



Laois Public Participation Network

May 2022 Newsletter

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The winners of the 12th Annual Laois Community and Voluntary Awards 2021 gathered in person to receive their awards on 5th May, following the virtual ceremony streamed live in February.

Laois PPN in collaboration with our long term partner, Laois County Council were delighted to be able to celebrate the awards presentation in person, and to acknowledge the incredible contribution made by the community and voluntary sector here in Co. Laois.

This year welcomed the introduction of a new award, the Covid19 Community Response Award sponsored by Laois Volunteer. A special thanks to our media partner, Leinster Express.

Paddy Buggy (Secretariat Member) and Diane Seale (Support Worker) attended on behalf of Laois PPN.



volunteer centre
Ionad d'Obair Dheonach Laois
LAOIS



CHILDREN & YOUTH



Runner-Up: Ballyroan Blue Stars Juvenile

Pictured: Paddy Buggy (Laois PPN) presenting award to Olive Delaney, Cllr. Barry Walsh & Orla Cahill



Winner: Oughaval Athletic Club

Pictured: Paddy Buggy (Laois PPN) presenting award to Hilary Treacy

ARTS, CULTURE & HERITAGE



Runner-Up: Mountrath Youth Theatre



**Winner: Colonel James Fitzmaurice
Commemoration Society**

Pictured: John Mulholland (Chief Executive, Laois County Council) presenting award to Michael Parsons & Teddy Fennelly

SOCIAL INCLUSION



Runner-Up: Laois Down Syndrome

Cllr. Conor Bergin (Cathaoirleach) presenting award to Amy Lalor & Margaret Miron



Winner: PATH

Cllr. Conor Bergin (Cathaoirleach) presenting award to Irene Redmond & Catherine Bennett

ENVIRONMENT



Runner-Up: Camross Tidy Towns

Pictured: Pat Somers (Editor, Leinster Express) presenting award to Johanna Mc Donald Steenkist



Winner: Abbeyleix Tidy Towns

Pictured: Pat Somers (Editor, Leinster Express) presenting award to Mary White & Cllr. John Joe Fennelly

HEALTHY & ACTIVE COMMUNITY



Runner-Up: Portlaoise Musical Society

Cllr. Conor Bergin (Cathaoirleach) presenting award to Hilary Treacy



Winner: Teac Tom - The Thomas Hayes Trust

Pictured: Cllr. Conor Bergin (Cathaoirleach) presenting award to Josephine Walsh

AGE FRIENDLY



**Runner-Up: Portlaoise
Active Retirement**

*Paddy Buggy (Laois PPN) presenting award to
Andy Mc Quillan & Trudy Nealon*



**Winner: Portarlinton
Social Services**

*Paddy Buggy (Laois PPN) award to Paul
Mooney & Anne Dunne*

LAOIS VOLUNTEER CENTRE COVID-19 COMMUNITY RESPONSE



Runner-Up: PATH

*Caitriona Ryan (Laois Volunteer Centre)
presenting the award to Irene Redmond &
Catherine Bennett*



**Winner: Portlaoise Order of
Malta**

*Caitriona Ryan (Laois Volunteer Centre)
presenting the award to Des Thornton &
Marie Carroll*

UNsung HERO



Runner-Up: Gina Reidy

John Mulholland (Chief Executive, Laois County Council) presenting the Unsung Hero Runner-up Award to Cllr. James Kelly, who accepted on behalf of Gina Reidy



Winner: Michael Gorman

Michael Gorman with his son Eoin, accepting the Unsung Hero Award from Cllr. Conor Bergin (Cathaoirleach)



Pictured: Pamela Tynan (Laois County Council), Cllr. Catherine Fitzgerald & Suzanne O'Connor (Laois County Council)



Michael Gorman with his son Eoin, with the Usung Hero Award & Amy Lalor & Margaret Miron & Mary Gorman

Photos: Michael Scully

Paddy Buggy, Laois PPN Secretariat Member said

"It was great to participate in our first in person presentations since 2019 and I'm looking forward to the 2022 awards event. My congratulations to both those present on the night and to the other groups and individuals who were nominated for the awards. Not even a pandemic can stop the great work carried out in the community by committed individuals week in week out and we look forward to once again acknowledging this later this year."





