

**MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL  
IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, ROSCOMMON  
ON Monday, 23rd October, 2023 AT 2.15 pm.**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Councillor John Keogh	<b>PRESIDED</b>
<b>MEMBERS:</b>	Cllr L. Fallon, Cllr E. Kelly, Cllr P. Fitzmaurice, Cllr D. Kilduff, Cllr T. Crosby, Cllr A. Waldron, Cllr O. Leyden, Cllr T. Ward, Cllr N. Dineen, Cllr V. Byrne, Cllr J. Cummins, Cllr M. Mulligan, Cllr J. Murphy, Cllr J. Naughten, Cllr K. Shanagher and Cllr L. Callaghan.	
<b>OFFICIALS:</b>	Shane Tiernan, Chief Executive Caitlín Conneely, Director of Services Sean Mullarkey, Head of Finance Fiona Ni Chuinn, A/Director of Services Greg O'Donnell, A/Director of Services Declan Dolan, Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services Claudette Collins, Staff Officer Darragh Kelly, Communications Officer	
<b>Apologies:</b>	Cllr M. McDermott	

**127.23 DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST (SECTION 177 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 AS AMENDED)**

There were no Disclosures of Conflict of Interest declared by Members.

**128.23 ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

Cllr. Shanagher requested that an amendment be made to the minutes of the previous meeting. She said a reference to a Roscommon Lions Club presentation should refer to the publication of a magazine, rather than a newsletter.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Shanagher

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Leyden

It was **AGREED** to adopt this amendment to the minutes.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Crosby

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Fallon

It was **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the Plenary Meeting of 25.09.23

**129.23 MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

**130.23 MANAGEMENT REPORT**

- Management Report for Quarter 3 was noted.

### **131.23 DISPOSAL OF LANDS - ASSETS**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Naughten

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Fallon

It was **AGREED** that the Council consent to the disposal of property pursuant to the provisions of Article 206 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 of particulars of property which it is proposed to dispose of at the location in County Roscommon and to the persons set out in the schedule hereunder. Particulars of the property which the County Council proposes to dispose:

**The Property:** Site comprising 0.62 ha (1.53 acres) at Monksland Td., Co. Roscommon - Folio RN41636F

**The person(s) from whom the land was acquired:** Eamon and Dolores Conneely, Stradbally North, Clarinbridge, Co. Galway

**The person(s) to whom the land is to be disposed of:** Spaulding Systems Limited.

**The consideration proposed in respect of the disposal:** €100,000

### **132.23 DISPOSAL OF LANDS - ASSETS**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Shanagher

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Fitzmaurice

It was **AGREED** that the Council consent to the disposal of property pursuant to the provisions of Article 206 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 of particulars of property which it is proposed to dispose of at the location in County Roscommon and to the persons set out in the schedule hereunder. Particulars of the property which the County Council proposes to dispose:

**The Property:** Site comprising 0.047 Ha (0.116 acres) at Rockfield, Oran, Co. Roscommon - Folio RN 41132F

**The person(s) from whom the land was acquired:** Unknown – First Registration with Roscommon County Council February 1953

**The person(s) to whom the land is to be disposed of:** Iontaobhas Corparáideach Chumann Lúthchleas Gael Cuideachta Faoi Theorainn Ráthaíochta (Oran GAA)

**The consideration proposed in respect of the disposal:** €2,000

### **133.23 LEASE OF LANDS - ASSETS**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Ward

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Naughten

It was **AGREED** that the Council consent to the lease of property pursuant to the provisions of Article 206 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 of particulars of property which it is proposed to lease at the location in County Roscommon and to the persons set out in the schedule hereunder. Particulars of the property which the County Council proposes to lease:

**The Property:** Lands comprising 0.88 ha (2.17 acres) at Monksland, Athlone, Co. Roscommon

**The person(s) from whom the land was acquired:** Folio RN30295F - Unknown

**The person(s) to whom the land is to be disposed of:** Greener Ideas Limited

**The consideration proposed in respect of the disposal:** €500.00 per week

**Term of Lease:** 12 Months

### **134.23 LEASE OF LANDS - ASSETS**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Leyden

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Fitzmaurice

It was **AGREED** that the Council consent to the lease of property pursuant to the provisions of Article 206 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 of particulars of property which it is proposed to lease at the location in County Roscommon and to the persons set out in the schedule hereunder. Particulars of the property which the County Council proposes to lease:

**The Property:** Lands comprising 0.043 ha (0.106 acres) at Rockfield, Oran, Co. Roscommon

**The person(s) from whom the land was acquired:** Folio RN41132F- Unknown. (First Registration with Roscommon County Council, February 1953)

**The person(s) to whom the land is to be disposed of:** Iontaobhas Corparáideach Chumann Lúthchleas Gael Cuideachta Faoi Theorainn Ráthaíochta (Oran GAA)

**The consideration proposed in respect of the disposal:** €1,000 and €10 per year thereafter

**Term of Lease:** 99 years

### **135.23 DISPOSAL OF LANDS - HOUSING**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Shanagher

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Fitzmaurice

It was **AGREED** that the Council consent to the disposal of property pursuant to the provisions of Article 206 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 of particulars of property which it is proposed to dispose of at the location in County Roscommon and to the persons set out in the schedule hereunder. Particulars of the property which the County Council proposes to dispose:

**The Property:** 6 Convent Road, Ardnanagh, Roscommon F42FH70 (Folio RN22545F)

**The person(s) from whom the land was acquired:** Gerard Nolan, Kilbride Development, Mullymux, Roscommon

**The person(s) to whom the land is to be disposed of:** Gillian Hoare

**The consideration proposed in respect of the disposal:** €81,922.63 (Council's Rental Equity)

### **136.23 DRAFT LOCAL AUTHORITY CLIMATE ACTION PLAN**

Director of Services Caitlín Conneely introduced the Draft Climate Action Plan - a statutory plan that has been discussed and approved at the Planning, Environment, Climate Change and Corporate Strategic Policy Committee and is now ready to proceed to public consultation. She said the draft plan is now before Members for approval at the meeting to go to the next stage – public consultation. It is anticipated the final plan would be considered for adoption by the end of February.

The Climate Action Co-Ordinator Aoife Moore presented an overview of the plan to the members:

- Advance planning for the document commenced last year with an initial pre-draft public consultation phase running from April to October in 2023
- The document will go on public display for six weeks for public submissions and it is anticipated to have the completed plan in place by March 2024 if adopted by the Members.
- The plan will be in force for five years with a two-year preparation phase which will be informed by

- EU and National legislation governing climate change.
- There are four stages to the plan:
  - Full Accountability - delivering actions within RCC remit
  - Influence – directly through procurement etc; regulatory through policy decisions and broad through provision of services.
  - Advocate - engaging with communities by creating awareness and capacity building
  - Coordinate and Facilitate - creating bridges between different stakeholders in identifying funding and collaborate and engage in partnerships
- Climate Risk is a continuing issue as new and adverse weather trends continue to intensify resulting in increased temperatures and more rainfall in winter.
- The vision of the plan is that within its five-year lifetime Roscommon would deliver a carbon neutral economy and have targeted carbon actions as part of its plan.
- Five themes were identified as part of the plan, under which goals and objectives would be realised - governance, the built environment, the natural environment and infrastructure; communities, resilience and transition and sustainable resource management.
- The development of a Decarbonisation Zone in Roscommon town would be an exemplar or 'test bed' of the plan for learning and knowledge sharing
- The actions contained within the plan would be broad in scope.
- To deliver Climate Action objectives, there is a need for stakeholder engagement from communities and local businesses to realise the terms of the completed Climate Action Plan, noting the objectives of the Plan were broad in scope to take advantage of initiatives that become available during the life of the plan

The Chair of the SPC, Cllr. Naughten thanked the Director, the Climate Action Unit and the members of the SPC for the work they have put into the plan to get to this stage noting significant feedback had been obtained in the development of the Draft Plan, resulting in Roscommon becoming a leader on Climate Action when it is adopted. However significant funding will be required from central Government if the plan is to deliver on actions by local authorities, communities, the farming sector and industry.

Members broadly welcomed the plan and discussed as follows:

- The high rate of submissions received during the pre-draft/preliminary consultative phase was noted.
- It is important to publicise and encourage the public to make submissions.
- Will there be an opportunity for the Members to consider submissions received in advance of finalising the Plan?
- Members cited the cost effective nature of implementing climate action friendly initiatives such as the instillation of LED Christmas lights in towns, which had a cost effective benefit on energy use and costs.
- The importance of the Plan being promoted in a positive fashion, focusing on the financial benefits of buy-in from community groups.
- Concerns were raised over projections of carbon emissions and the impact this had on job losses following the cessation of turf harvesting at the Bord na Mona site in Mountdillon and the closure of the Lough Ree Power electricity generating plant in Lanesboro. These closures should be used to promote job creation as part of the Climate Action Plan.
- Members cautioned against the greater use of electricity for home and car use, urging the need for energy security.
- Appeals were made for the availability of greater supports to farmers arising from the impact of climate change and manage their business at no extra cost.
- Gullies should be cleaned on a more regular basis, which would minimise the impact of excess rainfall and potential flooding.
- Verges should be opened at least once a year to relieve excess flooding on local roads.
- Concern expressed over what was perceived as the impact of climate change upon rising electricity costs.

- Members appealed for Government measures to be sensible and thought-out for the benefit of community groups.
- It was suggested that there should be less dependence on other countries for Ireland's energy security need together with a greater focus on its positives of the plan.
- Concerns were raised over the availability of electricity for electric vehicles and the cost of transition to air to water heating of buildings.
- A request was made that an amendment be made to the Draft Plan on pg. 63 to refer to Roscommon Transition Towns.
- Will the Climate Plan, when adopted, have a bearing on future planning applications?
- The effects of climate change in having a big impact upon lives with increased flooding trends, locally and nationally.
- Clarification was requested on the difference between 'global warming' and 'climate change'.
- Ireland will have no big impact on Climate change internationally as we cannot influence bigger powers such as the US and Russia who don't seem to be doing anything.
- Minister Eamon Ryan's recent visit to Roscommon was described as an informative meeting.
- It is important that people are incentivised to support the Climate Action Plan.
- Members were cautioned that the provision of three phase power didn't automatically mean communities would be successful in making grant applications as criteria such as the availability of bathroom facilities and shops were also a consideration in providing funding for charging facilities.
- A Climate Action emergency was declared by members five years previously. It was stated local authorities needed to take responsibility for their own actions and not rely on others to take the lead in promoting climate mitigation and adaptation measures. We must own this and take actions now.
- The Local Authority would have no basis to call out larger polluters if not taking action themselves. Taking action will result in a transition to a better and more effective society.

A proposal for Roscommon to be considered as a pilot scheme for water quality as an example to Ireland and other countries was proposed by Cllr. Waldron and seconded by Cllr. J. Naughten.

Responding, the Director of Services Caitlín Conneely said the local authority was working constantly on improving and monitoring local water quality. She said the new River Basin Management Plan would soon be presented to members for consideration and this proposal may be more suitable for discussion at this time. Cllr. Waldron said he would submit a notice of motion on this issue at a future meeting.

Responding to the issues raised, Aoife Moore said public consultations will conclude on December 15<sup>th</sup> and a report on the submissions received will be circulated to members by mid-January as part of the Chief Executive's report.

Ms. Moore said the planning process is a separate process to the terms of the Climate Action Plan, noting that the of the County Development Plan includes climate mitigations and any actions cannot be in contravention with it.

The decarbonisation zones will be dealt with as a separate consultation process.

Referring to claims citing historical adverse weather patterns, Ms. Moore said the impact of those trends was not as significant as the infrastructure that exists in society today, did not exist then.

Issues relating to farming, the cessation of turf cutting and power generation at the Moundillon works and the Lough Ree power plant respective were contained in section four of the draft plan under advocacy.

Chief Executive Shane Tiernan acknowledged the work of the Climate Action Unit and said how Minister Ryan was particularly impressed by the production of a range of climate action videos, highlighting significant interventions undertaken by community groups. He said the Minister was particularly impressed by interventions undertaken by the Kiltievan Tidy Towns committee.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Naughten  
**SECONDED** by Councillor Shanagher

It was **AGREED** that the Council would write to the Minister for the Environment and the Taoiseach's office that funding would be allocated to deliver all of the actions as outlined in the completed Climate Action Plan.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Kilduff  
**SECONDED** by Councillor Kelly

It was **AGREED** that the Council would write to the Department of the Environment seeking the adoption of measures to assist community groups seeking grant funding for better access for the provision of electrical chargers without the need for three phase power. It was proposed the scheme should be as simple as possible for applicants and mindful of their voluntary nature. It was also agreed funding should be made available to groups for the provision of three phase power, if required, in respect of any future grant applications made.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Naughten  
**SECONDED** by Councillor Leyden

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Draft Climate Action Plan to move to the public consultation phase.

### **137.23 CHIEF EXECUTIVE BUSINESS**

The Chief Executive informed the Members of the launch this morning by the of "Your guide to Household Waste Management and Recycling in County Roscommon" published by the Environment Unit.

Director of Services Caitlín Conneely said the guide gave valuable advice on waste segregation to householders and is being distributed to the public through area offices, libraries, public events and Civic Amenity sites and it is also available online.

The Director also informed the members of forthcoming event 'Orchards for Farmers' taking place in the Kilbride Community Centre on Tuesday, October 31<sup>st</sup>. The event is organised by the National Federation of Group Water Schemes and the Mid-Roscommon and Curracreegh Group Water Schemes. The event is focused on encouraging farmers to plant orchards as a means of improving and enhancing water quality in communities throughout the county as well as featuring information and trade promotions.

The Chief Executive then informed members of the appointment of Mr. Mark Keaveney as Director of Services with responsibility for Regeneration, Economic Development, Community, Tourism and Heritage as well as being the Roscommon Municipal District manager.

Mr. Tiernan also outlined the other Directorates to members -

Mr Sean Mullarkey, Head of Finance, Procurement, Enterprise, Building Control and Emergency Services. This Directorate includes the following: Finance, Motor Tax, Internal Audit, Rates, Procurement, Local Enterprise, Building Control, Fire Services and Civil Defence

Ms Caitlín Conneely, Director of Climate Action, Environment, Resources, People, Governance and Athlone MD Manager.

This Directorate includes the following: Climate Action, Environment, Rural Water, Water Services, Laboratory, Information Systems, Corporate Services, Assets & Energy Management, Health & Safety and Human Resources

Ms. Fiona Ni Chuinn, Acting Director of Housing, Culture and International Protection.

This Directorate includes the following: Housing, Arts Centre, Arts Office, King House, Library, Ukraine and International Protection

Mr. Greg O'Donnell, Acting Director of Roads & Active Travel Infrastructure, Planning and Boyle MD Manager

This Directorate includes the following: Roads, Active Travel, NRRO Regional Office and Planning.

Cathaoirleach Cllr. J. Keogh wishes Mr. Keaveney and all of the Directors well in their respective roles.

### **138.23 VISIT OF "ARIZONA COLLEEN" MACKENZIE SHANE TO ROSCOMMON**

The 'Arizona Colleen' Mackenzie Shane was welcomed to the chamber by the Cathaoirleach. He also welcomed MEP Maria Walsh and Senator Aisling Dolan who accompanied Ms. Shane who is on a visit to Ireland as part of her promotional duties during her tenure.

A resident of Scottsville, Ms. Shane said Arizona was known for his desert type landscape but had strong and enduring ties with Co. Roscommon. She said the local Chamber of Commerce, where she works has over 2,400 members. she was presented with the Arizona Colleen award by the Irish Cultural Centre which requires the recipient to act as an ambassador, promoting business and cultural ties between Arizona and Ireland and is an important networking tool.

Ms. Shane said the Irish Cultural Centre in Phoenix was one of only two west of the Mississippi River. Citing Arizona as one of six sister cities, she highlighted the origins of the city of Tucson, which was founded by Hugh O'Connor who has strong Roscommon roots and is a sister city of Roscommon town.

The Members welcomed Ms. Shane claiming her visit should be a catalyst for Roscommon to be outward looking in terms of seeking twinning opportunities. 2025 will mark the 750<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the founding of Tucson.

