



Laois Public Participation Network

NOVEMBER 2021 NEWSLETTER



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Laois PPN Event



Laois CONNECTS Event - Rory's Stories - "An Unexpected Journey to Self-Belief"

Laois PPN were delighted to host "Rory's Stories - An Unexpected Journey to Self-Belief". A talk with comedian and mental health advocate Rory O'Connor AKA Rory's Stories. The event was part of Laois CONNECTS, which promotes positive mental health and took place on Wednesday evening, the 27th of October 2021, at the Abbeyleix Manor Hotel.

On the night, Rory told his story - his struggles in school, in work, with a gambling addiction and his own mental health. The boy labelled as thick in school would later find out he is dyslexic, is now a best-selling author.

The man who struggled to find a career he could succeed in, is now a stand-up comedian, selling out venues around Ireland with a social media following of over a million. A gambling addiction which gnawed at his self-esteem, struggling with depression, he now uses his social media presence to promote positive mental health, the importance of knowing your own worth and being happy in life.



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Dan Bergin, Laois PPN Resource Worker said, " There was a wide variety of groups from across the county in attendance, which shows the appeal of Rory O' Connor and the importance of his message on positive mental health. Rory told of his struggles with mental health and the positive steps he had taken to help him with this. The honesty and humour which Rory used to tell his story, struck a chord with so many in attendance both young and old."

After a Q & A session, Rory took time to pose for photos. Attendees were treated to refreshments supplied by the Abbeyleix Manor Hotel.

The event which was free for Laois PPN member groups was fully booked and highly praised by attendees. Laois PPN would like to extend our thanks to Alex Kent, Abbeyleix Manor Hotel for hosting on the night and to Rory O' Connor for sharing his story.

Photos on the night were taken by local photographer Michael Scully.



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Laois PPN Event



Ramble at the Rock

On a bright November Sunday morning, Laois PPN held a "Ramble at the Rock". The event was a guided heritage walk of one of the most iconic heritage sites in Laois - Rock of Dunamase.

The tour of the site was led by local tour guide, Trudy Carmody of Experiencing Ireland. Trudy told attendees of the history of the Rock of Dunamase which is believed to have been a fortress dating back almost 2000 years. Trudy told of how through the centuries the Rock of Dunamase has been a key defensive 12th century Anglo Norman fortification, a strong hold for the O' Moore's of Laois, a dowry gift to Strongbow by the King of Leinster and the location where the first cannonballs were fired in all of Ireland when the Rock of Dunamase was attacked by Cromwellian forces.

Trudy led the group of PPN members up the path, inviting them to imagine how difficult it was to successfully attack the castle, pointing out all the many defensive features including curtain walls, barbican gate, murder hole and a moate.

Dan Bergin, Resource Worker with Laois PPN, said "The Rock of Dunamase is an amazing heritage site to have in our county.

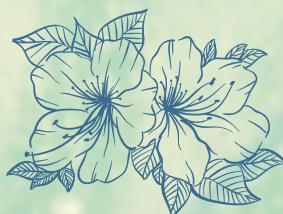
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"On a bright day like today from the top, there is a fantastic view across seven counties. Attendees were delighted to learn of the rich history of one of the most iconic heritage sites in Laois from Trudy."

The day finished with tea and sweet treats for attendees provided by local business "Cuddy's Brew".

Photographs taken on the day by local photographer Denis Byrne.



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Heritage Keepers Programme

The Heritage Council is teaming up with Burrenbeo Trust to launch this exciting pilot programme.

'Heritage Keepers' is a free programme for schools and communities that will enable them to work together to explore the built, natural, and cultural heritage of their local place and then plan an action or actions to enhance their place. The 'Heritage Keepers' programme will initially be offered to a limited number of schools and communities nationwide, through a series of five 2-hour workshops. In-person, online and blended learning options will be made available and there are also plans to offer teachers and community facilitators the chance to become 'Heritage Keepers' programme trainers.

Burrenbeo Trust is inviting expressions of interest from primary schools, secondary schools and community groups who are interested in participating in the programme.

Closing Date for Submissions is Wednesday 1st December, 2021.



