

**TUARASCÁIL MHÍOSÚIL BAINISTÍOCHTA      MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT**  
**Bealtaine & Meitheamh / July & August**



**Civic Welcome for  
Chandler Artists  
and Mayor  
26 July 2024**

**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

*The judging for two entries of the **National Age Friendly Recognition and Achievement Awards** will be held in Offaly on **Thursday 19th September 2024.***

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**Birr Courthouse – Part 8**

*Closing date for submissions or observations  
**Thursday 19 September 2024***

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**Culture Night Friday 20 September 2024**

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**Built Heritage Investment Scheme 2025**- applicants to **BHIS@offalycoco.ie** by 4pm, **Friday 27th of September 2024.**

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**Parenting Support Programme – series of free talks and workshops beginning in September 2024**

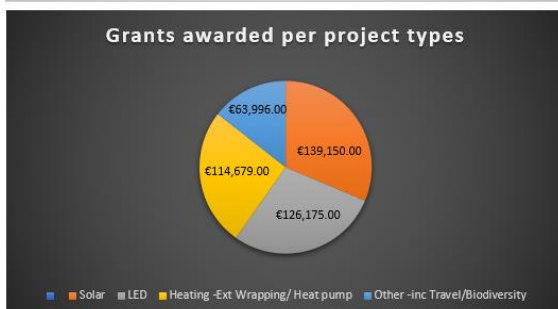
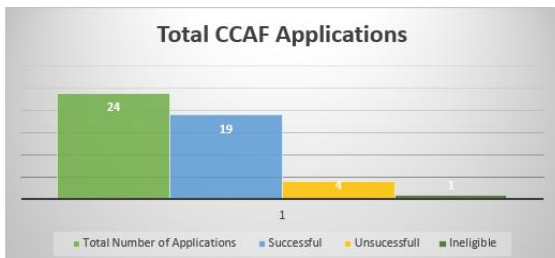
<https://simplebooklet.com/parentsupportprogramme>

# Climate Action Environment Water & Transportation

## ENVIRONMENT

### Climate Action Community Climate Action Fund

The Community Climate Action Fund of €444,000 launched by the Climate Action Team back in December 2023, received 24no. applications from local community groups. After initial local assessment, followed by DECC approval, the program has moved to the 'Grant Agreement' stage with all 19 successful applicants returning their signed grant agreements. This has resulted in 19 separate community groups receiving 100% funding towards local climate action projects under such themes as community & energy, travel, biodiversity, food & waste etc. which will help to raise awareness, build capacity and contribute towards national climate targets.



### Energy

Offaly County Council Climate/Energy Action Team hosted two visits from DECC officials and project partners of the National Geothermal Database project to

the GSI Tullamore Geothermal Investigation well site at Clonminch Avenue. The purpose of the project is to determine rock types present down to 1km, while measuring temperature profiles to this depth. This information will allow for accurate temperature calculations to be applied for deeper depths i.e. 2km which will reduce operational uncertainty in the future while assisting current geological modelling. Tullamore is the third drill site of the project, following similar projects completed in Grangegorman Campus (TU Dublin, 2021), Tallaght Campus (TU Dublin, 2023) and further proposed site in Cork later in 2024 or into 2025.

This project will act as an important 'piece of the jigsaw' in determining the economic benefits of implementing low carbon geothermal heating/cooling to future commercial, residential and public developments across Tullamore, Offaly and the wider Midlands.





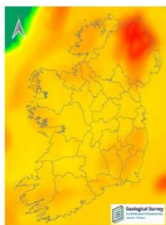
Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



Geological Survey  
Suirbhéireacht Gheolaíochta  
Ireland / Éireann

### Exploratory borehole for geothermal energy

At this site, we are drilling a 1 km deep borehole, as we believe this location holds potential for geothermal energy.



Geothermal energy is the heat beneath our feet. It can be used for heating (and cooling) buildings, and if we drill deep enough, for generating electricity.

- **2021** – Geological Survey Ireland drilled a borehole at TU Dublin’s (TUD) Grangegorman Campus to explore for potential geothermal energy below Dublin city centre. A temperature of 38 °C was recorded 1 km beneath the surface.
- **2023** – We drilled another borehole at TUD’s Tallaght Campus. At a depth of 1 km, 32 °C was recorded.
- **2024 and 2025** – Geological Survey of Ireland will aim to drill to 1 km in Tullamore, County Offaly in the summer of 2024, and then in County Cork in the winter of 2024/2025.

Scan me to find out more!



Geological Survey Ireland is a division of the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications

### Environment Section Report for August 2024 - Targeted Air Quality Project for Edenderry

The EPA air quality monitoring network has observed over the past number of years that the air pollution levels in Edenderry are a matter for concern, particularly in relation to sulphur and particulate matter. In response, Offaly County Council (OCC), in collaboration with the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) and the Health Service Executive (HSE) Public Health Unit, has proposed a comprehensive strategy to

be rolled out from Autumn 2024 to Spring 2025. The project involves

- Awareness & Education Campaign
- Air Quality Monitoring & Analysis Programme
- Communications programme with community

The Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications has agreed to offer 100% grant funding of €80,000 (Inc VAT) for the project.

### Offaly County Council - Local Authority Performance Framework Results 2023

The EPA has completed the assessment of Offaly County Council’s environmental enforcement performance in 2023 under the Local Authority Performance Framework. Offaly County Council submitted a detailed report on environmental progress for 2023 covering each of the following priorities as tabulated below –

Governance	Water Quality	Waste Management	Air and Noise
<b>Work completed to drive compliance through RMCEI Review and Compliance</b>	Pressures from agriculture (farmyards)	Tackling illegal waste activities	Solid fuel
<b>Management of Environmental Complaint Handling</b>	Pressures from Agriculture (Farmland)	Construction and Demolition waste activity	Air Quality monitoring activities
	Domestic Wastewater treatment systems	End of life vehicles and waste metal sector	Environmental Noise Directive
	Discharge Licences/Misconnections	Producer responsibility Initiatives	Air and Noise Control
	Local Priorities and water quality monitoring		Ongoing Air and Noise Enforcement Work

An Environmental Plan for 2024 was also submitted.

OCC reached a standard of excellent or strong in 60% of priority reports submitted. This was a significant improvement from 2022 Report and shows the commitment to continual improve to meet EPA's requirements.

### Environmental Management

In August, the Environment Section received **33** environmental complaints. All were investigated in a timely manner and resolved where possible.

Complaint Category	Number
Litter pollution (fly tipping/casual litter/litter on property)	10
Waste (dumping/burning/unauthorised sites)	4
Noise (community/commercial/industrial)	4
Control of Horses	2
Control of Dogs	5
Water Quality	1
Abandoned vehicles	6
Air	1

### RURAL WATER SERVICES - Capital



Applications for capital funding for from the Multi-Annual Rural Water Programme 2024 to 2026 were submitted to the Rural Water Unit,

Dept of Housing, in April, and all projects have been reviewed and passed stage 1 of the application process. Stage 2 of the application process involves consideration by the RWU's Expert Panel for consideration. A total of 37 projects were submitted, seeking funding to the value of €3,000,213. We are currently waiting for the announcement of funding from the Rural Water Unit.

### Subsidy

We are currently processing and paying out annual and advance subsidies to the Group Water Schemes. All subsidies will be paid by the end of September.

### Grants

Information and grant application forms for Well Grants, Domestic Lead Remediation Grants, and Domestic Waste Water Treatment are available on [www.offaly.ie](http://www.offaly.ie) or from the CAERW section by contacting 057 9357403.

### Burial Grounds

#### St. Mary's Cemetery, Edenderry

Works have been substantially completed on the extension, providing an extra 300 burial spaces in the cemetery. Finalisation and landscaping will take place over the coming months.



### Cemetery Committees

We currently work with 17 cemetery committees, and we look forward to working with two new committees that have been formed in 2024. There are grants and assistance available from the CA-ENV-RW section and we welcome engagement from groups that are currently maintaining their local cemetery or planning on forming a committee to do that.





## **Veterinary Services**

### **Control of Dogs**

So far this year we have cared for over 140 dogs in the dog shelter and on average 15% of the dogs are reclaimed by their owners, 15% are rehomed by the Care of Dogs Team and the other 70% are rehomed through animal rescue charities.