Ms. Shane was commended for visiting Strokestown Park House as well as the commemorative stone, marking the links between Tucson and Roscommon as 'sister cities'. Reference was made to the many links between Roscommon and Tucson over many years which have continued to endure. It was suggested that it may be worthwhile considering moving the stone that commemorates Tucson with Roscommon as Sister Cities from outside the Courthouse to a location at Áras an Chontae.

Members also highlighted the links between both locations as an opportunity to strengthen economic and tourism links between both locations.

The Cathaoirleach said it was important the Council continued to foster strong links with our Roscommon diaspora which should be part of the county's new Tourism strategy including student exchange programmes and share technological advances.

He thanked Ms. Shane for coming to the Chamber to address the members and made a suitable presentation to her to mark the occasion of her visit.

### **139.23 NOTICES OF MOTION**

#### **140.23 13.23 CLLR. NAUGHTEN - SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC VALUE OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISES**

"That Roscommon County Council consider the significant social and economic value of Social Enterprises

for communities across County Roscommon and that Social Enterprises have dedicated support and assistance when required from a designated senior council official, and that that person preferably a Director of Service.”

As Cllr. Naughten was not present to move the motion, this notice of motion was deferred to the next Council meeting.

**141.23 14.23 - CLLR. WALDRON - DEVELOPMENT OF A COMMEMORATIVE SITE OF THE FAMINE VICTIMS BURIED IN BULLY'S ACRE**

“That Roscommon County Council appropriately commemorate the victims of An Gorta Mór by devising a heritage development plan to remember the people of Roscommon buried in Bully’s Acre in the townland of Slevinagee off Antogher Road in the town of Roscommon.”

The Meetings Administrator read the following reply:

There is an existing famine memorial in Roscommon town at the site of the former Workhouse (now Sacred Heart Home) to commemorate victims of the famine.

The National Famine Museum in Strokestown is only 20 km away and this is a highly interactive visitor destination, which addresses and commemorates local and national stories from the famine period. A national famine commemoration day is held annually and locally events can be organised as part of National Heritage Week held in August.

Cllr. Waldron said the site was a sacred one and proposed Fr. Francis Beirne, Parish Priest of Four Roads and Chairman of the Roscommon Cemetery Committee to make a presentation to members on the site.

The Cathaoirleach responded that any presentation to the Plenary meeting should first be considered by the CPG. Cllr Waldron agreed to bring his proposal to the next CPG meeting.

Cllr. Waldron’s motion was seconded by Cllr. Ward.

Cllr. Leyden, supported the motion, claiming there should be a commemoration of the graves which are unmarked at the site referenced by Cllr. Waldron. She stated we have a responsibility, as a Council, in the knowledge that the graves are in Bully’s Acre, to do something about it.

Cllr. Byrne supported the motion as every old graveyard in the county have people buried from the famine. She suggested this should be done in every graveyard in the county. She also asked if anyone could confirm why this site is called Bully’s Acre as there is a Bully’s Acre in Elphin also.

Cllr. Dineen suggested that the CPG should look favourably on the request for the presentation.

Cllr. Ward stated that every case is different in relation to people buried all around the county as a result from the famine. This is a good motion and should be supported.

Cllr. Fallon commented this as an interesting motion and would welcome a presentation from Fr. Beirne as a noted authority on the famine and who has carried out considerable research in this area.

The Cathaoirleach suggested that Cllr. Cummins motion is a good one. He also suggested the erection of a plaque or other commemoration would mean the erection of a plaque on all burial grounds, noting that this may not be feasible and suggested that a policy must be adopted with appropriate criteria agreed and this should be done by the relevant SPC.

Cllr. Leyden again stated that the graveyard needs to be marked and suggested that this should be included in the forthcoming Roscommon Local Area Plan that is currently being prepared.



On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Cummins

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Byrne

It was **AGREED** that this matter be considered at the cemetery workshop proposed at the last meeting by Cllr Crosby and that Fr. Beirne be invited to attend that workshop to outline what he sees as necessary to commemorate the famine victims around the county as part of the agenda.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Kelly

**SECONDED** by Councillor Leyden

It was **AGREED** that Roscommon County Council extend an open invitation to the public regarding information they may have on unmarked graves to attend the forthcoming Cemetery Workshop.

The Chief Executive said it was important to remember people who had died in the famine, which was reflected in the work and function of Strokestown Famine Museum. He cautioned that there are over two hundred graveyards in the county including Bullys Acres in a number of locations, and on private lands and that is why he agreed with the Cathaoirleach's suggestion that a policy would be in order on the issue of commemorating famine graves.

Mr. Tiernan also suggested such commemorations should be community led and had the potential to be funded through Municipal District fund. Mr. Tiernan said that arising from the discussion at the Cemetery Workshops, any matters arising could be discussed at the Strategic Policy Committee, noting that the Council also had budgetary constraints to consider.

## **142.23 CORRESPONDENCE**

### **Acknowledgments to Resolutions from Roscommon County Council:**

- **28<sup>st</sup> September, 20223** - Acknowledgement of correspondence from Ms. Heather Humphreys T.D., Minister for Social Protection regarding Tus and Rural Employment Schemes.

### **Replies to Resolutions from Roscommon County Council:**

- **29<sup>th</sup> September, 20223**- Reply from Minister for Social Protection Ms. Heather Humphreys T.D., in response to Notice of Motion regarding Tus & Rural Social Scheme (RSS)

### **Resolutions from other Local Authorities:**

- **20<sup>th</sup> September, 2023 – Motion, Cork City Council**  
“That **Cork City Council** notes with concern the upward turn in road deaths, in particular the exponential growth in pedestrian deaths, and calls upon national authorities to review policies that can help reverse this trend.” (Proposer: Cllr. D. Boyle 23/399)
- **26<sup>th</sup> September, 2023 – Resolution, Limerick City and County Council**  
“That **Limerick City and County Council** calls on the Minister for Housing to reconsider the Government’s position in relation to the tax placed on residentially zoned land.”
- **27<sup>th</sup> September, 2023 – Resolution, Limerick City and County Council**

“That **Limerick City and County Council** call on the Minister Stephen Donnelly, TD, Minister for Health, and Minister for Finance, Michael McGrath, and TD, to raise the funding support for the Chuin Mhuire Association in Bruree, and also in their Centres throughout the country, from ten euro per bed per night to fifty euro per bed per night.”

- **27<sup>th</sup> September, 2023 – Resolution, Limerick City and County Council**

“That **Limerick City and County Council** call on the Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly, TD, and Minister of State at the Department of Health, Mary Butler, TD, to provide the necessary funding to the National Treatment Purchase Fund (NTPF) to stop further nursing home closures and bring fees payable in line with the reality of nursing homes care costs. It must also bring into effect a Fair Deal pricing mechanism that reflects the reality of resident’s care needs.”

- **9<sup>th</sup> October, 2023 – Resolution, Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council**

“That **Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council** formally backs the call for a Fossil Fuel Non-proliferation Treaty and urges the Irish Government to support the initiative for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty”.

- **13<sup>th</sup> October, 2023 – Resolution, Clare County Council**

“That **Clare County Council** proposes in future housing developments and as part of the planning process, there should be a planning condition to all new housing applications stating that part of the conditions would be that traffic calming measures would be part of the developments, as a matter of safety for all concerned.”

#### **143.23 COUNCILLORS CONFERENCES - PAYMENT/ATTENDANCE**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Cummins

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Byrne

It was **AGREED** to adopt the list of payments for training and conferences as circulated.

#### **144.23 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

##### **144.23a TIDY TOWNS RESULTS 2023**

The county’s twenty-eight Tidy Town groups and committees were acknowledged following the announcement of results for this year’s Supervalú Tidy Towns competition.

The Members acknowledged the achievements of groups who won two golds, a silver, a bronze and an endeavour award.

Reference was made to one of the county’s newest entrants in the competition, Rahara who received the most improved marks in the competition. Members also urged citizens to volunteer an hour or two per week on average to contribute to the overall upkeep of their respective areas.

##### **144.23b TRANSPORTATION OF PEAT AT CLONSHANNAGH**

Cllr. Crosby raised the matter of peat transportation of peat at Cloonshannagh. His concern is in relation to the impact on road conditions following the transportation of Bord na Mona peat from Cloonshannagh between Roosky and Tarmonbarry to a company in County Tyrone. He claimed up to 80,000 tonnes of moss peat had been transported on local roads by vehicles in excess of the maximum three tonnes of material per load that is permitted to be carried on local roads.

Members said the impact of the transported loads was having an adverse effect on the surface condition of roads as well as affecting access for local motorists and farmers. It was argued the material being transferred should instead be used locally and create local employment as a result.

Appeals were made to hold Bord na Mona to be held to account on the issue and encourage the company to use their existing rail carriage network to transport and load the material locally, instead of using local roads.

Members queried if the company required a road licence from the local authority to transport the peat, particularly if stock piling material. An appeal was made for Ministerial intervention on the matter to prevent the peat being removed from the local bog which would cease extraction of peat.

Responding to the concerns raised, Acting Director of Services Greg O'Donnell said Bord na Mona had in the past, permission in place to extract peat but was unsure if the company had planning permission to do so presently from the site. He said there were also environmental issues to consider.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. T. Crosby

**SECONDED** by Cllr. V. Byrne

It was **AGREED** to contact Bord na Mona over concerns over the transfer of peat from its site at Cloonshannagh and determine if there are planning requirements governing the movement of peat from the site.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. O. Leyden

**SECONDED** by Cllr. K. Shanagher

It was **AGREED** Roscommon County Council would write to Environment Minister Eamon Ryan seeking a Ministerial Order, prohibiting further removal of peat for transportation, setting out the background to the removal of peat.

#### **144.23c WATERWAYS IRELAND BYE-LAWS**

Cllr. Kilduff raised the matter of Waterways Ireland and their proposed Bye Laws.

He raised concerns about the negative impact on boating and tourism in general in the county – the proposed abolition on winter mooring and that a boat could not moor for no longer than 5 days. He suggested the Council's Tourism Officer make a submission on behalf of the local authority prior to the closing date for submissions of October 27<sup>th</sup>.

Cllr. Kilduff also suggested a letter could be sent to the Minister Malcolm Noonan who will be reviewing the Bye-Laws requesting these bye laws not be adopted if the Members agreed.

The Cathaoirleach said recent consultations heard concerns over winter moorings whereby it was suggested time limits be put on winter moorings to prevent abuses of boats mooring. He said it was felt greater enforcement was needed, rather than any changes required and said he was not in favour of reducing the five-day mooring period to three for boats. He noted that while there was an availability of private berthing spaces, this did not mean these spaces were located where they were needed. Boat

owners very often avail of moorings at locations because of the lack of facilities where they require them.

Cllr. Keogh encouraged submissions from the Elected Members to reflect the importance of the county's waterways.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Kilduff

**SECONDED** by Cllr. Fallon

It was **AGREED** that a submission would be made on behalf of the local authority in respect of the proposed bye-laws to Waterways Ireland.

***NEXT MEETING***

**The next meeting will be on Monday, 27th November, 2023.**

This concluded the business of the meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are

Confirmed and Signed:

*Petrizis Bohan*

Meetings Administrator

*John D Keogh*

Cathaoirleach

*Petrizis Bohan*

Countersigned



Comhairle Contae  
Ros Comáin  
Roscommon  
County Council



**To: The Cathaoirleach and Each Member of Roscommon County Council**

**Date: 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

**Re: Management Report September (Q3), 2023**

Dear Cathaoirleach and Members,

As part of the on-going governance of the Local Authority, Section 136 (2) of the Local Government Act 2001 as inserted by Section 51 subsections (3) and (4) of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 places an obligation on the Chief Executive to prepare monthly management reports, in relation to the performance of his or her executive functions during the preceding calendar month, including implementation of policy or other matters required by the council in the exercise of its reserved functions, and the provision of services by the council, and shall on the set day (4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month) furnish a copy of the management report to each member of the local authority.

I refer to circular letter LG 18/2014 which contains the guidelines on the preparation of the monthly management reports. The monthly management reports are intended to assist the elected members discharge their governance responsibilities.

The attached management report for September (Q3), 2023 has been prepared in accordance with Circular LG 18/2014 and policies which have been adopted by Roscommon County Council are currently being implemented throughout the organisation.

Yours sincerely,

**Chief Executive  
Roscommon County Council**



Comhairle Contae  
Ros Comáin  
Roscommon  
County Council



# MANAGEMENT REPORT



**September 2023**

**QUARTER 3**

**Roscommon County Council**

**Revenue Account Income & Expenditure Summary by Service Division**

**Management Accounts Summary to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

	EXPENDITURE		INCOME		NET
	Expenditure Incurred up to 30/09/2023	Adopted Full Year Budget	Income Receivable up to 30/09/2023	Adopted Full year Budget	Actual Overall Surplus/ (Deficit)
	€	€	€	€	€
Housing & Building	6,430,512	8,947,517	7,539,771	8,958,648	1,109,259
Road Transport & Safety	18,084,994	28,908,117	10,709,113	22,164,121	(7,375,881)
Water Services	4,715,014	6,869,635	4,743,303	6,819,363	28,289
Development Management	7,012,444	9,072,304	3,031,013	3,002,088	(3,981,431)
Environmental Services	4,635,214	6,700,185	586,451	1,065,136	(4,048,762)
Recreation & Amenity	4,006,345	4,728,556	812,872	625,798	(3,193,474)
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	450,117	792,603	152,907	260,156	(297,210)
Miscellaneous Services	4,030,281	6,039,949	3,936,435	5,683,092	(93,846)
Central Management Charges	1,411,474	0	78,220	0	(1,333,253)
Local Government Fund/General Purpose Grant	0	0	7,171,089	10,756,600	7,171,089
Pension Levy	0	0	0	0	0
Rates	0	0	9,362,993	12,723,862	9,362,993
	<b>50,776,394</b>	<b>72,058,866</b>	<b>48,124,168</b>	<b>72,058,866</b>	<b>(2,652,226)</b>

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**Note 1;**

The Central Management Charge is allocated one month in arrears. The costs included in the Central Management Charge are distributed among Divisions A-H and include costs from Area Offices, Corporate Affairs, Corporate buildings, Finance, Human Resources, IT Print & Post Room Services, Pension & Lump Sums.

**Summary of Major Collections as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

<b>Debt Type</b>	<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>Accrued</b>	<b>Vacant Property Adjustments</b>	<b>Write Off/Waivers</b>	<b>Total for Collection</b>	<b>Collected</b>	<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>Specific Doubtful Arrears</b>	<b>% Collection</b>	<b>% Collection Previous Year</b>
<b>Commercial Rates</b>	1,343,850	12,475,149	762,532	112,879	12,943,588	9,729,686	3,213,902	18,717	75%	76%
<b>Rents &amp; Annuities</b>	524,603	4,578,407		(7,220)	5,110,230	4,464,095	646,135		87%	89%
<b>Housing Loans</b>	135,470	276,151			411,621	290,835	120,785		71%	67%

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**Recourse to Overdraft;**

There has been no recourse to overdraft during the month of September 2023



# PLANNING DEPARTMENT

## **Forward Planning**

Activity in the Forward Planning Section in Q3 focused on a range of pre-draft preparatory work on four Local Area Plans (LAPs) – the *Roscommon Local Area Plan*, the *Boyle Local Area Plan*, the *Athlone Joint Urban Area Plan* in conjunction with Westmeath County Council, and the *Carrick-on-Shannon Local Area Plan* in conjunction with Leitrim County Council.

The preparatory work on the *Draft Roscommon Local Area Plan* neared the concluding stages towards the end of Q3. There was engagement during August and September with the consultants appointed to undertake the environmental reports relating to the Plan, with the reports being finalised at the latter end of the period.

Survey and research work was on-going during the quarter as part of the preparation of the *Draft Boyle Local Area Plan*.

Engagement with colleagues in Westmeath County Council on pre-draft work on the *Athlone Joint Urban Area Plan (JUAP)* included the appointment of graphic designers for the preparation of the initial draft of the 'Strategic Issues Paper'. This contract also includes the creation of a unique logo, the development of the overall design concept for the printed document, and the development of a dedicated website for the *Joint Urban Area Plan*.

There was also engagement with colleagues in Leitrim County Council to agree the initial steps in the preparation of the *Carrick-on-Shannon Joint Local Area Plan*. Similar to the *Athlone JUAP*, although not a statutory requirement, it was agreed that an Issues Paper would be prepared to inform pre-draft consultations. Work was on-going on the Issues Paper in September, along with the development of a dedicated website for the *Carrick-on-Shannon LAP*.

