



Comhairle Chontae Uíbh Fhailí
Offaly County Council

Nollaig 2024
December 2024

Ag Ceiliúradh 125 bliain den Rialtas Áitiúil i gContae Uíbh Fhailí

Celebrating 125 Years of Local Government in Offaly



I gcomhar le
In association with



*An Sean-Teach Cúirte i dTulach Mhór
The Old Courthouse in Tullamore*

Fáilte ón bPríomhfheidhmeannach, Anna Marie Delaney

Tá Comhairle Contae Uibh Fhailí ag déanamh fónamh dá cuid saoránach ó uair a bunaidh ar an 22 Aibreán 1899. Tá Comhairle nua againn ó mhí na Bealtaine, comhairle a bhfuil fuinneamh úr agus fíis nua ag baint léi, agus tá mé ag súil go mór leis an gcéad chaibidil eile i stair an chontae seo a fheiceáil. Ba mhaith liom ómós a thabhairt dóibh siúd a d'oibrigh ar son mhuintur Uibh Fhailí le 125 bliain anuas; as an tiomantas a léirigh siad don tseirbhís féin agus as an ndúthracht a chaith siad i gcónaí lena chinntiú gur i bhfeabhas a bheadh an contae ag dul. Tá ríméad orm an foilseachán seo a chur in bhur láthair, foilseachán ina ndéantar ceiliúradh ar laethanta tosaigh na heagraíochta chomh maith leis an obair leanúnach atá ar siúl i gcónaí chun raon leathan seirbhísí a chur ar fáil do mhuintir ár gcontae.

Offaly County Council has been diligently serving its citizens since its foundation on 22nd April 1899. The new Council, elected in May of this year, brings with it a new spirit and a fresh vision for the county and I am very much looking forward to seeing what this next chapter has in store. I would like to pay tribute to all of those who have served the people of Offaly over the past 125 years; for their dedication and commitment to the service, and for paving the way for a better future for the faithful county. I am delighted to present this publication to you, which serves as a reminder of how our organisation first came to be and of how it continues to provide a wide array of services to our people to this very day.



*Príomhfheidhmeannach Chomhairle Contae Uibh Fhailí, Anna Marie Delaney
Chief Executive of Offaly County Council, Anna Marie Delaney*

Bunú an Rialtais Áitiúil i gContae Uíbh Fhailí

Is i lár an 19ú haois a tháinig na chéad údaráis áitiúla ar an bhfód i gContae Uíbh Fhailí nuair a bunaíodh craobhacha d'Aontas Dhlí na mBocht i Ros Cré, Biorra, Móinteach Mílic, Éadan Doire agus Tulach Mhór.

Murach go raibh gá le cead a fháil ó údarás áitiúil sula gcuirfí píopaí gáis síos le haghaidh soilse sna bailte, rud a tharla in 1852 agus 1860 faoi seach, ní bheadh glacadh ag muintir Bhiorra ná ag muintir Thulach Mhór le bunú an údaráis áitiúil chomh sciobtha is a bhí.

Is ar sheanchóras an Ard-Ghiúiré a bunaíodh an córas rialtais ar leibhéal an chontae go dtí gur ritheadh an tAcht Rialtais Áitiúil (Éire) in 1898. Na tiarnaí talún ba mhó sa chontae a bhí ar an Ard-Ghiúiré agus tháinig siad le chéile dhá uair sa bhliain chun cúrsaí an údaráis áitiúil a phlé.

Is leis an Acht Rialtais Áitiúil (Éire) 1898 a tháinig na comhairlí contae isteach, i ndáiríre, agus, de réir a chéile, tháinig deireadh le córas na dtiarnaí talún. Is iad na comhairlí contae a bhí freagrach as cúrsaí riaracháin agus airgeadais, na comhairlí bardasacha tuaithe agus uirbeacha tithíochta agus sláinte poiblí agus na Boird Bhardachta a raibh baint acu le fóirithint na mbocht agus carthanachtaí leighis. Céim thábhachtach chun tosaigh a bhí san Acht lenar leagadh bunstruchtúr an údaráis áitiúil, ar struchtúr é atá fós le feiceáil, a bheag nó a mhór, sa lá atá inniu ann.

The establishment of Local Government in County Offaly

The development of local government institutions in County Offaly can be traced back to the mid-nineteenth century when Poor Law Unions were established at Roscrea, Birr, Mountmellick, Edenderry and Tullamore.

Neither Birr nor Tullamore would have adopted local government institutions so quickly were it not that the permission of a local authority was necessary for the laying of gas pipes for town lighting, a development which took place in 1852 and 1860, respectively.

The system of government at county level was based on the archaic King's County Grand Jury until the passing of the Local Government (Ireland) Act in 1898. The grand jury was comprised of the county's leading landowners and met twice a year for local government functions.

The Local Government (Ireland) Act in 1898 established county councils and swept away the last stranglehold of landlordism. The county councils were responsible for administrative and financial affairs, rural and urban district councils for housing and public health, and Boards of Guardians for poor relief and medical charities. The act was an important modernising measure that laid the basis for a structure of local government that has survived more or less intact down to the present day.

An Chéad Chruinniú de chuid na Comhairle in 1899

Ba ar an 22 Aibreán 1899 a bhí an chéad chruinniú de chuid na Comhairle agus ba é Henry Egan, náisiúnaí measarthach agus fear gnó mór le rá i dTualach Mhór, an chéad Chathaoirleach. Ba é John Powell, an fear a bhí ina eagarthóir ar an Midland Tribune ag an am, an Leas-Chathaoirleach. Náisiúnaithe a bhí sa chéad Chomhairle, den chuid ba mhó, cé go raibh aontachtaithe agus protastúnaigh ann chomh maith.

First Council Meeting in 1899

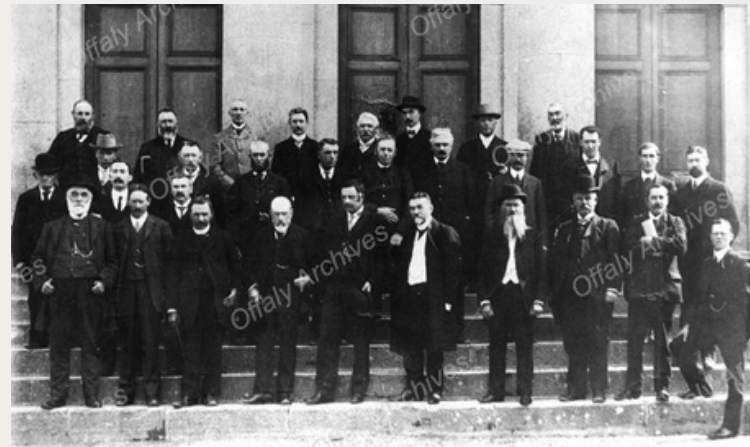
The first Council meeting took place on 22nd April 1899 under the chairmanship of Henry Egan, a prominent Tullamore businessman and moderate nationalist. The vice-chairman was John Powell, editor of the Midland Tribune. The council was predominantly nationalist in tone, but the unionist and protestant minority were well represented.