The Control of Dogs team has also dealt with 61 complaints so far this year and has assisted AGS on a number of raids and have carried out inspections of premises under DBE and Animal Health and Welfare legislation. The team has also had a successful prosecution for a breach of DBE regulations.

We are currently carrying out internal and external renovations to the Dog Shelter to

improve the living and working conditions in the shelter including improved site security, a new whelping section, a new isolation area and improvements in the heating system. This project is funded by grant aid from the Department of Community and Rural Development.

### **Control of Horses**

To date in 2024, we have dealt with 15 complaints, there have been no seizures to date.

### **Veterinary Inspections**

Offaly County Council continues to operate the Shared Service Agreement for Veterinary Services in the Westmeath County Council administrative area.

## TRANSPORTATION

### Grand Canal Greenway

Works are now complete on the mainline of the Grand Canal Greenway from Edenderry To Shannon Harbour with snagging and final accounts now being closed out. Construction of the Urban element of the Greenway in Tullamore is now underway. The Roads Department in collaboration with our Planning colleagues, TII and Waterways Ireland have now delivered approximately 72km of Greenway. Works are now ongoing on the Ballycommon Trailhead scheme which is intended to be an exemplar scheme with regards to the trailhead delivery program.

To complement the mainline works on the Grand Canal Greenway we have now also completed our first NTA funded pathfinder scheme designed to link our towns and villages to the Greenway via the delivery of the Edenderry Harbour to the Grand Canal Greenway link upgrade.

### Birr North Distributor Road

Tenders for the construction of the Birr North Distributor Road were received in late August 2024. The tenders are now going through the assessment process and once completed the Roads Department will issue a request to the Department of Transport to award the contract in early October.

### R400 Peat Roads Pilot Scheme

Following Department of Transport approval the Roads Department awarded the contract for the R400 Peat Roads Pilot scheme to Tower Plant and Civil Engineering. The works are focused on the reconstruction of a section of the R400 north of Derry iron Bridge for a distance of between 1.75 to 2km. The R400 will be closed for the duration of all the works. The scheme involves the excavation of the existing road to a depth of over 1m. The works are being funded 50% or €1,000,000 from the Department of Transport and €1,000,000 from planning development contributions for the R400 specifically. The final output of the scheme is intended to provide a longer-lasting road surface which is safer and more easily trafficked.

It is accepted that there will be significant inconvenience for local road users with diversions

in place. The diversion routes will be monitored regularly and maintained to a reasonable standard.

The Roads Department will have an Engineer onsite who will manage communication between residents and the contract works as they arise. All other communications will be issued as previously via our social media channels and local press when necessary.

### Public Lighting Maintenance Contract

The following is a breakdown of the Public Lighting failures across the County. There are currently 127 faults on the system. 31 of these faults require third party intervention and as such cannot be repaired by the maintenance contractor. These anomalies are being addressed by the yearly public lighting capital program.

Therefore, the current actionable faults amount to 96 faults or 1.03 % of the lighting stock. The breakdown of the 96 faults across each MD are as follows:

Municipal District	No Of Faults	Total No of Lights in the MD	% of MD Lights Only	% fault per MD of the Countywide Public Lighting Stock
Birr MD	27	2962	0.91	0.29
Tullamore MD	56	3933	1.42	0.60
Edenderry MD	13	2405	0.54	0.14

### Regional Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy

We now have appointed Systra as our Technical Consultants tasked with the delivery of our Regional Electric Vehicle. Infrastructure Strategy Offaly County Council as the lead Authority are managing the delivery of this strategy in collaboration with our colleagues in Roscommon, Laois, Westmeath and Longford Local Authorities. It is intended that we will have a draft strategy by early Q2 of 2025.

## Housing & Integration

To assist us in streamlining the delivery of Housing Services we encourage the use of the following email addresses:

Service	Email Address
HAP Enquiries	hap@offalycoco.ie
Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans	homeloans@offalycoco.ie
Housing Inspections – HAP, Leased, Private, etc.	standards@offalycoco.ie
General Enquiries, Maintenance Issues, etc.	housing@offalycoco.ie
RAS & Leasing Enquiries	RAS@offalycoco.ie
Housing Adaptation Grants for Older People and People with a Disability Scheme	HousingAidGrants@offalycoco.ie
Anti-Social Behaviour	ASB@offalycoco.ie

### Housing Update

- There are 596 on the Social Housing Support List at the end of August 2024.
- A further 529 active tenancies are currently being supported under the Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Scheme, 8 signed up for HAP and 10 exited from HAP in August.
- At the end of August, 34 single people and 15 couples and families were being supported in emergency accommodation.
- The 2024 Rent Review of Social Leasing Scheme Tenants (Rental Accommodation, Short Term Leasing, Repair & Lease and Mortgage to Rent) and HAP Tenants is complete. Approx 662 rent letters will issue to Social Leasing Scheme and HAP tenants on Friday 28th June 2024, these rents became effective from the 13th July 2024. Leasing tenant queries can be directed to RentReview@offalycoco.ie.

and HAP queries can be directed to hap@offalycoco.ie

- Social Housing Assessments (SSHA) 2024 has commenced. All relevant approved applicants on Offaly County Council's Social Housing Support List, using the current address provided by the applicant, have been written to and completed forms must be returned by Friday, 30th August 2024. If any applicant has changed accommodation or contact information since the last SSHA they must request an SSHA Update Form – forms are available on <http://www.offaly.ie/eng/Services/Housing> or from the Birr, Edenderry or Tullamore Municipal District Offices.

### Housing Capital Programme Update

- Sr. Senan, Edenderry (4 no. Older Person's dwellings) – Due for completion in Q3 2024.
- Circular Road, Daingean (9 units) – Construction commenced. Completion Q3 2024.
- Raheen, Clara development (38 units) – Project started on site in March 2023. Due for completion in Q4 2024.
- Dargan Drive, Chancery Lane (20 Units) – Part 8 approved in May 2022. Stage 3 to be submitted to the Department once ESB lines on the site are undergrounded.
- Circular Road, Daingean, Site 2 (10 Units) – Stage 3 approval was granted on 31st July 2024. Tender will be issued in Q3 2024.
- Group Housing, Croghan Road, Birr (4 Units): Stage 4 approval was granted on 21st November 2023. Contractor Appointed & construction has commenced.
- Sycamore Drive, Ballycumber (10 Units) – Stage 2 approval received 30th Nov 2022. Stage 3 approval application to be lodged with DHLGH in Q3 2024.

### Approved Housing Bodies Schemes

- Respond Housing: 77 Units under construction @ Kingswood, Ardan Lane with completion in Q2 2025
- Sofia Housing: 37 Units with Stage 2 approval @ Presentation Lands, Portarlinton. Planning Granted in November 2023. AHB is preparing tender documents (Stage 3/September 2024)
- Sofia Housing, 17 Units @ Clonamore, Tullamore – Midlands Region Statutory Management Group continue to work with Sophia Housing, the Dept and HSE, to ensure adequate staff and resources to open Clonamore safely and fully supported in 2024.

### Turnkey Developments/Part V

- Turnkey & Part V: Bog Road, Portarlinton, 33 units – Complete
- Part V: Silverbrook, Tullamore, 15 Complete, 5 remaining
- Part V: Redwood, Tullamore, All 11 Units complete
- MacGregol, Birr, 6 Units – 2 Part V units Complete & 4 Turnkey Units Complete

### Retrofit Programme

In deciding on a works programme, local authorities are urged to choose a mix of properties across a range of BERs to allow for homes which need significant expenditure to be balanced out by those needing lesser spend so as to achieve the overall average cost of €34,000 per property. A BER rating of B2 must be achieved.

- 120 Units complete to date
- DHLGH have advised target for 2024 of 28 Energy Efficiency Retrofit Program Units
- 28 Units complete in 2024

### Community Development Programme

Estate Management Funding for Birr, Edenderry and Tullamore Municipal Districts have been agreed at Municipal District meetings. Works will be scheduled to commence for all approved works.

Housing Liaison Officers are continuing to support established resident committees and engaging with new groups and communities in an effort to support them to establish committees and thereby support the development of their community.

Housing Staff delivered a total of 10 sessions of games on the green in 7 LA estates during the month of July to encourage children to participate in their local communities. This initiative has been delivered in partnership with Offaly Sports Partnership and the housing section for a 4th year for children between the ages of 6 and 12. Over the 10 sessions a total of 80 children attended the games and there was a great mix of age ranges from 6 to 12 and a good balance of boys and girls attending the sessions.