## **Development Management and Planning Enforcement Activity**

The table overleaf summarises Development Management activity in Q3. A total of 179 valid planning applications were received. Following the introduction of the new online facility for the submission of planning applications at the end of June, the number of applications submitted electronically continued to increase month on month through the quarter.<sup>1</sup> In addition to increased application numbers, the number of requests for Section 5 Declarations of Exempted Development was also significant and continued to rise each month, with an unprecedented total of 35 such applications being received in Q3. A large proportion of DEDs received in recent months relate to refurbishment and extension projects at vacant residential properties.

Decisions issued on 100 planning applications in Q3, of which 90% were grants of planning permission.

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<sup>1</sup> Of the valid applications received, 48% were submitted online in Q3 (34% in July, 53% in August and 57% in September).

Given the increases in all aspects of development management activity (including planning applications, Section 5 DEDs and requests for pre-planning discussions), it was necessary to deploy staff resources from the Forward Planning team to development management duties during part of Q3.

### Development Management Statistics

Period	Activity	Roscommon North	Roscommon South	Totals
Q3 2023	Valid Applications <sup>1</sup>	98	81	179
	Invalid Applications	28	28	54 <sup>2</sup>
	Extension of Duration	1	0	0
	DED	26	9	35
	Pre-planning meeting	29	24	54

### Enforcement Activity

Period	Activity	Countywide Totals
Q3 2023	New enforcement case	16
	General letter	26
	Warning letter	8
	Enforcement notice	7
	Closed case	12
	Legal proceedings	4

### Unfinished Housing Developments (UHD)

During Q3, on-site activity on site resolution works was on-going at various times in six unfinished developments around the county. Contractors engaged by Roscommon County Council were at work in four developments (three in the Athlone MD and one in Boyle MD), while developers continued to undertake work directly at two developments in Boyle and Monksland.

A contract was awarded for further elements of site resolution works at a development in Tarmonbarry in September. In addition, one development was referred to Uisce Éireann for consideration as part of the Taking in Charge procedure, also during September.

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<sup>2</sup> Refers to applications invalidated during the initial invalidation process only and not applications declared invalid during the course of assessment due to findings on site.

# ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT PROMOTION

## Local Enterprise Office:

- **Trading On Line Vouchers (TOVs):**

22 applications have been received and approved to-date. Clients who received TOV approval in 2022 and whose deadline date is approaching are being followed up. Remote Trading Online Voucher Information Seminars are held regularly, with bookings accepted via the LEO website. Seminars in 2023 took place on January 25<sup>th</sup>, February 22<sup>nd</sup>, March 7<sup>th</sup>, April 27<sup>th</sup>, June 29<sup>th</sup> & August 17<sup>th</sup> 2023. The next Remote Trading Online Voucher Information Seminar is due on October 5<sup>th</sup> 2023.

- **Evaluation & Approvals Meeting:**

The next Evaluation Committee Meeting is scheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023.

- **Green for Micro Scheme:**

The Green for Micro helps small businesses become more environmentally friendly and sustainable by providing advice and technical support covering topics such as resource efficiency, understanding carbon footprint and implementing an environmental management system. LEO Roscommon has processed 14 applications to date in 2023. The annual target for this scheme is 14 applications for LEO Roscommon. Clients that have completed the Green for Micro can now apply for the new Energy Efficiency Grant.

- **DigitalStart Scheme:**

Digital Start is a pilot initiative from the Local Enterprise Office designed to help businesses prepare and implement a plan for the adoption of digital tools and techniques across the business. 5 applications for Digital Start has been approved to date in 2023.

- **Technical Assistance for MicroExporters:**

Helps small businesses expand into export markets by assisting with the costs of exhibiting at international trade shows. LEO Roscommon has processed 10 applications to date in 2023.

- **Microfinance:**

10 applications were received and sent to MFI up to September 2023. 2 approved, 5 refused and 2 pending decision, 1 withdrawn by MFI. 2 also approved directly with MFI. Work continues on the promotion of this source of finance on social Media and via mentoring clinics.

- **Training:**

The 1<sup>st</sup> tranche of training to support the business community is underway and places are in demand and training is well attended. A total of **788** participants have been facilitated to date in 2023.

- **Local Enterprise Week:**

This initiative has concluded for 2023 and will recommence in 2024.

- **Remote Mentoring:**  
16 Business Advice Clinics & 6 Remote Website & Social Media Review Clinics have been held since January with **153** clients attending the Business Advice clinics. All bookings were taken via the LEO website online booking system. 62 clients in total have been facilitated through One to One Mentoring sessions with a further 29 in progress.
- **REBOOT Training Programme:**  
(RTP) is a co-operative collaboration between Local Action Groups and Local Enterprise Offices in Mayo, Roscommon and Sligo. A finale event was held on April 19<sup>th</sup> at the Mc William Park Hotel, Claremorris and this programme has now concluded.
- **Enquiries:**  
Appropriate support provided on an ongoing basis. **322** enquires were logged in January, February, March, April, May, June, July & August 2023.
- **Student Enterprise Programme:**  
The programme for 2023/24 academic year recommenced in September with all 9 secondary schools registering to take part in the programme once again. In school workshops are ongoing and these are being delivered by Whizzkids Training.
- **National Enterprise Awards:**  
This initiative has concluded for 2023 and will recommence in 2024.
- **Promotion:**  
All LEO supports were promoted on the LEO website and on various social media platforms.
- **EI:**  
LW continues to work with Meabh Conaghan, the new West Region Manager and Noeleen Hussey.
- **IDA:**  
LW is keeping the line of communication open between IDA, CE & Senior Management of RCC in the hope of encouraging FDI to Roscommon.

# COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Healthy Ireland

- In September, the introduction of the "Healthy Ireland" programs to our community marked a significant milestone in our ongoing commitment to well-being and the promotion of health and wellness in Roscommon. The positive reception of the "Transition Year On Your Bike" (TYOYB) initiative among our secondary schools, along with our Wellness Walks, has provided a means for our communities to engage in physical activity, reinforcing our dedication to enhancing both physical and mental health. These initiatives closely align with the Healthy Ireland Framework, demonstrating our commitment to improving the health and well-being of our county.

## LEADER

- 2 LEADER claims processed in Sept (to be paid early Oct)
- June Monthly Return reviewed
- March, April and May Monthly returns approved

## Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

- LCDC approved the draft LECP on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2023
- Attended LCDC Networking Event in Athlone Springs Hotel on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> September
- Rita Kearney representing "Roscommon Women's Network" replaces Faye Hayden as LCDC-Social Inclusion Representative.
- For 3 members of the LCDC Committee, their 3-year term will be up in October

## LECP

- **LECP** - At the LCDC Meeting in May, the objectives that matched the 6 High Level Goals were drafted. Feedback was sought from the members. It is now moving into the Action Planning Phase and a Workshop is planned for 19<sup>th</sup> July.
- **Action Planning Workshop for County Roscommon**  
19.07.23 - Various Stakeholders have been invited to participate in the LECP Action Planning Workshop for County Roscommon. Individuals will have the opportunity to see the key findings from the research and consultation phases, and contribute to the actions to create an implementation plan that is ambitious, realistic and achievable.

## Joint Policing Committee (JPC)

- JPC Public meeting took place in Abbey Hotel Roscommon on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September. Large number of people were in attendance. Feedback was positive.

## Citizen Rural Project

- A workshop for Citizen Rural took place on 21<sup>st</sup> September. It was well attended by staff from across the Council sections.
- There will be a Citizen Rural Seminar taking place in the Abbey Hotel on 19<sup>th</sup> October. It is a free event but your place needs to be reserved through Eventbrite. Here they will be reporting back on some of the key findings from the Surveys which took place in April to July and the Workshops.

## **SICAP**

- SICAP 2024-2028 Tender received 8<sup>th</sup> Sept
- Initial Tender Evaluation Meeting with Subcommittee 19<sup>th</sup> Sept
- Tender Review ongoing in preparation for formal first round Evaluation scheduled 5<sup>th</sup> Oct; Prepared feedback
- Reviewed SICAP 2022 process/payments with Internal Auditor

## **Community Support Fund 2022 & 2023**

- Capital projects are being processed. To date €23,601.44 has been paid out.

## **Age Friendly**

- We held our second Age Friendly Interdepartmental Group meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> of September where we discussed the Draft Age Friendly Action Plan.
- We had our first Age Friendly Alliance Meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> of September which Shane Tiernan CE chaired. Various members attended from different services e.g. Garda Siochanna, TUS, ALONE, Sports Partnership etc. We discussed the Draft Age Friendly Action Plan.
- We are hosting an Age Friendly event in the Hub, Castlerea in conjunction with Leader called the Harvest Festival on the 12<sup>th</sup> of October 2023. It will be a mix of social dancing, cookery demos, health and wellbeing etc.

## **Community Recognition Fund (CRF)**

- We are hosting an Age Friendly event in the Hub, Castlerea in conjunction with Leader called the Harvest Festival on the 12<sup>th</sup> of October 2023. It will be a mix of social dancing, cookery demos, health and wellbeing etc.

## **Social Inclusion Unit**

- Attended Enhancing Social Inclusion event hosted by Pobal 6<sup>th</sup> Sept
- Attended 'Be Irish Sign Language Online' training 18<sup>th</sup> Sept
- Online applications for funding for Social Inclusion week opened online
- Update Social Inclusion Unit website pages to remove outdated materials

## **Ukrainian Response Forum**

- Roscommon Community Response Forum was established in March 2022 to co-ordinate the community led response in the provision of assistance and support to Ukrainian Refugees in Co. Roscommon. Partner agencies of the forum (Social Inclusion Measures Sub Committee SIM) work together to guide Refugees to the relevant services and supports required such as welfare, child care, health, education, employment, social and other integration needs and meet on a regular basis.

### **Offer a Home**

Scheme was launched on the 24<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023. Applications can be made via Offer a Home website and this will be followed up with inspections to determine the suitability of the property. Advertisements of the scheme have been placed on line (RCC website and Social media) and in the local newspapers.

### **To-date**

- 153 properties have been offered in Co. Roscommon.
- 101 properties have been allocated to Ukrainian families. (316 persons)
- 5 are in the process of being offered
- 33 houses have been withdrawn.

There are approximately 800 Ukrainians in the County that we are aware of, however, there are also a number of privately arranged units of accommodation. There are 16 accommodation Service Providers, three of which are under contract with Roscommon County Council and the remaining are under contract with IPAS. There will be a new national call out for vacant homes in October, 2023.

### **Emergency Refurbishment Ukraine Project (ERUP)**

A number of properties have been referred to us for the Emergency Refurbishment Programme which is being administered by Department of Housing.

- 8 Active Applications on ERUP tracker
  - 2 new property visits (Castlerea, Knockcroghery)
- 2 Projects progressing to proposal stage
  - 1 resubmitting updating drawings/ rate negotiated
  - 1 letter of intent issued/ funding challenges to meet fire safety requirements

### **PPN**

- Tender process completed and consultant appointed to develop a new marketing resource toolkit for the PPN.
- PPN's "County Vision for Community wellbeing" finalised and developed.
- Collaborated with PPN Reps to gather and present queries at recent JPC Meeting.
- Collaborated with SEAI and Ballyfarnon Tidy Towns to deliver energy roadshow and "Sustainable Energy Community" exploration workshop in. Further workshops currently being discussed and planned with other groups.
- PPN Staff presented at "Our Rural Future" tent at National Ploughing Championship.
- LCDC- Social Inclusion Rep Nomination secured and appointed.
- Continued increase in PPN Registrations during September.

### **Pride of Place**

- Two groups from Roscommon nominated this year:
- Castlerea Town Team (Somers Park) – Category – Community Wellbeing Initiative
- Dysart Community Development Association – Category – Population 0-500
- Judging took place on 31<sup>st</sup> August
- The awards ceremony is scheduled for 10<sup>th</sup> November in Armagh City Hotel hosted by Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council.

## **Tidy Towns & Amenity Grant Scheme 2023**

- Work is ongoing with the successful applicants under this scheme.

## **Tourism**

### Regional

- Attended workshops for the Upper Shannon, Shannon Erne & Border Destination and Experience Plan development – plan in final stages.
- Attended Waterways Ireland sessions on the Shannon & Shannon Erne Waterways Interpretation Project
- Attended presentation & discussion at Burren Eco-tourism Network in Ennistymon.
- Just Transition funding meetings attended with launch of Investment Grant aid Scheme for private & community SME's

### County

- Summer & Autumn digital & print Visit Roscommon Marketing Campaign rolled out
- Co-ordinated two Top Travel Influencer visits to Roscommon
- Arranged itineraries for a number of groups visiting the County
- Destination Boyle Project ongoing
- Explore Roscommon promotional material & website update
- Marketing content capture Shoot across the county completed

### King House

- Now open for year round tours
- RRDF retrofitting works ongoing & almost complete
- Culture night event – An Evening with Percy French with visits to the House open free all day.
- Boyle Arts Festival Launch

### Douglas Hyde Centre

- Centre opened August, September & October for tours
- Conradh Na Gaeilge – launch of Irish classes held at the Centre
- Culture night event was the launch of artist Pdraig Cunningham's Decade of Centenaries artist commission piece followed by recitations from Liam Mac Mathuna.

## **Heritage**

**National Heritage Week** - 50 events for Co. Roscommon were registered on [www.heritageweek.ie](http://www.heritageweek.ie). Heritage Office delivered 6 x events. Heritage office promoted all events county wide & supplied branded bunting, flags etc. to all event organisers. This involved press release and full page adverts in 2 x local papers, ads on Shannonside FM & 16 x social media posts. Attendance at events was over 1900 people.

**Royal Sites of Ireland UNESCO Bid** – a steering group meeting took place on 16/06/2023. The National Monuments Service are working on a Memorandum of Understanding between the and the Royal Sites of Ireland local authority partners in relation to the nomination of the Royal Sites of Ireland as a World Heritage property.



**Built Heritage Investment Scheme** – This scheme is administered by the Heritage Office on behalf of the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage. 19 projects were allocated a total of €102,984 and letters of offer were issued to all successful applicants. Heritage officer has been following up with applicants to get invoices, completion reports etc. for the 2023 recoupment. Heritage Office does not have operational capacity and is no longer in a position to deliver the Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) grant scheme for 2024 (reference email to Nollaig Whyte & Sean Mullarkey 07/09/2023).

**Historic Structures Fund** - This scheme is administered by the Heritage Office on behalf of the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage. 4 x projects were allocated a total of €107,800 and letters of offer were issued to all successful applicants. Heritage officer has been following up with applicants to get invoices, completion reports etc. for the 2023 recoupment. Heritage Office does not have operational capacity and is no longer in a position to deliver the Historic Structures Fund (HSF) grant schemes for 2024 (reference email to Nollaig Whyte & Sean Mullarkey 07/09/2023).

**Community Monuments Fund** – This scheme is administered by the Heritage Office on behalf of the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage. 4 x projects were allocated a total of €164,944 and letters of offer were issued to all successful applicants. Heritage officer has been following up with applicants to get invoices, completion reports etc. for the 2023 recoupment. One of the community projects has failed to progress and the department have been informed.

**Cloonshanvile Abbey Conservation Management Plan (CMP)** – Blackwood Associates Conservation Architects have been appointed to prepare the CMP and commenced with a site visit on 13/09/2023. This project is funded by the Community Monuments Fund.

**Elphin Cathedral Conservation Project** – Blackwood Associates have been appointed to prepare specifications and a schedule of works for this project. They commenced with a site visit on 13/09/2023. This project is also funded by the Community Monuments Fund.

**Local Biodiversity Action Fund** - This scheme is administered by the Heritage Office on behalf of the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage. 4 x projects were allocated a total of €53,194.

