

TUARASCÁIL MHÍOSÚIL BAINISTÍOCHTA

MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT

Samhain / November

**Offaly
Community
Groups
honoured at
2023 IPB Pride
Of Place
Awards**



**Offaly County
Council
welcomes fund
to support
community
climate action
in Offaly**



Tionól - tiomsú smaointe (idir mhór & bheag)
Cuireadh le haghaidh Smaointe don Ealaín sa Tírdhreach:
Féile an Athraithe



**Tionól -
tiomsú
smaointe
(idir mhór &
bheag)**

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**Built Heritage Investment Scheme & Historic Structures Fund
2024 – closing date Thursday the 18th of January at 4pm**

Land Use, Planning and Economic Development Services

PLANNING

Development Management

	To end Nov 2023	To end Nov 2022	Total 2022
Planning Applications	629	627	681
Extensions of Duration Applications & Assessments	20	15	16
Warning Letters and (Enforcement Notices) issued	181 (73)	146 (12)	158 (15)

During the month of **November 2023**, the following large planning applications were received:

Patrick Muldoon	The demolition of existing single storey house to facilitate access to the proposed development for 69 no. houses, Rhode, Co. Offaly.
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Forward Planning

Progress Report on the Implementation of County Development Plan

The CE's two-year Progress Report on the Implementation of Development Plan objectives was discussed at the November Council Meeting. This report provided an overview on the progress made in relation to headline objectives dealt with in the development plan since it came into effect on 22 October 2021.

OPR Review of Offaly County Council

The Review by the OPR was completed November 2023. Overall, the review found that Offaly County Council is delivering its planning functions on an effective basis with evidence of best practice in some respects. While the review notes that the Council must pay some attention to the resourcing of its planning function, in a general sense, the Office is left with the impression that the department is well organised with dedicated staff in place who are delivering a quality service for the public.

Just Transition

The Secretariat for Technical Assistance for Regions in Transition (START) and Offaly County Council agreed a Service Level Agreement and Workplan for the provision of 72 days of Technical Assistance to Offaly. Following on from a site visit by the START team in March 2023 and a review meeting in June, the first of two planned one day workshops took place on 13th September 2023. A second workshop took place on 27th November 2023 with a view to devising a mechanism which will support the development of a new partnership in vocational / tertiary education, training, and research to promote a local just transition. The final report from the START team is due by December 2023.

Local and Regional Economic Support Strategies Support Scheme

The above-mentioned scheme was launched on **13th October 2023**, to be administered by Pobal. This scheme will see the disbursement of €24m for projects aligned to Local Economic and Community Plans and the disbursement of €5m for projects aligned to Regional Enterprise Plans. The key dates are as follows:

- LA led LECP aligned project applications – closing date **8th December 2023**. Offaly County Council will be applying for funding to support the objectives of the **Local Economic and Community Plan** and the **Offaly Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2027**.
- Local Authority REP aligned project applications – closing date **8th December 2023**.
- LECP aligned projects – concept papers due **17th November 2023**.

Offaly County Council submitted 5 papers. Feedback is currently being received which will inform the full applications.

- LECP aligned projects – if successful at concept paper stage, closing date for full applications **23rd January 2023.**

All information in relation to this scheme can be found as follows:

[EU Just Transition Fund: Local and Regional Economic Strategies Support Scheme - Pobal](#)

Failte Ireland

Offaly County Council and Failte Ireland Recently signed a Strategic Partnership Agreement which will facilitate:

- (a) The post of Tourism Activator. A three-year contract post in Offaly County Council which will be 100% funded by Failte Ireland. This person will engage directly with private tourism operators within the county. This post will be filled in early January 2024.
- (b) Offaly County Council will be invited to submit applications directly to Failte Ireland in respect of tourism projects in the county.

