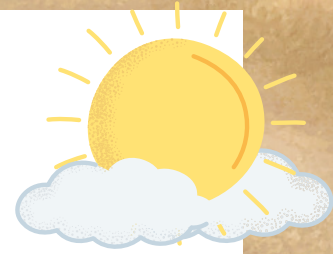


# IN THE Summer TIME



## Public Participation Network Laois

### Laois Public Participation Network

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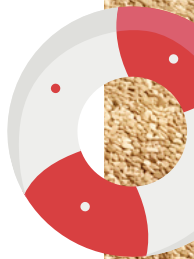
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# COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY AWARDS



*Patricia O'Rourke (Laois County Council), Anne Marie Kirrane (Laois County Council), Carol Murphy (People First Credit Union), Dan Bergin (Laois PPN Resource Worker), Cathaoirleach Cllr Thomasina Connell, Conor Ganley (Leinster Express) John Mulholland (Chief Executive of Laois County Council), Billy Fitzpatrick (People First Credit Union)*

**Laois PPN in collaboration with Laois County Council are delighted to launch the Community & Voluntary Awards 2023. The Community & Voluntary Awards celebrate the extraordinary work of Community Groups and Volunteers in Laois.**

**Paddy Buggy, Laois PPN Secretariat said, "Laois PPN in collaboration with our long-term partners Laois County Council are delighted to launch the Community & Voluntary Awards for 2023. The Community & Voluntary Awards recognise the significant positive impact that Community Groups and their volunteers have in their local communities. Laois PPN would invite nominations to the Community & Voluntary Awards to celebrate and recognise those who enhance the quality of life in our communities in Laois."**



*Paddy Buggy,  
Laois PPN Secretariat*



Special thanks to our C&V Awards Sponsor - People First Credit Union. Read more about the C&V Awards 2023 in this week's edition of the Leinster who are our official media partner.

[Click Here to Submit Nominations](#)



*Laois PPN at the 2022 Community & Voluntary Awards Ceremony*

Pictures by Michael Scully

# BIKE TOUR WITH LAOIS ARCHAEOLOGY



*Laois PPN Rep and local archaeologist Seán Murray talks to the attendees of the tour*

**Laois PPN as part of Bike week and their overall Climate Action Project 2023 hosted a Bike Heritage Tour on Saturday the 20th of May 2023 in Vicarstown County Laois.**

Active travel like cycling is a great way to fully enjoy what nature has to offer. Laois PPN members were treated to a fantastic bike ride taking in many heritage sites along the way. The tour was led by Laois Archaeologist Sean Murray.

Dan Bergin, Laois PPN Resource Worker said, "Laois PPN wish to thank Sean for a fantastic event. We received lots of positive feed back from our members who attended and enjoyed both the leisurely 21km cycle and Seans engaging and informative stories about the local area's rich heritage. Sean has a wealth of knowledge and a way of weaving a story, never more evident than in his book "101 Historic Curiosities in County Laois". As part of our Climate Action Project for 2023 Laois PPN hope to inspire our members through events like this that showcase the small positive actions they can take, such as active travel, whilst celebrating our wonderful county."



**Dan Bergin,  
Laois PPN  
Resource  
Worker**



*Ciara Murray, Laois PPN Resource Worker Dan Bergin & Seán Murray*



*Seán Murray*

Seán Murray, said of the event "There is no better way to explore our heritage, than on the leisurely pace of a bike. We cycled along the canal, which was completed in 1791, as a sustainable form of transport, and got to stop off at the Grattan Aqueduct, named after Henry Grattan who donated some of his Moyanna Estate for its construction by the Grand Canal Company. We then cycled to Bellegrave House, a 19th Century mansion which was owned by the infamous John George Adair, a business tycoon and progressive farmer, who was not fondly remembered by small farm holders, of whom he evicted many throughout Ireland. Bellegrave was accidentally burnt to the ground in 1887, two years after the death of "Blackjack". His widowed wife Cornelia, built the lavish Church of the Ascension at Rathadaire in his honour, which was designed by the eminent Irish Architect James Franklin Fuller, and with thanks to the kind Reverend Ven Leslie Stevenson we got to see the interior and superb stained-glass windows inside. At Ballyadding we visited the Medieval Church ruin and the reputed grave of an O'Dempsey Highwayman, the notorious Cahir na gCapall, who was hung in Maryborough Gaol in 1735. With our tummies rumbling, we were glad to arrive at the Fisherman's thatched Inn, where we were refreshed for the return journey to Vicarstown along the Blueway.