- LBAF #01 Quagga Mussel Project – this has high implications for water quality and biodiversity in the county.
- LBAF #02 Tree Mapping project – in association with the Climate Action Team
- LBAF #03 Invasive Alien Species Treatment – Athlone, Boyle & Castlerea Area Offices are participating in this project. Sites treated must be logged on <https://invasives.ie/> and data submitted to the National Biodiversity Data Centre. Giorria Environmental Services have been engaged to gather and submit the data as required.
- LBAF #04 County Actions for Pollinators & Biodiversity – as set out below:
  - **Council Actions for Pollinators** – Roscommon County Council signed up as a partner to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan in 2021. An ecologist from Giorria Environmental Services met with staff from 6 x area offices to review council actions for pollinators carried out in 2023 and plan actions for 2024. The need for grass mowers capable of cutting and lifting long grass has been identified as a major stumbling block for area offices in managing a 6 week cut & lift grass mowing regime as recommended at selected sites around the county.
  - **Pollinator Awards as part of the Greener Spaces Competition** – Initial scoping of pollinator category competition entries indicated a poor standard of entries with need evident for

increased advice for schools, cemetery committees and community groups entering the competition. It was planned to provide 'judging workshops' to school's applicants this year, but this was not possible owing to the late launch date of the competition. Such workshops would greatly improve the standard of entries.

- **National Pollinator Awards as part of the Tidy Towns Competition** – Roscommon County Council supports this national awards scheme.
- **Bee Hotels** – Ballyleague Men's Shed was commissioned to make 25 bee hotels for RCC in accordance with specifications. These will be distributed by the Heritage Officer this autumn.
- **Orchards for Pollinators** – Ballyleague Men's Shed have supplied and planted mini orchards at various locations around the county. These will be logged on <https://pollinators.biodiversityireland.ie/> in autumn.

**County Heritage Plan Projects** – 3 x applications funded by The Heritage Council were allocated €56,250.00 to be recouped in November 2023. These include the projects below:

- **Farming Rathcroghan EIP Community Archaeology Project** – input to farm plans, community outreach & schools engagement in ongoing. Funded by the Heritage Council.
- **Roscommon Field Names Project** - A workshop with Dr. Aengus Finnegan took place in July to launch this project took place in July with 39 people in attendance. A meeting took place in September to follow up with volunteer recorders and review project progress. Maps of 45 townlands have been given to volunteers to record fieldnames and upload them to <https://meitheal.logainm.ie/en/>. A baseline of fieldnames on uploaded as of 12/09/2023 has been set at 401.
- **Survey of holy wells in Co. Roscommon Phase 1** – Fado Archaeology have been appointed. Over 40 people attended a talk on the project during National Heritage Week. A public online survey is open for submissions and information until 6<sup>th</sup> October. A PR & social campaign has been carried out to promote the project, see <https://www.roscommoncoco.ie/en/services/community/heritage/roscommon%20holy%20wells/>
- **Roscommon Schools Heritage Programme** - 680+ Pupils, 30+ Primary Schools, 12+ Heritage Experts took part in this project in association with Heritage in Schools funded by The Heritage Council.
- **Historic Graveyards Recording Project** - Kiltullagh Hill Project Group took part in this project under the guidance of Eachtra Archaeology funded by The Heritage Council, see <https://historicgraves.com/graveyard/kiltullagh/ro-ktla>
- **Kilmeane Graveyard Book** – In association with Mote Park Conservation Group, progressing to final edit stage. Funded by the Heritage Council.
- **Roscommon Folklore & Oral History** – MacConmara Heritage Consulting have been appointed to carry out an audit of our existing collection and to make recommendations for future management of and additions to the collection. Funded by The Heritage Council.

**Creative Ireland** – 2 x projects are being delivered by the Heritage Office:

- **Táin March Festival / Royal Rathcroghan Schools Project** – Táin March festival took place in July with events in Tulsk, Roscommon & Rathcroghan. Chris Thompson has been appointed to deliver the schools project in October 2023. Funded by Creative Ireland.
- **Building of Ireland North Connacht Guide** – This is year 3 of the research phase of this project. Funded by Creative Ireland.

**Owen O'Connor Mausoleum Conservation Project** – contractor commenced works on site.

**Heritage Office News** – 60 emailed circulated to date in 2023

**Heritage Office Social Media** – 46 social media posts to date in 2023

**Heritage Office needs admin support** – Heritage Office has been unable to respond to planning referrals, derelict sites notice referrals & dangerous site notice referrals. Also unable to progress the preparation of a new County Heritage Plan, which has been impossible to achieve in 2022 & 2023. Heritage Office needs consistent administrative support to allow for delivery of a high quality heritage work programme.

## Arts Office

**Culture Night** - 22<sup>nd</sup> September - 25 ree events by 90 participating artists/creatives in 19 venues.

### **Arts Participation Programme**

- **CARE: Creative Ageing in Roscommon - Artist Residencies Programme** in HSE Nursing Homes 2023 ongoing.
- Call Out to artists for **Inclusion in the Arts Bursaries 2023**.
- Call out for applications to **RCC Artist/Creative Panel** for facilitators who wish to work in participation contexts in the Arts, Libraries, Heritage etc.

**Roscommon County Youth Theatre** weekly workshops resumed at Roscommon Arts Centre.

### **Creative Places Ballaghaderreen**

- Meeting of Steering Committee
- Assessment of Artist Researcher applications – 3 awarded

### **Capital Programmes** in collaboration with Regeneration

- Stage 1 Assessment for Roscommon Town URDF Artist Commissions – Sculpture on the Square and Living Laneways.

Ongoing development and delivery of the **Creative Ireland** and the **Decade of Centenaries** Programmes, liaising with artists, creatives, communities and coordinating the work of the internal **Culture Team** comprising Arts, Heritage, Tourism, Library, Community, LEO. Working with the national Creative Ireland Office and Commemorations Unit – both in the Department of Tourism Culture Arts Gaeltacht Sports & Media. Guided by Roscommon County Council **Culture and Creativity Strategy 2023-2027**.

Roscommon Arts Centre’s monthly programme contributes to an inclusive and vibrant arts space for artists and audiences through:

- **Performance:** a diverse programme of live events in the Centre’s 194-seater auditorium.
- **Visual Art:** curated and exhibited in the Centre’s dedicated Gallery
- **Outreach & Engagement:** a series of on-site and off-site opportunities for the public to expand and deepen their engagement with the arts which is inclusive and compliments the Performance and Visual Art pillars.
- **Artist Supports:** A programme of supports for professional artists across all artforms including residencies, mentoring, commissions, access to studio & work spaces at the centre, opportunities to develop and share work in progress.

# REGENERATION UNIT

## Town Centre First

### Strokestown TCF Plan Process

- Strokestown Capacity Building Programme took place in September which involved:
  - 2 training sessions held in Percy French (open to all Town Teams to attend)
  - Town Centre First Study Trip to Keady, in Armagh
- Strokestown Town Centre Plan final report delivered. To be launched by Strokestown Town Team in coming weeks.

### Town Teams

- TRO commenced meetings with each Town Team – so far meetings have been held with Strokestown, Ballaghaderreen, Castlerea and Boyle with other town teams due to be met in next quarter.
- A review of Town team plans for 2023 has been completed and a workshop on annual planning for Town Teams will be organised in Autumn.
- Meeting has also been held with Elphin Development Group.

### Linkages with External Stakeholders

- TRO presented to visiting students from NUIG on regeneration approaches in Roscommon.
- TRO presented on Regeneration approach in Roscommon at Placemaking Conference in Belfast
- Subsequently, a request for study visit for Masters in Planning students has been requested by QUB in early July to include 20 students staying and visiting local towns.

## Funding Schemes Involvement from Economic Development

### Rural Regeneration Development Fund

- Involved with Capital Implementation Team in design phase of Monksland.
- Identifying potential projects for next rounds of RRDF.

### Town and Village Schemes

- Information Evenings held in north and south Roscommon in early August providing details on Town & Village Renewal Scheme for 2023
- Processing of applications received. Deadline for submission to Department by 10<sup>th</sup> November
- Roscommon Bound TVR Project redefined to match current economic role and commencing in August 2023 focusing on promoting the county and linking in with ambassadors for Roscommon as well as Town teams.

### ORIS

- Measure 1 – 7 applications submitted to Department
- Measure 2 – 1 application pending
- Measure 3 – 1 applications pending
- 2 applications under ORIS 2023 Project Development Measure submitted to Department
- ORIS Measures completed Economic Unit are;
  - Roscommon Quality Framework for Outdoor Recreation Sites
  - Donamon Area Recreation Masterplan

## LIBRARY SERVICES

In Q3 2023, **23,795** people visited library service points across the county, to borrow **28,679** items.



### Library Events and Activities

The library service hosted a wide range of events and activities during this quarter.

- There were 24 Saturday Story times, 28 visits to libraries from school classes and ELCs, the branches have hosted 5 Play and Stay Sessions, in collaboration with Roscommon Childcare Committee, to improve social and community engagement among families with small children, especially for those families new to Ireland or the local area.
- In Roscommon Library the Ciorcal Litríochta – Irish language book club continues to meet on a monthly basis, as do monthly meetings of the ‘Bond with a Book’ Social Group, Mum-2-Mum Support Group, Craft Club, Book Launches, Regari Recovery College and Creative Writing Groups in Boyle and Strokestown Libraries. Staff members host weekly Storytimes for preschool age children each Saturday in the Roscommon and Castlerea Libraries.
- Roscommon Library also hosted a Climate Action Consultation with a large attendance in July.

### Right to Read

The *Summer Stars* programme was run throughout the school summer holidays. This year the scheme was launched with a special Storytelling session in Strokestown Library. The programme encourages children to read books for enjoyment during the summer months and offers rewards along the way. During *Summer Stars* **900** patrons (mostly children) became new members of the library and over **12,500** books and other materials were taken borrowed from the branches throughout Co. Roscommon and as part of *Summer Stars* there were STEM Science Workshops, Special craft demonstrations, Author visits, Weekly Story times and Special Story times (external) for Summer Camps organised for all branch libraries, which saw **400-500** children take part.

*Children’s Book Festival* is continuing throughout the month of October, and is used to encourage ongoing engagement between the public library and local national school. A total of 21 events are currently taking place in branches throughout the county, including visits by Story times by celebrated national and international children’s authors, craft workshops, and stories, music and dance sessions for younger classes.

The Little Library Bedtime Book Scheme designed to encourage library membership among babies, toddlers and their parents and families has gotten underway in September and will continue until the end of the year.



### Mobile Library

The mobile library service has continued to offer services, weekly in Ballaghaderreen, and monthly in Monksland, Keadue, Elphin, Ballyfarnon, Rooskey and Tarmonbarry. This has included, since the beginning of September, 10 visits to schools and preschools, and the time covered for mobile visits being extended by ½ hour for Thursdays.



## Sense-Ability

The Sense-Ability Collection continues to grow in popularity with library users since its launch in 2022.

Funding was sourced through the Department of Rural & Community Development Dormant Accounts Funding scheme for the provision of a 'Magic Table', to be installed initially at Boyle Library in October but also its portability means the library service may bring it to outreach and community events to cater for our Neurodiverse patrons. The Magic Table is a fun care innovation designed for use by people with dementia, autism and additional learning needs or a cognitive impairment. It consists of a series of interactive light games that project on to a table or floor and infrared sensors respond to the hand and arm movement of the players.

Use of the Sensory spaces (Cubbie in Castlerea and Sensory Pod in Roscommon) has increased steadily with a number of regular visitors making use of the spaces in Roscommon and Castlerea in support of their sensory needs.



The Sense-Ability service also supported two summer camps for our Neurodiverse community. Down Syndrome Ireland Roscommon held a 3-day camp in Kilbride Community Centre, in honour of the late Kate Collum, a young Sense-Ability member tragically lost as a result of a Streptococcal infection. Both Kate and her mother Clare present at the Chief Executive's reception to celebrate Down Syndrome Day on March 21<sup>st</sup> in the Aras, only for tragedy to strike a few short weeks later.

Library staff held Story Times at the camp for the younger and older attendees, and a large number of Sense-Ability sensory toys were delivered by our drivers for the duration of the camp.

Another additional needs Summer Camp was held in Strokestown with similar support from the library service.

## Equipment for visually impaired users

Through the support of the Dormant Accounts Fund, the library service has purchased a third device, this time for Boyle Library, having previously installing same in our Roscommon and Castlerea branches, aimed at supporting service users who are visually impaired, dyslexic and those with other needs. The new device is called an 'i-See HD electronic magnifier' which has been recommended specifically by the National Council for the Blind (NCBI). The equipment was supplied and installed by

the NCBI, along with training provided for library staff and users. The device is designed to be easy and accessible to use. It can increase text and image size to more than 70 times the original size making it suitable for use by people with different levels and types of visual impairment. The device has settings that make letters clearly legible, aiding users with visual impairments, literacy needs and people with dyslexia.

### **Community Regeneration Fund**

The Library Service received funding from the Community Recognition Fund for two separate projects. The Sports Equipment grant was used to purchase 72 pairs of 'Activator Poles' which will be lendable through our libraries to the elderly or infirm to help support a project initiated by Roscommon Sports Partnership. In addition to lending these walking aids, the library in collaboration with RSP will also lend some of their 'Boccia' accessible bowling equipment and Playground Stencils to schools and service users in the County.

The second project, a Sensory Garden at Castlerea Library is in the design stages and will bring yet another invaluable resource to support our neurodiverse community, as part of the Sense-Ability project.

### **SiarScéal**

Supported by Creative Ireland, Roscommon Library's annual SiarScéal Literary Festival, held in conjunction with libraries and schools in Sligo and Leitrim got underway this July under a new Creative Coordinator, Sligo poet Mary Branley. Eight Creative Writing Workshops for teens were held in Roscommon Library weekly throughout July and August, and four workshops in libraries in Sligo and Leitrim, with 240 young adults in attendance. The festival also includes the Hanna Greally Literary Awards, which includes entrants of all ages from as far afield as the UK, US and Canada, and always generates strong interest, locally and online, and is well-covered by local media. This year over had over 150 entries in the Poetry and Prose categories. The Awards Presentation Day will be held in Roscommon Library on Saturday, 21 October.





## Heritage Week

In collaboration with the Heritage Office of Roscommon County Council, Roscommon Library organised 10 events for this year, including 4 exhibitions, 4 in-branch talks and workshops, and 2 online talks. All were very well received and attended. Areas covered included Aleen Cust, genealogy, Roscommon participants in the American Civil War, the O'Connor Don, Castlerea Railway Museum and Creative Writing.



# HOUSING BUSINESS UNIT

## 1.0 Homelessness & Housing Allocations

### 1.1 Homelessness

A range of responses to homelessness in accordance with the West Framework Homelessness Action Plan are in place. The Western Region Homeless Action Plan 2019-2022 is being reviewed by the lead Council (Galway City Council) with input from the other authorities in the region.

**40** = homeless cases presented in Q3, 2023

**16** = cases required short-term accommodation in Q3, 2023

Breakdown Homeless figures Q2 2023				
Presentations	Individuals	Families	Totals Households	Breakdown of Family unit
July	10	5	5	2A & 1C X 2 1A & 2C 2A & 3C 2A & 9C
August	11	2	2	2A 2A & 1C
September	11	0	0	-

Accommodated	Individuals	Families	Totals Households	Breakdown of Family unit
July	4	0	0	N/A
August	4	2	2	1A & 1C 2A
September	6	0	0	N/A

Galway Simon is contracted to provide Housing First services to the Western Region. Resources to support six Housing First applicants over a three-year period will be made available to County Roscommon under the Housing First programme. A Homeless Action Team (HAT) facilitates the coordination of Housing First and Housing-Led support services.

To date, nine referrals have been forwarded to the HAT for consideration. Four referrals have been accepted for Housing-Led services and four referrals have been accepted for Housing First Services. At present, there are three Housing First Tenancies and three Housing-Led tenancies. Other units of accommodation are currently being identified for the creation of further Housing First tenancies and Housing-Led tenancies. One referral was submitted to the HAT in Q3, 2023 for consideration and was accepted for Housing First Services. A property was identified and a support package will be agreed with the case worker. Tenant signed up his Housing First tenancy on 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2023

## 1.2 Housing Assessments & Allocations

314	applicants (excluding transfers) on the approved housing list at end of Q3, 2023
116	applicants are currently in private rented accommodation with no housing support
21	offers of accommodation made in Q3, 2023
3	nominations made to AHB
18	new tenants appointed/allocated in Q3, 2023 to LA dwellings
0	AHB Tenants appointed in Q3, 2023
4	refusals recorded in Q3, 2023

## 2.0 Social Housing Rental Accommodation Market

### 2.1 Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS)

Financial support continues via the RAS Scheme for those applicants who have a long-term housing need. As of 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023, there are 338 households receiving support (226 private rented and 117 in voluntary housing)

### 2.2 Housing Assistance Payment (HAP):

Roscommon County Council is working closely with the Community Welfare Officers in the Department of Social Protection to continue the transfer of Rent Supplement recipients to the HAP Scheme. 31 HAP tenancies were opened in Q3 and 12 were closed in the same period. As of 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023, there were 425 social housing applicants in receipt of HAP.