ARCHITECTURE AND CONSERVATION

September to November 2023

1. **Birr Destination Town** - Failte Ireland funding, project to commenced on site and underway, new entrance to Birr Demesne, The Green. Curved stone wall to courtyard completed. Stainless steel surround in place, solid oak doors fitted, grading of ground re level change underway. New pedestrian crossing to be completed across to The Green in 2024 Q1.



2. **Built Heritage Investment Scheme**, 11 grants completed, funding spent **€94,378**

New Thatching Grant by Department **€15,450**, funding approved for 4 thatch projects, no thatch projects were carried out in 2023. Projects included stained glass repair, sash window repair, consolidation of stone structures (*Moorock Lodge outbuilding, photos below*), repairs to historic timber porch.



3. **Historic Structures Fund** – 3 projects approved by Department completed, Kinnitty Castle window repairs (€37,500), Birr Suspension Bridge, repairs (€135,750), St Mary's COI

Ballyboy, structural repairs – tenders received via consultants, PSCS process, OCC owned, (€37,500), **Total for 2023 €210,750** (Ballyboy and Birr bridge)



4. **Heritage Stewardship – Heritage Council, €19,926** Conservation Management Plan Tubberdaly Gazebo (former castle) by Howley Hayes Cooney recommendations, together with CORA Consulting Engineers, Colm Flynn, Archaeologist and Tir 3D.



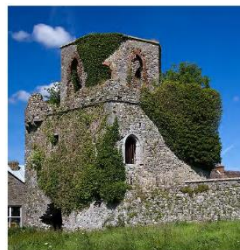
Vernacular **€5,000** (thatching – Derrybeg, repairs to Chaise Longue, Belmont)



5. **Creative Ireland:** part of Creative Ireland Team - Annual funding for Follies project **€10,000** (vegetation removal at Toberdaly and survey of Tinnamuck Folly)

Howley Hayes Cooney

Toberdaly, Co. Offaly



Conservation Management Plan
November 2023



6. **Traditional Architecture in Offaly**, by Rachel Mc Kenna, was one of six books shortlisted for the Katherine Briggs (Ireland and England) Folklore Society award and received an Honourable Mention on the evening in London 07/11/23, (Professor David Hopkin, Chair of Folklore Society)

'This book's title belies what turns out to be a much wider, deeper and altogether

rich material, social and cultural history of the community of Offaly. Production values are first class, with detailed present-day photography combined with clear illustrations and well selected historical sources.'



7. **Gloster House and Nationwide** aired 03 November 2023, interviews with the owners, historians, stuccodore who carried out repairs, former kitchen maid (now 89), nuns and former students and Rachel Mc Kenna. On the evening in question, a staggering 327,000 viewers tuned in to Nationwide which was significantly higher than normal for the programme.

REGENERATION

Town & Village Renewal Scheme

In excess of €3m has been allocated to more than 20 various projects throughout Offaly over the past 4 years. The Town & Village Renewal Scheme is designed to revitalise and regenerate our rural towns and villages, supporting economic development and improve to public amenities. Listed below are a number of examples of completed and ongoing projects to date.

Town & Village Renewal 2019, €700,000 allocated to Offaly, 5 successful applications

- The Green Birr – complete €200k
- Crinkle – complete €100k
- Mountbolus Ph I – complete €100k
- Shinrone – complete €100k
- Blundell Park Edenderry – complete €200k



Town & Village Renewal 2020, €800,000 grants allocated to Offaly, 7 successful applications

- Cloneygowan – complete €100k
- Daingean – complete €100k
- Mucklagh – complete €100k
- Mountbolus PII – complete €100k
- Pollagh – complete €100k
- Kilmalogue – complete €100k
- Ferbane €200k ongoing

Town & Village Renewal 2021, €450,000 grants allocated to Offaly, 3 successful applications

Killeigh awarded €250k for the refurbishment of the vacant Macra Hall, works nearing completion.

Ballyboy awarded €100k for the development of green space and recreational area, commencement Q1 2024.



Clonbullogue awarded €100k for the creation of the “People’s Park”, works ongoing.