### Integration Update

#### Local Authority Integration Team

The Local Authority Integration Team (LAIT) is now fully established with 4 staff which consists of an Integration Support Coordinator, 2 x Integration Support Workers and Administration support. The role of the Team is to engage with refugees fleeing the war in Ukraine, International Protection Applicants and those who have been granted their status and assist with their Integration into local communities.

LAIT members have started to hold clinics in the various accommodation centres in Co. Offaly on a regular basis, meeting with the residents and identifying their needs. Assistance and information is provided in relation to accessing local services and agencies that provide integration supports. Common queries include gaining access to English classes and employment supports as well as expressing interest in volunteering in the local community. For enquiries, please contact [integration@offalycoco.ie](mailto:integration@offalycoco.ie).



## Ukrainian Response

Offaly County Council is continuing to appeal to those who have unoccupied properties to offer them as temporary homes for those fleeing war in Ukraine. The call is part of a government initiative launched in November 2022 called Offer a Home and is led by local authorities to make use of unoccupied houses, apartments or holiday homes to house Ukrainian people and families.

A tax-free recognition payment of €800 per month is available for properties used to house those arriving from Ukraine.

More than 100,000 people have arrived to Ireland from Ukraine seeking safety and the vast majority need accommodation.

Under the Offer a Home programme, Offaly County Council will take offers of houses, apartments or holiday homes for temporary accommodation, liaise with owners to assess suitability, and arrange for their use by Ukrainian people and families.

Property owners can offer homes at [offerahome.ie](http://offerahome.ie) or by contacting Offaly County Council via [offerahome@offalycoco.ie](mailto:offerahome@offalycoco.ie)

## LAND USE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

### Development Management

	To end Aug 2024	To end Aug 2023	Total 2023
Planning Applications	458	461	695
Extensions of Duration Applications	6	14	20
Warning Letters and (Enforcement Notices) issued	62 (35)	161 (69)	181 (73)

During the month of July/August 2024, the following large planning applications were received:

24/60243 Deirdre Mulvin and Anne Marie Kelleher,	The provision of 20 no. dwellings, Rhode Co. Offaly
24/60325 Lea Mor Renewable Energy Community (REC) Ltd	Lea Mór Renewable Energy Community (REC) Limited, intend to apply for permission for development at this site at Rin, Co. Offaly.

### Forward Planning

#### Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT)

Following consideration of a Chief Executives Report at the July Council Meeting, the Council notified one landowner of their decision not to recommend varying the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027 on foot of a request for a change of rezoning in respect of the Residential Zoned Land Tax.

### Just Transition

#### Local and Regional Economic Support Strategies Support Scheme

Offaly County Council submitted appeals by the closing date of 23 May 2024 in relation to three unsuccessful applications under this scheme.

- Tullamore Enterprise Hub – total application costs €1m.
- Dalton Centre Re-purposing, Shannonbridge to create an employment / enterprise space – total application costs €1m.
- Technical Consultancy Services to identify a services corridor to the Rhode Green Energy Park – total application costs €537,634.

On 2 August 2024, Offaly County Council received notification that all appeals had been denied.

On 19 August 2024, a new call was announced under this scheme with €3.7m available for projects from €200,000 - €1m, with a closing date of 30 September 2024. All information in relation to this scheme can be found as follows:

[Local Economic and Community Plan Projects - Pobal](#)

### Heritage Team – June to August 2024

Heritage Week – 17 to 25 August. This 9-day celebration of heritage saw events held across the county exploring a wide range of natural, built and cultural heritage. 73 events were held in Offaly hosted by a wide range of partners including many community groups, private owners and Offaly Library Service.



As part of Heritage Week, we collaborated with the National Museum of Ireland and Padraig Larkin of Cloghan for an evening in Esker Arts discussing Traditional Crafts in Offaly.

### Community Monuments Fund

The introduction of this fund has had considerable impact providing 100% support for owners of monuments. Conservation works are underway at 5 sites in Offaly in 2024.

*Monasteroris medieval church, Edenderry* €120,000 - The vast majority of the work is completed on site and the final element of the conservation of the railings is in hand.

*Killeigh Chapter House – phase 2 - €90,393 –* The conservation team are on site and phase two of works in 2024 is well underway.

*Ballintemple Church medieval church near Walsh Island - €100,000 -* This is phase 1 of works at this medieval church however already the key works to the east gable end are in hand.



*Lemanaghan Castle, consolidating the ruins - Seir Kieran graveyard wall Clareen –* both these projects were awarded €30,000 and works are tendered and on track to commence shortly.



### Historic Towns Initiative funding of €80,000 - Heritage Council - Birr Courthouse

The Part 8 planning process with consultants Howley Hayes Cooney is progressing with the plans currently on public display since 8 August with a deadline for submissions 19 September. We are liaising with Birr 2020 Vision working group that proposed the Creative Court concept as they explore future use options.

### Built Heritage Investment Scheme

Site visits are continuing to support owners to complete works and drawdown the grants offered in 2024. The 2025 Built Heritage Investment Scheme has been advertised with the much earlier deadline of Friday 27 September. Details of the 2025 scheme can be found here - <https://www.offaly.ie/built-heritage-investment-scheme-2025/>

### Heritage Council Community Grants

The funding level for this grant scheme run directly by the Heritage Council has increased to 100%.

- *Lis Church* - conservation of the entrance railings. Work on the conservation of the railings has commenced.
- *Birr 2020 Vision* – conservation of the transept mausoleum at the medieval church of St Brendan's Church, Birr

Works are scheduled to commence in September.

- *Birr Scientific and Heritage Foundation* – conservation of archive material for the Van Gogh exhibition. Completed and the works are currently on exhibition in Arles, France.
- *Shinrone Church of Ireland* burial ground survey with Shinrone Heritage and researcher Stephen Callaghan. The survey is mid-way through with an update provided during Heritage Week.

### Heritage Council Funding

A film documenting the unique story of God in the Bottle and Offaly's two county makers by Mixed Bag Media is completed and was shown for the first time in Esker Arts Centre during Heritage Week. It can be viewed on the Offaly Heritage YouTube channel or through this link - <https://youtu.be/ifaPelWfPTvw> In the first week it has had 1270 views.



### Creative Ireland

A wide range of projects are supported from library programming to community engagement. A key project in 2024 is the repair and maintenance of the sculptures at Lough Boora Discovery Park which is currently underway.

Sample projects include -

The Shinrone Heritage Group received funding to recreate the medieval Shinrone Gown found in Cancort Bog in the 1800s - involving a range of community workshops the dress was made by Rosalind Fanning and Bernie Stapleton and featured during Heritage Week.

*Artist Eoin Coveney has been working with Geashill Tidy Towns to develop a series of images to show the key points in Matthew Guinan's life as he left Geashill and became a key figure in the Trade Union movement in America.*



### Offaly Biodiversity Action Plan 2025 - 2030

The Biodiversity Action Plan is being prepared. The draft is gone for SEA/AA Screening, and is also with the designers, following translation the draft will go back out to public consultation for a month. It is scheduled to be presented at Management Team meeting in the second half of October and to go in front of the December council meeting for adoption.

### In Your Nature Podcast

Six new episodes were published in July. This partnership podcast between Ricky Whelan and Niall Hatch of BirdWatch Ireland remains one of the top nature podcasts in Ireland.

### Offaly Naturalists Field Club

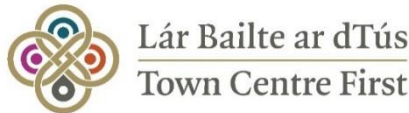
Four events were hosted over the period. The annual 5-day Offaly Summer School was held in Birr with the focus of Bogs Past, Present and Future led by John Feehan. We hosted an Aquatic Plant Walk at Gallen, Ferbane, Grasses for Beginners Course at Birr Castle Demesne and a Swallow Ringing Demonstration during Heritage Week at Pallas Lake. Support was provided for the Bog Trotters Festival in Clara with moth trapping at Tony's Hill.





## REGENERATION

### Town & Village Renewal Scheme Town Centre Suite of Supports



The Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD announced on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> August the final phase of the 2024 Town Centre First Suite of Supports awarding Clara Town Team in partnership with Offaly County Council a fund of €50,000 under the Project Development Measure for the vacant Co-Op building in Clara.