An raibh a fhios agat?

Nuair a cuireadh suas leacht i gcuimhne na Manchester Martyrs i mBiorra in 1894, tugadh cuireadh do O'Donovan Rossa, duine de na daoine ba mhó le rá i mBráithreachas Phoblacht na hÉireann ag an am, teacht i láthair. D'fhan sé i dteach John Powell don oíche. Nuair a tháinig an chéad chomhairle le chéile den chéad uair, scríobh Rossa litir chuig Powell ag gabháil comhghairdeachais leis as bheith tofa mar leas-chathaoirleach.

Did you know?

When Birr erected a monument to the Manchester Martyrs in 1894, O'Donovan Rossa, one of the leading members of the IRB, was invited to do the honours. He stayed, as a guest, in the home of John Powell. When the new county council met for the first time, Rossa wrote to congratulate Powell on his election as the council vice-chair.



*Grianghraf den chomhairle contae in 1908. Tá Henry Egan sa lár.
The county council photographed in 1908. Henry Egan is to the centre.*



*An Sean-Teach Cúirte i dTulach Mhór
The Old Courthouse in Tullamore*



*Leacht i gcuimhne na Manchester Martyrs i mBiorra
The Manchester Martyrs monument in Birr*

Na Chéad Fhorbairtí Móra

Tithíocht

Ceann de na hábhair ba mhó ba chúram don údarás áitiúil go luath san 20ú haois ná bail thithe an chontae.

In 1903, chuir Comhairle Ceantair Uirbigh Thulach Mhór a céad scéim tithíochta chun críche ag Ardán Emmet, áit ar tógadh dhá theach déag nua. Tá daoine ina gcónaí sna tithe sin go fóill.

Ag cruinniú de chuid Chomhairle Ceantair Uirbigh Thulach Mhór i mí Lúnasa in 1919, pléadh tuilleadh pleananna uailmhianacha mar gheall ar níos mó tithíochta poiblí a thógáil sa bhaile.

In 1923, tógadh ocht dteach nua ar an tsráid ar a dtugtar Sráid Sheáin Díolúin sa lá atá inniu ann. I rith na 1930í, cuireadh scéimeanna tithíochta iomadúla eile i gcrích ar Sráid O'Molloy, Sráid Callary, Sráid Uí Éilí agus Ascaill na Páirce. Tá tábhacht speisialta ag baint le tithe Shráid Sheáin Díolúin, áfach. Le linn mhionna tosaigh an Stáit a tógadh iad, ag am a bhí go leor deacrachtaí polaitíochta agus corraíl shibhialta ann.

First major developments

Housing

Chronically bad housing conditions were of grave concern to local government in the early 20th century.

In 1903, Tullamore Urban District Council completed its first scheme of twelve houses at Emmet Terrace. These houses are still inhabited today.

At a meeting of Tullamore UDC in August 1919, ambitious plans were discussed for more new public housing in the town.

Eight new houses were built by Tullamore UDC in 1923 in what is now known as John Dillon Street. In the 1930s, Tullamore UDC undertook several major public housing schemes, including O'Molloy St, Callary St, Healy St and Park Avenue. However, the eight houses in John Dillon St have a particular significance. They were built during the first months of the State's existence at a time of considerable political and civil unrest.



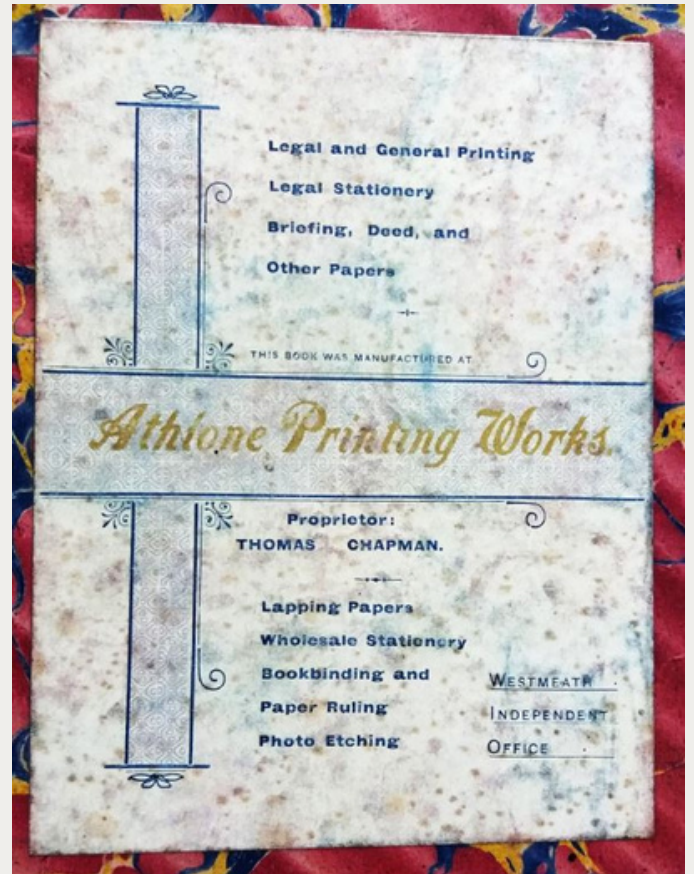
Grianghraf a tógadh le gairid de na tithe ar Shráid Sheáin Díolúin

Recent photo of the houses on John Dillon Street

Bóithre

Bhí an chomhairle contae freagrach as sonraí tiománaithe a bhailiú agus a chlárú agus na táillí a bhailiú. Bhí feithicilí ar bhóithre an chontae ó na 1890í, cé nach raibh aon chlár riaracháin ann lena n-aghaidh. Mar gheall ar an méadú a bhí tagtha ar líon na bhfeithicilí ar na bóithre faoi 1900, ghlac an chomhairle leis an Acht Bóithre. Leis sin, tugadh isteach luasteorainn de dhá mhíle dhéag san uair amuigh faoin tuath agus ocht míle san uair sna bailte agus sráidbhailte. Béigean do rothaithe agus tiománaithe araon soilse a iompar leo idir éirí na gréine agus lú na gréine agus b'éigean do rothaí agus do thiománaí cairr tuirlingt dá rothar nó dá fheithicil dá mbeadh cóiste capaill, vaigín nó aon bheithíoch iompair ag teacht ina threo go dtí go mbeidís imithe.

An chéad fheithicil a a cláraíodh i gContae Uíbh Fhailí ab ea an Wolseley 10 hp. Carr dubh a bhí ann a raibh dath dearg ar an taobh istigh de. Ba le James Perry Goodbody, Inis Mór, Clóirtheach é.



An taobh istigh de chlár fheithicilí an chontae 1904-23.

The inside cover label of the 1904-23 King's County vehicle registration ledger.



D.E. Williams Teo. agus a gcéad mhótar-leoraí IR 164 a cláraíodh ar an 25 Márta 1913. "Commer lorry 25 hp", dath dearg, 2 1/2 tonna.

