



DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community Newsletter



“Welcome to our first Community Development Newsletter. In this issue and over the coming months we hope to highlight some of the projects and initiatives that are coordinated, managed and overseen by our Community Development Division and Donegal Local Community Development Committee (LCDC).

“The Donegal Local Community Development Committee is made up of public and private sector members, including local authority members and officials, State agencies, private sector and local and community development representatives who champion and promote local and community development.

Community development is based on the core values of social inclusion, equality and respect for diversity. Together we seek to harness potential resources and look to bring together people, groups and voluntary and statutory bodies to make a positive difference in the development of the communities we serve.” - John G. McLaughlin, Chief Executive of Donegal County Council.

We draw on the expertise and experience of the people and organisations that make up our Committee to ensure an integrated approach and best use of resources in the planning and delivery of community development programmes to enhance the quality of life and wellbeing of the communities across our County.” - Cllr. Niamh Kennedy, Cathaoirleach of Donegal County Council.



IN THIS NEWSLETTER YOU WILL FIND:
Latest projects, funding programmes and more. Keep Reading!

Town and Village Renewal Scheme

The Town and Village Renewal Scheme is one of a series of national and local support measures designed to rejuvenate small rural towns and villages throughout Ireland and is targeted at towns and villages with a population of 10,000 or less.



In partnership with Newtowncunningham Community Focus Group and local businesses, we endeavoured to develop a Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan for Newtowncunningham to shape the future development and regeneration of the village. An element of the project included a space for young people in the centre of Newtowncunningham village. This culminated in the design and installation of two youth pods (pictured above) which provide an attractive recreational amenity to support and nurture social cohesion and promote health and wellbeing. The project complements recent enhancement works including the upgrading of the road and footpaths and provision of new street lighting but more importantly will shape and inform the future development of the village.



Civic Dollars Project

Following on from the success of last year's Healthy Ireland funded Civic Dollars Pilot Project, we were delighted to announce the extension of this innovative initiative over the next two years. [To download the app click here](#) and for details of 'Earn Zone' locations including playgrounds, beaches, parks, trails and forest walks and how to earn and spend online credits [click here](#).



Donegal Ferry Services 2024

Lough Foyle ferry service which links Greencastle and Magilligan and the Swilly ferry service which links Bunrana and Rathmullan are operating a full service seven days a week since 1st June 2024. For information including timetables and fares on the [Greencastle and Magilligan service click here](#) and on the [Bunrana and Rathmullan service click here](#).

PEACEPLUS PROGRAMME 2022 - 2027



DONEGAL COMMUNITIES TO BENEFIT FROM €7.6 MILLION FUNDING AWARD THROUGH THE PEACEPLUS PROGRAMME

Donegal County Council's PEACEPLUS Partnership has successfully secured €7,635,396 funding under the PEACEPLUS Programme, Investment Area 1.1 Co-designed Local PEACEPLUS Action Plans.

Donegal's PEACEPLUS Action Plan, was developed using a local co-designed engagement process which facilitated residents, community, social and voluntary organisations to reflect their challenges, needs and priorities which formed the basis of the Plan. The Action Plan will fund 32 transformative and innovative projects under three thematic strands. Local Community Regeneration and Transformation; Thriving and Peaceful Communities; and Building Respect for all Cultural Identities.

7,635 participants will directly benefit from projects supported by Donegal's Action Plan, that will contribute to increased levels of social inclusion, cross community integration, and incorporate increased levels of sustained contact between those from different communities, cultural and political backgrounds. The Programme will also further develop sustained cross border linkage and partnerships with community organisations and public agencies in Northern Ireland. The Programme will build positive relations locally and make a significant difference within the County in challenging prejudice, promote understanding of diversity and good relations for the creation of a more inclusive society with the benefit of a shared and better future for all.

[FIND OUT MORE HERE!](#)



LEADER / Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2023-2027

The LEADER Initiative promotes a 'bottom-up' approach to rural development, with the implementation of business plans and decisions on funding being made at a national level on projects.

The new LEADER/Rural Development Programme is currently open to applicants with the aim of improving the quality of life and to encourage diversification of economic activity in rural areas. It seeks to bring about positive change helping to support and sustain rural areas for the better.

[FOR INFO ON HOW TO APPLY CLICK HERE](#)

€500,000 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) Funding Awarded to Donegal's Great Outdoors



MUCKISH RAILWAY WALK - FURTHER INVESTMENT

Donegal's stunning landscape provides the backdrop to an abundance of Waymarked Trails and local walks along mountain paths, rivers, lakes and beaches. One such walk is the Muckish Railway Walk, a 7km route with magnificent views as it follows the path of the railway line to Burtonport.