SOCIAL INCLUSION WEEK PHOTO COMPETITION WINNERS



As part of Social Inclusion Week, Laois PPN ran a Photo Competition. The theme was 'What does Social Inclusion mean to you?'.

A big thank you everyone who entered and our judges; Donal O'Shea (Laois PPN Social Inclusion Secretariat Member), Joan Bolger (Laois PPN Social Inclusion Rep) & Naeem Iqbal (Laois PPN Social Inclusion Rep).



O'Moores Camogie Club



**La Leche League
Portlaoise**



**Suaimhneas Community Childcare,
Portlaoise FRC**

PRESENTATION OF FUJI INSTAX MINI INSTANT CAMERA TO WINNERS



Pictured: Debbie Smith - Suaimhneas Community Childcare and Dan Bergin (Laois PPN Resource worker)



Pictured: O'Moores Camogie Club Mascot and Dan Bergin (Laois PPN Resource worker)



Pictured: Heather Rice - La Leche League Portlaoise and Dan Bergin (Laois PPN Resource worker)

Donal O'Shea , Laois PPN Social Inclusion Secretariat Member said

'Well done to all of the participants for forwarding their photos. They are all winners in their own right and are making significant contributions to enhancing inclusion in their communities.

Clearly social inclusion means different things to various people and organisations.

My own take is that socially inclusive initiatives are those which allow individuals and organisations to thrive to fulfill their full potential.'



ABBEYLEIX TIDY TOWNS BIG WINNERS AT ANNUAL PRIDE OF PLACE AWARDS

Abbeyleix Tidy Towns were announced as winners of their category at the IPB Pride of Place awards recently in the INEC, Killarney.

The award was received by Mary White, Betty Whelan and Councillor John Joe Fennelly.

Pride of Place awards promotes and celebrates the best in community development and recognises the selfless efforts of people in making their local neighbourhoods better places to live, work and socialise.

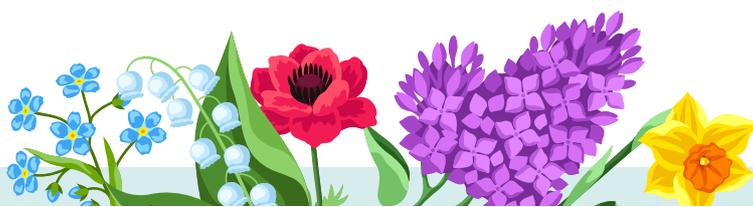




Mary White, Abbeyleix Tidy Towns said

“Abbeyleix Tidy Towns are thrilled to win this prestigious national award. I wish to thank, each and every one of our volunteers and supporters for their time and commitment to our community.

A special thanks to our friends in the Abbeyleix Bog Project. Thanks to our local community and businesses for their continued support. Abbeyleix Tidy wish to acknowledge and thank Laois County Council for their support.”



LAOIS BEALTAINÉ FESTIVAL

Laois PPN Member Groups were invited by Portlaoise Library to take part in the Laois Bealtaine Festival over the month of May.



Gerry Browne & Vincent Booth (Laois PPN Secretariat) representing Portlaoise Tidy Towns



Ray Harte (Laois PPN Rep & Men's Shed Secretary) , John McIntyre (Men's Shed Chairman), Martin Finn (Men's Shed Committee Member) representing Portlaoise Men's Shed

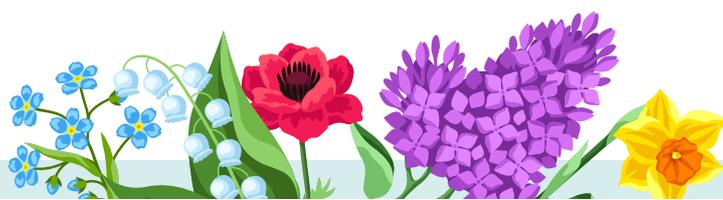




Anne Payne & Miriam Lawless representing Portlaoise ICA



Members of Portlaoise Active Retirement Association



UKRAINE ARTIST CREATES HUGE MURAL FOR PORTLAOISE TIDY TOWNS

Yana Koretska, is creating 10 metre long artwork on the walkway into the People's Park. Yana fled from Ukraine due to the Russian invasion, and is now staying with relatives in Portlaoise.