D. E. Williams Ltd with their first registered motor lorry IR 164 registered 25th March 1913. Commer lorry 25hp painted red 2 1/2 tons

Roads

The King's Co (Offaly) county council was responsible for the collecting and registering of drivers' details and collecting fees.

There were motor vehicles on the county roads from the late 1890's, although there was no administration register for them. With the increase in motor transport on the roads by 1900, the council adopted the rules of the roads act. This included a twelve mile per hour speed limit in the country and eight mile per hour in the towns and villages. Bicycle and motor car owners had to carry lights between sunset and sunrise, and a driver of a bicycle or motor vehicle had to dismount if they encountered a horse driven carriage, wagon or any other beast of burden until they were clear of the area to continue driving their motor vehicle.

The first vehicle registered in King's Co (Offaly) was a Wolseley 10 hp black car, lined red, for private use, owned by a James Perry Goodbody, Inchmore Clara.

Forbairtí eile sna laethanta luatha...

Leictreachas

Tháinig ceist an leictreachais aníos i dTulach Mhór chomh luath le 1897. Thosaigh Daniel E. Williams ag úsáid leictreachais ina ghnólacht féin sna 1890í.

Faoi 1921, bhí leictreachas in úsáid go forleathan i dTulach Mhór le haghaidh na soilse sráide agus bhí sé ar fáil dóibh siúd a raibh d'acmhainn acu íoc as chomh maith.

Bhí sé níos moille ag teacht isteach sna bailte níos lú agus sna sráidbhailte, áfach. Scriobh údar as Beannchar gur i ndorchadas a bhí an baile: 'A t-aon fhoínse solais a bhí againn le trí nó ceithre bliana anuas ná an solas a cuireadh ar fáil ar theacht an dochtúra McCartan'. Ba é McCartan an Teachta Parlaiminte deireanach a toghadh do chontae Uíbh Fhailí agus an chéad Teachta don chontae in Sinn Féin. (Aibreán agus Nollaig 1918).

Further Developments in the Early Days...

Electricity

The question of lighting Tullamore by electricity surfaced as early as 1897. Daniel E. Williams of Tullamore D.E.W. introduced electrical generation in his own business in the 1890s.

By 1921, electricity was widely available in Tullamore for street lighting and those who could afford to have a connection.

The provision of electric lighting in the smaller towns and villages was slower, however. A Banagher writer in late 1921 noted that the town was in the dark: 'The only bit of light we have had for the past three or four years was that provided on the night of Dr McCartan's arrival'. McCartan was the last MP elected for King's County/Offaly and the first for the Sinn Féin Party (April and December 1918).




An tseid giniúna leictreachais i gCearnóg an Mhargaidh, Tulach Mhór, 1921-1999. Bhí sé suite ar chúl fhoirgnimh an chuideachta gáis

The electricity generating shed in Market Square, Tullamore, 1921-1999. It was to the rear of the old gas company buildings

The Irish Times - Friday, August 30, 1901 - Page 4

ELECTRIC LIGHTING.



CHARLEVILLE CASTLE, TULLAMORE.
FOR LADY EMILY HOWARD BURY.

Also "Castlegar," for Sir Wm. Mahon, Bart.; Park House, for Martin Pierce, Esq.; The Grove, Fethard, for Richard Burke, Esq., M.F.H.; Portland House, for J. G. Russell, Esq.; Bryngwennalt, North Wales, for J. Roberts, Esq., M.P.; Ardfern Abbey, for L. Talbot-Crosbie, Esq.; Ballybrado, Cahir, for C. F. Denny, Esq.; Kilbrack, Doneraile; for W. H. Nicholls, Esq.; Skilts, Redditch; for Sir John Jaffray, Bart. The foregoing are a few of the many MANSIONS, fitted throughout, with ELECTRIC LIGHT by

HANDLEY & SHANKS,
ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS, 12 DAWSON STREET, DUBLIN.
SPECIALISTS IN COUNTRY HOUSE LIGHTING.
PLANS, SPECIFICATIONS, AND ESTIMATES FREE

Telegrams—"ILLUMINE." Telephone No. 3.

Fógrán do sholáthraí leictreachais ó 1901 do Chaisleán Charleville. Faoi 1912, bhí an caisleán fágtha, a bheag nó a mhór, ina diaidh ag a úinéir, Lady Bury. Le caoinchead ó Irish Times

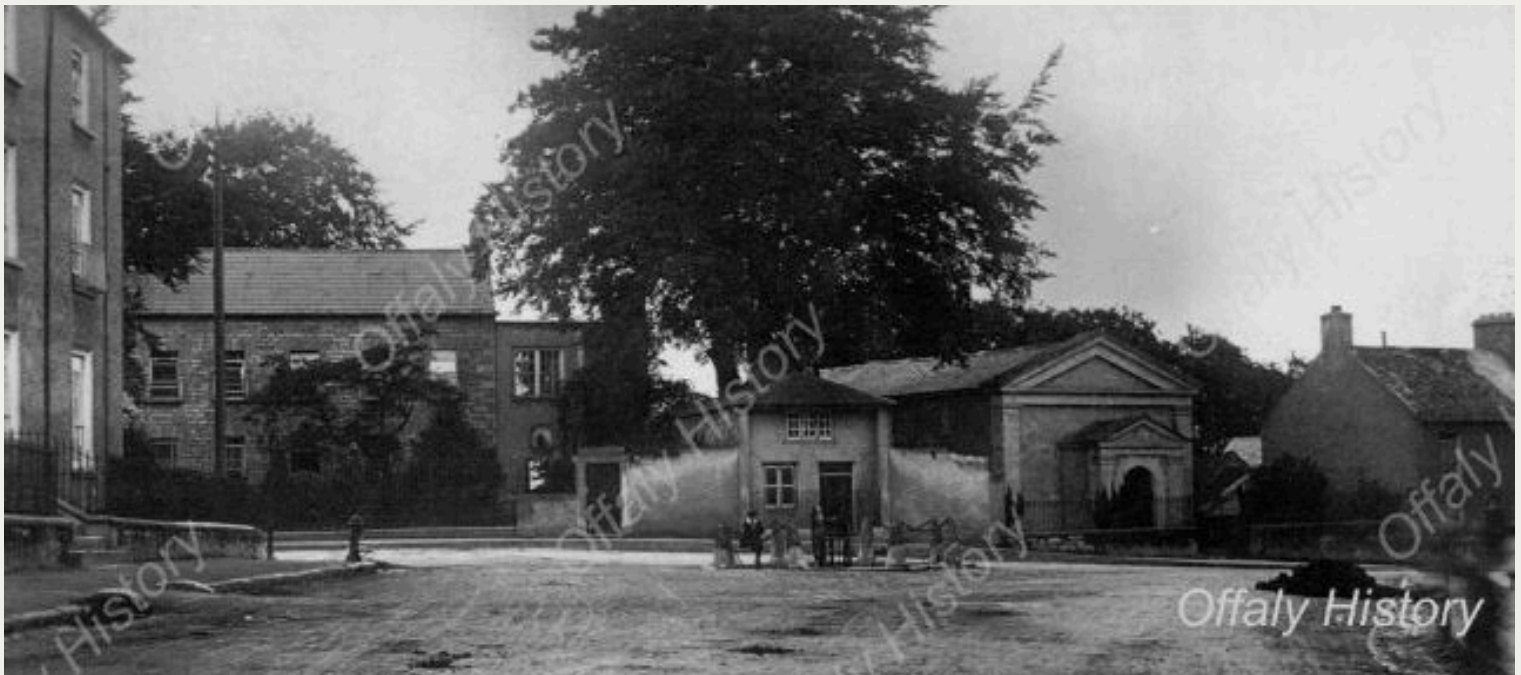
A 1901 advert for a supplier featuring Charleville Castle. By 1912 the castle had been largely vacated by its owner Lady Bury. Courtesy of Irish Times