### 2.3 Repair & Lease Scheme (RLS)

98	applications were received and were assessed since the scheme was rolled out in Q1, 2017; the majority of the applications related to properties outside areas of need/demand or were remote rural dwellings in poor condition – One application under review in Roscommon Town
4	number of lease agreements RCC has entered into under the RLS (2-1 bed apartments, a 3 bed ground floor apartment and a 4-bed town-house in Roscommon Town)

### 2.4 Leasing- Long-term Leasing and RAS-Type leases

- As of 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2023, Roscommon County Council has 4 long-term leases: 3 in Boyle Town and 1 in Roscommon Town.
- As of 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2023, Roscommon County Council has 62 active RAS Type leases throughout the county. As part of Housing for All Programme, only 200 RAS Type leases nationally were available. RCC have been approved for 20 of those and to date, 16 have been signed up.
- As of 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2023, there were 19 active Mortgage to Rent Scheme Leases in place (6 with AHB's & 14 with HFL). The Mortgage to Rent Scheme is a government scheme to help homeowners who were at risk of losing their homes due to mortgage arrears. One MTR tenant brought back their property.

### **3.0 Provision of Additional Social Housing Units**

#### **3.1 LA Build (including turnkeys & PPP):**

- 10 units at Windmill Rd., Elphin – Contractor Appointed, works commenced October 2022 with estimated completion Q1 2024
- 6 Units at Lake View Heights, Boyle – Project Completed in September 2023
- 12 units at Lisnamult, Ardnanagh, Roscommon – Works commenced in Q1 2023 with estimated completion Q1 2024
- 27 units at Esker Lawns, Monksland – RCC received departmental approval for the turnkey acquisition of 3 and 4 bed houses, works commenced on site in Q3 2022 and expected completion is Q4 2023
- 4 Units at Cortober, Carrick on Shannon - Part VIII Planning process complete. Expect commencement of works Q1 2024
- 16 Units at Curlew View, Boyle – Project is at Contractor Tender Stage. Expect commencement of works in Q4 2023
- 51 units at Sli an Choiste, Monksland – Design ongoing. Planning process 2023 expected to commence in Q4 2023
- 1 Unit at Pound St., Ballaghaderreen – Tender process complete and Stage 4 of process now with the DHLGH for approval. Works to commence in Q4 2023
- 4 Units at Elphin (Courthouse) – Project is at Contractor Tender Stage. Expect commencement of works Q1 2024
- 3 Units at Elphin Street, Strokestown – Project is at Contractor Tender Stage. Expect commencement of works Q1 2024
- 10 Units at Castle Street Apartments - Contractor on site with estimated completion Q4 2023
- 35 Units at Cloongowna, Monksland - Contractor on site with estimated completion Q4 2023

#### **3.2 Housing Association Activity:**

- Tuath proposal for 35 units at Cloongowna, Monksfield, Athlone – A Building Agreement/Contract of Sale was entered into between Tuath Housing Association and the Developer on 31 October, 2019. An extension to the back stop delivery date was sought by Tuath and granted by RCC and the Department. Unfortunately, delays arose. Roscommon County Council intervened to expedite the delivery of these. Housing Unit and Tuath continue to work with the developer to delivery these houses, expected completion date end of October 2023.
- Tuath Housing Association are working with a developer on a turnkey project under the Capital Advance Leasing Facility (CALF) model to deliver 10 units in Roscommon Town. The expected delivery date will be early Q1, 2025.

### 3.3 LA Acquisitions (including Buy & Renew)

#### 3.3.1 Buy & Renew Scheme

The focus under the Buy and Renew is on older stock in urban areas with a view to tackling dereliction and improving streetscapes in urban areas of Roscommon, Castlerea, Boyle, Ballaghaderreen, Elphin or Strokestown.

Since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023, 6 properties have been acquired as part of Buy & Renew Scheme in Ballaghaderreen (2), Elphin (1) and Boyle (3). Plans to develop these properties will proceed through the four stage process.

#### 3.3.2 Acquisition Programme

As of 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023, Roscommon County Council acquired 14 houses under the acquisition programme. Houses acquired for the following reasons:

▪ Tenants in-Situ	8
▪ Risk of Homelessness	2
▪ Specific Need	2
▪ PART V	1
▪ CPO by Agreement	1

The Department established the Cost Rental Tenant In-Situ (CRTiS) Scheme which commenced on a temporary administrative basis from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, prior to any legislative enactments or further funding negotiations required to formally establish a longer-term cost rental scheme. The tenants are assessed by the LA's and if they are eligible for CRTiS i.e. net income less than €53,000, the LA will refer the details to the Housing Agency. On 18<sup>th</sup> July last, the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage, set new limits to net income less than €59,000.

RCC has received 3 applications under the CRTiS Scheme:

▪ Deemed Eligible and referred to Housing Agency	2
▪ Deemed In-eligible	1

#### 3.3.3 Derelict Sites and Dangerous Structures

The Housing Department took over the function of Derelict Sites and Dangerous Structures and Places in late February / March 2022. It is intended the focus will be on the towns within the county initially. Roscommon County Council may acquire by agreement or compulsorily purchase any derelict site situated within their functional area. In April 2023, the CPO process commenced for 3 properties, 2 of these properties have now been vested by Roscommon County Council. In early October the process began to CPO another property.

Currently there are 31 properties on the Derelict Sites Register, 3 were removed in July 2023 as a result of works being carried out to make the property non-derelict. A valuation report has been received for the majority of properties on the DS register with some currently being valued. These valuations will issue to the owners under Section 22 of the Derelict Sites Act, in the coming weeks. Owners will have 28 days to appeal this valuation, Owners will also be notified that the derelict site levy of 7% of the market value applies to those properties on the register and demand letters will issue in January 2024. Notices continue to be issued to owners of properties that are currently in a state of dereliction.

### 3.4 Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024

- Cluain Airne, Killybegs – Two 2 beds will no longer satisfy the need for the families on this site. It has been agreed to increase unit numbers to four 4 beds and two 3 bed units. Redesign process has commenced and stage 1 approval should issue to the Department before the end of the year or early Q1 2024.
- Torpan Beg, Ballyforan - 3 extensions to existing units. Stage 4 Department approval has been received. Letter of intent has been issued to the contractor who is scheduled to commence in Q4 2023

### 3.5 Tenant Purchase:

The Tenant Incremental Purchase Scheme was published under the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014. As at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023, tenant purchase statistics were as follows:

276	applications received to date (6 received in Q3)
163	offers made to date (7 offers made in Q3)
106	offers accepted to date (2 offers accepted in Q3)
68	sales completed to date (2 houses sold in Q3)

Total proceeds of sales received during Q3 2023 is €100,500

### 4.0 Private Rented Accommodation Standards

Inspections of private rented dwellings are carried out under the Housing (Standards for Private Rented Houses) Regulations 2019.

- The recommended inspection target for Roscommon in 2023 is 700 inspections.
- 226 inspections were carried out in Q3 2023, 109 of which were follow-up inspections required to address issues arising from previous inspections.

### 5.0 Housing Stock

#### 5.1 Energy Efficiency Programme (retrofitting existing stock)

In accordance with Circular 22/2023, Roscommon County Council has an allocation of 45 units under the 2023 Energy retrofitting programme. 22 units were carried forward from the 2022 Energy Programme. The properties for the 2023 retrofit have been identified and surveyed by the RCC Housing Department. These properties are a mix of storage radiators or solid fuel heating. The 2023 contractor has been appointed and works are now underway.

#### 5.2 Voids Programme:

Roscommon County Council will complete 34 voids under the 2023 voids programme.

#### 5.3 Planned Maintenance Programme:

Roscommon County Council works ongoing under the 2023 planned maintenance programme.

#### **5.4 Casual Vacancy Works (pre-letting works)**

A total of 9 houses were refurbished due to normal turn-over of properties in Q3, 2023, to date 5 have been approved for payment to a total of €66,030.74. The remaining 4 properties are awaiting costs from the contractor. €47,802.80 was approved for payment for one property completed in Q2 2023.

#### **5.5 Housing Maintenance**

RCC Housing received 234 maintenance calls in Q3, 2023, billed expenditure on maintenance works during the same period was €216,122.58

#### **5.6 Housing Grants (Private Grants and LA Grants)**

RCC received a budget allocation of €1,446,375 for private house grants (80% Department funded and 20% Roscommon County Council funded) and the allocation is fully committed for 2023.

RCC continues to receive a large volume of grant applications and the process of validating applications for 2023 is ongoing.

The Disabled Persons Grant allocation for local authority housing stock for 2023 is €365,883 (90% Department funded and 10% Roscommon County Council funded). A total of 16 houses have/will be adapted to meet the needs of the grant applicant.

The 2023 Budget is now fully committed, some adaptations are completed and some are ongoing.

#### **5.7 Croí Cónaithe Fund**

On 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023, new guidelines were announced for the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant which provides grant funding to support the refurbishment of vacant properties in town and villages for residential use. The scheme has also been revised to include properties for the rental market. A grant of up to a maximum of €50,000 will be available for the refurbishment of vacant properties including the conversion of a property which has not been used as residential heretofore. This will be subject to upper limits for the types of work specified having regard to a reasonable cost assessment by the local authority. The grant is inclusive of VAT cost of the works.

Where the refurbishment costs are expected to exceed the standard grant of up to €50,000, a maximum top-up grant amount of up to €20,000 will be available where the property is confirmed by the applicant to be derelict (i.e. structurally unsound and dangerous) bringing the total grant available for a derelict property up to a maximum of €70,000. In the case of a top-up grant in respect of a derelict property, an independent report prepared by an appropriately qualified professional (e.g. quantity surveyor, engineer etc.) is required to be submitted along with the application confirming that the property is derelict (i.e. structurally unsound and dangerous).

For applications that have been approved prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> May, the revised rates can be applied at the point of the final site visit. The applicant will have outlined all proposed refurbishment works to be completed on the property in the application form submitted. In light of the revised grant rates, the local authority can review the submitted application form, the refurbishment works listed and the evidence of vouched expenditure. Following this assessment, they may revise the amount to be paid to the applicant, as appropriate.

In respect of rental properties, all landlords are required by law to comply with the standards for rental housing and ensure that their properties are fully compliant with fire safety and minimum standards regulations for rental properties. As part of the declaration to be signed in the application form, all applicants must agree to meet and comply with these standards.

An applicant can apply for a maximum of one grant for residential use and a maximum of one grant for rental use.

<b>Applications Received since the scheme launched</b>	<b>Awaiting further information</b>	<b>Under review</b>	<b>Refused</b>	<b>Approved in principle</b>	<b>Approved</b>
184	95	7	10 Does not meet criteria of scheme	50	29



# ASSETS, CLIMATE ACTION AND ENERGY MANAGEMENT

## FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

- The facilities in Áras an Chontae are being managed by Assets and Energy Management.
- Upgrades to the staff entrance were completed in Q3 2023.
- Facilities welcomed a delegation from Galway City Council for a tour of the Aras an Chontae building in Q3 2023

## ASSETS

- PIR (Property Interest Register) Roscommon for all Building and Land Assets is managed on an ongoing basis. An update of Folios was received from PRA and is being evaluated for submission to OPW.
- Full listing of RCC Assets across all Sections prepared and issued for reconciliation of FAR and PIR Roscommon. Follow-up actions agreed with Finance Section.
- Ongoing administrative and technical involvement with Letting, Leases, Acquisitions and Disposals of RCC Assets.
- Property Condition Surveys Form developed and to be trialled using digital platform.

## ENERGY

- Roscommon County Council expressed an interest in joining the Local Authority Leisure Centre Energy Efficiency and Decarbonisation Pathfinder Pilot Program.
- **Reduce Your Use**  
Energy Team are running the 'Reduce Your Use' national energy saving campaign across the organisation.
- **Energy Elephant Software**
  - Ongoing monitoring and review of significant energy usage in RCC Buildings. Expansion of energy monitoring from primarily electricity usage through Energy Elephant to other energy sources such as oil, gas and biomass.
- **Optimising Power @ Work Programme**
  - OP@W Mentor, Mark Skerritt, appointed and monthly meetings taking place in-person.
  - OP@W Mentor, Mark Skerritt, is advising on workplace energy saving programs and issues a Monthly Energy Report.
- **Energy Monitoring & Reporting (M&R) 2023**
  - Electricity Usage Data for 2023 submitted to SEAI.
  - Achieved 38% of targeted 33% energy efficiency improvement by 2020, based on 2020 energy usage.
  - The Energy Management Team have submitted Pathfinder project pipeline to the SEAI, who will assess eligibility of same for Pathfinder funding.
  - The Energy Management Team are actively working with SEAI agents (Consulteco) to model the impact of Roscommon County Council's project pipeline on our gap-to-target model (GTT model). The gap-to-target model (GTT model) is a spreadsheet model for use by public bodies to evaluate their energy efficiency (EE) performance and energy related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions over time, using data and methodologies from SEAI's Public Sector Monitoring & Reporting (M&R) system.

## **PUBLIC LIGHTING**

- Survey of all School Warning Lights in Co. Roscommon completed and Final Report issued. Review of repairs and possible upgrades is ongoing and repair works is subject to funding.
- Section 85 Agreement signed with Mayo County Council for the National LED Retrofit Project (PLEEP). Roscommon County forms part of Region 3 of the National Project. Consultants appointed by Mayo County Council on behalf of Region 3 and Regional Meetings commenced in October, 2021. Mayo County Council as the Lead Authority (Contracting Authority) issued a tender, in July 2022, to appoint a works contractor for the provision of a Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project for the North West Region. Three tenders were returned in October 2022. RPS/Arup have been appointed to provide professional services to Mayo County Council, which includes preparing the works contract procurement documents and assisting in the tender procedure. RPS/Arup will provide the NEC Project Manager for the Works Contract. The tender assessment board reviewed the tenders and issued the 'Tender Assessment Report' on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2023. Construction is expected to commence in 2023, subject to appointment of contractor by Mayo County Council.
- Loan Approval for the National LED Retrofit Project placed before and approved by the Members of RCC at Plenary Meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2020.
- Updates to DeadSure Inventory and UMR Database in preparation for National LED Upgrade are ongoing.
- A tender for 'Connaught Public Lighting Maintenance, LED Retrofit, New Works & Associated Services' was prepared by Mayo County Council on behalf of six Connacht Local Authorities. Documentation was reviewed and evaluation process completed with Electric Skyline Limited appointed in October 2020.
- The cost of the annual maintenance of public lighting has risen substantially due to the unavailability of replacement SOX lamps and associated cost of replacing SOX lamps with LED units.
- Taking-in-Charge of Estates (Public Lighting) is continuing in conjunction with Planning and Roads Sections. Updates are posted to RCC website.

# ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE UNIT

## Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI)

The RMCEI is an Environmental Inspection Plan detailing:

- the framework of environmental inspection targets to be undertaken in order to achieve environmental priorities and outcomes during the coming year, and
- identifies the inspections undertaken and the achievement of National Environmental Priorities (NEP's) and outcomes in the previous year, by monitoring the performance against the targets.