Community Activities Fund

Laois LCDC are delighted to announce the launch of The Community Activities Fund.

This Fund is being provided by the Government to support community and voluntary groups impacted by Covid-19. This once-off funding will be allocated under the Department's Community Enhancement Programme will be administered locally by the Local Community Development Committees (Laois LCDC).

The Community Activities Fund (CAF) provides funding to support community groups across Ireland.

The Community Activities Fund will support groups, particularly in disadvantaged areas

- **With their non-pay running costs for example utility bills (electricity costs, refuse charges, heating charges) or other non-pay operating costs for example rental / lease costs, insurance bills.**
- **Groups will also be able to use the funding to carry out necessary repairs and improvements to their facilities, purchase equipment such as tables and chairs, tools and signage, laptops and printers, lawnmowers, canopies and training equipment, etc.**



The following provides a non-exhaustive list of projects that could receive funding under the programme:

- **Development / renovation of community centres**
- **Community amenities**
- **Development of youth clubs or facilities**
- **Development of sports / recreation facilities**
- **Improvements to town parks and common areas and spaces**
- **CCTV equipment**
- **Public realm improvements**
- **Streetscaping**
- **Development of play / recreation spaces**
- **Energy efficiency type projects**
- **Purchase of equipment**
- **Adaptions or equipment needed as a result of COVID-19**
- **Maintenance of premises**
- **Utility Bills (electricity costs, refuse charges, heating charges)**
- **Operating costs (eg existing rental / lease costs, insurance bills)**
- **Website maintenance**
- **Cleaning**
- **Audit & Accountancy fees**

To ensure appropriate monitoring and governance, the Department is stating that only operating / running costs related to this period are eligible - 1st July 2021 - 30th June 2022.



The following expenditure is not eligible for funding:

- Any project not in keeping with the ethos of the Programme
- Employment costs
- Legal fees
- Project management fees
- Purchase of lands or buildings
- Feasibility studies
- Private or commercial operations
- Costs which are being paid for by another funder or department

For Further information, please visit:

<https://laois.ie/departments/community/social-enterprise-capital-grant-scheme/>

Please read CAP Guidelines for clarification, alternatively email:

rdoolin@laoiscoco.ie

or call

057 86 64206

The closing date for receipt of applications is Friday 7th January 2022 at 4.00pm.

Please ensure that all documentation required to complete the application is included, otherwise this may render your application invalid.

The application process is administered by Laois Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

Community Climate Action



Programme

Strand 2: Climate Education, Capacity Building and Learning by Doing, of the Community Action Programme is now open for not-for-profit organisations, non-government organisations, universities, third level institutions, community and voluntary organisations, social enterprises and libraries.

Partnerships / Consortiums are welcome to apply.

Organisations interested in applying must complete and submit their on-line application before the deadline of 3pm (15.00hrs) on the 14th January 2022.



Only one application per organisation.

THE GLOBAL GOALS

Overview

Climate changes are occurring in every region across the world, according to the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Report. In Ireland, we are already experiencing the results of this through flooding, extreme weather conditions (hotter and wetter) and rising sea levels (2-3mm since early 1990s).



The government recognises that supporting ambitious climate actions is necessary to ensure a sustainable future nationally and globally. The Government acknowledges the vital role of citizens and communities in addressing climate change.

€5m has been made available by the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications.

Purpose of the funding

- The purpose of the funding is to facilitate eligible organisations to collaboratively develop supports, tools, know-how and approaches to assist local communities take climate action. The strand focus is on climate education, capacity building and learning by doing - moving beyond 'raising awareness' to build the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary to respond to the challenges of climate change at a community level. It is necessary for successful proposals to demonstrate inclusivity in design and practice, so that no one is left behind.