In 2018, Donegal County Council began the journey of developing Muckish Railway Walk into a must-visit for anyone looking to explore the stunning natural beauty of the County. The section commences in the townland of Carronamaddy where the railway line skirts the foot of the distinctive flat-topped Muckish Mountain (which stands at 667 metres tall) and continues as far as what once was Falcarragh Train Station.

Ongoing improvement works to date have seen the upgrading of sections of the pathway, the replacement of a bridge structure, the development of a 29-space car park with bus parking/turning facilities and the installation of access control points and seating. Working with the Muckish Development Group and local landowners, our aim of enhancing the Muckish Railway Walk is to further complement existing resources, attractions, facilities, services and activities in the local and wider areas around Falcarragh and Creeslough in a sustainable manner. The potential increase in activity tourism also provides additional investment opportunities.

In June 2024 we were successful in securing a further €500,000 from the Department of Rural and Community Development for the Muckish Railway Walk under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS). ORIS funding facilitates the development of new outdoor recreational infrastructure. It also provides support for the necessary repair, maintenance, enhancement or promotion of existing outdoor recreational infrastructure in rural areas across Ireland. The funding allows for investment in the physical infrastructure that underpins sporting and recreational activities based on the use of the resources of the countryside; these contribute to healthy active lifestyles while building on the economic and tourism potential of the area, and so are to the benefit of both local communities and tourist visitors alike. This funding together with investment from Donegal County Council will see the completion of the upgrading of the 7km path at Muckish.

The development of Muckish Railway Walk and many more of our County's beautiful outdoor recreational spaces supports the objectives of the Donegal Outdoor Recreational Strategy 2023- 2029, which is closely aligned with the ambitions of the National Strategy for Outdoor Recreation - Embracing Our Great Outdoors and supports the objectives of Donegal County Council's emerging County Development Plan, the Local Economic and Community Plan and the Tourism Strategy for Donegal.



Donegal Africa Day 2024

Donegal County Council in partnership with Letterkenny Community Development Project (CDP) and Donegal Intercultural Platform held a successful celebration of Donegal Africa Day and Street Feast in May at the An Grianán Theatre Plaza, where people came together to enjoy a celebration of the diversity of African culture and heritage. The event exemplified the spirit of diversity, inclusion and community spirit.

Donegal Africa Day and Street Feast offered an energetic lineup of activities for attendees of all ages. From captivating music performances to engaging kids' games and elegant henna tattoos, the event provided a platform for celebration, learning and cultural exchange. [Read more here!](#)



Period Dignity Initiative 2024

Donegal County Council proudly announced the extension of its Period Dignity Initiative in collaboration with the Donegal Family Resource Centre Network. The initiative aims to help end period poverty through access to free menstrual products, as well as hygienic spaces to use them and safe waste management in accessible public buildings.

Period poverty refers to the inability to afford and access menstrual products, sanitation and hygiene facilities and education and awareness to manage menstrual health. Access to these products may be because of cost, or for social or cultural reasons.

The range of period products available in Donegal County Council's headquarters and public service centres are organic and eco-friendly, made with 100% certified organic cotton, with fully recyclable applicators and compostable packaging. [For details of product availability and locations click here.](#)

Community Recognition Fund

The Community Recognition Fund (CRF) aims to support the development of community infrastructure and facilities for the entire community in recognition of the contribution being made by communities across the country in welcoming and hosting significant numbers of arrivals from Ukraine and other countries.

IONAD COIS LOCHA



A €70,000 Community Recognition Fund grant contributed to the provision of a safe, modern, state-of-the-art, multi-activity play area in the grounds of Ionad Cois Locha.

The playground, which contains accessible equipment as well as sensory features provides a community play area to stimulate learning, creativity and interaction for families nearby and in the surrounding area, while fostering opportunities for new communities to engage locally in the universal language of play.

NEWTOWNCUNNINGHAM COMMUNITY FIRST RESPONDERS

The Newtowncunningham Community First Responder Group received €27,000 from the Community Recognition Fund 2023 to acquire 17 new defibrillators and AEROcase responder bags equipped with vital medical supplies to ensure prompt and effective medical interventions during critical situations.

This project empowers community members with the knowledge and skills needed to provide immediate aid, thereby improving survival rates in emergencies. By fostering a sense of preparedness and a safer, confident and more resilient community local people can effectively respond to medical emergencies.