She has been commissioned by Portlaoise Tidy Towns who were eager to support and integrate the new Ukrainian refugee community.



Vincent Booth, Laois PPN Secretariat and member of Portlaoise Tidy Towns.

"We found out about Yana's work through Laois Integration Network, and when we saw some of her work, we realised it was absolutely amazing."

"We have chosen a biodiversity theme featuring native flora and fauna, so it will be both nice to look at and educational. It will follow the Triogue Blueway walk from James Fintan Lalor side."



SOCIAL MEDIA FOR IMPACT WORKSHOP

Laois PPN provided a free Social Media for Impact workshop on Thursday 12th May via Zoom.

Laois PPN recognise's the power of Social Media and the part it can play in assisting Community Groups in growing their numbers and getting their message out there into the public domain.



The trainer Emily Bourke, Communications & Marketing Officer of The Wheel said

"This training session helped groups decide which social media platforms were right for them. It's not always a case of "more is better", but choosing a targeted approach to help groups meet their audience where they already are. This can help them to be more effective in their communications without overloading their capacity."



Dan Bergin , Laois PPN Resource worker said

"Social Media for Impact training was of real benefit to our Laois PPN Member Groups. Social Media can assist Community & Voluntary Groups in achieving goals such recruiting new members, promote upcoming events and highlight the work of their group to a large audience. "



AFRICA DAY LAOIS

Africa Day Laois took place on Saturday, May 28. The crowd were treated to musical performances as well as drama, storytelling and dance. There were stalls showcasing the very best of African Culture, fashion and Art & Craft.



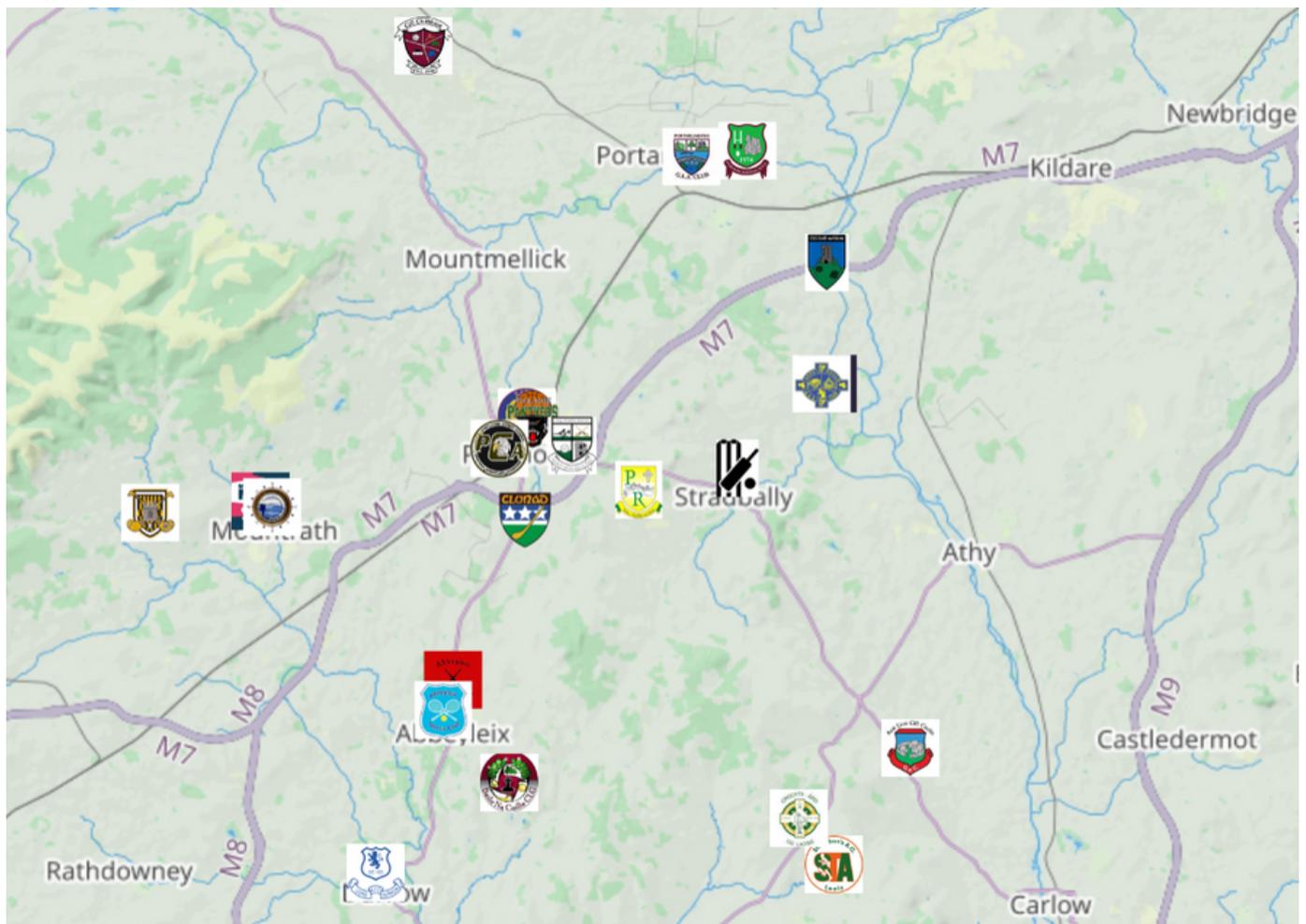
Bolaji Adeyanju, Laois PPN Secretariat & Laois Africa Support Group said *'Celebrations for Africa Day in Laois took place on the grounds of Portlaoise Leisure Centre. The biggest celebration yet for Africa Day was a great success and brought together the entire Laois community.'*