Cúrsaí Sláintíochta

Bhí uisce píobaí ar fáil i dTulach Mhór in 1895. Is as Cluain na Slí a tógadh é. In 1908, tugadh an t-uisce isteach chomh fada leis na príomhbhóthair go dtí an baile, rud a d'fhág go raibh uisce úr ar fáil do na daoine a bhí ina gcónaí ar lánai an bhaile ag an bhfuarán ba chónarai dóibh. Bhí deacrachtaí fós le sárú acu ó thaobh róphlódaithe agus easpa áiseanna de, áfach. Réitíodh an fhadhb sin, a bheag nó a mhór, nuair a thosaigh an t-údarás áitiúil ag tógáil tithe in 1903.

Sanitation

Piped water (from Clonaslee) was made available to Tullamore in the year 1895. The Tullamore water supply was then extended in 1908 to the main roads into the town, meaning that the occupants of the lanes of the town now had a supply of fresh water available at the nearest fountain but they still faced problems of overcrowding and lack of facilities. The provision of local authority housing from 1903 onwards more or less solved the problem.



An t-acomhal ar an tSráid Ard agus Acres Hall sa chúlra. Tá an pumpa ba dheireanaí a bhí ann, pumpa ó na 1840í, le feiceáil ann. Tá an pumpa nua ar thaobh na láimhe clé. Circa 1900.

High Street junction with Acres Hall in the background. On the street was the last surviving pump dating back to the 1840s. The new and familiar pump can be seen to the left. About 1900.

An raibh a fhios agat? Did you know?

Bhí an bua ag Sinn Féin san Olltoghchán i 1918 agus bhí an náisiúnachas an-láidir sa pholaitíocht áitiúil ag an am. D'athraigh an chomhairle contae ainm an chontae ó "King's County" go "Offaly/Uíbh Fhailí" in 1920 mar gheall ar an "spiorad nua" a bhí le brath sa tír, dar leis an Dlíodóir J. Molloy (duine a thiocfadh ina chéad bhreitheamh cúirte dúiche d'Uíbh Fhailí go gairid i ndiaidh dó an ráiteas sin a dhéanamh).

Sinn Féin won the 1918 General Election and there was a strong feeling of nationalism pervading local politics at the time. The name of King's County was changed to Offaly by the county council in 1920, due, in large to a "new spirit" in the country, according to Solicitor J. Molloy (who would soon be Offaly's first district justice).

Ón Sean-Teach Cúirte go dtí an tÁras nua

In 2002 a osclaíodh oifigí nua Chomhairle Contae Uíbh Fhailí ag Áras an Chontae, Bóthar Bhaile an Bhóthair agus bronnadh gradaim ailtireachta orthu siúd a d'oibrigh ar an tionscadal tamall ina dhiaidh sin. 16,500 troigh chearnach d'oifigí atá ann. chomh maith le 100 spás páirceála agus seomra do chruinniuithe na Comhairle.

From the old Courthouse to the new Áras

In 2002, the new civic offices for Offaly County Council opened at Áras an Chontae, Charleville Road and was later commended for architectural awards. The building comprises 16,500 sq. ft of offices, 100 car parking spaces and a council chamber.



*Áras an Chontae, Bóthar Bhaile an Bhóthair, Tulach Mhór
Áras an Chontae, Charleville Road, Tullamore*

Bonneagar Uisce á Sholáthnú

Tullamore D.E.W.

Sna 1890í a bunaíodh Tullamore D.E.W agus tá sé ar díol ar an mórchoir timpeall an domhain ó shin i leith. Ar an 17 Meán Fómhair 2014, d'oscail an t-úinéir Albanach, William Grant & Sons, an chéad drioglan in Éirinn ar láithreán úrna le breis agus 100 bliain. Chosnaigh sé €35 milliún. Thug Comhairle Contae Uíbh Fhailí an-chuid tacaíochta don ghnólacht agus í ag aistriú abhaile go Tulach Mhór mar tuigean sí a thábhachtaí atá sí ó thaobh na tionsclaíochta áitiúla de agus deiseanna turasóireachta de. D'éascaigh an Chomhairle soláthar uisce ó uachtar Abhainn na Clóidí go speisialta do Tullamore D.E.W. Fostaítear breis agus 100 duine ag an drioglan agus táthar ag súil go dtiocfaidh méadú ar an líon sin sna blianta amach romhainn. Táthar ag tuar chomh maith go dtairgfear thart ar dhá mhilliún cás in 2025.

Providing Water Infrastructure

Tullamore D.E.W.

The Tullamore Dew brand was established in the 1890s and has been sold in bulk and in bottle across the world since then. The Scottish owner of the Tullamore D.E.W. brand, William Grant & Sons, opened the first new Irish distillery on a greenfield site in over 100 years on 17th September 2014 at a cost of €35 million. Offaly County Council was very much a supporter in getting this iconic brand back to Tullamore and recognises its importance in terms of local industry and tourism opportunities. A water supply direct from the upper reaches of the Clodiagh River was facilitated by the Council. Over 100 people are employed on site at the distillery and this number is expected to rise in years to come. The company predicts volumes will hit two million cases in 2025.

Cé dó a seasann D.E.W.? What does D.E.W. stand for?

Sna 1870í nó go luath sna 1880í, ceapadh fear ó Mhóinteach Milic ina bhainisteoir ginearálta ar an drioglan bhunaidh agus faoi na 1900í, is é a bhí i gceannas ar an áit. Chun ómós a léiriú don mhéid a rinne Daniel E. Williams don ghnólacht, rinneadh ainm an bhranda a bheachtú tar éis 2010 agus is é Tullamore D.E.W. a tugadh air ó shin i leith.

In the 1870s or early 1880s, a Mountmellick man, Daniel E. Williams, was appointed as the general manager of the original Tullamore distillery and by the 1900s, he had full control of its operations. To emphasize the contribution of Daniel E. Williams to the growth of the Tullamore Dew brand, the product name was refined to Tullamore D.E.W. after 2010.