BUNDORAN PLAYGROUND €225,000 INVESTMENT



A major €225,000 refurbishment project was completed at Bundoran's main playground which serves thousands of locals and visitors annually. The playground overlooks the beach and is located right beside the popular Waterworld aquatic facility.

The project's new play space encompasses a bigger area than before and includes new equipment, surfacing, fencing and seating area and was funded under the Community Recognition Fund 2023.

CLÁR Funding Programme

The CLÁR programme (Ceantair Laga Árd-Riachtanais) provides funding for small-scale infrastructural projects in rural areas and works in conjunction with local funding on the basis of locally identified priorities. The scheme is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and is delivered by local authorities in consultation with local community groups.

TERMON COMPLEX, PETTIGO



The MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) pitch at the Termion Complex, Pettigo recently underwent a refurbishment and upgrade that included the resurfacing of the playing area to a sand-filled synthetic turf and a new powder-coated fenced area.

The project, which was awarded €50,000 under the CLÁR Programme, provides an outdoor recreational meeting space for the community that encourages and promotes positive physical and mental health.

ARRANMORE COMMUNITY GYM

Arranmore Island Development Group received over €39,500 in CLÁR funding for improvement works and the upgrade of equipment of their community gym. The project included the installation of new plasterboard, flooring, shower and toilet facilities, fire doors, painting and the purchase of new gym equipment.

The upgrading of this resource allows a community to come together through shared health and fitness goals. A welcoming fit-for-purpose facility that goes beyond individual efforts and serves as a support system that celebrates successes, provides guidance during setbacks, and encourages each member to strive for their best.



GÁIRDÍN NA GCEADFAÍ CILL ULTA



The Gáirdín na gCeadfaí Cill Ulta, located along the Wild Atlantic Way in the Donegal Gaeltacht, was awarded €50,000 CLÁR funding to provide a wholly accessible and inclusive outdoor sensory space for the community and visitors to enjoy.

Works included a wheelchair accessible sensory garden, wheelchair accessible parking bays, kitchen with tea/coffee making facilities, a biogas stove and solar panels. The development of the garden has provided an enhanced space to be enjoyed by young and old.

Donegal Joint Policing Committee



DONEGAL GARDA YOUTH AWARDS 2024

The Donegal Garda Youth Awards, held on May 20th 2024, marked a poignant moment in the County's history as it stood as the final event of the Donegal Joint Policing Committee (JPC). As the curtains drew on this significant chapter, the ceremony shone a spotlight on the exceptional contributions and achievements of young individuals across Donegal.

The Award Winners for 2024 were :

Individual Award: Carmen Hernandez, Donegal Town

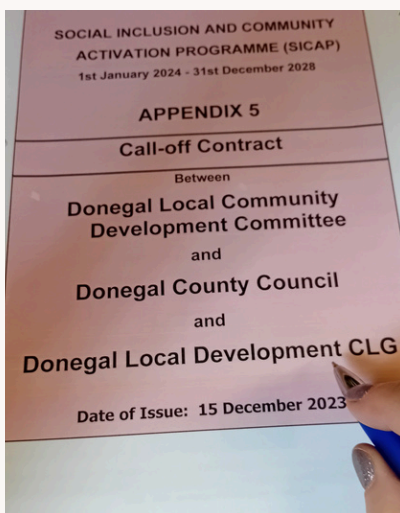
Special Achievement Award: Seán Boyle, Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada, Arranmore

Special Recognition Award: Conor Callaghan, Deelee College, Raphoe

Group Award: Class 3B, Scoil Mhuire, Buncrana

Community Safety Award: Harry Byrne, Luke Holmes, Konrad Krol & Tristian Harron, St. Columbas College, Stranorlar

The Donegal Garda Youth Awards stand as a testament to the resilience, determination, and compassion of our young people. As we bid farewell to the Donegal JPC, we will carry forward the spirit of unity and cooperation that has defined its legacy, ensuring that the voices and contributions of youth remain at the forefront of our collective efforts to build a safer, stronger, and more inclusive Donegal.



SICAP (Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme) 2024-2028

SICAP is a targeted, holistic programme for those who are most disadvantaged and less likely to use mainstream services, which provides supports directly to beneficiaries and links them into existing services. It is a multi-faceted programme that provides supports to respond to individual and community needs, aiming to ensure that beneficiaries receive quality, tailored supports, while also allowing flexibility to adapt actions to local need.

[FOR INFO ON HOW TO APPLY CLICK HERE](#)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THIS NEWSLETTER PLEASE CONTACT

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