A big thank you to the Laois community and volunteers on the day and of course the An Garda Síochána for the football game.'



To see all photos from the day
[CLICK HERE](#)

SPORTS CLUBS AND YOUTH CLUBS WELCOMING UKRAINIAN NATIONALS



Dan Bergin Laois PPN Resource worker said
“Laois PPN recognise's the positive physical and mental health benefits of sport and the key role sport and youth clubs can play in supporting people in particular children to integrate in our communities in Laois. Thanks to Sports & Youth Clubs across Laois for supporting this mapping initiative and their warm welcome to Ukrainian Nationals into our communities



[CLICK HERE](#)
TO VIEW THE MAP





FUNDING OPPORTUNITY: COMMUNITY CENTRES INVESTMENT FUND

Grants of between €10,000 and €300,000 available for upgrade and refurbishment works to Community Centres

The Department of Rural and Community Development has announced a new €15 million capital fund to support community groups for the upgrade and refurbishment of Community Centres. This is an investment in both rural and urban communities across the Country.

The Community Centres Investment Fund will support community groups with the upgrade and development of their Community Centre facilities.

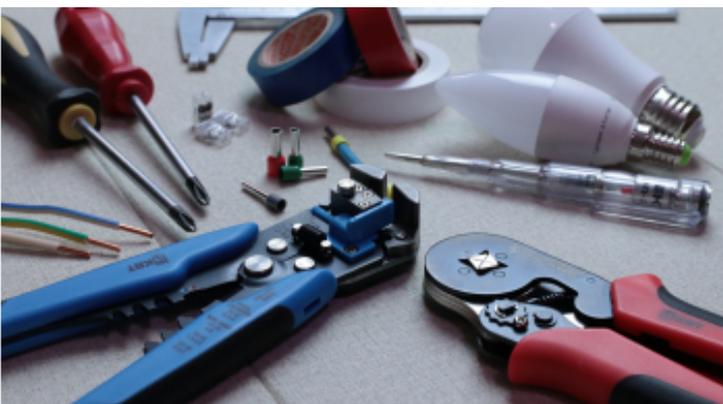
Funding will be available under 3 Categories with grants of between €10k and €300K available:

Category 1: Small scale projects/improvements to facilities - €10,000 to €25,000.

Category 2: Larger scale projects - €25,001 to €100,000.

Category 3: Major projects- €100,001 to €300,000.

