of working collaboratively with communities of place or interest in the context of human rights. The Bursary of €10,000 provides the selected artist with time and resources to carry out research and to reflect and engage with and reflect on their practice. More particularly, it allows the artist to consider key questions associated with human rights using collaborative methodologies.

It is expected that the successful applicant will share the learning arising from the Bursary with the wider Human Rights and Collaborative Arts Sector. **CREATE** will work in partnership with the Irish Council for Civil Liberties, providing an information session and on the selection process.

The closing date for applications to this Bursary is the 9th November 2020. Full details, guidelines and application forms can be found on our website:

<https://www.create-ireland.ie/projectsubpage/aic-bursary/2020-bursary-collaborative-arts-and-human-rights/>



create national development
agency for collaborative arts

September 2020

Minister Humphreys, Donnelly and O'Brien announce third tranche of COVID-19 Stability Funding

Some 209 organisations across the country are to benefit from €11 million worth of funding under the COVID-19 Stability Fund.

The funding was announced by Minister for Social Protection, Rural and Community Development and the Islands, Heather Humphreys TD, Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly TD and Minister of State with responsibility for Community Development and Charities, Joe O'Brien TD.

The funding from the Dormant Accounts Fund is designed to support community and voluntary organisations, charities and social enterprises that are experiencing financial difficulties as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Once-off cash injections of between €2,000 and €200,000 are being awarded to qualifying organisations that provide critical services to those most vulnerable in society.

This will help with short term cash flow issues caused by COVID-19 crisis.

This includes organisations from both phase 1 and 2 (unincorporated charities) of the fund and is on top of two previous tranches of the funding announced in June and July 2020 that benefitted 276 organisations amounting to €14.1 m in funding.

These organisations provide services in a diverse range of areas including disability services, health and wellbeing services, community supports, active retirement and elder care services as well as a range of social services and supports for disadvantaged individuals and communities.

Some of the successful applicants today include:

- **Society of the St Vincent De Paul Ireland - €200,000**
- **St Lukes Charity & Northridge House Education & Business Centre - €192,733**
- **Gary Kelly Cancer Support Centre - €87,932**
- **Sligo Centre for Independent Living - €53,240**
- **Comharchumann Forbartha an Leith Triuigh Teoranta - €32,270**
- **Community Radio, Castlebar - €27,689**

Two Laois PPN member groups received funding in this tranche:

- **Abbeyleix Heritage Company Ltd - €7,290**
- **P.A.T.H. Portlaoise Action to Homelessness - €11,510**

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Speaking this morning, Minister Humphreys said:

"I am delighted to join with my colleagues, Minister Donnelly and O'Brien, to announce a further tranche of funding - totalling €11 million - under the COVID-19 Stability Fund. I am very aware of the valuable contribution of the Community and Voluntary sector in general. This is particularly the case as Ireland navigates its way through this pandemic.

"I hop that this funding will help to support these organisations to continue to provide their valuable services to the people most in need and support individuals and communities as we work our way through the impact of the pandemic.

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers and community workers across the country who are providing their services in difficult circumstances ensuring that all our citizens are supported through this very difficult time and I look forward to the day when I can thank you in person."

Minister Donnelly said:

"I am pleased to announce this latest tranche of funding under the COVID-19 Stability Fund together with my colleagues, Minister Humphreys and O'Brien.

"Community and voluntary organisations, charities and social enterprises play a vital role in our society, and their volunteers and workers are incredibly dedicated. Many of them have worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to support and help people across Ireland and this funding will help them to continue in this work. Along with my colleagues in the Department of Health, Minister Butler, Minister Feighan and Minister Rabbitte, I welcome these additional resources which will help these organisations to continue their valuable work."

Joe O'Brien TD, Minister for State with responsibility for Community Development and Charities added:

"I would like to add to what my colleagues Minister Humphreys and Donnelly have said and express my gratitude to all of the organisations around the country that are helping our most marginalised and disadvantaged.

"Their work is critical as we try and manage our way through this pandemic and the impact of it. I hope this funding will provide some level of support to allow organisations to continue to provide their valuable services and supports to individuals and communities all over the country."