Ó Bhaint na Móna go dtí an Turasóireacht

Tá fuinneamh á ghiniúint in Uíbh Fhailí leis na blianta fada. Bhí baint na móna chun fuinneamh a ghiniúint ina dlúthchuid i gcónaí de chreatlach chultúrtha shocheacnamaíoch Uíbh Fhailí agus, go stairiúil, ba é an tslí bheatha ba mhó sa chontae é. Tá Comhairle Contae Uíbh Fhailí ag obair chun an t-aistriú go dtí an fuinneamh glas a éascú agus, anuas air sin, chun tionscadail éagsúla a mhaoiniú, tionscadail lena spreagfar úsáidí eile le haghaidh cuid den 27,000 heicteár de thalamh portaigh sa chontae. Samplaí de na tionscadail sin is ea feirm ghaoithe Dhroim Cáithe agus Páirc Thaiscéaláíochta Loch na Buaráí, áit a dtagann na mílte cuairteoirí ann ó gach uile chearn den domhan gach bliain. Bhí an Chomhairle i dtús cadhnaíochta chomh maith nuair a d'ullmhaigh sí plean 10 mbliana do Lochanna agus Conairí Dhoire Fhuinsigh. Ba eiseamláir í Comhairle Contae Uíbh Fhailí san iarratas pleanála in 2009 le haghaidh conairí áineasa ar fheirm ghaoithe Dhroim Cáithe agus tá cuideachtaí fuinnimh tar éis glacadh leis an an múnla céanna ar fud an chontae agus ar fud na tíre, dá bharr. I go leor de na cásanna sin, bíonn nasc acu leis na Glasbhealaí.



Feirm ghaoithe Dhroim Cáithe ar lá an Reatha Páirce Mount Lucas Wind Farm on the day of the Park Run

From Peat Harvesting to Tourism

Offaly has a rich history of energy generation. Peat harvesting and electricity generation has always been part of the socio-economic and cultural fabric of county Offaly and, historically, has been one of the county's largest sources of employment. Offaly County Council has been working to facilitate the smooth transition to green energy and also to support projects which inspire alternative uses for some of the 27,000 hectares of peatlands in the county. Examples of such developments include the Mount Lucas wind farm and the Lough Boora Discovery Park, which attracts visitors from all over the world to the county every year. The Council also led on the preparation of a 10-year plan for Derrycastle Lakes & Trails. Offaly County Council has led the way on requiring amenity trails in the Mount Lucas windfarm in the 2009 planning application and this model has been embraced by energy companies county and countrywide, and in many cases linking into National greenways.



Seoladh phlean 10 mbliana do Dhoire Fhuinsigh. Derrycastle launch of OCC-led 10-year plan.



Feirm Ghaoithe Dhroim Cáithe Mount Lucas Wind Farm



Tá an-athrú go deo tagtha ar Uíbh Fhailí le blianta beaga anuas. Bhíodh an t-am ann nuair a bhí 3 mhóinstáisiún cumhachta sa chontae (agus ceann eile ar an teorainn chontae) ach anois is eiseamláir é contae Uíbh Fhailí i gcomhthéacs an fhuinnimh inathnuaite agus 'píplíne' ceadaithe de thoilleadh suiteáilte c15 GW agus thart ar 550MW de stóras ceallraí suiteáilte faoi 2024. Tá comhaontuithe maidir le nascadh leis an ngréille ag cuid de na feirmeacha móra gréine chomh maith.

*An tionsclaíocht mar a bhí.
The industry as it was.*



Offaly has experienced a rapid transition from a county with 3 peat-fired power stations (and another on the county boundary) to the leading inland county for renewables with a permitted 'pipeline' of c15 GW of installed capacity and approx. 550 MW already producing power by 2025. Also, already 250MW battery storage installed by 2024. A number of large solar farms have grid connection agreements.

*Páirc Thaiscéalaithe Loch na Buarai.
Lough Boora Discovery Park.*

Action 1.1 Economic Diversification call 1: Derrycastle Lakes & Trails

Early phase proposals

**re-peat
adventure**

Comhairle Chontae Uíbh Fhailí
Offaly County Council

*Derrycastle Plan
Plean Dhoire Fhunisigh*

Conairí Rothaíochta ar Shliabh Bladhma

Tar éis do Chuideachta Forbartha Áitiúil Uíbh Fhailí staidéar féidearthachta a dhéanamh, d'oibrigh Comhairle Contae Uíbh Fhailí i bpáirt le Coillte agus Comhairle Contae Laoise chun a chinntiú go gcuirfear na conairí rothaíochta i gcrích. In 2018 a tosáidh an obair. Tá 80km de chonairí (a bhfuil 57km de 'chonair aonair' ann) agus áiseanna tacaíochta tógtha anois agus an-tóir go deo orthu. Fuair an tionscadal maoiniú ón gCiste Athghiniúna agus Forbartha Tuaithe agus ón Scéim um Infreastruchtúr Áineasa Lasmuigh, chomh maith le cistiú meastseála nach beag ó údarais áitiúla Uíbh Fhailí agus Laoise. Ba í Comhairle Contae Uíbh Fhailí a bhí taobh thiar den Lúbóg 'Núiosach' a thóg Coillte in 2022 agus atá gar do Chaisleán Chionn Eitigh. Fuarthas maoiniú ar dhá ócáid dhifriúla faoin Scéim Athnuachana Bailte agus Sráidbhailte chun forbairtí móra a dhéanamh ar lár shráidbhailte Chionn Eitigh, an áit a dtosaíonn na siúlóidí. Is mar gheall ar an obair sin uile atá sé ar cheann de na cúig Lárionad Conairí Náisiúnta.

Slieve Bloom Mountain Bike Trails

On foot of a feasibility study funded by Offaly Local Development Company, Offaly County Council worked with Coillte and Laois County Council to ensure the trails were delivered. Construction commenced in 2018. The 80km trail system, (with 57kms 'singletrack') and supporting amenities, funded under the Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF) and the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS), with considerable match funding from the Local Authorities Offaly & Laois are in place and attracting significant levels of use. OCC led on the concept of and secured funding for a 2km 'Novice' Loop close to Kinnitty Castle, which was constructed by Coillte in 2022. Two rounds of Town & Village Renewal funding have significantly upgraded the public realm in Kinnitty, facilitating the development of the village Centre as the 'trailhead' for the trails which are one of five National Trail Centres.



Conairí Rothaíochta Lár Tíre - Uíbh Fhailí, (2016), ullmhaithe ag Comhairle Contae Uíbh Fhailí, Bord na Móna agus Coillte
Midlands Cycling Destination – Offaly, (2016), prepared by Offaly County Council, Bord na Móna and Coillte

Comhairle Contae Uíbh Fhailí ag tacú leis na hEalaíona

Ba i dTulach Mhór a bhí Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann ar siúl in 2007. D'oibrigh baill na Cosanta Sibhialta ó go luath san iarnóin Dé hAoine go dtí go deireanach ar maidin Dé Luain lena chinntiú go n-éireodh go geal leis an ócáid. D'éirigh chomh maith sin leis an bhFleadh in 2007 gur tháinig sí ar ais go Tulach Mhór in 2008 agus arís in 2009.