Applications under Category 2 and 3 must include a minimum contribution of 5% of the total project costs from the applicants own funds.



Funding is available for capital works such as:

- Works to improve communal facilities such as kitchen and toilet facilities
- Energy retrofitting, new windows / doors / heating systems
- Upgrades to lighting systems and stage areas
- Works to address safety concerns, including as a result of fire safety audits
- Works to improve disability access
- Improvements to assist in providing additional or better services to the community such as Meals for the Elderly & youth facilities
- Works to develop Community Centres as Social Hubs through the development of Community Cinemas, Youth Hubs and Community Libraries
- Essential maintenance works, repairs to roof, etc

Applicants need to register as 'users' on their portal in advance of the application process . The closing date for applications is **Thursday 14th July 2022.**

Support clinics for applicants will be held online on the following dates:

- Wednesday 15th June 2:30pm – 4:00pm
- Wednesday 29th June 7:30pm – 9:00pm
- Monday 11th July 12:30pm – 2:00pm

[For more information](#)
[CLICK HERE](#)





FUNDING OPPORTUNITY:

TOWN AND VILLAGE RENEWAL SCHEME 2022

The Town & Village Renewal Scheme, funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development, is part of a package of national and local support measures to rejuvenate rural towns and villages throughout Ireland.

The 2022 Scheme will prioritise tackling vacancy and dereliction in towns and villages. Other projects which will be welcomed include regeneration projects that support active and vibrant town or village centres, remote working, upgrading shopfronts and street facades, and green spaces and parks, etc.

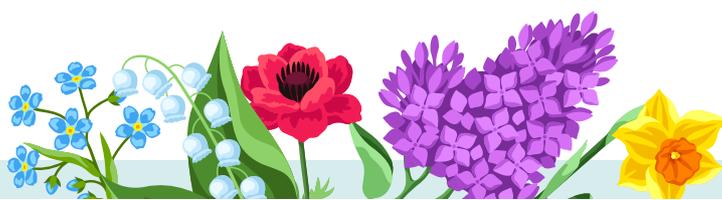
The 2022 scheme will be targeted at two categories of Towns/Villages as follows:

- Category 1: Towns and villages with a population of up to 5,000
- Category 2: Towns with a population of 5,001 to 10,000
- Larger towns with a population of up to 15,000 people may be eligible under certain circumstances.

The primary focus of the scheme will be on villages and towns with a population of up to 5,000 (Category 1). These towns/villages will receive at least 60% of funding available.

Grant Levels

For the 2022 Scheme, the minimum grant which is available is €20,000. The maximum level of grant funding available is €500,000 in respect of one application from each Local Authority. A maximum of €250,000 will apply in respect of 5 applications.





The maximum grant level has been set at 90% of the total cost of a project under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme. The remaining 10% match funding must be contributed by the Local Authority and/or the community and/or Philanthropic contributions – this can take the form of 5% cash contribution (minimum level) and 5% in-kind contribution (maximum level).

Project Development Measure:

The Project Development Measure (up to €50,000) is being included again this year, with Local Authorities now able to submit 2 applications under the measure.

The Project Development Measure is similar in nature to Category 2 projects under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF). The purpose of this Measure is to assist Local Authorities to contribute to a pipeline of significant, well developed projects which might be subsequently progressed to construction stage, subject to the availability of further funding. It is proposed that applications would involve:

- Development costs for one strategic large scale project, per application, that may be subsequently progressed with funding from the TVRS e.g. detailed design, preparation for the planning and/or procurement, appropriate assessment etc.
- Funding of up to €50,000 at a 90% rate of aid
- Maximum of two proposals to be submitted by any Local Authority (increased from 1 last year)

The approval of funding under this category does not automatically guarantee future support under the TVRS for delivery of the emerging project – the resulting projects will need to be submitted as normal under the competitive TVRS process.

All Expressions of Interest should be received no later than 4pm on **Friday 24th June 2022**, by post or email to ptynan@laoiscoco.ie.

[For more information](#)
[CLICK HERE](#)



CONTACT US

The Laois Public Participation Network (PPN) Office is open Monday to Friday by appointment only.

You can also contact us by:



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