



DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
**Community Newsletter**

**PEACEPLUS PROGRAMME 2022 - 2027**

DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL AND DERRY CITY AND STRABANE DISTRICT COUNCIL SECURE €16.7M PEACEPLUS FUNDING FOR RIVERINE CROSS BORDER COMMUNITY PARK



Spanning both Lifford and Strabane, the project was developed through a partnership between Donegal County Council and Derry City and Strabane District Council and will involve the creation of 30 acres of parklands, a new community pavilion building and will create an iconic, progressive and sustainable shared space, uniquely connected by a pedestrian bridge spanning a transnational border, which will harness and drive intercultural, cross-community and cross-border cooperation

The Riverine Cross Border Community Park project is supported by the PEACEPLUS Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

[FIND OUT MORE HERE!](#)

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



## A Message from our Chief Executive and Cathaoirleach



“As we reach the final weeks of another year, this edition of our Newsletter allows us to pause and reflect back on what we have achieved and delivered with and for the communities we serve over the last six months - from

securing funding for the Riverine Cross Border Community Park to proudly recognising our sporting talent at the Donegal Sports Bursary Awards - I think you’ll agree, we have much to celebrate. I would like to wish you a very Happy Christmas and bright New Year.” - John G. McLaughlin, Chief Executive of Donegal County Council.



As the year draws to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the people and organisations who work on a daily basis, to enhance the quality of life and wellbeing of the communities across Donegal,

from our newly elected Youth Councillors to our Older Persons Council and every group and organisation in between. I look forward to working with you again next year and to welcoming new faces and opportunities. I wish you all a Happy and Safe Christmas and Prosperous New Year.” - Cllr. Niamh Kennedy, Cathaoirleach of Donegal County Council.

## Active Play Programme Launch



In collaboration with Donegal Sports Partnership and funded through the Healthy Ireland Programme and Slaintecare Healthy Communities Programme, we launched the Active Play Donegal Programme in November 2024. This initiative aims to increase participation in physical activity for children through developing the capacity and skills of ‘Play Leaders’ within communities. Play Leaders will receive training and support in how to encourage children in their domain to become more physically active through the use of play.

[Find out more here!](#)

# 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 collaboration with Dungloe Tidy Towns and with the support of local businesses and community interest groups, through the Town and Village Renewal Scheme, we are working to address issues and actions identified in An Clochán Liath (Dungloe) Town Centre Regeneration Strategy & Action Plan.

Issues identified that were impacting on the town centre included the unappealing public realm and lack of public spaces, vacancy and dereliction, and the need to capitalise on the attractive waterfront. Elements of the work undertaken incorporated the provision of a refurbished public realm with seating, contactless water dispenser, band stand, planters, hedging and semi-mature trees and the provision of age-friendly seating. This has resulted in regenerating the public realm space as an inclusive meeting point for the whole community.

## Donegal Youth Council



The Donegal Youth Council marked the end of its 2022 to 2024 term with a celebratory event in August 2024, highlighting their remarkable work and achievements. The Donegal Youth Council serves as a consultative forum to which young people can identify topics and create action projects to address these topics and inform key decision-makers. Over the past two years, the Youth Councillors have actively addressed critical issues such as vaping, mental health, social media and body image, ensuring that the voices and opinions of young people across Donegal were heard and valued. Read more here!

## National Play Day 2024



In partnership with the Donegal Family Resource Centre Network (DFRCN) and funded through the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth we delivered a programme of activity to promote play and recreation opportunities for children and young people earlier this year. The National Play Day funding was used by the DFRCN to provide play-packs/equipment and host play friendly community events in a socially inclusive environment which created a sense of belonging and general wellbeing in local communities across Donegal.

# Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS)

The ORIS fund provides for the development of new outdoor recreational infrastructure and support for the necessary repair, maintenance, enhancement or promotion of existing outdoor recreational infrastructure in rural areas across Ireland. It helps to make use of the resources of the countryside that contribute to healthy active lifestyles and supports the economic and tourism potential of the area.



## Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme Funding 2024/25 - Measure 1

Donegal County Council is seeking Expressions of Interest from communities in relation to - Measure 1: Small Scale Repair/Development/Promotion and Marketing.

Projects typically funded by ORIS include walkways, cycleways, blueways, water and cycle trails, mountain access routes, bridleways, and open water amenities at bogs, rivers, lakes and beaches, including tidal pools.

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

## KINCASSLAGH TOWER TRAIL

Kincasslagh Tower Trail was awarded €30,000 ORIS funding from the Department of Rural and Community Development to enhance the visitor experience to the area through the development of the Tower Trail.

With the support of the local community, the scope of works we carried out included site clearance works, installation of way marker posts, drains, the laying of aggregates, the reinstatement of old stone walls and gate posts and the installation of way-markers, bench seating and picnic areas and a trail-head map board at the pier.