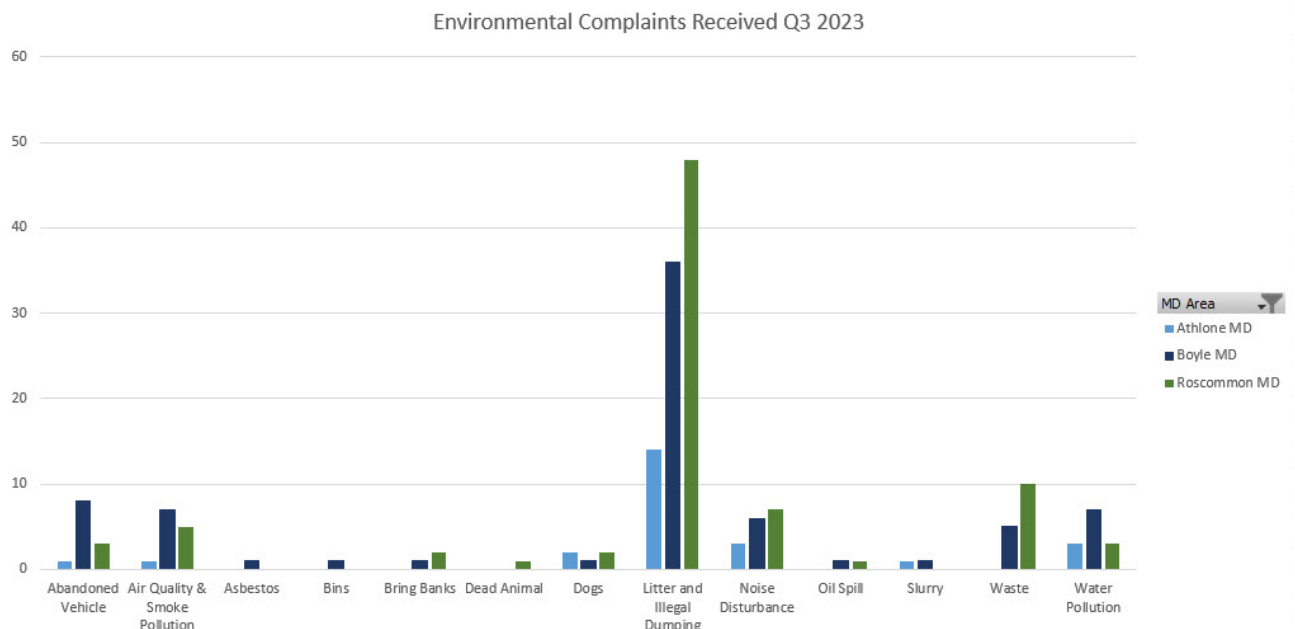
Roscommon County Council submitted their 2023 RMCEI plan to the Environmental Protection Agency in February 2023. Roscommon County Council are continuing to carry out inspections in accordance with the plan.

The EPA carried out an audit in Q3 2023 assessing progress under the annual RMCEI plan and a report will be circulated in Q4.

## Complaints

The Environment Unit continues to investigate litter and pollution complaints on a daily basis. All complaints are recorded, assigned and investigated using a database. Monthly reporting to the LGMA has also moved to an **online portal called NEMIS**; the examination of generating quarterly reports from NEMIS is ongoing by RCC/Environment with a view to providing suitable information in future management reports.

There were 182 complaints received in Q3 2023, 172 complaints were inspected and 156 cases were closed. The majority of complaints relate to illegal dumping and littering.



## Environmental Awareness

The Environmental Education and Awareness Officer continues to engage with schools, community groups and individuals; providing talks, information sessions and support.

- Green Schools – 21 schools in County Roscommon Schools received a Green Flag (renewal) in 2023. Schools must renew their flag every 2 years.
- Greener Spaces competition – 23 entries received for competition to recognise enhancement of outdoor spaces.
- National Food Waste Recycling Week – 4 information sessions/talks held at libraries in County Roscommon. Distribution of 110 food waste kitchen caddies and information.
- Gum Litter Taskforce Roadshow (August) - The Roadshow was launched in Loughnaneane Park, Roscommon. Its aim was to raise awareness of the sustainable impacts of responsibly disposing of gum litter and changing disposal behaviours. The GLT campaign has seen a visible reduction of gum litter on our streets since it first began, and the Roadshow is an important reminder to the whole community that we must continue to reduce our litter and protect our local environment.
- Launch of Schools Roadside Anti-Littering Competition (September) - As an individual or group, students are asked to draw a design for a car window sticker to raise awareness of littering on roadsides as a result of 'dashboard dining'. Each entry should include a tagline for the car window sticker. The car window sticker should aim to encourage people to think about the important issue of roadside littering.
- WEEE Ireland (Supported by Roscommon County Council) Free Electrical Recycling Day – Strokestown.
- Anti dog fouling campaign launch – Strokestown.

### **Media Campaigns**

A number of Social Media/Awareness Campaigns were organised during this period including:

- IFFPG – Approved Farm Plastics Recycling Compliance Scheme
- Continued promotion of Bag It! Bin It! Anti Dog Fouling Campaign
- MyWaste – Bin It, Or Bring it Home Campaign
- WEEE Ireland – Vape/E-Cigarette Campaign Campaign
- Plastic Free July
- MyWaste – Are you Waste Compliant?/Waste Presentation Bylaws
- WEEE Ireland – E-waste Campaign

### **Waste Collection and Civic Amenity Sites**

Roscommon County Council operates four Civic Amenity Sites which are open to the public three days a week. Waste collected at all four sites is reflected in the National Waste Survey which was submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency on 30<sup>th</sup> June. Waste collected at Roscommon and Ballaghaderreen is also reflected in the Annual Environmental Report (AER) and the Annual Environmental Performance Reporting (EPR) landfill returns.

### **Water, Wastewater, Air and Noise Pollution**

1. RCC continues to engage with Lough Forbes Pesticides Action group. This group looks at mechanisms to address **pesticides exceedances** within catchment area. The next meeting of the group is on the 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023 where it is expected that experiences for pesticides exceedances in other area that have been resolved will be presented. No pesticides exceedances have been recorded in 2023 from smaller water bodies (rivers) contributing to Lough Forbes from County Roscommon but the River Shannon is still associated with pesticide inputs. The ongoing issue of pesticide in the lake continues to present a problem with actions taken to date having limited improvement. The incidence of pesticides occurrence in Lough

Forbes is not following the national trend in reduction and may require further inspections and resources from all LA's in the catchment in the near future.

2. Water quality – protect and restore water bodies, (rivers, lakes etc.) to at least good status remains a function of local authorities and it is highlighted as key area for Ireland to achieve objectives under the Water Framework Directive. Staff attended Teagasc Open Day at Moore Park – Dairy day as a training mechanism for new members of staff who will be conducting agricultural inspection. On the day staff were able to attend a number of presentations of farm systems, their management as well as observe discussions from the farming sector on current issues. The open day provided an opportunity for staff to view dairy parlour, design and operation. Catchment investigations and inspections are to be completed in Q4 2023 to which attendance of the above will be invaluable.  
One member of staff completed the final modules of the Catchment Science Management Course delivered by LAWPRO in September. This programme is devised to allow participants to be able to ID potential water quality issues and identify potential remediation techniques at field scale to mitigate against such potential impacts.
3. Western ROC (regional operation committee) Water Framework Directive committee continue to meet and coordinate a number of national agencies in relation to implementation/progressing of water quality issues within the Western Region. Western ROC meeting held in September in RCC offices with a field trip in the afternoon to discuss and observe works completed by the NFGWS under its pilot source protection project. The Red Dot + notification review is ongoing by LAWPRO at present as the facility associated with the deterioration in EPA licence facility. RCC have investigated a number of facilities in the area, some non-compliances recorded at facilities have been addressed but there are some matters outstanding at the facility regulated by the LA.
4. National Inspection plan for DWWTs – Sites for inspection under the 2023 plan have been identified and focus at present is on the inspection of historic open inspection files. Priority has been given to addressing these open files with a view to have all historic open files revised by the end of year, with 38 inspections completed in Q3. The Council have increased awareness activities in Q3 to advise householders of their responsibilities and the actions they can take with an article published in Roscommon Herald. Roscommon County Council are continuing to engage on all open advisory notices and are committed to pursuing all required enforcement options with non-compliant householders up to, and including, legal proceedings to ensure risk to human health and the environment is eliminated. In addition, Roscommon County Council are continuing to administer the grant scheme covering remediation, repair or upgrading works to DWWTs for eligible householders inspected under the National Inspection Plan.
5. Air Quality at monitoring station in Roscommon Town (adjacent to Aras an Chontae) remained at good quality for Q3.
6. Solid fuel register compiled for the county in Q2 has been used for targeted engagement campaign and inspections of premises on the solid fuel register in Q3. Focus for Q3 has been on retail premises in Elphin, Boyle and Athlone.  
Staff attended the Environmental Services Training Group Annual conference. The conference provides a good overview in terms of the increasing role of local authorities in protecting and restoring our environment. Staff also attended the EPA circular economy conference.
7. A member of staff is sitting on the Agricultural Inspections Working Group with a view to developing a new framework for Local Authority inspections at a national level. Meetings of the working group are ongoing with next meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> October. A training event for all staff within all local authorities is to take place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November with work continuing on

a more intensive training programme to be developed. Development of national IT system for recording farm inspection to be devised under the programme. Working group has also made a number of recommendations on targeted inspection of farms for future and work outcomes are feeding into the national review of the derogation held under the Nitrates Action programme at European level.

8. RCC continues to engage with dentists operating in the County in relation to the Mercury regulations.

### **Closed Landfill Sites**

These landfill facilities have ceased accepting waste for landfill disposal but Waste Licences still remain in place for Ballaghaderreen and Roscommon Landfills and as per the conditions set out in the Licences, Roscommon County Council is obliged to continuously monitor environmental risks associated with the closed facilities (e.g., landfill gas, groundwater quality, surface water quality). Regular maintenance and servicing continues to take place.

Both licenced sites were inspected by the EPA in March 2023 and inspection reports were received in Q2. The Agency carried out this site visits as part of the OEE annual site visit programme to evaluate the licensee's compliance with the requirements of the licence. Roscommon County Council was found to be in compliance with its licences and have commenced actions relating to improvement observations raised by the EPA for both sites – relating to maintenance of monitoring locations, power outages procedures, incident reporting and water quality trigger levels.

Department funding is available for the remediation of four non-licenced landfills, known as historic landfills, and some of this was drawn down for Castlerea Landfill in 2022. Further funding for 2023 is available and Certificate of Authorisation works at Castlerea historic landfill will be prioritised. Contracts for the prescribed works will need to be prepared when the additional staffing resources are filled. Lands cannot be transferred back to original owner until all RCC's site restoration obligations have been met, with the possible exception of monitoring. Access to lands will be required post transfer to facilitate any future monitoring requirements.

RCC continues to sample leachate, surface water and ground water as required from these closed landfill sites.

### **Laboratory Services**

The laboratory provides both a technical/analytical and sampling service and is accredited to ISO 17025 (one of only 6 Local Authority testing laboratories accredited to this standard). The laboratory provides a shared service to Local Authority's and LAWPRO in three provinces and continues to expand its customer base. Maintaining output is a primary concern. This year's accreditation audit by the Irish National Accreditation Board took place in Q3 2023.

### **Casual Trading**

The Roscommon County Council Casual Trading Bye-Laws 2022 were adopted in November 2022 and come into effect on 01/01/2023. 2 casual trading licences have been granted in Q2 throughout the County.

Compliance with the Casual Trading Bye-laws is being monitored by enforcement officers on an ongoing basis.

### **Anti-Dumping Initiative 2023**

In Q2 of this year following submission to CUWERA of a number of proposed projects, RCC was advised of a grant in the amount of €110,494 for the above initiative.

Staff Waste Enforcement Training was completed and bulky goods collections were held in Roscommon and Boyle in Q3. Other ongoing projects include a focused campaign in Ballaghaderreen, targeted clean ups, removal of tyres from a number of locations, further social media campaigns, new waste management booklet, Sustainability of Textiles – Upcycling and Reuse Project and also the clean-up of roadside dumping at a number of locations. Final claim to be submitted in Q4 for this initiative.

### **Climate Action**

**Climate Action Unit:** The process of appointing staff resources under the Environment, Climate and Rural Water business unit to lead climate action is complete with the climate action coordinator, climate action officer and community climate action officer positions filled.

A media briefing was held in Q3 to outline the role of the unit and articles were published in the Roscommon Herald and Westmeath Independent. Ros FM also aired interviews held with staff in the climate action unit.

**Climate Action Team:** Membership of the inter-department climate action team has been extended with a revised terms of reference circulated. 2 meetings were held in the Q3 period.

**Climate Action Plan:** The Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications has instructed Local Authorities' to commence the process of preparing their statutory 5-year Local Authority Climate Action Plans (LACAP). Final government guidance on the preparation of LA Climate Action Plans was issued in Q1 2023.

Progress to date:

- Baseline reports – A climate change risk assessment, county wide baselines emissions inventory and decarbonization zone baseline emissions inventory all completed.
- Pre-draft stakeholder engagement - Various internal workshops were held with each directorate and external pre-draft consultation took place from the 7<sup>th</sup> of July to the 4<sup>th</sup> of August and included an online survey with additional submissions received by mail/email.
- Publication of draft plan, strategic environmental report and natura impact statement for formal consultation to commence occur in Q4 2023 with final plan to be presented for adoption in Q1 2023.

**Climate Action Community Promotional Video:** The project was launched in Q2 2023 in Roscommon Arts Centre. Each video produced was uploaded to RCC social media accounts on a weekly basis over Q3.

**Community Climate Action Programme:** Awaiting final funding agreement from the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications before expressions of interest will be invited from community groups/organisations.

### **Community Facilities Electric Vehicle Chargers Grant Scheme:**

A new just transition scheme through Zero Emission Vehicle Ireland (ZEV) to install Electric Vehicle chargers in community facilities in the midlands was open for applications up to 28<sup>th</sup> September 2023. The scheme provides grants to cover 100% of costs associated with civil, electrical, and installation works necessary to install publicly accessible 50 kW electric vehicle chargers. Roscommon County Council applied for funding for applicable public buildings under their ownership.

**Sustainable Energy Communities:** An Energy Master Plan for Castlereagh SEC was prepared in 2022. Bridge funding for the preparation of the SEC energy master plans was provided by RCC. This funding will be recouped from the SEAI. Roscommon Transition Towns SEC finalising energy master plan with other SEC's at earlier stages.

### **Tree Management Strategy**

The first initial draft of the Roscommon County Council Tree management strategy has been submitted in Q3 by UCD who were appointed as consultants to prepare the strategy. The initial draft will be reviewed internally by the climate unit and with other participating local authorities before it is circulated throughout the council for further feedback.

### **Alternative to Herbicide Use Project**

In 2021 Roscommon County Council entered into a service level agreement with Kildare County Council who are performing the role of lead local authority for the scientific assessment of alternatives to Herbicide Use in the Maintenance of Amenity Public Open Spaces project.

The aim of the project (through masters and potential PhD research and practical implementation) was to produce a practical maintenance guide for the maintenance of open spaces in the temperate zone using alternatives to pesticides that are efficient, labour saving, environmentally sustainable and provide value for money.

A master student commenced research on the 8<sup>th</sup> June 2021 in Maynooth University. The masters by research work undertaken looks at not only the alternative maintenance measures but the biodiversity associated given we are in both Climate and Biodiversity crises.

In Q3 2023 'Guidelines for Increasing Biodiversity and Alternatives to Herbicides in Public Open Spaces' were produced and issued to Roscommon County Council for operational staff use. Next steps include research at PhD level which will examine:

1. A comparison of biodiversity and biodiversity management practices on agricultural and town park open public sites in Ireland.
2. A comparative analysis of biodiversity on wildflower versus ornamental roundabouts.
3. Assessing the impacts of glyphosate and its alternatives on the soil microbiome.
4. A comparative analysis of mechanical and chemical alternatives to glyphosate for vegetation control on roadside verges and hard surfaces.
5. Towards a biodiversity indicator scoring system for open public spaces.



## RURAL WATER

The rural water function now falls within the Environment department remit following the transition of water services to Uisce Eireann in Q3.

The annual Rural water conference took place in the Hodson Bay hotel on the 7<sup>th</sup> September with Gerard Hannon presenting at the conference. Presentation was in relation to overview of the outcome of the Pilot source protection project part of which was run in Co. Roscommon among a number of group water schemes. The outcome of this review is that an 80% reduction in water related complaints was recorded in the geographical areas associated with the scheme during the lifetime of the pilot project. Increase engagement and understanding of where individuals and communities exist among the landscape with increased awareness of the potential effects of day to day activities carried out by stakeholders on the environment and water source.

### **MULTI-ANNUAL RURAL WATER PROGRAMME 2019-2021**

The Multi Annual Rural Water Programme 2019-2021 is a scheme specific or project based approach to funding from the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage. The Department has agreed that works continue under this programme until the new Rural Water funding programme is available later this year.

The objective for this cycle is to provide enhanced funding certainty for priority investment needs to support the implementation of proper planning and sustainable development in rural areas. This is to assist in meeting the requirements of the Drinking Water Directive in relation to rural water supplies and to support the delivery of measures identified in the *River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021* to meet the objectives of the Water Framework Directive.