A full list of successful applicants under Tranche three is available at:

<https://www.gove.ie/en/publication/3957e-covid-19-stability-fund-successful-applicants/>

National Fire Safety Week 2020

5th - 12th October

This year the main theme is:

"Smoke Alarms Save Lives"

"Sabhalann alaraim deataigh beathai"



- **2 people in Co.Laois have died from fires in their home in 2020.**
- **Between 2014 and 2019, 173 people died from fire in Ireland,**
- **In this time of Covid-19, as we spend more time at home, we all need to be fully aware of the steps we can take to protect ourselves and our homes from fire,**
- **Laois County Council Fire and Rescue Service is working together with Local Link Laois Offaly, Laois Public Participation Network and Laois County Council Community and Enterprise section to provide communities with all the information needed to help reduce the number of fire related fatalities and injuries, but we need your help!**
- **We are encouraging everyone to visit www.laois.ie and download free fire safety in the home booklets and leaflets (see direct link information below),**
- **We are asking every household to view the safety information and follow the recommendations included within,**
- **We are asking you to test your smoke alarms regularly, and encourage vulnerable neighbours, friends and relatives to do the same,**
- **Furthermore, 100 homes throughout the County, will be provided with free smoke alarms. To be in with a chance to enter our FREE draw and /or receive a free fire safety in the home booklet, email lo@locallink.ie or call 057 86 92168**
- **Free downloadable fire safety in the home booklets with fire safety checklist at**
<https://laois.ie/wp-content/uploads/Fire-Safety-in-the-Home-Booklet-English-1.pdf>
- **Free downloadable fire safety in the home leaflets (available in English, Irish, Chinese (Mandarin), Latvian, Lithuanian and Polish at**
<https://laois.ie/departments/fire-rescue/fire-safety-in-the-home/>
- **Additional information is also available at www.firesafetyweek.ie**

Unfortunately due to ongoing Covid-19 global pandemic it will not be possible to hold fire station open nights this year.

Minister Humphreys announces second tranche of rural Town and Villages to receive COVID-19 adaptation supports



The Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, has announced details of the projects that have been approved for funding under the second round of the enhanced Town and Village Renewal Scheme that supports towns and villages to respond and adapt to COVID-19.

The focus of the funding is on measures and interventions that help towns and villages to adapt to social distancing requirements and to provide safe environments that encourage people into towns and villages to shop and socialise.

In the latest allocation of funding my Minister Humphreys, €3.3 million has been approved for 120 projects countrywide.

This is in addition to the €2.8 million that was announced under Round 1 of the scheme in August.

Examples of the successful projects being funded under the latest allocations include:

- **Cavan:** Creation of outdoor meeting and event space at Ballyconnell Market Square;
- **Cork:** Purchase of stage and amplification equipment for hosting medium scale events and concerts in West Cork;
- **Donegal:** Establishment of outdoor food market in Donegal town;
- **Laois:** Converting car parking spaces into outdoor spaces (parklets) for public seating and dining, as well as the enhancement of other central areas in Stradbally with landscaping and street furniture;
- **Tipperary:** Repurposing eight community buildings throughout the county to facilitate Broadband Connection Points and remote working;
- **Mayo:** The creation of three covered outdoor spaces for community based exercise classes and other community events in Belmullet and Westport.

Speaking today, Minister Humphreys said:

"I'm delighted to announce a second round of funding for projects under the enhanced Town and Village Renewal Scheme. The challenges of recent months have highlighted the central role that our towns and villages play in the lives of people in rural areas. They are where we live, work, shop and socialise.

"The impact of COVID-19 has brought changes to all of our daily lives, but the projects I am approving today will assist rural towns and villages to adapt to those changes. It is important that we make our towns and villages as welcoming as possible and that we provide the infrastructure to allow people to engage with local shops and services, and with each other, in a safe manner at this time.

"The €3.3 million in funding which I am allocating today to 120 towns and villages is for projects that can be delivered quickly and which will encourage people into our towns and villages, and giving them the confidence to spend more time there. Today's funding is in addition to an allocation of €2.8 million made to 120 projects in August and is supported through the Government's July Stimulus Package."