Town & Village Renewal 2022, €1.2m grants allocated to Offaly

- Market Sq., Birr, €250k, development of plaza
- Kilcormac Fiesta Hall, €500k, redevelopment of Old Fiesta Hall
- Shinrone Old Library €250k, redevelopment of Old Shinrone Library



Project Development Measures 2022

- Moneygall, €50,000 Design team for development of a community building, due to commence Q1 2024.
- Daingean Townhall - € 50,000 On the 24th of November the full team of Conservation Architects, Howley Hayes Cooney carried out a condition survey of the Town Hall to assist the Conservation Master Plan process. A consultation meeting with Daingean Town Hall Committee was held. Aspiration of uses for the Daingean Town Hall was discussed which was compiled based on a general community meeting held previously. A further meeting in quarter 1 2024 will follow.



First Consultation meeting with Daingean Town Hall Committee and Conservation Consultants

Building Acquisition Measures 2022

Moneygall and Ballyboy property acquired



Church View, Moneygall



Former Community Hall, Ballyboy

Streetscape Enhancement Measure 2022

- Clara, €100,000 complete
- Over 65 property owners applied, 40 successful applicants.





Marketing and AI Event

A fantastic interactive learning, networking, marketing, and artificial intelligence event took place recently in the Bridge House Hotel in Tullamore. Attendees had the opportunity to acquire valuable knowledge on the extensive range of AI tools available to assist them in their marketing efforts. The session was interactive, which was a great opportunity for attendees to connect with a diverse group of business professionals during the engaging session.

The featured speaker, Muireann Fitzmaurice from The Marketing Coach, shared her expertise with the audience. Attendees were a cohort of dynamic entrepreneurs and business owners hailing from County Offaly. The feedback we received from attendees was overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the event's success in fostering connections and collaboration within our community.



All in a Day's Work Campaign

In 2023, LEO Offaly has been working closely with Enterprise Ireland to promote a range of targeted initiatives to help businesses become more efficient and productive. They include Green for Business, Lean for Business and Digital for

Business. A new national media campaign and website has been launched www.allinadayswork.ie to increase awareness of the supports.

To complement this campaign, LEO Offaly has introduced a free mentoring session to Offaly businesses owners so that they can learn more about the initiatives and which supports would best suit them. The initiatives are either free or heavily subsidized and can be completed over a 2 to 5 day period.

Better Farming Awards

Congratulations to the four Offaly finalists in this year's FBD Insurance Better Farming Awards! They are recognised for their initiatives, research, and practices in helping Irish agriculture meet today's economic, social, and environmental challenges. They are:

- Agri Data Analytics in the AgTech Ireland Best Agritech Hardware Product category
- Fox Covert Partnership in the Small Sustainable Food Producer of the year category
- Feighery's Farm also in the Small Sustainable Food Producer of the year category
- Adrian Egan in the Herdwatch Biodiversity Farmer of the year category
- Anne Marie Feighery in the FRS Network Diversification Farmer of the year category



There were two Offaly winners on the night. Congratulations to Ann Marie Feighery from Farm for winning Diversification Farmer of the Year at

the Better Farming Awards. Anne Marie Feighery is one of Ireland's only Beetroot Juice producers, using pesticide-free beetroot grown and nurtured on her home farm just outside Kilcormac.

Congratulations also to Jack Pilkington and the team at Agri Data Analytics, Daingean, who won the AgTech Ireland Best Agritech Hardware Product category award. The Bovine Breathalyser developed by Agri Data Analytics is a non-invasive machine that measures enteric methane emissions from ruminants and was recognized for contributing to a more sustainable, better farming practice.



National Startup Awards!

Congratulations to BiaSol who recently won Gold in the Food and Drink Startup category at the National Start Up Awards.

The National Startup awards shine a light on the best and brightest early-stage companies in Ireland by providing a highly regarded national platform where the Startups can gain national and international recognition.