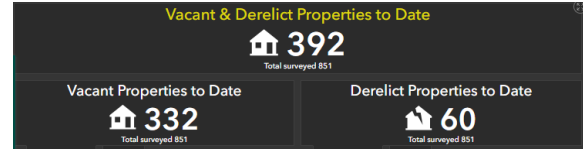


This funding will be used to engage the services of an architect led design team that will deliver a detailed proposal and planning permission for the refurbishment and conversion of a strategically located but now derelict, former co-operative building located at River St., Clara into a multi-purpose community space.

### Vacancy & Dereliction Vacant Homes Survey App

A total of 851 properties have been surveyed to date in the county with 392 confirmed vacant. Letters are continuing to issue to the owners of vacant/derelict

properties on a town by town approach with the aim of encouraging owners to bring their property back into use.

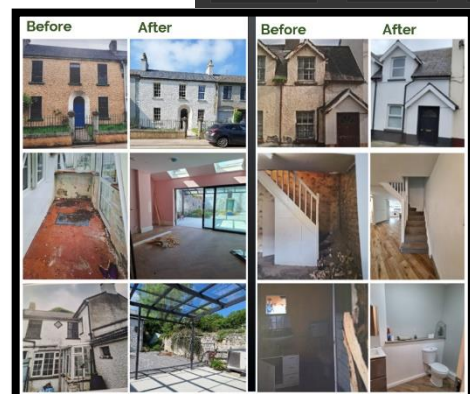
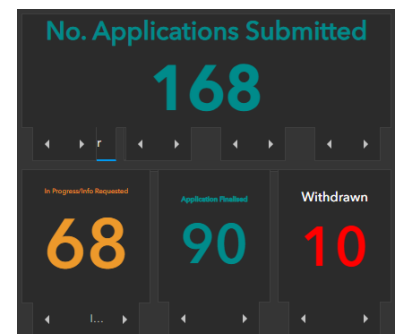


### Croi Cónaithe – Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant

The Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant is progressing as supports continue to be available to turn vacant residential and commercial properties into private residences/rental properties. Breakdown of applications received to date:

- 12 No. grants have been paid out totalling €638,631.17.
- 2 No. paid out include the derelict top up of an additional €20,000.
- There are 18 No. applications in the Charge Document stage which total an additional €980,000 in payments due to be made in the coming weeks.

For information and application





forms please see

<https://www.offaly.ie/vacant-homes/>

### **Derelict Sites**

The Derelict Sites team continue to implement the Derelict Site Policy and Procedure to target derelict properties and sites through the Derelict Sites Act 1990. Extensive efforts have been undertaken throughout 2024 to build on the foundations laid in 2023. The derelict sites team continue to oversee a structured and sustained approach to addressing vacancy and dereliction that exists in Offaly's towns and villages.

As of August 2024, there are 23 sites that make up the derelict sites register of Offaly County Council. With the continuous review and roll out of its derelict sites policy the derelict sites team envisage this number will grow into late 2024 and beyond. The team continuing to take a town-by-town approach to dealing with derelict sites throughout the county. In recent months, three properties listed on the register have been sold by owners on the private market. In addition, Offaly County Council have begun the CPO process on three other properties listed on the register outside of Tullamore Town.

Derelict site levies for 2024 have been issued on each of these sites and served to the identified owners of each property. All queries in relation to derelict sites in co Offaly should be directed to [derelictsites@offalycoco.ie](mailto:derelictsites@offalycoco.ie)

### **URDF Call 3**

Under Call 3 of URDF, Offaly County Council is now positioned to address dereliction and vacancy within the urban district of Tullamore Town. In 2023, the Department of Housing approved a list of 25 properties and allocated funding to activate these properties located in and near the town centre.

This approved list and allocated funding gives Offaly County Council a platform to activate properties that have, for one reason or another over time, become vacant and derelict. A dedicated team has been put in place to oversee this, the approved list is live and will constantly change as properties are added and removed. To date, a number of properties have been put on the open market, others have been activated by owner as a result Offaly County Council's engagement.

Of the 25 properties on the approved list, OCC have identified owners and opened engagement with 23. To date, this engagement has yielded the following,

- 2 properties on the list are not vacant.
- 6 properties have been placed on the private property market by private owners.
- 5 Properties are presently on the derelict sites register
- 2 properties are being placed on the derelict sites register of Offaly County Council.
- 3 properties are being activated by owners, a process that is ongoing.
- 5 properties explored for acquisition by Offaly County Council.
- 2 properties explored for acquisition under the housing act
- 5 properties have ongoing engagement with owners and will continue.

During engagement owners are made aware of available grants to support property activation, grants such as Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant and Housing grants. Offaly County Council will continue to identify and work with owners to activate properties within Tullamore.

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## TOURISM

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### Tullamore Show

This August saw a record number of visitors to the 2024 Tullamore Show, Ireland's Premier Show & Country Lifestyle Event, making it the most exciting Show so far!



The Experience Offaly Pavilion provided great interest for visitors. As it hosted 30 exhibitors from a variety of craft, artisan food and tourism providers in the county. The atmosphere on the day was electric as visitors enjoyed experiencing all the best that Offaly has to offer.

### TV Exposure

The tourism team have been organising yet another Tracks and Trails show. Two trails in the Slieve Blooms will feature in a new episode to be broadcast on season 12 of the popular show in 2025.

Filming will take place in Mid-September 2024.

### Marketing Activities

On-going marketing activities continue as the Tourism Team develop monthly Blogs, Press Releases, Events Guides and Newsletters and the latest development - Visit Offaly is now on TikTok!

## LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE



Thank you to all the businesses that joined us in the Offaly Pavilion at the Tullamore Show. Their participation helped make the event a great success, showcasing the incredible talent, innovation, and entrepreneurial spirit that Offaly has to offer.

The feedback received was that all had a productive and successful experience at the show, connecting with new customers, gaining valuable exposure, and they enjoyed the experience of sharing their fantastic products and services with a wider audience.

### Spotlight on “Green for Business” and the “Energy Efficiency Grant”

The “Going Green, It’s All In A Day’s Work” campaign shows how easy it is for a business to make small changes that can make a significant impact. There are two specific supports available to all small businesses (up to 50 employees) in any sector that can set them on their green journey, the FREE Green for Business audit and the Energy Efficiency Grant which allows eligible businesses apply for support of 75% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of €10,000.

Businesses are encouraged to apply on [localenterprise.ie/Offaly/Green](http://localenterprise.ie/Offaly/Green) and our team in the Local Enterprise Office Offaly will take it from there.

For small businesses in any sector it has never been easier to begin that green journey. We will work with them to find the best times to carry out

the free Green for Business audit to take up as little time of theirs as possible and we work through the results with them.

Then they will likely be in a position to apply for the Energy Efficiency Grant and we bring them through the whole process. We have the expertise, the time and the supports to help them go green and become more sustainable, they just have to register and we’ll take it from there. And the best thing about implementing these changes is that they will improve the business and help in saving time, money and energy, which is crucial for businesses at the moment.



LEO Offaly Business Advisors ran a clinic on 5th September to give advice on a one-to-one basis about grant eligibility, how to apply and the draw down process for this Grant. It also covered the Green For Business scheme which must be completed prior to a Grant application.

### New Office Space in The Junction

Offaly Innovation and Design Centre CLG (The Junction, Axis Business Park, Tullamore) has recently completed a significant renovation at 25J Axis Business Park, thanks to the generous grant funding from the Just Transition Fund and support funding from Offaly County Council.



This newly revamped space now boasts nine new offices and a warehouse available for rental. The response to the Expression of Interest forms was

overwhelming, with eight of the nine offices and the warehouse already rented out.

This project is a tremendous boost to the economic success of Tullamore and County Offaly. By providing essential landing and industrial space, we are meeting the growing demand, facilitating job creation, and fostering a vibrant business economy. Our focus on developing low-carbon, digital economy enterprises is a priority, contributing to regional development and reducing commuting times for employees.

Offaly Innovation and Design Centre CLG has consistently expanded to meet increasing demand, offering hot desks, office space, training facilities, and meeting rooms. The close connection to LEO Offaly attracts a diverse range of start-ups and remote workers. By developing this space, we are supporting jobs and communities throughout the county. Networking opportunities through co-working hubs are invaluable for our tenants.