The Minister continued:

"Once again the Local Authorities, together with their local communities, have brought forward projects that will help meet the specific needs of their own areas. A wide variety of innovative measures are being supported under this round of funding, including purchasing of marquees and equipment to facilitate outdoor events and festivals, and the provision of sheltered outdoor meeting spaces.

I'm also pleased to be able to provide support for the fit out of a number of Broadband Connection Points throughout the country, which will be vital for people in remote locations to stay connected or to work remotely."

Full details of the 120 projects supported under Round 2 are available on the [gov.ie](https://www.gov.ie) website



Thank You

Laois PPN wish to thank Paddy Buggy who has served with distinction for 6 years on the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC). Paddy has helped many community groups and individuals in Laois with his work on the LCDC. Paddy will continue to help community groups throughout the county with his continued work as a Secretariat Member of Laois PPN.

THANK YOU



THANK YOU!



Best Wishes

Laois PPN would like to wish Bolaji Adeyanju, Laois PPN Secretariat Member all the best in his new role as Migrant Support Worker with Respond.



September 2020



Make Way Day 2020

"Make Way Day" is a campaign that brings the disability and wider community together to consider the needs of people with disabilities in the public spaces we all share.

It is led by the Disability Federation of Ireland and is a unique collaboration across Ireland and the voluntary and local government sectors. But most of all it's about people with disabilities.

This year, Laois County Council supported #makewayday20 on Friday 25th September by creating awareness around the access issues faced by the people of Laois as they go about their daily business.



Laois PPN Secretariat Member, Donal O' Shea represented Laois PPN at the launch of " Make Way Day".

COVID-19 Community Response Support Helpline



The council phone line **057 86 64000** is open **Monday to Friday**, between the hours of **9am to 5pm**, for the Laois County Council Community Response Support Helpline and deal with normal council queries.

On **Saturdays**, the Laois County Council Community Response Support Helpline is available on **1800 83 20 10 (10am-1pm / 2pm-4pm)** to facilitate the most appropriate community response to the needs of vulnerable people living in the community where their usual sources of support have become unavailable due to COVID-19.

Coronavirus COVID-19

The Facts

Most at Risk

- Anyone who has been to an affected region in the last 14 days AND is experiencing symptoms
- Anyone who has been in close contact with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) in the last 14 days AND is experiencing symptoms

Prevention

Wash
your hands well and often to avoid contamination

Cover
your mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing and discard used tissue

Avoid
touching eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands

Clean
and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

Symptoms

- A Cough - Shortness of Breath - Breathing Difficulties - Fever (High Temperature)

Affected Regions

Check the list of affected regions on www.hse.ie

What to do if you are at risk

I've been to an affected region in the last 14 days and

I HAVE symptoms

1. Stay away from other people
2. Phone your GP without delay
3. If you do not have a GP, phone HSE Line: 1800 24 2800

I DO NOT HAVE symptoms
For advice visit www.hse.ie

I've been in close contact with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) in the last 14 days and

I HAVE symptoms

1. Stay away from other people
2. Phone your GP without delay
3. If you do not have a GP, phone HSE Line: 1800 24 2800

I DO NOT HAVE symptoms
For advice visit www.hse.ie

For Daily Updates Visit
www.gov.ie/health/covid-19
www.rcsc.ie

Ireland is operating a containment strategy in line with WHO and ECDC advice

Rialtas na hÉireann Government of Ireland



LAOIS COVID-19 Community Response Forum

A helpdesk will respond to the needs of vulnerable members of our community

Call: 1800 83 20 10
Email: covidsupport@laoiscoco.ie

Laois County Council | Éilias na hÉireann Government of Ireland

Good Luck!



**Laois PPN would like to wish
Laois PPN Secretariat Member,
Vincent Booth all the best in his
new role on the Local
Community Development
Committee (LCDC)**



CONTACT US

As per Government guidelines, our office is closed to the public, but Ailish will be in the office Monday to Friday, 9.00am - 1.30pm for any queries by phone or email.

You can contact Dan or Ailish by:

Email: ppn@laoiscoco.ie



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