Look for Local in Offaly

Let's aim for a more sustainable Christmas! #Lookforlocal Irish-made products for more mindful consumption. Sourcing lasting treasures from Irish makers will greatly help Ireland's sustainable design and craft industry and excellent value for money.

If we all #LookForLocal in Offaly this Christmas, we'll be supporting jobs, businesses, and communities.

You'll find loads of great examples of local businesses below along with their website addresses using our [Look for Local in Offaly Directory](#). You can search by name or by category.



New Beginnings - Creating Sustainable Futures Programme



Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board in partnership with Bord na Móna, the Local Enterprise Office Offaly and the Department of Social Protection developed and delivered in conjunction with Hartley People Training and The Entrepreneurs Academy, the first **New Beginnings - Creating Sustainable Futures Programme**.

LEO Offaly provided inputs to the design of the programme, delivered information sessions to the participants on supports available through the LEO, and participated in the assessment of presentations.

Congratulations to all the graduates pictured above along with representatives from the delivering partners.



Crisis Management - Leadership and Readiness in Uncertain Times

Congratulation to **Irish Training Solutions** and Nigel McCormack for holding the recent **Crisis Management - Leadership and Readiness in Uncertain Times** with Ray Goggins, Declan Power and Paul Murphy - it was fantastic to hear experts in their field sharing insightful, real-world experiences. MC on the day was Ronan Berry who effortlessly guided the event

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/>

Upcoming Events		See All Events >
14/12/2023	Grant Application Workshop – How to Complete your ...	Book online
28/12/2023	Learn about the Productivity and Competitive Suppo...	Book online
15/01/2024	Start Your Own Business Course Evenings	Book online
19/01/2024	One to One mentoring - Chat GPT.	Book online
22/01/2024	Start Your Own Business Day Course	Book online
26/01/2024	One to One mentoring - Chat GPT.	Book online
08/02/2024	Trading Online Voucher Webinar	Book online

Pre-Start Start Grow

READY TO START YOUR OWN BUSINESS?

A RANGE OF FINANCIAL SUPPORTS ARE AVAILABLE FROM LEO OFFALY.

#MakingItHappen LocalEnterprise.ie/Offaly

Housing

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

- Social Housing Assessments (SSHA) 2023 has been finalised having regard to all returns submitted to the Department.
- Information on the various pathways available to Tenants on valid Notice of Termination is available at <https://www.offaly.ie/c/housing/> on the *Notice of Termination Information* link.
- There are 522 on the Social Housing Support List at the end of November 2023.
- A further 606 active tenancies are currently being supported under the Housing Assistance Payments

(HAP) Scheme, 11 signed up for HAP and 27 exited from HAP in November.

- At the end of November, 30 single people and 18 couples and families were being supported in emergency accommodation.

Housing Stock – Number, Maintenance & Repair

- Total housing stock at end of November 2023 is 2,096.
- 395 maintenance calls were logged in November.

Housing Capital Programme Update

- Banagher, Kylebeg (18 Units) – Project is complete and houses allocated.
- Beechgrove, Belmont (7 units) – Project is complete and houses allocated.
- Elderberry Drive Moneygall (4 Units) – Complete and houses allocated.
- Sr. Senan, Edenderry (4 no. Older Person's dwellings) – Due for completion in Q1 2024.
- Circular Road, Daingean (9 units) – Construction commenced. Completion Q2 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 2 approval was granted on 27th February 2023.

New Part 8 planning process; Section 179A of Planning and Development Act was advertised on 10th October 2023. Stage 3 will be lodged with the DHLGH in Q1 2024.

- Group Housing, Croghan Road, Birr (4 Units): Stage 4 approval was granted on 21st November 2023. Preferred Contractor has been identified and works on site will begin on Q1 2024.
- Sycamore Drive, Ballycumber (10 Units) – Stage 2 approval received 30th Nov 2022. Part 8 resolution was received on 17th April 2023. Stage 3 approval application will be lodged with DHLGH in Q1 2024.