Pictures by Rene PR

# LAOIS PPN & LAOIS TOURISM FUNDING WORKSHOP



*Dan Bergin (Laois PPN Resource Worker), Caroline Hofman (Director of the Cube), & Regina Dunne (the new Tourism Development Executive with Laois Chamber Alliance)*

**Laois PPN in collaboration with Laois Tourism were delighted to welcome Community Groups from across Laois to a Regenerative Tourism Funding Workshop.**

Laois PPN provide regular updates to PPN Member Groups on funding opportunities. Community Groups registered with Laois PPN were invited to come along and learn how their Group and local community can benefit from this funding opportunity.

As Ireland moves towards a low-carbon economy, Fáilte Ireland will deliver the Regenerative Tourism Scheme as part of the EU Just Transition Fund. Through this scheme, tourism projects will be funded across Laois and the Midlands – sustaining jobs, businesses and communities.

**Dan Bergin, Laois PPN Resource Worker said, “Laois with its central location, beautiful Slieve Mountains, rich heritage and growing number of events and festivals is ideally placed to benefit from this funding opportunity”.**



**Dan Bergin,  
Laois PPN  
Resource Worker**



Potential Project ideas include Community Festivals, Community Markets, development of walkways and trails in local communities, small museums or visitor centres, Community Café, Equipment hire such as bicycles or kayaks and glamping/camping facilities.

Attendees at the workshop were treated to sweet treats from local Artisan award winning bakery, Mueller & O'Connell.





Regina Dunne, the new Tourism Development Executive with Laois Chamber Alliance said " I was delighted to be invited by the Laois PPN to deliver a presentation on the €68 million of Just Transition Regenerative Tourism



funding. There was a great turnout of Laois PPN groups on Tuesday evening last at The Cube Low Carbon Centre of Excellence. It was evident from the discussion and the people in the room that communities are key to enhancing our tourism offering here in County Laois. The purpose of the workshop was to generate project ideas that could potentially be funded under the funding which will be administered by Fáilte Ireland. Ideas such as the repurposing of old farm building to create low carbon accommodation offerings or employment for community cafés were discussed. We invite anyone with a project idea to fill out the attached survey, and make an anonymous submission to Fáilte Ireland. Regenerative tourism, is key to job creation in the counties affected by the closure of the peat processing power plants, and Laois are strategically located in the country for tourists to situate themselves to explore all of Ireland while on their visits to Ireland.



*Regina Dunne*

To find out more about the funding stream or to discuss a project idea, reach out to Regina at [regina.dunne@laoistourism.ie](mailto:regina.dunne@laoistourism.ie).

# COMMUNITY CLIMATE ACTION FUND WORKSHOP



*Karen Moore (Laois County Council Community Climate Officer) & Dan Bergin (Laois PPN Resource Worker)*

**Laois PPN welcomed Community Groups from across Laois to our Community Climate Action Funding Workshop on Wednesday 31st May.**

Dan Bergin, Laois PPN Resource Worker said, "The Community Climate Action Funding Workshop was part of our Climate Action Project for 2023. The funding available will support PPN Member Groups with Climate Action Projects in their community."



*Dan Bergin,  
Laois PPN Resource Worker*





A fund of €465,000 over the next 18 months from the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications is available to support Community Groups in Laois in building low carbon, sustainable communities. There will be a further €465,000- available to groups in Laois over the following 18 months.

Projects can address ideally more than one of the following 5 themes:

1. Home/Energy
2. Travel
3. Food and Waste
4. Shopping and Recycling
5. Local Climate and Environmental Action

There are 3 project scales as shown below

**Small Scale** – Up to €20,000

**Medium Scale** – Up to €50,000

**Large Scale** – Up to €100,00

Karen Moore, Climate Action Officer with Laois County Council went through the Climate Action Fund in detail along with possible projects.