Ba in 2007 chomh maith a leithdháil an rialtas €2 mhilliún d'Ionad Ealaíona na hEascrach, áit a osclaíodh go hoifigiúil don phobal Dé Sathairn an 15 Aibreán 2023. Is céim ollmhór chun tosaigh atá ann do na healaíona lár tíre. Tá spásanna ar leithligh anois ann d'ealaíontóirí gairmiúla agus d'ealaíontóirí an phobail áitiúil araon thar réimse leathan disciplíní; amharclannaíocht, drámaíocht, amharc-ealaíona, ceol agus litríocht san áireamh.

Offaly County Council supporting the Arts

Tullamore was chosen to host the All-Ireland Fleadh Cheoil in 2007. Civil Defence members worked from early Friday afternoon to late into Monday morning making sure the event went off without a hitch. The Fleadh was such a huge success in 2007 that Tullamore was chosen to host it again in 2008 and yet again in 2009.

2007 was also the year that saw €2 million allocated by government for what is now known as the Esker Arts Centre, which officially opened its doors to the public on Saturday 15th April 2023. The facility represents a major landmark in the advancement of the arts in the Midlands providing spaces for professional and community-based artists across all of the disciplines of theatre, drama, visual arts, music and literature.



Angela Ryan Whyte, Sally O'Leary, An Príomhfheidhmeannach Anna Marie Delaney, an Comhairleoir Seán O'Brien, Stiúrthóir Seirbhísí Sharon Kennedy agus an Comhairleoir Neil Feighery ag an ócáid cheiliúrtha an 14 Aibreán 2023



*An tUachtarán Micheál D. Ó hUiginn ag tabhairt óráide uaidh ag oscailt oifigiúil an Esker Arts
President Michael D. Higgins speaking at the official opening of Esker Arts*



*'Tullamore Stage School Ladies Choir' ag ceolchoirm na Nollag
'Tullamore Stage School Ladies Choir' at their Christmas concert*



*Tá 230 suíochán i halla éisteachta an Esker Arts agus spás ann do chathaoireacha rothaí chomh maith.
The Esker Arts auditorium has a capacity of 230 fixed seating, with wheelchair accommodations.*

Seirbhísí Leabharlainne siar sa stair

Sa bhliain 1921 a tosaíodh an chéad leabharlann phoiblí i dTulach Mhór le linn Chogadh na Saoirse agus bhí 250 leabhar aici in oifigí chomhairle an bhaile. In 1925, fuarthas seomra sa teach cúirte agus in 1937, aistríodh arís í go dtí seanbheiric an Gharda ar Shráid an tSéipéil. Sna 1960í, d'fhéadfadh duine suí isteach san fhuinneog agus leabhar ina glaic aige sa tseanleabharlann ar Shráid an tSéipéil nó suí isteach i ngiorracht dá sorn urbholgach a bheadh lán le móin a thabharfaí aníos ón íoslach. In 1977, rinneadh an tseanghairmscoil ar Chearnóg Uí Chonchúir a athchóiriú agus cuireadh isteach leabharlann nua ann, leabharlann a bhí i bhfad níos fearr ná an ceann a bhí ann roimhe. I dtreo dheireadh ré an Tíogair Cheiltigh, bhí pleananna nua ann le haghaidh leabharlann nua don chontae. In 2012, osclaíodh an leabharlann láir nua i dTulach Mhór ar chostas €2.2 milliún. Ó uair a hoscailte, tá an leabharlann geall le hollscoil don phobal áitiúil; bíonn léachtaí ann, an club scannánaíochta agus seoltaí leabhar. Na háiseanna atá anois ar leac an dorais againn, ní raibh siad riamh chomh maith is atá anois.



Leabharlann Thulach Mhór, 1942-77
Tullamore library, 1942-77

Library Services through the years

The first public library was started in Tullamore in 1921 during the War of Independence and housed 250 books in the town council's offices. In 1925, a room in the courthouse was secured and in 1937, the library was moved once again to the former Garda barrack in Church Street. In the 1960s, one could sit and browse in a window alcove in the old Church Street library or huddle near its pot-bellied stove, full of turf hauled up from the basement. In 1977, the old vocational school in O'Connor Square became available and was adapted for a new and greatly improved library. In the twilight of the Celtic Tiger years, firm plans were considered for a new library for the county. In 2012, the new central Library was opened in Tullamore at a cost of €2.2 million. Since its opening, the library has become the people's university, with lectures, readings, film club and book launches. We have never had such great facilities on our doorstep.



Leabharlann Thulach Mhór sa lá atá inniu ann
Tullamore library today



Leabharlann nua in Éadan Doire

Tá leabharlann nua agus ionad ealaíon á bhforbairt d'Éadan Doire ag Comhairle Contae Uíbh Fhailí ar láithreán tréigthe i lár Éadan Doire agus fuarthas maoiniú de €12.25 i mí Bealtaine na bliana seo faoin gCiste Athghiniúna agus Forbartha Tuaithe lena n-aghaidh.

New Edenderry library project

A new community library and Arts base for Edenderry is being developed by Offaly County Council on a derelict site in the centre of Edenderry and was awarded funding of €12.25 million in May of this year under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF).



An plean le haghaidh na leabharlainne nua in Éadan Doire
The plan for the new library in Edenderry

Amach anseo...

Is iontach na forbairtí a dhéanfar inár mbailte agus ar ár nglasbhealaí faoin gCiste Athghiniúna agus Forbartha Uirbí (CAFU). Síníodh conarthaí níos luaithe i mbliana do Ghlasbhealach Uirbeach na Canálach Móire, agus leis sin, cuirfear críoch le Glasbhealach na Canálach Móire trí Uíbh Fhailí, glasbhealach atá 70 km ar fad ar cuid lárnach de nasc an Ghlasbhealaigh ó Dhuga Chanáil Laighean go Caladh na Sionainne in Iarthar Uíbh Fhailí é. Beidh borradh mór faoin turasóireacht in Uíbh Fhailí nuair a thabharfar an tionscadal chun críche. I gcomhpháirt le Comhairle Contae na hIarmhí, tá nasc de 14km tógtha toabh leis an gcanáil thirim chomh fada le Cill Bheagáin. Ba í Comhairle Contae Uíbh Fhailí a chuir tús leis an staidéar féidearthachta a rinneadh i dtaobh an nasc seo a leathnú chuig an Muileann gCearr agus an Glasbhealach idir Baile Átha Cliath agus Baile Átha Luain (agus ar deireadh Gaillimh).

Cuireann Creat Athghiniúna Thulach Mhór Lár Bhaile Thulach Mhór chun tosaigh i bhforbairt an bhaile amach anseo. Bhí na Máistirphleananna ar fáil lena n-íniúchadh ag an bpobal níos luaithe sa bhliain. Sna hiomhánna mionsonraithe den fhorbairt a d'fhéadfaí a dhéanamh ag Cearnóg an Mhargaidh agus Bóthar an Chlochair, cuir i gcás, tugadh léargas luachmhar do mhuintir Uíbh Fhailí ar a bhfuil i ndán do bhaile Thulach Mhór.