In the post-COVID era and with climate change considerations, the demand for co-working hubs with private office spaces is expected to rise. This new space significantly contributes to the delivery of the Economic Element of the Local Economic & Community Plan 2023-2028.

### Upcoming Events

#### Local Enterprise Village at the Ploughing Championships, Ratheniska, County Laois

NIS Ltd, one of Offaly's best small businesses, will get a chance to exhibit their business to almost 300,000 people at the National Ploughing Championships in Ratheniska, County Laois next month as part of the Local Enterprise Village.



Network & Infrastructure Support (NIS) Ltd. who are supported by Local Enterprise Office Offaly and are winners of the 2024 Offaly Enterprise

Awards, specialise in a comprehensive range of IT services for businesses, organisations, schools, and homes throughout Ireland.

The Local Enterprise Village, an initiative of the Local Enterprise Offices, will house over 30 small businesses and will be located at the heart of this year's National Ploughing Championships from the 17th to 19th September.



#### Business Breakfast "Ready to Export (MORE!)"

Join us on September 25th for an essential business breakfast event for anyone new to exporting or eager to explore new markets. This is your opportunity to transform your export strategies and boost your business! Whether you're an experienced exporter or just starting your journey into international markets, this event is tailored for you. Gain invaluable insights from Susan Hayes Culleton, also known as "The Positive Economist." As a seasoned business owner and Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) advocate, Susan will share her expertise on leveraging the EEN to expand your business across Europe and beyond. Find out more and book your place at: [LocalEnterprise.ie/Offaly/ReadyToExport](https://LocalEnterprise.ie/Offaly/ReadyToExport)

#### Lunchtime Networking Event for businesspeople in Offaly!

LEO Offaly is hosting a networking lunchtime event in the County Arms Hotel, Birr on 3rd October. This is another opportunity for business owners to learn more and to foster connections in their business community.

The Mastering Your Brand Story: Ignite your business' growth networking

lunchtime event will assist participants to perfect their brand story and provide an opportunity to connect with fellow professionals,





Una Ryan, from The Marketing Eye, is a dynamic speaker who will share her expertise, cutting-edge trends, and innovative strategies to help businesses stay ahead of the game. Link to Book is here: [localenterprise.ie/Offaly/Mastering-Your-Brand-Story](https://www.localenterprise.ie/Offaly/Mastering-Your-Brand-Story)

### National Women's Enterprise Day 2024!



It's happening this October 17th at The Crypt beneath St. Mel's Cathedral in Longford. This is the first time that this national landmark will be used for a business networking event. This annual business networking gathering is dedicated to businesswomen from our Midlands Region, including Laois, Longford, Offaly, and Westmeath. Key note speaker will be Anne Heraty, founder and former Chief Executive of CPL Resources plc. Anne was also honoured with the IMAGE PwC Businesswoman of the Year Lifetime Achievement Award in 2024.

This year the local ambassador is Louise Brennan, the driving force behind the hugely successful Fabiani and Mudshot in Longford. MC on the day is Sinéad Hussey, Midlands Correspondence for RTÉ news, who will also facilitate a Q&A session. Internationally recognised soprano, Emer Barry will share her music industry experiences, highlighting a new business sector for our NWED event. Director of Services for Longford County Council, Barbara Heslin will open the event as well as participating in the Q&A session.

This event is a collaboration brought to you by our dedicated teams in Local Enterprise Offices Laois, Longford, Offaly, and Westmeath. Further details and to book a place click on the following link: [Localenterprise.ie/Offaly/National-Women-s-Enterprise-Day](https://www.localenterprise.ie/Offaly/National-Women-s-Enterprise-Day)

Most of our courses are FREE OF CHARGE! Whether it is starting a business or growing a business there is something suitable for everyone.

Full details and link to book is here: <https://www.localenterprise.ie/Offaly/Training-Events/Online-Bookings/>

Course Title	Dates
Start Your Own Business Day Course (Online)	16th Sept - 30th Sept
Digital Marketing Programme (6 sessions)	17th Sept - 22nd Oct
Monitor, Manage and Optimise your Business Finances	19th Sept
One to One FREE Marketing Mentoring session	24th Sept
Offaly Business Breakfast: Ready to Export (MORE!)	25th Sept
Practical Guide to Income Tax	2nd Oct
Mastering Your Brand Story – Join Our Networking Lunchtime Event!	3rd Oct
Digital Marketing for the Christmas Market	9th Oct
Grow Your Business Programme	10th Oct
Small Business Accounts	10th Oct
How to submit Income Tax Returns on ROS	15th Oct
Start Your Own Business Day Course (In Person)	23rd Oct - 6th Nov
Start Your Own Business Evening Course	4th Nov - 9th Dec
How to use TikTok for marketing (Beginners)	6th Nov
How to use Chat GPT to improve your digital marketing	12th Nov
How to use the latest AI tools for video, voice and image creation in your marketing	19th Nov
Start Your Own Business Day Course (Online)	25th Nov - 9th Dec
How to create & use reels for marketing on Instagram	4th Dec



# Community Culture and Emergency Services

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## Local Community Development Committee

Offaly LCDC held its monthly meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2024. Congratulations were extended to nominated LCDC members Cllr. J. Leahy, Cllr. N. Cribbin and Cllr. D. Harvey on their recent Local Election successes. New members were welcomed with sincere thanks extended to retiring long serving members.



Agenda items included the Rural Development LEADER Programme 2014–2022; Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2024-2028; Local Enhancement Programme 2024 update and the Community Recognition Fund 2024 update. Healthy Offaly Budget amendments were approved.

### SICAP

A comprehensive overview of SICAP delivered in Jan-May 2024 was provided and the SICAP Mid-Year Performance Review 2024 was presented and approved by the members. Proposals for SICAP Case Study 2024 were approved.

### Local Enhancement Programme 2024

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 the 113 successful Local Enhancement Programme (LEP) 2024 projects in Offaly were announced. An additional announcement was made on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2024 in respect of the 14 successful Women's Groups in Offaly who were awarded €27,099.89 under the same Programme. The successful projects can be viewed on the [www.offaly.ie](http://www.offaly.ie) website.

The Local Enhancement Programme 2024 provides vital support to community groups to help them improve their facilities. It supports small-scale funding

for projects which range from purchasing equipment to minor renovations to buildings. These investments allow community groups to carry out the invaluable work they do on behalf of others in local areas throughout the country. Projects are currently being completed with documentation to be submitted to the Council before the deadline of 20<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

### Community Recognition Fund (CRF) 2024

Offaly was allocated €1,002,543 under the CRF 2024 scheme specifically targeted at capital projects located in communities, towns and villages that are hosting new arrivals. The scheme aims to promote the development of facilities that will be used by all members of the community.

A total of 31 submissions were received during the first window in May 2024, and 11 of these projects were approved for funding by the Department on 2 August 2024. The total value of the successful projects is €702,000 which leaves €300,000 to be allocated after submissions are received in the final window in January 2025. Works under these projects are to be completed in 2025 and 2026. All projects are due to be completed by November 2026.

### Pride of Place

IPB Pride of Place is an annual competition organised by Co-operation Ireland and sponsored by IPB Insurance. It promotes and celebrates the best in community development and recognises the enormous efforts of volunteers in making their local neighbourhoods better places to live, work and socialise.

This year Offaly County Council nominated the three groups below in the respective categories.

MD	Community Group	Category
Tullamore	Tullamore International Welcome Centre	Inclusive Communities
Birr	Banagher Development Group	Population - 1000-2000
Edenderry	Acorn	Community Youth Initiative

Judging for the Offaly entries took place on 24th and 25th July 2024. The judges for the two days were Mr. Eddie Sheehy, former Chief Executive of Roscommon and Wicklow County Councils, and Ms. Katrina Murphy, former Director of Finance, Leitrim County Council. The awards ceremony will be held on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2024 in Monaghan.