## ROSSYLONGAN ESTATE WALK

The Department of Rural and Community Development awarded €30,000 ORIS funding to the development of the Rosssylongan Estate Walk.

In partnership with Coillte and supported by Friends of Rosssylongan Forest Group and the local community, the scope of works we carried out included site clearance works, the laying of aggregates, installation of fencing around the ruins of the old Mc Manus House and outbuildings, the clearing of drainage channels and provision of new drains and installation of footbridges, way-markers, a trail-head map board, bench seating and picnic area with sculpted table and seats.

# Errigal Sustainable Access & Habitat Restoration Project



Standing at 751 metres, Errigal's quartzite peak is the tallest of the Derryveagh Mountains and the highest peak in County Donegal. Errigal is an iconic landmark, dominating the landscape of the Northwest, with its name and imagery being used extensively locally, nationally, and internationally raising the mountain's appeal and profile.

In 2016, ever increasing visitor numbers across multiple undefined access routes on the vulnerable natural asset resulted in the ASCENT project - an EU funded project, led by Donegal County Council working with partners in five European countries. The objective was to combine the skills of each region to develop new ways to conserve the natural environment in seven areas of natural beauty in each of these European countries in a way that is sustainable, with Errigal being the focus for Donegal.

Through the ASCENT project, a planning application for Habitat Restoration and Sustainable Access Project was approved by Donegal County Council on April 24th 2019, which allowed for the necessary works to be completed on Donegal's highest peak. This was followed by an Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) Measure 3 application in 2019 where funding of €500,000 was secured for completion of the project. Working with local Elected Representatives, Errigal Stakeholders Committee and local landowners, we appointed an upland path specialist contractor to upgrade a 3km path leading from the car park to the summit of the mountain to protect against further erosion while enhancing the visitor experience. With



further investment from Donegal County Council works to date have seen the development of -

- 750m of stone-pitched path
- 1,750m aggregate path with geotextile matting & geogrid
- 600m of revetted pitched path
- 30m of boardwalk
- Path drainage provisions
- Landscaping, peat bunds, fencing and revegetation

The community with Donegal County Council and supported by key stakeholders are working together to now produce a masterplan for Dún Lúiche. This plan will provide a roadmap to inform the development of the village and wider landscape over the next 6 years and on to 2040, building on the great work already ongoing and to further enrich and enhance the village and wider surrounding landscape place for the community and the increasing number of visitors coming to the area.



# Letterkenny Urban Adventure Park Opens to the Public



Donegal County Council was awarded funding from the North West Regional Assembly to develop the Letterkenny Urban Adventure Park within the grounds of Bernard McGlinchey Town Park. The project, which was a collaboration between Donegal County Council, Donegal Sports Partnership, Gartan Outdoor Adventure Centre and the many youth organisations both statutory and community in Letterkenny, was carried out over a phased basis.

Phase 1 included the development of a Pump Track - a surfaced ramped area for bikes, scooters & skateboards to use year-round for free to practice and develop skills. Phase 2 included an outdoor performance area, with an amphitheatre-style area, for groups (dance, musical, performance, arts etc) to perform with seating around for viewers set against the views of Bernard McGlinchey town park and proved very popular during the hosting of recent culture night events. And finally, Phase 3 consisted of creating a better pathway through the park and an outdoor games area with a multi-use games table and "Teqball" table area, for children and adults to meet and play different activities.

## SHOW RACISM THE RED CARD PROGRAMME



Donegal County Council in partnership with Finn Harps launched the Show Racism the Red Card Programme with students and staff from Coláiste na Carráige on 23rd October.

The Show Racism the Red Card Programme aims to harness the high profile of sports people to combat racism and provides educational resources, workshops, training and awareness-raising activities for primary and secondary schools, youth groups, workplaces and sporting stakeholders nationwide.

[Read more here!](#)



## Donegal Indian Mela 2024

Donegal County Council in partnership with the Letterkenny Indian Community Centre celebrated and showcased the vibrant Indian culture within the community of Donegal at the Donegal Mela on 17th August 2024. This intercultural event offered a unique blend of workshops, activities, music, live performances, and stalls for all ages to enjoy and exemplified the spirit of diversity, inclusion and community spirit.

The Donegal Mela supports our commitment to inclusive communities and builds upon the core values and vision outlined in the Black and Minority Ethnic Inclusion A Strategy for County Donegal 2021-2026. [Read more here!](#)

## Pride of Place 2024



Donegal County Council recently welcomed the judging panel of the renowned Pride of Place competition, showcasing the remarkable achievements of local community groups.

The Pride of Place Competition is a prestigious competition in which local authorities from across the island of Ireland nominate groups that have made a significant impact in enhancing their communities through collective effort.