**Karen Moore, Community Climate Action Officer with Laois County Council** said, "the groups were given



***Karen Moore, Climate Action Officer with Laois County Council***

detailed information on the background to the fund, what types of projects would be suited and how the groups can apply. I outlined an important first step was to make contact with me to register your project outline. The event was well attended and the representatives from PPN Member Groups all enjoyed refreshments and an informal Q and A with me after the presentation."

If your Community Group wishes to discuss a potential Climate Action Fund project under this scheme, please contact Karen Moore via [kmoore@laoiscoco.ie](mailto:kmoore@laoiscoco.ie)

# NEW HOUSING FOR LAOIS



**Minister for Housing, Darragh O'Brien TD, visited Laois for the official opening of 4 social housing schemes on Monday 15th of May. These homes were located across all 3 Municipal Districts and will provide 108 new homes for families across Laois.**

The official opening took place in the presence of Cathaoirleach of Laois County Council, Cllr. Thomasina Connell, Chief Executive John Mulholland and elected representatives and guests.





These four new housing developments are located in Ballylinan, Ballyroan, Durrow and Portlaoise. The houses were constructed both directly by Laois County Council and by AHB's supported by the Council.



Laois PPN Reps Michael J. Cobbe & Sheelagh Coyle work in collaboration with the Elected Members Housing Regeneration and Planning SPC.

# IWA PORTLAOISE ACCESSIBLE GYM OPENING



*Cathaoirleach Cllr Thomasina Connell opens the IWA Portlaoise Accessible Gym Opening*

**On Tuesday 23rd May, Laois PPN's Dan Bergin was delighted to attend the opening of the Irish Wheelchair Association Portlaoise Accessible Gym.**

The additions to the gym include 6 pieces of training equipment which are; a rowing machine, a motomed, an easy stand glider, a handcycling machine, a multipurpose weight machine and 2 sets of dumbbell free weights ranging from 1kg – 10kg. All of these provide the users with the necessary tools to complete a full body workout.

Visitors were given an insight as to what IWA users can experience on a day-to-day basis and what sort of atmosphere is present in the centre.

# FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

## Coca-Cola Thank You Fund 2023



The Coca-Cola Thank You Fund is now open for applications. A fund of €200,000 will be available to support community-based projects and programmes across Ireland that are focused on empowering young people aged 16-25 by engaging in models of innovative and inclusive practise under the following three focus areas:

- 1. Empowering Learning**
- 2. Empowering Sustainable Development**
- 3. Empowering Inclusion**

Awards of up to €5,000 and €10,000 will be available.

**Closing date: Thursday 15th June 2023 at 6pm.**

[Click Here to  
For Full Details](#)



# COMMUNITY RECOGNITION FUND

Community  
Recognition  
Fund



**Laois PPN are delighted would like to congratulate all the groups in Laois who were successful in their application of the Community Recognition Fund.**

The €50 million Community Recognition Fund is a major initiative designed to specifically support communities across the country that are hosting people from Ukraine and other countries. The groups who benefitted are:

- Abbeyleix Community Garden
- Abbeyleix AFC
- South Laois Beekeepers
- Jellytots Community Crèche
- Abbeyleix Bog Project
- Laois Down Syndrome
- Abbeyleix Parish Hall
- St Lazerian's GAA
- Abbeyleix Park Development
- Emo Sports field Committee
- Rath NS
- Rath/Ballybrittas Development Association
- Clonaslee High Nelly Club
- Clonaslee United
- Clonaslee St Manman's GAA
- Clonaslee Tidy Towns
- Clonaslee Community Hall