Approved Housing Bodies Schemes

- Oaklee: Clonminch, Tullamore (19 units) – Construction complete and houses allocated.
- Oaklee: Kearney's Field, Tullamore (41 Units) – Construction complete and houses allocated.
- Sofia Housing: Stage 2 approved (39 units) at Presentation Lands, Portarlinton. Planning Granted in November 2023. AHB is preparing tender documents (Stage 3)
- Sofia Housing, Clonamore, Tullamore – Works being finalised.

Turnkey Developments/Part V

- 2 x Part V units under construction at Ard na Carriage, Edenderry: Completed and allocated.
- Bog Road, Portarlinton, 28 units - Under Construction and anticipated completion Q1 2024
- 8 Units (6 Turnkey & 2 Part V) Approved May 2023 at Bell Lane, Daingean: Construction and allocations completed.

- 7 x Part V units @ Redwood, Tullamore – complete and units allocated.
- 7 x Part V units @ Silverbrook, - Works being finalised.
- 8 Units (6 Turnkey & 2 Part V) Approved June 2023 at MacGregor, Birr: Construction commenced. Completion Q1 2024
- 22 Units (18 Turnkey & 4 Part V's) Approval July 2023 at Carrick Hall, Edenderry

Housing Adaptation Grants for Older People and People

Housing are finalising Housing Adaption 2023 Grant claims to the Department. Housing are working with successful applicants to collate the required documentation in order that claims can be processed and claimed in the financial year.

Disabled Persons Grants 2023

Housing are working with contractors to progress works as far as possible to maximise the claim for 2023. The process of selecting applicants for the 2024 programme is underway, procurement of contractors and works are expected to commence in early 2024.

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.

- 105 Units completed
- 19 Units to start Q1 2024
- Tender preparation for a further 24 Units is under-way

Community Culture and Emergency Services

Local Community Development Committee

Offaly LCDC held their monthly meetings on Thursday, 9th of November 2023.



Main agenda items included briefings and updates on the following:

- Local Economic Community Plan 2023-2028
- Healthy Ireland Round 4 Projects
- Offaly Age Friendly Strategy 2023-2028
- Community Response Forum
- Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024-2029
- Offaly Community Climate Action Fund

PPN Plenary on November 8th @ 7.00pm



The end of year Plenary 2023 was a very engaging event with a range

of speakers followed by round table discussions on a range of themes. The themes were gathered during the Municipal District PPN meetings held in October.

Offaly PPN were delighted to have Offaly County Council's Chief Executive, Anna Marie Delaney, open the evening. Anna Marie gave a wonderful overview of the breadth and depth of work carried out by the PPN over this past year, highlighting the valuable role of the PPN in the Local Development Strategy Consultations and the Local Economic & Community Plan Consultations.

Sinead McEvoy, Community Climate Action Officer, Offaly Co Co presented on the Climate Action Team providing an overview of the upcoming opportunities for the Community Sector.

Brian Flynn – Ferbane; spoke about the changing landscape in Offaly Community Power and the necessity for collective Community engagement in retaining people in our communities.

OLDC presented on TUS and RSS schemes, the opportunities and supports available and the process.





Themes

The round table discussions centred around the following themes.

- Labour market Schemes: Opportunities & Challenges
- Offaly History: Commemorating Historical events.
- Community Power and the value of the collective
- Offaly Healthy Homes
- Volunteering

Feedback was presented by each table and further discussion ensued. The outcomes from the discussions will feed into the 2024 PPN Workplan

Property Marking machine training workshops:

Training was delivered by Property Marking Ireland's James O'Neill and Emma Thompson in two locations one in each of the following Municipal Districts: Edenderry & Birr.

- **Edenderry MD:** Clonbullogue St Broughan's Parish Hall Nov 11th
- **Birr MD:** Ferbane Heritage Centre Nov 25th



The training events were well attended with the Property Marking machine in demand across the county. The training was funded by Offaly County Council. Offaly PPN manage the scheduling of the Machine and ensure all areas have an opportunity to avail of the service.