Looking ahead...

The future is looking bright for the development of our town centres and greenways under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF). Contracts were signed earlier this year for the Grand Canal Urban Greenway which will complete the Grand Canal Greenway through Offaly, a total distance of 70kms, which is an integral part of the proposed Greenway link from the Grand Canal Dock Dublin to Shannon Harbour in West Offaly. The completion of this project will bring a welcome boost to Offaly tourism well into the future. In conjunction with Westmeath County Council, a 14km link along the dry canal to Kilbeggan has been constructed. Offaly County Council led on the early stages of a feasibility study to continue this link to Mullingar and the Dublin-Athlone, (ultimately Galway) Greenway.

The Tullamore Regeneration Framework positions Tullamore Town Centre at the forefront of the town's future development. The Masterplans were available for inspection by the public earlier in the year. Detailed images of the potential development at Market Square and Convent Road, for example, provided the people of Offaly with a valuable insight into what the future holds for the town of Tullamore.



***Máistirphlean Cuan na Canálach Móire sa Tulach Mhór
Tullamore Grand Canal Harbour Masterplan***

Ag Gníomhú ar son na hAeráide - ag cosaint na todhchaí

Leagtar amach i bPlean Gníomhaithe ar son na hAeráide Chomhairle Contae Uíbh Fhailí an chaoi ar féidir, agus ar gá, athruithe domhanda ar son na haeráide a dhéanamh ar an leibhéal áitiúil, ar leibhéal an phobail agus ar leibhéal an Chontae. Tuigtear anois níos mó ná riamh gurb é an t-athrú aeráide an dúshlán domhanda fadtéarmach is mó dár linn agus, mar sin, bíonn an Chomhairle i gcónaí ag iarraidh muintir Uíbh Fhailí a spreagadh chun teacht ar bhealaí inar féidir linn oibriú le chéile chun dul i ngleic leis. Sampla maith is ea an Clár Pobail um Gníomhú ar son na hAeráide lena leithéid a dhéanamh. Faoin scéim seo, bronntar suas le 100% de mhaoiniú ar eagraíochtaí pobail chun cabhrú leo lena dtionscadail ar son na haeráide agus is é €100,000 an t-uasmhéid is féidir a fháil. Leis an maoiniú sin, spreagtar muintir Uíbh Fhailí, i gcomhpháirt leis an údarás áitiúil, chun pobail ísealcharbóin inbhuanaithe a thógáil ar bhealach atá cliste ciallmhar chun na sproicanna aeráide agus fuinnimh náisiúnta a bhaint amach.

Climate Action – safeguarding our future

Offaly County Council's Climate Action Plan of 2024 – 2029 sets out how global climate changes can, and must, be met at a local, community and County level. Climate change is increasingly understood to be the most critical, long-term global challenge of our time and OCC actively enables and encourages the people of Offaly to find examples of ways in which we can work together to combat it. The Community Climate Action Programme (CCAP) is one such example. This scheme provides community organisations with up to 100% funding to help deliver local climate action projects, up to a maximum value of €100,000. This funding serves to inspire the citizens of Offaly, in partnership with their local authority, to shape and build low carbon, sustainable communities in a coherent way to contribute to national climate and energy targets.



Tá an Cathaoirleach Eddie Fitzpatrick in éineacht leis an Aire Pippa Hackett, an Comhairleoir Declan Harvey, an Comhairleoir Tony McCormack, an Comhairleoir Mark Harkett, an Príomhfheidhmeannach Anna Marie Delaney, Stiúrthóir Seirbhísí Tom Shanahan agus an fhoireann um Gníomhú ar son na hAeráide ag seoladh an Phlean 5 Bliana um Gníomhú ar son na hAeráide

Cathaoirleach Cllr Eddie Fitzpatrick is joined by Minister Pippa Hackett, Cllr Declan Harvey, Cllr Tony McCormack, Cllr Mark Harkett, Anna Marie Delaney, Chief Executive, Tom Shanahan DOS and your Council's Climate Action team at the launch of the 5 Year Climate Action Plan

An Bhitheagsúlacht i gContae Uíbh Fhailí

Ceapadh an chéad oifigeach Bithéagsúlachta riamh in 2023. Cabhraíonn an t-oifigeach bithéagsúlachta leis an nádúr a chaomhnú agus a chur chun cinn trí bheith ag comhoibriú le pobail, trí bheith ag reáchtáil imeachtaí agus trí thionscadail éagsúla. Cinntíonn sé chomh maith go bhfuil riachtanais dlí á gcomhlíonadh ag an gComhairle ó thaobh an nádúir de. Tá an Podchraoladh **In Your Nature** le Comhairle Contae Uíbh Fhailí ar cheann de na podchraoltaí nádúir is mó sa tír.

Biodiversity in County Offaly

Offaly County Council appointed its first ever Biodiversity officer in 2023. As well as helping the Council fulfill its statutory requirements in the area of nature conservation, the biodiversity officer helps promote the enhancement and enjoyment of nature through collaboration with communities, events and projects. The OCC podcast **In Your Nature** is one of the top nature podcasts in the country.

Tacaíochtaí ó Oifig Fiontair Áitiúil Uíbh Fhailí

Mar thoradh ar an Acht um Athchóiriú an Rialtais Áitiúil, 2014, tugadh ról níos láidre agus níos soiléire don rialtas áitiúil i bhforbairt eacnamaíoch agus pobail. Bunaíodh an Oifig Fiontair Áitiúil i gComhairle Contae Uíbh Fhailí, agus foilsíodh an chéad Phlean Forbartha Áitiúil & Pobail 5 bliana (LCDC) i gcomhréir leis an reachtaíocht sin. Ó shin i leith, tá Oifig Fiontair Áitiúil Uíbh Fhailí ag cur raon tacaíochtaí comhlántacha ar fáil chun cabhrú le daoine ar mian leo gnó a thosú nó a fhás. Cuireann an Oifig tacaíochtaí airgeadais, oiliúint agus comhairle phraiticiúil ar fáil agus bíonn sí ina hóstach ar raon imeachtaí líonraithe i rith na bliana. I measc na n-imeachtaí móra i bhféilire na hoifige tá an tSeachtain Fiontair Áitiúil, na Gradaim Náisiúnta Fiontraíochta, Lá Náisiúnta Fiontraíochta na mBan agus an Sárthaispeántas Fiontair Áitiúil. Cuireann an oifig tacaíocht ar fáil freisin do pháistí agus d'fhiontraithe óga i scoileanna Uíbh Fhailí tríd an gClár Fiontraíochta do Scoláirí.