- 
- Clonaslee Badminton Club
  - Irish Country Roads and Culture Trail
  - Lions Durrow AFC
  - Harps GAA Club Durrow Internal
  - Mountmellick AFC
  - Sarsfields Ladies LGFA
  - Mountmellick ICA
  - Mountmellick Men's Shed
  - Portarlington GAA Community Centre
  - Portarlington Lawn Tennis Club
  - Portarlington Rugby Club
  - Port Art Collective
  - Portarlington Concert Band
  - Coderdojo
  - Laois Leisure – Portarlington
  - Rathdowney Errill Activity & Wellness Hub
  - Rathdowney Community Centre
  - Portlaoise GAA
  - Laois LABS Flag Football
  - Portlaoise Sports Hall
  - Music Generation
  - Cos na hAbhann / Bruch na hAbhann
  - Portlaoise FRC
  - Laois Leisure – Portlaoise
  - Laois School of Music
  - Downtown Portlaoise
  - Laois County Council
  - St. Brigid's Place Residents Assoc
  - Ballylinan Community
  - St. Abban's Athletic Club Various areas throughout the county
  - TFI Local Link Laois/Offaly Various areas throughout the county

# PUBLIC CONSULTATION



**As part of Laois County Council's continued work to deliver a sustainable and prosperous future for our County they consulted on three major plans: the Local Development Strategy, the Local Economic & Community Plan and the Local Authority Climate Action Plan.**

As part of this consultation, PPN Member Groups were invited to share their vision for the future of Laois at public consultations meetings at;

- Rathdowney
- Mountmellick
- Abbeyleix
- Virtual session
- Portarlinton
- Portlaoise
- Ballylinan

PPN Member Groups were also invited to complete an online survey.

There was a large turnout of PPN Member Groups at the various locations and who made submissions to the online survey. Laois PPN wish to thank all our PPN Member Groups who took part in the Public Consultations.

# RATHDOWNEY TOWN PLAN



**Are you living, working or own a business in Rathdowney?  
WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

Now is the time to have your say on how you want the town to develop and grow over the next 10 years.

A Town Team has been established in Rathdowney and together with Consultants appointed by Laois County Council, they have produced a draft Town Centre First Masterplan which is now on public display.

5 key infrastructural projects are outlined in this plan together with an action plan designed to revitalize Rathdowney going forward.

[Click Here to  
View the plan  
Or Make A Submission](#)

Alternatively email [drainey@laoiscoco.ie](mailto:drainey@laoiscoco.ie) to give your feedback on the plan

# SURVEY FOR PORTLAOISE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN



**Laois County Council (LCC) and the National Transport Authority (NTA) are currently preparing a Local Transport Plan (LTP) for Portlaoise Town. The completion of this LTP is an objective of the Eastern and Midlands Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and its delivery will support many other national, regional and local objectives.**

The aim of this Survey is to firstly understand how people currently move around Portlaoise, why they choose current modes of transport, and what may encourage them to use more sustainable modes (i.e. walking, cycling, scooting, public transport) of transport in the future, if not already. We will use the results of this Survey to help inform and shape the recommendations and proposals of the Portlaoise LTP.

[Click Here to Complete Survey](#)



# LAOIS AFRICA DAY



*Emma O'Connor (Healthy Laois Co-ordinator), Simon Walton (Director of Services, Laois Co Council) Bolaji Adeyanju (Laois PPN Secretariat), Kemi Adeyemi, Kamar Ayanda, Kafayat Sanusi, Tom Curran (Staff Officer, Comm. Section) and Anne Marie Kirrane (Acting Admin. Officer Community Section)*

**The 2023 Laois Africa Day will be taking place on Saturday 3rd June at the Portlaoise Leisure Centre.**

The event will start with a charity football match between members of the Laois African Support Group and An Garda Síochána at 11:30am.

The day will celebrate the diversity of African Culture. There will be African music, hair braiding, competitions, African cultural performances, spoken word and more.

In the interest of sustainability and to help in reducing emissions and traffic congestion, attendees are encouraged to use public transport, walk or cycle to Laois Africa Day. It is also recommended that attendees bring a refillable water container to avoid the use of single-use plastic.



**Public Participation  
Network Laois**

## **CONTACT US**



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

**You can also contact us by:**



**Email:** [ppn@laoiscoco.ie](mailto:ppn@laoiscoco.ie)

**Phone:** 057 86 65661 (Office)  
086 035 2107 (Dan)



**Postal Address:**

**Laois Public Participation Network,  
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Portlaoise, Co. Laois**