Pride of Place

The Pride of Place awards celebrate the valuable work of Community groups across the Country. It was a great evening with Ballyboy Community Development, Tullamore Tidy Towns and Bracknagh Community Association.

Ballyboy Community Development won a Runner Up prize in the annual IPB Co-

operation Ireland Pride of Place Awards, which were announced on Friday 10th November 2023 at a glittering gala event held in the Armagh City Hotel, hosted by Armagh City.



Preparation for Older Persons Event in Tullamore is under way in collaboration with the gardai and OLDC SICAP team. This will take place on the afternoon of

December 12th in the Bridge House Tullamore. Invitations went to older people in the Tullamore and surrounding area.

Preliminary work is underway to ensure a workplan is in place early in 2024 and also to welcome the surrounding PPN Secretariats to Offaly early in 2024 for the Midland Regional PPN meeting.

Offaly PPN attended the (ODEN) Offaly Disability Equality Network Housing Information morning on Thursday 30th November @11am in the Tullamore Library.

A very informative meeting with presentations and Q & A sessions highlighting the work taking place in a collaborative manner between agencies, the work of the Disability Advisory group and the Housing SPC. Key information on the process and supports was also provided.



Comhairle Na nÓg

In November, Offaly Comhairle na nÓg held their first meeting since their Annual Youth Consultation Day and welcomed new members.



A number of members held meetings to prepare for an upcoming presentation.

Offaly CNN took part in the U.N Child Summit in Croke Park. "Young Ireland the National Policy Framework for Children and Young People (0-24) 2023-2028" was launched. A representative from CNN participated in panel discussions at the event, and spoke about Education and Disability.

ARTS

Arts Strategy 2024-2028



Following an open call and selection process the Arts Office commissioned arts consultant John O'Brien to assist with the planning, consultation and writing of the new Arts Strategy 2024-2029. The new strategy will align with the newly adopted Arts Infrastructure Strategy 2023-2028. The development of the new strategy has developed through a phased approach of research, consultation and writing throughout 2023. The writing phase is now in draft stage and the report has been submitted for review by the Community and Culture SPC, with the aim to submit to the council early in 2024 for approval.

ARTS OFFICE PROGRAMMES

Lough Boora - Art in Landscape Project Funding

Planning for the Art in the Landscape Festival of Change, taking place in Offaly and Mayo in April 2024 is currently ongoing with calls to artists and communities being released before the end of the year. As part of the *Art in Landscape: Festival of Change* there will be an event called *Tionól – a gathering of ideas*; a creative space to share ideas and an opportunity for



participants to share their 'big' or 'small' ideas around Art in the Landscape. The purpose of the event is to share ideas and spark conversations locally. A call has been issued to anyone interested in, working in or volunteering in arts, heritage, culture, tourism, community development, the environment or economic development or a local community member living near Lough Boora Sculpture Park, to submit their ideas to share as part of the event. Ideas will be shortlisted based on having a mix of ideas from different sectors at the event. Selected presenters will have presentation slots of 10 minutes each.

FilmOffaly

The FilmOffaly Award 2023 has been awarded and the Arts Office are delighted to announce the winning script *A Simple Killing* by Mark Conway. This film will be produced in Offaly in 2024 by the production team, Jason Branagan,

(Director) Mark de Carreau, (Actor, Producer) Emer Durcan (Producer) and Brian Durcan (Cinematographer) of Western Front Studios.

The successful team have expressed their delight of being awarded the funding. Award winning writer and director Jason Branagan said 'I'm delighted to be a part of the team bringing Mark Conway's script to life. 'A Simple Killing' is a taut thriller that gripped me from first read, and it's been a lot of fun working with Mark, Emer, Brian and Mark De Carreau in developing the film'.