THE GLOBAL GOALS

Themes



There are five themes:

- Home / Energy
- Travel
- Food and Waste
- Shopping and Recycling
- Local Climate and Environmental Action

Applications must contribute to at least one of these themes. For Application and more information, go to

<https://www.pobal.ie/programmes/community-climate-action-programme-climate-education-capacity-building-and-learning-by-doing-strand-2/>

Amount of grant that you can apply for:

- €50,000 to €100,000 (up to 18 month proposal)
- €101,000 to €500,000 (up to 36 month proposal)

JAM (Just A Minute) Card

Transport for Ireland along with Bus Éireann, Dublin Bus, Go-Ahead Ireland, Iarnród Éireann, TFI Local Link and Luas are continuing our journey to become JAM Card Friendly. The JAM Card will assist customers using the public transport system and make their experience as stress-free as possible.

What is JAM Card and who is it for?

JAM Card was created by NOW Group, a social enterprise that supports people with learning difficulties and autism into jobs with a future and their service users told them that they would like a way to relay to people that they need a little extra time or patience.

Find out more about NOW Group at

www.nowgroup.org

and JAM Card at

www.jamcard.org



There are 3 message options to choose from:

1. Please be patient, I have autism
2. Please be patient, I have a learning disability / difficulty
3. Please be patient, I have a condition

For those with a learning difficulty, autism or any condition where there can be a communication barrier, the JAM Card allows users to relay to others that they may need a little extra time in a simple, effective non-verbal manner.

The JAM Card is useful when on public transport, in a retail or any other customer facing environment.

Where can I get one?

There are several different methods to get a JAM Card.

JAM Cards are available for collection from the following transport hubs:

Irish Rail Stations:

- 1. Connolly Station, Dublin**
- 2. Pearse Station, Dublin**
- 3. Heuston Station, Dublin**
- 4. Kent Station, Cork**
- 5. Ceannt Station, Galway**
- 6. Colbert Station, Limerick**
- 7. Plunkett Station, Waterford**
- 8. MacDiarmada Station, Sligo**



Dublin Bus:

Dublin Bus Head Office, O' Connell St

Local Link Offices

You can also request one directly from NOW Group by visiting the JAM Card website and filling out the request form.

Or if you would prefer there is a JAM Card App available for Android and iOS. The App allows you to choose your message option and find other JAM friendly businesses.

Congratulations



Laois PPN would like to extend huge congratulations to Abbeyleix TidyTowns on their amazing win at the SuperValu TidyTowns Competition which took place on November 12th, 2021 in the RDS, Dublin.

Abbeyleix was named as Ireland's Tidiest Small Town at the national awards event.

The town was just pipped at the post for the overall award by one point, which was won by Ennis, Co.Clare.

Abbeyleix was awarded an amazing five prizes including the Tidiest Small Town Title. They also won:

- **The Climate Action & Air Quality Award - Village and Small Town**
- **County Award**
- **Gold Medal Award**
- **Regional Award for Midlands & East**

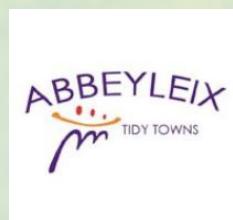


"It's all down to the volunteers doing a weekly clean up every Tuesday night, and others who come out at 5am" stated Mary White, Secretary of Abbeyleix TidyTowns.

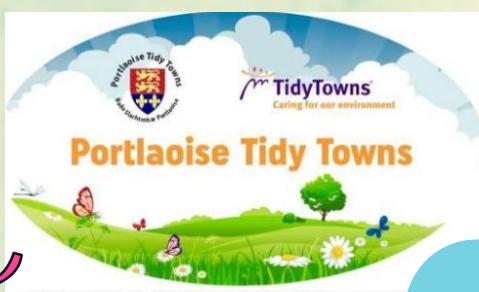
Robbie Quinn, Chairman of Abbeyleix TidyTowns said, "It is absolutely brilliant to win. It is in recognition of all the hard work that goes on in the town, not just by the committee"

Laois PPN would also like to extend our congratulations to the following Laois TidyTowns Groups who were successful at the SuperValu TidyTowns Competition:

- **Portlaoise TidyTowns - Silver Medal Award**
- **Castletown TidyTowns - Highly Commended Award**
- **Ballacolla TidyTowns - Commended Award**
- **Ballinakill TidyTowns - Best Endeavour Award**