*Pride of Place judges with Banagher Development Group members and Council staff at the Pride of Place judging event on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2024.*



*The Pride of Place judges meet members of Banagher Search and Recovery Team as part of the judging for Banagher Development Group on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2024.*



*Pride of Place judges and Tullamore International Welcome Centre members at the Pride of Place judging event on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2024.*



*Pride of Place judges with Councillors Cribbin and McDonnell, Acorn Project team and Council staff at the Pride of Place judging event on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024*



*The Pride of Place judges meet families displaying activities they use in the Tullamore International Welcome Centre.*



*The Pride of Place judges meet members of the Acorn Project team who outline the range of activities undertaken at the centre*





## Public Participation Network

Offaly PPN were busy during the months of July and August promoting the PPN and supporting our colleagues in different services and supports across the county while also preparing for and supporting groups. Offaly PPN assisted the nominees with the Pride of Place competition this year. All three groups made excellent presentations which impressed the judges. Fingers crossed for November awards!

Preparations for this year Socia Inclusion Awareness Week were also made in July and August. It runs from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> September 2024 with a range of events being held throughout the county. Social Inclusion Week is a wonderful opportunity to showcase the diversity, strength, and unity within our communities. It aims to promote inclusivity, celebrate cultural diversity, and highlight the positive impact of community engagement.

Community groups play a key role when it comes to inclusion. Social Inclusion Week offers an opportunity for social inclusion and community groups to highlight and welcome new members and spread the word to the greater community.

Details of the wide range of 2024 events are listed below:

MON 9TH	Social Walk at The Cabin, Edenderry R45HY18 10:00am
MON 9TH	Drop in Café - at The Cabin Edenderry R45HY18 11:00am - 12:30pm
MON 9TH	Lunch Club at Barna Parish Hall ,Dunkerrin 12:30pm - 3:30pm
MON 9TH	Sing - a - long for all - at The Parish Centre, Edenderry R45 E840 02:00pm - 03:30pm
TUES 10TH	Activi-TEA - at The Cabin, Edenderry R45HY18 11:00am - 1:00pm
TUES 10TH	Open House - at Darmagh Centre, Tihilly, Clontarf Rd, Tullamore R35 HC04 11:00am -12:30pm
TUES 10TH	Visual Arts Project - at The Parish Centre, Edenderry R45 E840 11:00am - 12:30pm

TUES 10TH	Health and Wellbeing Dance Workshop, Retox Dance Studio, Edenderry 11:30am - 12:30pm
TUES 10TH	Lunch Club - at Cloghan Parish Hall R42 AK24 12:30pm - 3:30pm
TUES 10TH	Arts & Craft Masterclass at St. Brendan's Hall, Birr 5:00pm -7:30pm
WED 11TH	Creative Movement - at The Parish Centre Edenderry R45 E840 10:00am -11:30am
WED 11TH	A walk in the park followed by cup tea/coffee - Town Park, Tullamore 11:00am
WED 11TH	Showcase - Tullamore Library R35 X226 12:00pm - 3:30pm
WED 11TH	Lunch Club - at Coolderry Parish Hall R42 DH05 12:30pm - 3:30pm

THURS 12TH	Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Awareness Event - Darmagh Centre Tihilly, Clontarf Rd, Tullamore R35 HC04 05:30pm - 07:00pm
THURS 12TH	Workability <b>Employers information morning</b> - Grand Canal Room, Millennium House, Main Street, Tullamore R35 Y7P2 08:15am - 09:00am
THURS 12TH	Social Walk - Birr Castle Demesne,R42 V027 11:00am
THURS 12TH	Drop in Café - at Darmagh Centre, Tihilly, Clontarf Rd, Tullamore R35 HC04 11:30am -1:00pm
FRI 13TH	Drop in Café - LOETB Further Education & Training Centre, Birr R42 W902 11:00am - 12:30pm

## Comhairle Na nÓg

In July, three Members of Offaly CNN attended the Regional Networking



Event at DCEDIY in Dublin They discussed their current work as a group and what they hoped for the future of Comhairle. Meetings were held in July and August the main focus was planning for the upcoming Youth Conference which will be held in October.

In August meeting took place staff from Offaly Libraries on how to best setup book/media clubs in libraries. Offaly CNN have previously collaborated with Offaly Library Services in relation to promoting awareness on Disabilities in Young People. This year they are hoping to get book and media clubs up and running across the County for Young People. Offaly Comhairle na nÓg Members believe that having regular book clubs specifically for

teenagers can support positive mental health. Additionally, book clubs can support young people to boost their confidence, improve their reading and social skills, form strong social connections within their communities and enjoy reading more.

### **National Age Friendly**

The judging for two entries of the National Age Friendly Recognition and Achievement Awards will be held in Offaly on **Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2024**.

### **Offaly Older Person's Network Community Felting Project**

Using craft to connect past and present! Esker Arts Centre, from 12.00 pm until 1.30pm, competing in the Community Innovation category. Applicants are Frances Kawala and Molly Buckley of Offaly Older Person's Council

**The Felting Project** resulted from a collaboration between Offaly Age Friendly Older Persons Council (OPC) and the LOETB as part of the Bealtaine programme in May 2024, with assistance from Declan Costello in OLDC. The Felting project was one of the highlights of the Bealtaine programme and the OPC decided to put it forward for the National Age Friendly Recognition Awards. Ann Dillon, DOS; Lourda Giles, SEO Community; Brian Pey, AO Community and Bridie Costello Hynes, Offaly PPN will attend from OCC.

### **Clonminch - 19 1 and 2-bedroom A rated homes Re-imagining the Traditional Concept of Elderly Living**

In the Age Friendly Housing category is Ashfield, Clonminch, Tullamore, R35 K6V6, from 2.30 pm until 4.00pm. Applicants are Oaklee, Pat Loftus Construction Group, Brian Dunlop Architects, Nolan Construction Consultants, MPA Consulting

Engineers, Delap & Waller, Doyle + O'Troithigh Landscape Architecture.

Ashfield in Clonminch is a purpose built, well proportioned, modern development of 19 single storey homes which seeks to re-imagine the traditional concept of age friendly (over 55) living.

- 19 single storey purpose built houses for the elderly
- Oaklee led design and build delivery, under a Capital Works contract
- CAS funded

A combination of modern architecture and generous outdoor communal space - which seeks to stimulate resident interaction, while the use of high quality, sustainable building materials make this a low maintenance, aspirational location for mature residents who wish to maintain a sense of independence and dignity in a community setting.

The mixture and variation of house types - 10 x 2 bed single storey homes, 4 x 2 bed fully accessible single storey homes, and 5 x 1-bedroom single storey homes, ensures equity of representation, and that each home remains flexible enough to respond to the changing needs of respective residents, making them truly a home for life.

Jean Ryan, DOS; Lourda Giles, SEO Community; Brian Pey, AO Community and Bridie Costello Hynes, Offaly PPN will attend from OCC.



The judges are Madeleine Quirke, former CEO of Wexford Chambers and Jackie Maguire, former CE in Meath County

Council. The Age Friendly Ireland programme Staff on the day will be Bruce McDevitt, AFI Regional Programme Manager Dublin.

The awards are being hosted by Fingal County Council this year and the ceremony will be held on **Thursday the 7<sup>th</sup> of November** in the **Crown Plaza Hotel, Santry, Dublin.**

### HEALTHY OFFALY



On what is sometimes a less busy period of the year, Healthy Offaly has been very active for the months July and August.

On 10<sup>th</sup> July Healthy Ireland Fund Coordinator attended a regional meeting of Kildare, Offaly and Westmeath Creative Ireland, Age Friendly and Healthy Ireland Coordinators to discuss a Creative Ireland funded 'memory book' project titled '*Did I ever tell you...*' The total grant allocation of €140,000 for the three counties. The funding will provide a storytelling project, focused on collecting the thoughts and memories from older people in HSE healthcare settings across Kildare, Offaly, and Westmeath. Creative practitioners will collaborate with older people in each care setting through a variety of creative artforms to facilitate a bespoke programme of sustained engagement over the period Sept 2024-Dec 2025. "**Did I Ever Tell You...**" will capture the stories of each county, unique to each county. Selected stories will be published as a collective booklet, which will be shared widely across our Age Friendly, Healthy Ireland, and Creative Ireland networks.



Healthy Offaly are currently leading out the delivery of the Offaly project with the Artists' group Anam Beo commissioned as creative practitioners to deliver the project in the County. A fund of €33,367 has been provided to Anam Beo for 2024 and 2025 and this week a funding agreement has been signed by the group. The Anam Beo creative practitioners will go into Offalia House Edenderry, Riada House Tullamore, Birr Community Nursing Unit, and Clara Day Care to engage with residents and gather stories for publishing in an Offaly book before the information is passed on to the regional network led by Kildare County Council to put into a book that covers the three counties involved.