Representing Donegal, Cairde le Cheile in Letterkenny entered the competition under the Inclusive Community Category, Awake Tourism in Ardara under the Population 300-1000 Category, and Coiste Forbartha na Carrige / Carrick Development Group under the Community Tourism Initiative category. Through insightful presentations and interactions, the groups demonstrated the profound impact their initiatives have on their local community, their unwavering commitment to their localities and productive collaborations with Donegal County Council. At a gala award event at the Hillgrove Hotel in Monaghan on 2nd November, Coiste Forbartha na Carrige was awarded runner up for Community Tourism Initiative.

# 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.

## DONEGAL TOWN PLAYGROUND



A major €238,000 refurbishment project was completed in Donegal Town's playground. The playground which serves the local community and visitors alike, is located in the centre of the town and adjacent to the St. John Bosco Community Centre.

The project included provision and installation of new play equipment, street furniture, safety surfacing and fencing and features include toddler equipment, sensory play panels, an activity trail and a zipline.

## LETTERKENNY ROVERS F.C.

The Letterkenny Rovers Football Club received a grant of €80,000 under the Community Recognition Fund 2023 towards the costs of installation of floodlights. The lights have been installed on the newly redeveloped grass pitch and the official ceremony was attended by the Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys.

Inclusivity is at the heart of Letterkenny Rovers, with over 140 'Junior' participants aged 4-8 including children from Ukraine, India and Poland and other new communities and 'Football For All' with the Donegal Sports Partnership and the FAI aimed at children with disabilities.



## BUNDORAN LIBRARY



Donegal Library Service developed a fully accessible outdoor sensory garden, which can be utilised for events such as storytelling, book clubs and biodiversity talks, with a €30,000 grant from the Community Recognition Fund.

The project included the construction of a ramp and planters, the installation of an accessible door and planting. The space is now of particular benefit to ASD groups and people suffering from Dementia and also, members of the community to relax, read a book or listen to an audiobook.



## 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.

### ARDARA CLG MULTI USE GAMES AREA (MUGA)



Ardara CLG with the support of Donegal County Council received €50,000 funding, under CLÁR Measure 1, towards the installation of a new MUGA Pitch that included new sports mesh fencing, an NK safety gate, multi-use goals and signage.

The project has provided the local community with an all-year, all-weather public amenity and recreational resource for all ages that promotes positive health and wellbeing through outdoor activity and also helps combat rural isolation.

## Age Friendly Donegal



### DONEGAL AGE FRIENDLY PROGRAMME - AGM OF OLDER PERSONS COUNCIL

The AGM of the Older Persons Council (OPC) took place in Ionad Naomh Padraig, Dobhair in October 2024.

The Donegal OPC is a recognised structure for communication and representation of older people across our county with consultation through a variety of formats shaping the work of the OPC and informing services delivered by other agencies. The well-attended event included guest speakers Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh a founding member of Altan internationally recognised for her exceptional musical talent and dedication to promoting the Irish language through music and song and Jim McGuinness, a ‘true legend and hero to the people of Donegal’, whose journey from local footballer to renowned coach, both in Gaelic football and soccer, exemplifies persistence, innovation and leadership. Their interactive discussion offered a unique perspective, sharing insights from both sporting and cultural realms to inspire positive ageing. [Read more here!](#)

# Donegal County Council Sports Bursary Awards



Donegal County Council was proud to pay tribute to a wide array of talented sportspeople at our biennial Sports Star Awards which took place in the Council Chamber, County House, Lifford on 25th October 2024.

Donegal County Council has been hosting the Sports Bursary Awards for over twenty years with the aim of promoting and recognising athletes across the County for their contribution to sport. It is open to all sports recognised by Sport Ireland and overseen by a national governing body and is awarded under three categories Senior Olympic / World Class / International, Developmental and Veteran with recipients from a wide range of sports from athletics to surfing, badminton to shotput; and boxing to cycling receiving awards.

In presenting the awards, Cllr Niamh Kennedy, Cathaoirleach of Donegal County Council acknowledged "Not only the contribution that elite sportspeople make to our County, but the important contribution that sport at any level can make to individuals and communities. Also, the coaches, families, and friends who have stood by our athletes, your unwavering support has been invaluable – the support networks that you provide help make their success possible, your unwavering dedication is the bedrock upon which our community is built".

Donegal County Council Chief Executive John G McLaughlin congratulated the awardees and commented on "the importance of Sport in promoting social inclusion, active citizenship and pride in our communities regardless of age, gender or ability" and he congratulated "all the awardees and encouraged everyone to continue to champion the spirit of sport and community".

A total of 60 applicants received a Donegal County Council Sports Bursary Award.



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THIS NEWSLETTER PLEASE CONTACT  
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