CONGRATULATIONS



Portlaoise TidyTowns



**Congratulations to Laois PPN Member Group,
Portlaoise TidyTowns on their wonderful achievement
of winning a Silver Medal in the SuperValu TidyTowns
Competition.**

**It is great to see the hardwork and dedication of the
committee and volunteers to our town recognised at
this national competition.**



**Vincent Booth, Laois PPN Secretariat
Member and Secretary of Portlaoise
TidyTowns Committee**



SOSAD IRELAND - LAOIS BRANCH



SOSAD Ireland Laois Branch is now open and is temporarily based in Shamrock House, Abbeyleix Road, Portlaoise, R32 AH51. We are a voluntary-lead suicide prevention charity, preventing suicide through early intervention. We provide free 1:1 counselling for any feeling suicidal, has suicide ideation, self-harms, has depression, has anxiety or if they simply need to talk. Our counselling is done in person, however we can facilitate remote counselling as well. We are hoping to start a bereavement group soon.

As we are not funded, the money to run our service comes from donations and fundraisers. If anyone in the community has ideas for fundraising, we would love to hear them. All money raised in Laois goes directly into our Laois office.

People can make contact with us via phone

083 029 1706

or email

laoisoffice@sosadireland.ie

Our office hours are Monday to Friday, 10am -6pm.

We also have a 24 hour helpline and a messaging service is available on our website

www.sosadireland.ie

This Christmas we are asking the public to donate self-care packs for people with mental difficulties.

The pack can include chocolates, candles, socks, games, etc and can be dropped into our office during office hours. They can be wrapped or bagged and marked with which gender they are for or if they are gender neutral. Members of the community that would like to receive a self-care pack can sign up for one by contacting the office via phone or email and collect it on December 20th.



Laois County Library Services

REDUCE YOUR FOOD WASTE

ARE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT THE AMOUNT OF FOOD WASTE YOUR FAMILY PRODUCE OVER THE FESTIVE PERIOD?

JOIN LAOIS LIBRARIES AND AOIFE MUNN FOR A ZOOM SESSION COVERING EVERYTHING FROM MEAL PLANNING, RECIPE SWAPS, PRESERVING AND GROWING YOUR OWN. WE WILL ALSO LOOK AT FOOD STORAGE, WHAT BEST BEFORE DATES TO IGNORE AND JAZZING UP LEFT OVERS FOR A TASTY PACKED LUNCH.

TO BOOK A PLACE CONTACT US AT PORTLAOISELIBRARY@LAOISCOCO.IE

**Thursday 2nd December
at 7pm**

Laois County Library Service

europe direct Portlaoise

Midlands Louth Meath CHO - Recovery Education

December Timetable Free Mental Health and Wellbeing Online Workshops

Midlands Louth Meath CHO Recovery Education



Workshop Title

Finding Joy

Date & Time

Friday 3rd Dec, 2pm to 4pm

An Introduction to Affirmations & Meditations

Tuesday 7th Dec, 2pm to 3pm

An introduction to Journaling & Meditation

Tuesday 14th Dec, 2pm to 3pm

Christmas Coffee Morning

Friday 17th Dec, 11am - 12:30pm

- It is free to attend our courses
- Our courses are open to anyone (aged 18 and over) with an interest in mental health and wellbeing



Book your place at one of our online modules:
<http://mlmrecoveryed.eventbrite.com>

or



Contact with any queries or to book a place:

Email: tara@mentalhealthireland.ie

derek@mentalhealthireland.ie

Phone: 087 052 8058

087 284 0901

Follow us online:



Midlands Louth Meath CHO
Recovery Education

Midlands Louth Meath
Community Healthcare
Organisation



Seirbhís Sláinte
Níos Fárraí
a Forbairt

Building a
Better Health
Service



Mental Health
Ireland



Contact Us



**The Laois Public Participation Network (PPN)
Office has reopened, Monday to Friday by
appointment only.**

We are also contactable by email and phone.

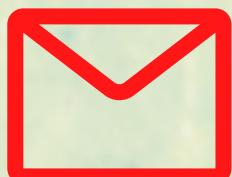


Email: ppn@laoiscoco.ie

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