In August Healthy Offaly, in partnership with a community coalition of Laois Offaly Education & Training Board, HSE, Turas Nua, Healthy Offaly, Offaly PPN and Offaly Local Development Company, etc, came together to host a community engagement event in St. Columba's Terrace, Tullamore. On the day lunch and refreshments were provided to the estate residents as well as services such as literacy awareness needs, cookery demonstrations, physical activity exercises/games and vaccination services. Healthy Offaly contracted the services of the team at the Crinkle Sports & Recreation Centre to run the physical activity games many of which had a numeracy and problem-solving element to them. The positive energy and enthusiasm brought to the day created a warm and welcoming environment that was appreciated by



everyone who attended. The positivity and conversations that shared with residents are a testament to all the hard work done in the background. Further community engagement events are planned in the future and Healthy Offaly will be an integral part of this outreach.

## SPORTS - July

Programme highlights include:



During the month of July, several programmes were delivered as part of the **Sports Inclusion** and **Community Sports Development Programmes** including: -

- July Provision catering for over 100 children
- Adapted camps for 23 children with additional needs
- Learn to cycle for over 40 children
- Golf for All, delivered in association with Tullamore Golf Club at which eight children were in attendance
- Support for the GAA Inclusive Cul Camp at which 22 children were in attendance
- Games on the Green for over 50 children
- Support for the Arden View Camp with an average attendance of 25 children per session
- Summer Programme for Teenagers & Children
- National Learning Network Sports Day for over 70 people
- Support for the FAI Football Camp at which 26 children were in attendance



OFFALY SPORTS PARTNERSHIP 2024 SUMMER PROGRAMME FOR TEENAGERS & CHILDREN FROM 7YRS+		
 <b>All Activities in R35 T1H5</b> Ballycumber Activity Centre (AC), Community Hall (CH), GAA Pitch (PIT)	<b>FURTHER INFORMATION</b> • Programme starts the week of Monday 24th June • Programme will run for 6 weeks finishing the week of 29th July (individual programmes are subject to numbers attending) • No booking Required, just show up - Bring Water, Sunscreen, Lunch	
	<b>Boxercise (AC) Mondays</b> 12.30pm - 1.30pm Teenagers	<b>Pickleball (CH) Mondays</b> 2.00pm - 3.30pm Teenagers and Children
<b>Dance (CH) Tuesdays</b> 11.00am - 11.30am Children 7yrs+ 11.30am - 12.00pm Teenagers	<b>Badminton (CH) Tuesdays</b> 12.00pm - 1.00pm Teenagers and Children	<b>Teenagers Dodgeball (AC) Tuesdays</b> 2.00pm - 3.30pm Teenagers
<b>Injury Prevention (CH) Wednesdays</b> Learn the correct technique when following S&C training plans 12.00pm - 1.00pm Teenage Girls 1.00pm - 2.00pm Teenage Boys	<b>Boys Futsal / Soccer (AC) Wednesdays</b> 2.30pm - 3.30pm Teenagers	
<b>Girls Futsal / Soccer (AC) Thursdays</b> 12.00pm - 1.00pm Teenagers	<b>Rounders / Frisbee Thursdays</b> 2.00pm - 3.00pm Teenagers	<b>Contact Denise on 086 7912513 for further enquires</b>

## Urban outdoor adventure project

Ongoing delivery of the summer elements of the urban outdoor adventure project in Tullamore including: -

- Four summer camps for 65 participants
- Canoe polo
- Open boating
- Kayaking for people with additional needs

Photos of each session can be found at <https://westoffalytraining.com/adventure/>



## August

August was another busy month for the staff...

HER Outdoors Week took place which is designed to encourage women and girls to #FindYourOutdoors and #EmbraceYourSpace where the following events took place: -

- Kayaking
- Chair Yoga
- Mindfulness
- Activator Poles
- Dance

## Sport 4 Empowerment Programme:

Launched during the summer, among the activities delivered in August were the following: -

- Exercise programme for women
- Cricket programme for men
- Chair yoga sessions



For more information on the work of Offaly Sports Partnership, check out [www.offalysports.ie](http://www.offalysports.ie) or our social media feeds on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram



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## LIBRARY SERVICE

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### Stellar Turn-out for Summer Stars!



Offaly Libraries are pleased to report that over **1,790 children** across Offaly continued to read and develop their literacy over the Summer months as part of our Summer Stars Reading Adventure. As part of the celebrations, our libraries delivered **457 free events**, including crafts and story time sessions, for **8,949 children** across the county. Other events included the Tallest Smallest Theatre, Vex Robotics sessions and a Harry Potter Extravaganza

### 'Meet Your Future' Series Edenderry Library



Edenderry Library ran a successful 'Meet Your Future' series of talks where every week children got the opportunity to meet someone from their community with an interesting job. Visitors included a Barista, Firefighters, a Garda, a Scientist, a Farmer, a Pilot, a Nurse and Librarians. **293 Children attended the 8 sessions.**

### Harry Potter's Birthday


On the 31<sup>st</sup> July Edenderry Library turned into Hogwarts to celebrate Harry Potter's Birthday. Vex Quidditch, a movie screening, and wand and potion making workshops were just some of the activities available on the day.



On August 31<sup>st</sup>, Birr Library welcomed Birr Fire Service to our Summer Stars Awards ceremony where children were treated to a tour of the fire engine, a morning movie, a story time and the chance to dress up and get a picture in the Fire Brigade Soap Box!



All children received a certificate and a medal for participating in the reading adventure.

Summer Stars is one of the four pillars of the  **Right to Read** at your Library programme. We look forward to the next pillar of Right to Read: Children's Book Festival, coming in October.

## Heritage Week

Offaly Libraries celebrated another successful Heritage Week this year, with plenty of events to celebrate our local heritage, history, and culture.



76 people attended Edenderry Library for Dr. Ciarán Reilly's talk on the 'Famine in the Edenderry Area'. The evening also included a presentation by the ICA to the library of figures commemorating 15 girls from the workhouse sent to Australia during the famine.



40 people attended a talk titled 'All Along The Banks', given by James Scully in Tullamore Library, which was followed by a musical performance by Midlands Strings



Pollinator workshops for children took place in Tullamore, Daingean and Edenderry.



Clara Library hosted a photographic session with Jeff Harvey, *Preserving Your Living Photographic Heritage*

Coffee mornings, story times and crafts took place throughout the county for Heritage week including a 'Round Towers' craft in Edenderry and a 'My Local Library' craft in Birr Library.

## Birr Vintage Week



Birr Library celebrated the 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Birr Vintage Week from 2-10 August with a fantastic array of events and activities for all ages. Local vocalist, Rachel Cleary, took full advantage of the acoustics and atmosphere of our beautiful library with a special tribute to Irish female artists. This free concert was enjoyed by 34 guests.

Despite the poor weather, our 'Teddy Bear Story Time' attracted **105 attendees** while 25 attendees joined us for a Family Movie Screening.





Our Ciorcal Comhrá group transformed the library into a 'Pop Up Gaeltacht', where over 30 people enjoyed chats as Gaeilge over refreshments.

### Offaly Pride celebrated at Offaly Libraries

Offaly Libraries supported the Offaly Pride Festival through a programme of inclusive events including storytimes and crafts offered across the county.

Birr Library's Pride-ful Poetry evening was joined by 10 attendees.



Organised by Offaly Local Development Company and Midlands LGBT+ project, Offaly Pride Festival celebrates diversity and acceptance for all.



### Back to School with Offaly Libraries

September has rolled around again, and we would like to remind all teachers that Offaly Libraries are here to support schools and students with a range of resources, services and activities. As always activities, resources and services are free!



### Sign Up for Offaly Libraries School Newsletter 'The Bookmark Bulletin'

Stay in the know about all that is taking place and available for schools at Offaly Libraries by subscribing to 'The Bookmark Bulletin' and get information on events and resources directly to your inbox!

**134 teachers** have subscribed already and, with the new academic year started, we look forward to expanding this further.