The 2019-2021 funding cycle of the multi-annual programme consists of eight measures. These measures reflect the key challenges currently facing the rural water sector in respect of funding support. In particular, the measures have been more expressly focused around a 'multiple barriers' approach, from catchment to consumers (source – treatment - distribution), to prevent the contamination of, and ensure that, drinking water is safe and meets the quality parameters of the Drinking Water Regulations on a consistent long-term basis.

Approval of the schemes/projects under the MARWP 2019-2021 and the grant funding allocations were received from the Department in Circular letter dated 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2019.- €2,861,263

#### **The eight funding measures are:**

- **Measure 1 - Source Protection (Group Water Scheme Sector- Funding approved for the GWS Pilot Project at Peak Mantua, Polecat Springs, Corracreigh, Mid Roscommon, Oran Ballintubber & Castlestrange GWS and additional works at Brusna, Gorthaganny and Castlestrange GWS' - total available €351,150 for the period 2019-2021.**

Roscommon County Council are working in partnership with the National Federation of Group Water Schemes and other stakeholders on a Source Protection Pilot Project developing full source protection plans including specific actions to improve the safety and security of Group Water Schemes drinking water. The work commenced in 2018 and continued in Q2 2023. A steering group and operational working group have been set up to progress the development of the source protection plans.

Works undertaken to date at a cost of €437,683.33 were 100% recoupable from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

A campaign to raise public awareness on source protection and incorporating Biodiversity was developed to coincide with Rural Water Week on 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2020 with many initiatives. Mitigation measures for swallow holes were developed and farmers encouraged to fence off vulnerable areas on their lands. Catchment walks were undertaken by GWS managers to identify further sources of pollution. Farmers and contractors were reminded of the importance of proper and effective nutrient management to help protect water sources from pollution. Promotional Video clips were also undertaken to raise awareness. Available on [www.roscommoncoco.ie](http://www.roscommoncoco.ie) under Water & Wastewater/Rural Water Programme.

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BijH8U5Z\\_DLI4Tuz7M7twQFjlbAPgyj/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BijH8U5Z_DLI4Tuz7M7twQFjlbAPgyj/view?usp=sharing)

#### **‘I’ve Planted a Tree and My Garden is Pesticide Free’**

Approximately 8,000 trees were distributed to all the primary schools in the County. This initiative was to encourage the community to go pesticide free in their gardens and to educate and create awareness in schools. Surveys undertaken suggest that most householders that currently use pesticides are prepared to rethink their use in order to protect the environment. Concerns of the damaging impacts of pesticides on water sources and biodiversity lie behind the initiative and was developed as part of this project in Roscommon County Council. The main objective is to educate the wider community on the damage that pesticides can do in their domestic gardens. This is an important part of the overall project and is very much linked to the ‘Let it Bee’ initiative. [I've Planted a Tree and My Garden is Pesticide Free](#)

The ‘Let It Bee’ initiative - Farmers working together to protect their local water source and enhance biodiversity is another initiative of the Group Water Scheme Source Protection Pilot Project in Roscommon.

Bees, hives, equipment and mentoring were supplied to selected members of the community. In return the farmers are looking at changing their practices, putting in biodiversity measures and informing the wider community about the dangers of pesticides.

The farmers taking part in the initiative also receive a Plaque which is placed on the wall outside their homes to highlight their involvement.

#### **‘European Bee Award 2020’ for Roscommon**

The Source Protection Pilot Project in Roscommon won the European Bee Award 2020 for its outstanding contribution to protect pollinators, promoted by the European Landowners’ Organisation. The ‘Let It Bee’ initiative continued to be developed through this project into 2022.

All works have been completed in Measure 1.

- **Measure 2 - Public health compliance (Group Water Scheme Sector): Funding of €814,000 approved for the period 2019-2021.**

This measure is aimed at improving water quality in existing group water schemes, through upgrading their treatment facilities, so that the schemes can sustainably achieve compliance with the parameters of the Drinking Water Regulations on a consistent long-term basis. The Capital Replacement works are ongoing in accordance with a planned programme on the Design Build Operate Group Water Schemes. Works were undertaken to date on Mid Roscommon, Oran Ballintubber and Corracreigh GWS at a cost of €438,923 with 85% of costs €351,138 recoupable.

Works to upgrade the existing UV systems to validated UV systems on the Design Build Operate bundle, Mid Roscommon, Oran Ballintubber and Corracreigh Group Water Schemes were undertaken in 2020 at a cost of €248,186.34 to date.

UV systems works on the Brusna GWS and Gortaganny GWS has been completed Q1 2023.

**DBO Bundle:** [(2 in Mid Roscommon GWS (Lismurtagh & Ballinderry)], Oran/Ballintubber GWS and Corracreigh GWS) that make up the Roscommon DBO Bundle.

- **Measure 3 – Enhancement of existing schemes including water conservation (Group Water Scheme Sector): Funding of €1,431,000 approved for the period 2019-2021.**

This measure supports projects to make existing group water schemes more efficient in their operation (e.g. water conservation and network upgrades, including storage) and contributing to good water quality on a consistent sustainable long-term basis.

Funding of €1,133,238 has been paid to the Group Water Schemes at 85% of costs in Mid Roscommon, Oran/Ballintubber, Corracreigh, Polecat Springs, Brusna, Gorthaganny and Castlestrange. Further projects are underway at a cost of approx €230,000 for 2023.

As of March 2023 contracts works ongoing/completed on the following projects totaling approx. 13 kilometers of watermains.

- Corracreigh – Contract No.1 2020: - The contract provides for the installation of 319 linear meters of 90mm OD PE100 SDR17 1209 linear meters of 125mm OD PE100 SDR17 HPPE Water mains, installation of 4 connections to existing water mains, installation of 1 Air Valve, 6 Sluice Valves, 1 No Elster 4000 Bulk water meter, 1 No Cla Val Pressure reducing valve with strainer, 3No. Domestic PRVs and 12 no connections to services in the Townlands of Cloonyquin and Killynagh-Completed.
- Gortnaganny GWS Upgrade Contract 1(2019)- 785 linear meters of 90mmOD PE100 SDR17 HPPE Water mains, installation of 2 No connection to existing water mains, installation of 1 Bulk water meter, installation of 1 scour valve, 4 Sluice Valves and 14no connections to new and existing service pipes in the Townlands of Gortaganny and Carrowbehy-. -Completed.
- Mid Roscommon -Contract 01(2020) Tulsk: – The contract provided for the installation of 415 linear meters of 63mm OD PE100 SDR17 & 1509 linear meters of 90mm OD PE100 SDR17 HPPE Water mains- Completed
- Mid Roscommon-Contract02(2020) Kinnity: - The contract provides for the installation of 2052 linear meters of 90mm OD PE100 SDR17 HPPE Water mains - Completed
- Mid Roscommon -Contract 03(2020) Bushfield: - The contract provides for the installation of 2852 linear meters of 63mm OD PE100 SDR17 & 1913 linear meters of 90mm OD PE100 SDR17 HPPE Water mains -Completed.
- Oran Ballintubber-Contract No.1(2020): -The contract provides for the installation of 1965 meters of 90mm water main with 10 service connections- Completed
- Polecat Springs -Contract 01(2020): - The contract provides for the installation of 1746 linear meters of 90mmOD PE100 SDR17 HPPE Water mains- extra works necessary have been completed. -Completed.
- Corracreigh – Contract No.1 2020 Extras: The contract provides for the installation of approx 400 linear meters of 63mm OD PE100 SDR17, a number of connections to services in the Townland of Cloonequin. Works 100% completed –August 2022.
- Mid Roscommon – 2021 Contract 2 Carrowduff-Tonbaun: – The contract provides for the installation of 1400 linear meters of 63mm OD PE100 SDR17 & 950 linear meters of 63mm OD PE100 SDR17 HPPE Water mains. Completed.

- Mid Roscommon – 2021 Contract 3 Coggalbeg: – The contract provides for 4100 meters of 90mm water main water with various fittings laid in the public road. Completed.

Upgrade contracts are ongoing on the following and work will continue into Q2/3 2023. Delays in projects are still occurring due to costs and supply problems with construction materials.

- Brusna - Contract No.1(2023): -Contract documents currently being produced for works, surveying ongoing. Expect to go to tender Q4-2023.No communication from GWS
- Corracreigh – Contract No.1 2022: The contract provides for the installation of approx 1000 linear meters of 90mm OD PE100 SDR17, a number of connections to services in the Townland of Annaghmore. Contractor appointed, and work 95% Complete-Final A/C
- Mid Roscommon – 2021 Contract 1 Ballinderry-Carrowbaun: – The contract provides for the installation of 1400 meters of 90mm water main water and 1350 meters of 63mm water main water, with various fittings laid in the public road at two locations. Contractor has completed Carrowbaun section). Contractor commenced in Ballinderry Q1 2023. 95% Complete-Final A/c
- Oran Ballintubber-Contract No.1(2022): -The contract provides for the installation of 800 meters of 75mm water main with 5 service connections-

Contractor appointed, works completed Q1 2023

Oran Ballintubber-Contract No.1(2023): -Contractor on site 75% Complete

- Corracreigh / Peake Mantua Amalgamation -Contract 01(2022): - A Special General Meeting of Peake Mantua held on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2022 approved a motion for a “transfer of engagements” (Amalgamation) with Corracreigh GWS. This clears the way to proceed with the process of design of the interconnector. The contract will provide for approximately 3,600 meters of 125 mm water main and approx. 1000 meters of 75 mm water main with various fittings laid in the public road. Survey, Design & contract documentation is currently being produced for this contract. Awaiting Final design details from Consultants (TJ O Connors), now hope to go to tender in Q4 2023 subject to Department Funding.

Group Water Scheme Managers have been advised to identify works/upgrades necessary on their schemes in preparation of the next programme of funding. Lists have been received from most schemes.

- **Measure 5 – Transition of Existing Group Water Schemes and Group Sewerage Schemes to the Public (Irish Water) Water Sector: Funding of €247,000 approved for the period 2019-2021.**

This measure enables existing group water schemes and existing group sewerage schemes, where they wish to do so and with the agreement of Irish Water, to transition to the public water sector (Irish Water).

At the end of 2022 Projects totalling 3.5 kilometers of watermains at a cost to date of €203,857.40 were completed.

- Works are completed on the Drumheriff /Derrinasoo GWS. December 2020  
Drumherriff: 1480m of 63mm watermains with 10 connections.
- Works are completed on the Lisagallon GWS -June 2021  
Lisagallon: 1928m of 125mm watermains with 46 connections.  
TIC process completed 02 Nov 2022.
- Discussions are progressing with Woodbrook GWS Q2-2023. Surveying Ongoing. Contract documents are being produced for upgrading to Uisce Eireann Taking In Charge standards. Expected tender Q4-2023. extra funding applied for from the department due to increase in costs.
- Rockfield GWS Q3-2023, Surveying complete, tendered  
Contract documents produced for upgrading to Uisce Eireann Taking In Charge standards.-  
extra funding applied for from the department
- A request was received from Caramunia GWS, Rahara to be taking in charge in June 2022 –  
additional surveys required.

**ORPHAN SCHEMES BEING CONSIDERED FOR TIC:**

Report has been prepared on Orphan schemes which will be considered for taking in charge by Uisce Éireann.

List has been forwarded to Uisce Eireann - Full surveys will be necessary on all schemes to comply with Uisce Eireann Taking In Charge policy.

1. Ardikellan	North East Roscommon RWSS	2600PRI2019
2. Arm/Cashel	Castlerea Regional WSS	2600PRI2020
3. Barrybeg	South Roscommon RWSS Lisbrock	2600PRI2027
4. Cartron/Kilteevan	Roscommon Central WSS	2600PRI2035
5. Clonelt No 1	Ballinlough/Loughglynn RWSS	2600PRI2039
6. Clonelt No 2	Ballinlough/Loughglynn RWSS	
7. Cloonarkin/Meeltraire	Ballinlough/Loughglynn RWSS	2600PRI2044
8. Cloonfad East	Ballinlough/Loughglynn RWSS	2600PRI2053
9. Cloongrehan	Boyle Ardcarne RWSS	2600PRI2059
10. Cloontrask	Castlerea Regional WSS	2600PRI2065
11. Fairymount	North Roscommon RWSS	2600PRI2091
12. Mount Prospect/Fuerty	Roscommon Central WSS	2600PRI2121
13. Onagh, Taughmaconnell	South Roscommon RWSS Killeglan	2600PRI2126
14. Parkmore, Ballinasloe	Ballinasloe UDC	1200PUB1004
15. Rockfield	Roscommon Central WSS	2600PRI2129
16. Rooskey, Ballaghaderreen	North Roscommon RWSS	2600PRI2131
17. Sligo Road	North Roscommon RWSS	2600PRI2137

- **Measure 6 – A Community Water Connection**  
Crosshill, Arigna was undertaken in 2019 costing €22,314. Completed.  
Numerous queries have been received on this measure.

- **Measure 8 - PRIVATE WATER SUPPLY- Grants for the improvement of a private water supply to a house**

The existing grant scheme to support improvement works for a private water supply providing water intended for human consumption and domestic purposes to a house, (more commonly known as private or household wells) has been revised with effect from 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2020 under the ***Housing (Private Water Supply Financial Assistance) Regulations 2020 (S.I. No. 192 of 2020)***.

### **1. Purpose of grant**

The purpose of this grant scheme is to assist households in rural areas that are dependent on a private water supply (individual well) for their household use, by financially assisting them where they incur capital expenditure, to carry out improvements to the supply to ensure that the water supply is wholesome and clean, or that the quantity supplied is insufficient to meet the domestic needs of the household as defined in the Housing (Private Water Supply Financial Assistance) Regulations 2020 (S.I. No. 192 of 2020).

### **2. Level of grant**

The level of a grant is determined by the type of improvement works being undertaken and shall not exceed the following amounts:

- (a) (i) 85% of the approved costs for rehabilitation works, subject to a maximum of €3,000; or
  - (ii) 85% of the approved costs for the provision of a new well, subject to a maximum of €5,000 (where the housing authority agrees that this is the most appropriate solution);
- (b) 100% of the approved costs for works that, in the opinion of the housing authority, are necessary to treat the water to meet the water quality standards specified in the Regulations, subject to a maximum grant of €1,000. Examples of such treatments are filtration or Ultra Violet treatment.

To the end of Q3 2023 a total of 15 applications for the upgrade of Private Water Supplies have been received.

€23,832 paid out end of Q3 2023

### **SUBSIDY - Payable towards the Operational Costs of Group Water Schemes Providing Water for Domestic Use:**

With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2018, the subsidies have been increased, streamlined and new incentives introduced for smaller schemes. This is intended to bring greater equity and fairness to ensure that domestic users on group water schemes receive comparable benefits to those receiving their water supply from Irish Water.

- **Annual Subsidy** - - An annual subsidy per house is available to group schemes for the operational cost of providing domestic water. Annual subsidies in the sum of €106,026.90 have been paid to Group Water Schemes to end of Q1 2023.
- **Operational and Maintenance Subsidy** – This subsidy is payable towards Operational and Maintenance (O&M) costs associated with “bona fide” Design/Build/Operate (DBO) contracts for group schemes that have their own water treatment facilities. O&M subsidies have been paid in the sum of €155,671.03 to Group Water Schemes to the end of Q1 2023. **& €147,267.66** claim has been submitted to the depart for Q2

Total Subsidies paid to Group Water Schemes to end of Q3 2023 is €302,938.69.

## ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION

**N5 Ballaghaderreen–Scramoge:** The Ballaghaderreen to Scramoge Road Project is 33.4km in length and extends from the east tie-in point of the N5 Ballaghaderreen By-pass to Scramoge and bypasses Frenchpark, Bellanagare, Tulsk and Strokestown. The Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) was made on 11 December 2017. The application for Development Consent and for confirmation of the CPO and associated documentation was submitted to An Bord Pleanála (ABP) on 20 December 2017. Following an Oral Hearing in October 2018, ABP approved the scheme and confirmed the CPO in January 2019. CPO notices have been served on all persons listed in the approved CPO. Land and property acquisition continues. Various works and services contracts were undertaken in advance of the main construction contract including fencing, archaeology, topographical surveys, geotechnical investigations and the diversions of some Authority & Utility apparatus. Technical consultants were appointed to assist in progressing the project through the tender and construction stages. The main construction contract tender documents were issued on 22 July 2020 and the closing date for receipt of tenders was set for Tuesday 22 December 2020. Tenders received on or before the specified closing date were assessed. In accordance with the Public Spending Code, the updated Final Business Case together with a request to award the main construction contract was submitted to the Department of Transport on 14 April 2021. On 11 June 2021, the Department of Transport advised that Government approval as required under the Public Spending Code was given on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021 and granted approval to award the main construction contract under the direction of TII. TII approval to award of the main construction contract was received on 14 June 2021. The Main Construction Contract was awarded to Roadbridge Ltd. on 16 June 2021 and the Contract was formally executed on 06 October 2021. Following the appointment of a Receiver over certain assets of Roadbridge Ltd. on 11 March 2022, all work under the contract ceased. Roadbridge Ltd.'s contract was subsequently terminated on 04 April 2022. A contract notice to re-procure the main construction contract was published on eTenders on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2022 and on the OJEU on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2022. Pre-qualification submissions were received by the latest specified time and date for receipt of submissions (16.00 hrs on 27 May 2022). The main construction contract tender documents were issued to all pre-qualified candidates on 22 July 2022. The closing date for receipt of tenders was Friday 24 March 2023. Following the closing date for receipt of tenders, the tender assessment process was undertaken, and Roscommon County Council subsequently recommended the appointment of a contractor and sought the formal approval of TII to award the contract on 31 May 2023. In accordance with the Public Spending Code, Government consent is also required. The Final Business Case was updated and submitted to TII on 16 June 2023. Government approval to award the main construction contract was received on 27 September 2023 and TII approval on 28 September 2023. Subject to the satisfaction of specified requirements in relation to the provision of insurances, bond, etc. it is intended to award the contract in Q4 2023.

**N61 Ballymurray to Knockcroghery Road Project:** This project comprises the improvement of the N61 National Secondary Road between Ballymurray and Knockcroghery which will incorporate a bypass of Knockcroghery. The project was brought through to the completion of TII Phase 2 (Option Selection) by the appointed consultants Roughan & O' Donovan-AECOM Alliance (ROD-A) in 2021. This project was suspended in 2021 by TII due to funding constraints. Some funding was allocated in 2022 under the TII Minors programme to develop an overall strategy to address the safety and related issues on the section of N61 between Roscommon town and Athlone pending the implementation of long-term solution(s). ROD-A were appointed in August 2022 to undertake this study. A draft report has been issued and is currently under review.

**N61 Tulsk to Clashaganny Road Project** involves the realignment of approximately 4km of the N61 National Secondary route from Tulsk village to Clashaganny. A planning application in accordance with Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations was published in October 2022 and the proposed development was approved to proceed in accordance with the recommendation of the Chief Executive's report at the Plenary Meeting of Roscommon County Council held in February 2023. That

decision has been the subject of a judicial review brought before the High Court and Roscommon County Council has agreed to the setting aside of the decision reached in February 2023. It is anticipated that a revised planning application in respect of the proposed development will be submitted in 2024.

**N61 Tulsk to Gortnacrannagh Road Project** involves the realignment and improvement of approximately 6km of the N61 National Secondary Road between Tulsk village and the new N5 crossing of the N61 at Gortnacrannagh Townland. TII approved the appointment of Lead Technical Consultants and independent specialists to progress the project through the planning phases. Roughan & O' Donovan-AECOM Alliance (ROD-A) was appointed in July 2022. Phases 0 and 1 have been completed. Phase 2 Option Selection is ongoing and it is anticipated that the emerging preferred route corridor will be identified in Q4 2023.

**National Road Pavement Projects:** Design and Contract documentation have been prepared for the pavement overlay projects included in the 2023 TII National Road Allocations. Contract documentation for N5 Frenchpark to Ballinagare and the N63 Athleague to Ballinagard Road pavement projects were completed in March 2023 and May 2023 respectively. The Design and preparation of tender documentation for projects anticipated to be progressed in 2024 is ongoing.

**N4 Carrick on Shannon to Dromod Project** involves the provision of a transport solution, which includes a new crossing of the River Shannon, to relieve the significant traffic congestion on the N4 through Carrick on Shannon / Cortober. A Section 85 Agreement under the Local Government Act is in place between Roscommon County Council and Leitrim County Council. Under the Section 85 Agreement Leitrim County Council is the Lead Authority. Leitrim County Council appointed Ove Arup & Partners Ireland Ltd. (ARUP) to progress the project through the planning process in March 2020. ARUP completed Phase 1 (Concept and Feasibility) in July 2020 and Phase 2 (Option Selection) in March 2023. TII approval to proceed to Phase 3 (Design and Environmental Evaluation) has been received. Ground Investigation and Topographical surveys necessary to progress the project design have commenced on site and are expected to continue throughout 2023. Considering the 2023 Grant Allocations to Local Authorities for National Roads, Leitrim County Council has prioritised the progression of the town bypass and associated traffic demand management and active travel measures through subsequent development phases. ARUP commenced Phase 3 (Design and Environmental Evaluation) of the project development in June 2023.

## **GREENWAY PROJECTS**

**Athlone to Ballyleague/Lanesborough Greenway Project** involves the provision of a greenway, with an approx. indicative length ranging from 45 to 60km. This Greenway links into proposed Galway to Athlone cycleway scheme in the Athlone area. RPS has been appointed to progress project through Phase 0 Scope and Pre-Appraisal & Phase 1 Concept and Feasibility (TII Project Managers Manual for Greenway Projects). Phase 0 deliverables were completed in 2022. TII issued approval to proceed from Phase 0 to Phase 1 on 13/02/2023. Public Consultation No.1 took place in the Hodson Bay Hotel in Hodson Bay, Athlone on 22nd March 2023. Phase 1 deliverables to be completed during Q4 2023.

### **Mid Shannon Greenway Project**

Mid Shannon Greenway is the adopted name for proposed greenway project in the area of Ballyleague/Lanesborough, Strokestown, Roosky and Termonbarry. The Mid Shannon Greenway has an approx. indicative length ranging from 30 to 45km. This Greenway links into Athlone to Ballyleague/Lanesborough Greenway scheme. Ryan Hanley has been appointed to progress project through Phase 0 Scope and Pre-Appraisal & Phase 1 Concept and Feasibility (TII Project Managers Manual for Greenway Projects). Phase 0 deliverables were completed in 2022. TII issued approval to



proceed from Phase 0 to Phase 1 on 20/01/2023. Public Consultation No.1 took place in the Percy French Hotel, Strokestown on 19th April 2023. Phase 1 deliverables to be completed during Q4 2023.

**Lough Key to Carrick on Shannon Greenway Project** involves the provision of a greenway with an approx. indicative length ranging from 15 to 20km. Following a tender process, Roughan & O'Donovan Consulting Engineers have been appointed to progress the project through Phase 0 Scope and Pre-Appraisal & Phase 1 Concept and Feasibility (TII Project Managers Manual for Greenway Projects). The contract commenced in January 2023. Phase 0 deliverables were completed in Q3 2023. TII issued approval to proceed from Phase 0 to Phase 1 in July 2023. Public Consultation No.1 took place in the Lough Key Forest and Activity Park on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023. Phase 1 deliverables to be completed during Q4 2023.

### **ACTIVE TRAVEL PROJECTS**

Initial funding was provided by TII to initiate the following Active Travel projects: -

- AT N5 Bellanagare;
- AT N5 Frenchpark;
- AT N5 Strokestown;
- AT N5 Tulsk; and
- AT N5 Tulsk to Rathcroghan.

A single topographical survey contract (encompassing all 5 projects) was completed in June 2022. Archaeological assessment and investigation contracts are ongoing. Procurement of various design services contracts necessary to progress the projects is ongoing. The AT N5 Frenchpark project is being progressed in-house by Roscommon NRRO. A Technical Consultant is being procured to assist Roscommon County Council progress the other four projects through Phases 2-4 of TII's Project Management Guidelines.

### **Local Improvement Scheme**

The Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) operates the Local Improvement Schemes for the improvement of local non-public roads. 16 projects received funding in 2023. The Council intend to advertise in early December for expressions of interest for 2024, subject to funding from the Department.

### **Community Involvement Schemes (CIS)**

Roscommon County Council received an allocation of €139, 050 in 2023. Four projects will be completed in 2023.

In July 2023 the Department of Transport announced that it proposes to continue the Community Involvement Scheme (CIS) in 2024 and 2025. Roscommon County Council advertised for Expressions of Interest from householders and land owners on local and regional roads who wish to participate in the Scheme. The Scheme will be based on a minimum community contribution of either 10% or 20% for eligible works, including general maintenance, drainage works, pavement works and footpaths, based on the criteria below:

- Where the local community contribution is monetary a minimum contribution rate of 10% will apply;
- Where the local community contribution comprises works the minimum contribution rate will be 20%;

### **Active Travel Investment Programme**

The *Programme for Government* published in June 2020 included significant and ambitious targets for the development of walking and cycling schemes. In 2023 the National Transport Authority (NTA) has allocated funds to Ireland's local authorities with a view to spending €290 million on walking and cycling infrastructure. Roscommon County Council received an allocation of €2,500,000 for 2023. The funding for 2023 is for Year 3 of a 5-year *Active Travel Investment Programme*, which will be transformative in the area of green sustainable transport options to those outside of large urban centres. The development of high quality walking and cycling facilities will encourage more people to switch to active travel and will contribute to tackling climate change. This funding will help towards connecting communities and making walking and cycling attractive, safe and accessible to everyone. A total of 19 Schemes have been completed to date in County Roscommon across the three Municipal Districts with a spend of €3,230,264. In 2023, construction has commenced in Lecarrow, Cloonfad and Ballinlough Villages. A further 12 Projects are at planning/procurement stage in 2023 along with eight school projects under the Safe Routes to School Programme.

## Broadband

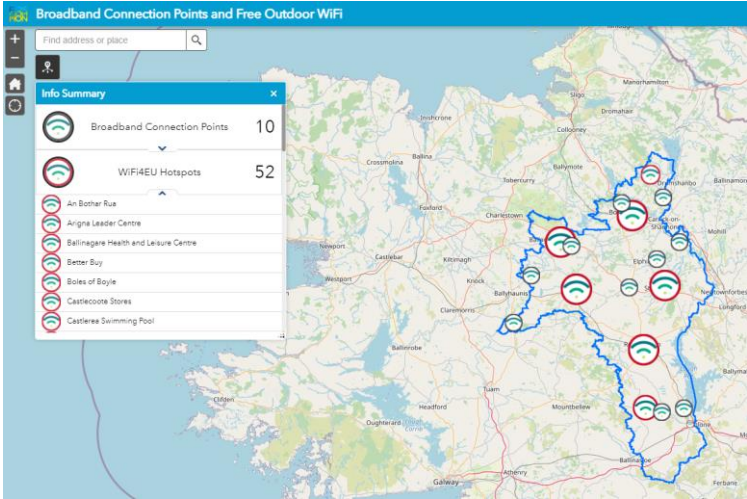
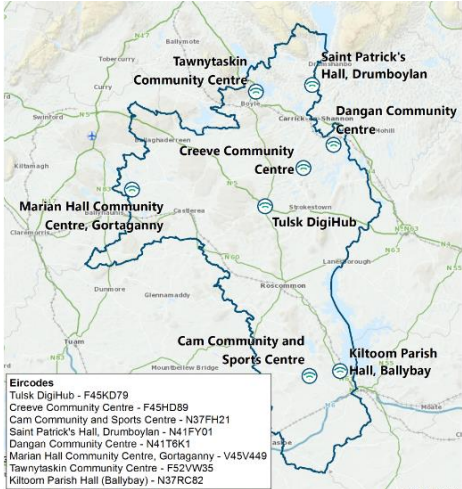
### NBI

Work continues with NBI staff regarding build designs and S254 planning applications across the network. Ballinasloe, Roscommon, Athlone and Carrick on Shannon deployment areas are taking orders currently for new connections and properties are now live on the network in those areas. Pole applications are continuing to be processed by the roads department.

To date in Roscommon, we have

€76M Investment	19K Premises	8,438 Premises Passed	2,437 Connections
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Deployment Area	Premises*	Status	Anticipated Date for Connection
ATHLONE	892	Available to Order/Pre-Order	Available to Order/Pre-Order
BALLINASLOE	834	Available to Order/Pre-Order	Available to Order/Pre-Order
BANAGHER	92	Survey Complete	January 2025 - December 2026
CARRICK-ON-SHANN..	2,462	Available to Order/Pre-Order	Available to Order/Pre-Order
CASTLEREA	3,668	Network Build in Progress	September 2023 - October 2023
CLOONFAD	664	Survey Pending	January 2025 - December 2026
CURRAGHBOY	1,716	Survey Complete	January 2025 - December 2026
DOWRA	146	Survey Pending	January 2025 - December 2026
ELPHIN	2,367	Survey Complete	January 2025 - December 2026
GURTEEN	1,004	Survey Complete	January 2025 - December 2026
KESHCARRIGAN	171	Network Build in Progress	July 2024 - September 2024
KNOCK	438	Survey Complete	January 2025 - December 2026
LONGFORD	282	Available to Order/Pre-Order	Available to Order/Pre-Order
NEWBRIDGE	158	Survey Complete	January 2025 - December 2026
RIVERSTOWN	29	Survey Pending	January 2025 - December 2026
ROOSKEY	917	Survey Complete	January 2025 - December 2026
ROSCOMMON	3,556	Available to Order/Pre-Order	Available to Order/Pre-Order
(Additional Premises)	254	N/A	TBC

<p><b>WiFi4EU</b></p>	<p>WiFi4EU was a project that received EU funding to provide free Wi-Fi hotspots around the county. 52 access points are now live in towns and villages in Roscommon. This project is bringing free Wi-Fi hotspots to towns and villages all over the county and is being widely used in most locations.</p>  <p>A link to the above map showing all locations has been created on our GIS homepage.</p>
<p><b>Broadband Connection Points (BCPs)</b></p>	<p>The RCC broadband office continues to liaise with our BCP sites and source DRCD funding to develop their hub facilities on an ongoing basis.</p>  <p><b>Eircodes</b>  Tulsk DigiHub - F45KD79  Creeve Community Centre - F45HD89  Cam Community and Sports Centre - N37FH21  Saint Patrick's Hall, Drumboylan - N41FY01  Dangan Community Centre - N41T6K1  Marian Hall Community Centre, Gortaganny - V45V449  Tawnytaskin Community Centre - F52VW35  Kiltoom Parish Hall (Ballybay) - N37RC82</p>
<p><b>Siro</b></p>	<p>Siro commenced works in Roscommon Town earlier this year and have many properties connected to high speed fibre during the year.</p>

**Galway to Athlone Cycleway**

RPS Consulting Engineers were appointed to provide engineering, planning, environmental and other services on the above Cycleway, which forms part of the strategic Dublin Galway route in October 2019. Work has been ongoing since then and the Emerging Preferred Route was identified and published. Work has also been undertaken on various other elements of the project, which will culminate in the submission of a planning application to An Bord Pleanála.

However, due to the complexity and scale of the 200km Preferred Route together with upward market pressures in recent years, in September 2023 RPS Consulting Engineers have advised Westmeath County Council that the project is no longer financially viable for the company, having regard to the fixed price tender sum for the contract as signed in 2019 and have sought mutual termination under the contract. To minimise any delay on the project and in particular the completion of the design and environmental evaluation phase of the scheme, the parties have agreed to now enter into a process to

deal with the issues to hand. As a result of this development, Westmeath County Council as the lead authority, on behalf of the participating local authorities and TII, is exploring various approaches to identify the most appropriate and effective mechanism for progressing and delivering the scheme through the design and environmental evaluation processes.

Landowner liaison is continuing and will not be impacted by this process.

### **Road Opening Licences**

Excavations made in a public road or footpath require a Road Opening Licence. Applications for licences to open the public road are lodged through the central portal with the Road Management Office [www.rmo.ie](http://www.rmo.ie). The Roads Department processes the licences for County Roscommon from this portal and attaches conditions and fees to the licence. The number of new applications for Q3 2023 is 122

### **Abnormal Load Permits**

Roscommon County Council operate a permit system for abnormal loads on all or part of journeys where specific weight and height conditions apply. The Roads Department issued 48 Abnormal Load Permits to the end of Q3 2023.

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