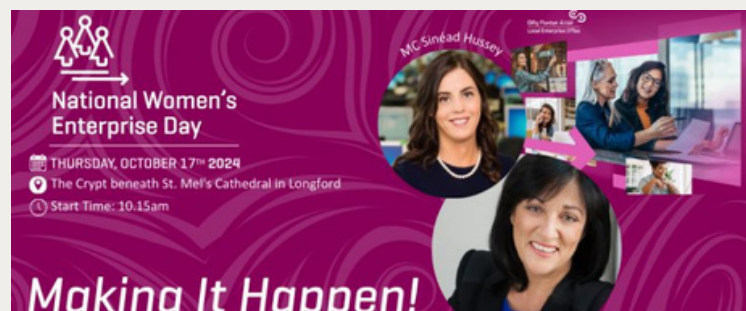
Lisa Molloy; Edel Boyd; Sinead Clarke; an Cathaoirleach Eddie Fitzpatrick, an Príomhfheidhmeannach Anna Marie Delaney, Orla Martin, Ceannasaí Oifig Fiontair Áitiúil Uíbh Fhailí, Dermot Shortt; Ann-Marie O'Brien agus Mary McIntyre ag seoladh Sheachtain Fiontair Áitiúil Uíbh Fhailí



Ceann de phéire ulchabhán fada cluasa a chonacthas i gcrainn an Árais sa samhradh. One of a pair of long-eared fledgling owls which were spotted in the trees of the Áras in the summer.

Local Enterprise Offaly Supports

The Local Government Reform Act 2014 provided a stronger and clearer role for local government in economic and community development. Local Enterprise Office Offaly was established in Offaly County Council, and the first 5 year Local & Community Development Plan (LCDC) was produced in line with this legislation. Since that time, Local Enterprise Office Offaly has been providing a range of complementary supports to help people who want to start up or grow a business. The Office offers financial supports, training and practical advice and also hosts an array of networking events throughout the year. Some major events in the LEO calendar include Local Enterprise Week, the National Enterprise Awards, National Women's Enterprise Day and the Local Enterprise Showcase. The office also provides support to children and young entrepreneurs in Offaly schools through the Student Enterprise Programme.



Próifil Eacnamaíoch Uíbh Fhailí

Léiríonn próifil eacnamaíoch Uíbh Fhailí láidreachtaí an chontae maidir le nuálaíocht, oiriúnú agus claochlú agus fianaise air sin is ea na rudaí seo a leanas:

(a) An Leviathan i mBiorra (an teileascóp is mó ar domhan tráth) a bhfuil I-LOFAR anois ann, an teileascóp raidió is mó ar domhan);

(b) Tá tírdhreach na gceantar portaigh iarthionsclaíoch laistigh den chontae tar éis athrú go mór, go háirithe ó cuireadh deireadh le baint móna tráchtála chun críocha giniúna cumhachta. I measc na n-úsáidí atá anois ann do laghortaigh tá fuinneamh gaoithe, fuinneamh na gréine, dobharshaothrú, foraoisiú, stóráil fuinnimh ceallraí, bealaí móna agus athfhliuchadh.

(c) Táirgeadh móna ar na portaigh ag athrú ina tháirgí turasóireachta, táirgí a bhfuil gradaim bainte amach acu ar nós Fhearann Páirce Loch na Buaráí agus Portach Chlóirthigh;

(d) Tá Tullamore DEW ar ais i dTulach Mhór anois agus próiseas driogtha den scoth aige;

(e) An Chanáil Mhór, ar canáil í a bhíodh ina bealach trádála ó Bhaile Átha Cliath go dtí an tSionainn tráth den saol, ag teacht ina Glasbhealach/Gormbhealach lena ndéanfar nasc idir pobail, bailte agus turasóireacht le hoidhreacht nádúrtha agus thionsclaíoch.

Is iad na príomhréimsí fócais eacnamaíocha atá ag Uíbh Fhailí faoi láthair:

- Tógáil agus Innealtóireacht
- MedTech agus Folláine
- TFC
- Táirgeadh agus Stóráil Fuinnimh Ghlais
- Bia agus Cothú
- Eispéiris Éiceathurasóireachta agus Ealaíne

Offaly's Economic Profile

Offaly's economic profile reflects the county's strengths in innovation, adaptation and transformation and is evidenced by:

(a) The Leviathan in Birr (once the world's largest telescope) now home to I-LOFAR, the world's largest radio telescope);

(b) The landscape of post-industrial peatland areas within the county have started to change particularly since the cessation of commercial peat harvesting for power generation purposes. After uses of cut away bogs have included wind energy, solar energy, aquaculture, afforestation, battery energy storage, peatways and re-wetting;

(c) Peat production on the bogs evolving to award-winning tourism products like Lough Boora Parklands and Clara Bog;

(d) Tullamore DEW Whiskey now back in Tullamore with state of the art distillation process;

(e) Grand Canal, once a trade route from Dublin to the Shannon, now transforming to a Greenway/Blueway linking communities, towns and tourism with natural and industrial heritage.

Offaly's current key areas of economic focus are:

- Construction and Engineering
- MedTech and Wellbeing
- ICT
- Green Energy Production and Storage
- Food and Nutrition
- Eco-Tourism and Art Experiences

Mar Fhocail Scoir

Tá Comhairle Contae Uíbh Fhailí ar an bhfód le 125 bliain. Tá an-obair go deo déanta i rith an ama sin agus tá muid ag súil go mór leis na blianta atá romhainn. Níl aon dabht faoi ach go bhfuil an contae ag dul ó neart go neart. Bhí Uíbh Fhailí i gcónaí ar thús cadhnaíochta ó thaobh cúrsaí eolaíochta, cúrsaí fuinnimh agus cúrsaí tionsclaíochta de, rud a thugann spreagadh dúinn leanúint ar aghaidh mar a bhí riamh. Tá Uíbh Fhailí níos domhanda agus níos ceangailte anois ná riamh ach tá muid ag obair go háitiúil go fóill. Coinnigh súil ar ár suíomh gréasáin agus ar na meáin shóisialta chun an t-eolas is déanaí a fháil faoi na forbairtí atá ag tarlú i do cheantar féin. Uíbh Fhailí abú!

As a Parting Word

Offaly County Council has been in existence for the last 125 years. There has been a huge amount achieved in that time and we look forward to continuing to serve our citizens in the years ahead. A history in science, energy and connection to industry means that from the legacy of the old, comes inspiration for the new – more global and more connected but still local. The future looks very bright indeed. Keep an eye on our website and our social media channels to keep up to date with the latest developments in your area. Uíbh Fhailí abú!



*Cuid den Ghlasbhealach nua ar an bhFéar Bán
Part of the new Greenway near Febane*



*An Cathaoirleach Tony McCormack agus an tAire Stáit James Lawless ag rothaiocht le beirt scoláirí ag Oscailt Oifigiúil an Ghlasbhealaigh nua i ngiorracht don Chnógús Buí, an Féar Bán an 10 Deireadh Fómhair 2024
Councillor Tony McCormack and Minister for State James Lawless cycling the new Greenway with two students at the Official Opening near Noggus, Ferbane on 10th October 2024*

I gcomhar le
In association with



Comhairle Chontae Uíbh Fhailí
Offaly County Council