[Sign up here.](#)

### Free Teacher's Library Card

A Teacher's Library Card is available to every teacher, allowing them to borrow up to **30 items at a time for three months**. Teachers can sign up for a card by visiting their local library with photo ID and school details. This card can also be used to access online resources via our [Digital Library](#).

### Class Sets

Offaly Libraries holds 30-copy sets of children's books suitable for a variety of ages, which can be borrowed on a teacher's card for three months at a time.

[View our Class Set booklet here.](#)



### Class Visits

Offaly Libraries encourage all school classes to visit the library at least once during the school year so students can choose their own books to borrow. We can guarantee a friendly welcome and guidance on selecting books for all ages. Just contact your local library in advance.

### Free Little Library Book Bags

We are pleased to continue the First Five initiative and invite all parents of little ones starting 'big school' this year to pick up their free Little Library Bag at your local library.





The book bag will include a story book and a free [Safefood](#) booklet for kids to learn how to 'Wash your Hands with Rufus'.

More information can be found at [offaly.ie/find-your-local-library/](http://offaly.ie/find-your-local-library/)

### Stay and Play Sessions with Offaly Childcare Committee



Offaly Libraries have facilitated a number of Stay and Play sessions by Offaly Childcare Committee, over the Summer months.

More Stay and Play sessions, aimed at children aged 8 and under, are planned in **Birr Library on the following Wednesdays from 16.00 – 17.30:**  
**September 18th**  
**October 16th**  
**November 20<sup>th</sup>**  
**December 18<sup>th</sup>**

Bookings can be made directly with Offaly Childcare Committee at [www.offalychildcare.com](http://www.offalychildcare.com)

### Offaly Libraries Comic Con returns, Saturday 14th September!



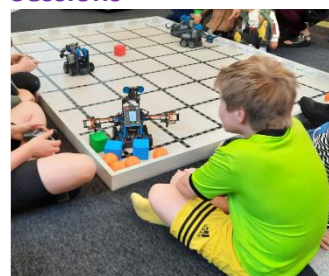
We are very excited to present the eagerly awaited fourth instalment of Offaly Libraries **Comic Con 2024**, coming to **Tullamore Library on Saturday, 14th September!**

For information on all the amazing events, activities and spectacles on offer throughout the day, please check out our programme on [offaly.ie/libraries](http://offaly.ie/libraries). This series of free events has been organised by Offaly Libraries, with support from Creative Ireland.

Clár Éire Ildánach  
 Creative Ireland  
 Programme



### Offaly Libraries STEAM Programme: VEX Summer Camps and Freeplay Sessions



Offaly Libraries Library hosted VEX Robotics Summer Camps and Play sessions during July and

August, delighting **122 attendees.**

### STEM Saturdays

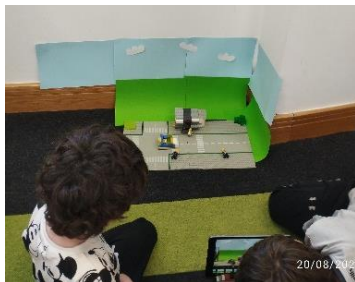
STEM Saturdays were a popular event in Edenderry over the summer with **over 230 children** attending between July and August.



**Freeplay Lego** sessions are now available in **Birr, Edenderry, Daingean and Tullamore** libraries every **Saturday from 10am**.

### STOP MOTION LEGO ANIMATION WORKSHOP

On Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> August Tullamore Library held a stop motion Lego animation workshop. Children created storyboards, constructed sets and film short stop motion movies.



The films can be viewed on our [Youtube channel here](#).

### Space Week, October 4th – 10th



Offaly Libraries ever-popular STEAM programme is back again beginning with Space Week from October, 4<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup>.

There will be plenty on offer in our libraries, including Rocket Making workshops with STEM communicator, Seanie Morris, story time and craft sessions with an Astro-twist!

Check out the [STEAM programme on offaly.ie/libraries](http://offaly.ie/libraries) for more information.

### Offaly & Laois Parenting Support Programme: Autumn 2024

Offaly Libraries together with Laois Libraries are delighted to co-deliver a free series of talks and workshops for parents at various stages throughout the year.



Supported by Laois Offaly Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSC), the Parenting Support Programme invites experts to discuss a broad range of parenting topics currently impacting our children.

The programme, beginning in September 2024, will be open to everyone including parents, caregivers, healthcare professionals, teachers, special needs assistants and those working with children and young people.

[Details of all events can be found in our digital booklet here](#) and summarised on our website here.



### Exhibitions

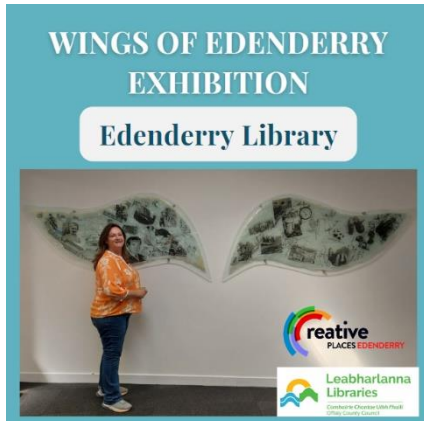
#### 'Leinster Regiment Exhibition', Birr Library

Artefacts from the Leinster Regiment, as well as an impressive display of international medals, were on exhibition for the month of August in Birr Library.



Launched ahead of Birr Vintage Week, the exhibit attracted over 400 visitors from across the country during August.

### 'Wings of Edenderry', Edenderry Library



45 people attended the launch of Michelle O'Donnell's Wings of Edenderry launch on the 28<sup>th</sup> August. This community project was facilitated by Glasshammer Studios in conjunction with Edenderry's community groups.

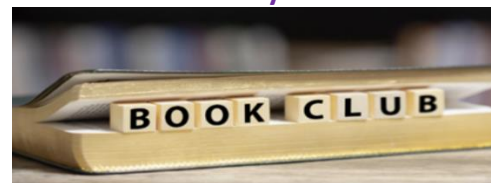
The project was supported by Creative Places Edenderry and Offaly County Council Arts Office and will be on display in Edenderry Library until the end of October.

### Threading Needles, Telling Stories, Tullamore

Oein de Bhairduin from the National Museum of Ireland joined artist Teresa Doyle and members of *Chatters & Matters*, Offaly Traveller Movement Group at the Launch of their exhibition *Threading Needles, Telling Stories* at Tullamore Library.



### Book Clubs at Offaly Libraries



Did you know that Offaly Libraries have **book clubs** spread across our library branches *and* online? [Check them all out here.](#)

### Sign up for our Library Newsletter



A quick reminder that the best way to keep up to date with all library programmes, developments and new services is via **Offaly Libraries Newsletter** and by following our social media channels.

With **3,111 email subscribers** don't miss out. [Follow the link to subscribe.](#)

*Anna Marie Delaney, Chief Executive*

## Finance

### Draft Consolidated Revenue Account Income & Expenditure Summary by Service Division to 30 June 2024

	Expenditure €	Income €
Housing & Building	9,663,620	9,435,129
Road Transport & Safety	12,813,541	8,618,486
Water Services	2,221,896	2,050,955
Development Management	9,603,824	5,863,541
Environmental Services	5,698,904	1,529,588
Recreation & Amenity	2,936,745	175,876
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	406,930	114,645
Miscellaneous Services	4,306,144	4,488,520
Local Government Fund / GPG		5,987,295
Gross Rates Income		9,610,346
	<b>47,651,605</b>	<b>47,874,380</b>
Surplus to 30th June 2024		<u>222,776</u>

#### OCC to 31st August 2024

	<u>Rates</u> €m	<u>Rents</u> €m	<u>Loans</u> €m
Opening Balance Jan 1, 2024	2.58	0.64	0.04
Net Invoices & Adjustments, waivers	16.93	5.87	0.34
2024 Cash Collected to end of August	14.16	5.96	0.33
Closing Balance August 31st 2024	<u>5.35</u>	<u>0.55</u>	<u>0.04</u>
<b><u>2023 Cash collected to Aug 31st</u></b>	12.75	5.19	0.40
% Collection at this point in 2023	111%	115%	83%

#### Bank Overdraft to 31st August 2024

	-	-	% YTD
Number of days Overdrawn in Bank year to date		24	10%
Bank Interest and non conforming charges to August 31st 2024 YTD			€13,155
Bank Administration and transactional charges to August 31st 2024 YTD			€37,346