Script writer Mark Conway explained how he got the team together as part of the application process for the award, 'After I watched the fantastic award-winning short Bruise, I knew I had to get Western Front Studios (Brian & Emer Durcan) involved with my short *A Simple Killing* for Film Offaly and was delighted when they came on board. They brought with them Mark De Carreau, an actor and producer who has worked on multiple shorts including the award-winning Calf and director Jason Branagan who's no stranger to short films and who has credits including Eastenders, Fair City and most recently the short Picture Day also with Western Front Studios. I just want to thank them all because without them none of this would have been possible'.

Offaly County Council Arts Office are delighted to be working with such a talented team under the production of Emer and Brian Durcan (Western Front Studios) and Mark de Carreau, producer, who said 'We are extremely grateful to Film Offaly for choosing us to produce this project. It's exciting that Mark Conway should get his first script produced and that we are the ones to do it. Under Jason's

direction we are hoping to make a film that is worthy of Oscar selection.



FilmOffaly Review

The FilmOffaly Review undertaken by researchers; *Culture Works* across the Summer months has been completed. The report has been presented to the Community and Culture SPC, FilmOffaly board and the Management of Offaly County Council. Following these presentations recommendations and actions will form part of the new Arts Strategy 2024-2028.

Annual Programme

Hullabaloo!

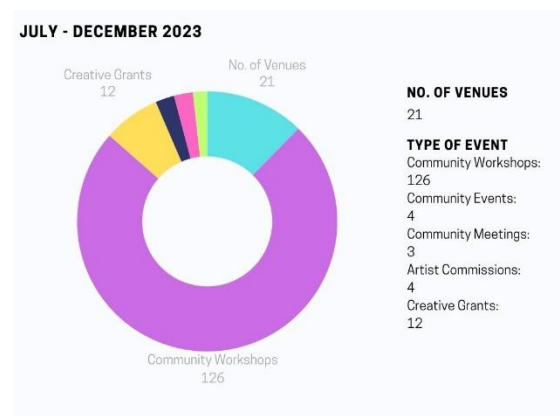
Offaly Children's Arts Festival was a much broader offering this year also, with the inclusion of Esker Arts as a partner in the festival this year. The programme was launched September with inclusion from artists from all over Ireland delivering workshops and performances in across a number of art forms for children up to 12 years of age. This was the 17th edition of Hullabaloo! and it was the largest festival to date with a record 101 events taking place across venues in four towns in Offaly from November 1st to November 4th showcasing an eclectic blend of artforms and experiences for children and their families to enjoy. In Birr, Clara, Edenderry and Tullamore there were 1,381 in attendance at the festival.

A broad offering of workshops including activities in crafting, visual arts, dance, circus, drama and mixed media. Families were treated to some stellar family performances including the renowned *Whistle Blast Quartet* who brought classic fairytales to life in a stunning classical music concert. *Circus 250* brought environmental issues and sustainability to the forefront in two wonderfully subversive and interactive circus shows with leading Italian female clowns. *A Little Door Theatre* brought us a visually stunning theatre show about love, connection and belonging using shadow play, puppetry and story-telling. Equality and Inclusion was to the forefront of programming this year, with the addition of some bespoke workshop experiences in traditional Ukrainian crafts with Ukrainian artist *Katerina Putintseva* which proved to be highly popular with all audiences. Inclusive theatre-maker *Jess Rowell*, artist in residence at Draíocht Arts Centre created a workshop for children with additional needs. This sensory movement and music workshop was crafted for children with physical and intellectual disabilities.

The festival also enjoyed excellent intergenerational support from all elements of the community with students from LOETB and Transition Year in Birr and Clara as well as active citizens from Esker Arts Volunteer Panel and Creative Places Edenderry playing a vital role in supporting the smooth running of the festival through their participation as volunteers.



Creative Places Edenderry



Creative Places, Edenderry, a project funded by the Arts Council, led by Creative Lives in partnership with Offaly County Council Arts Office and Edenderry Municipal District, has had a dynamic 2023! with an array of different arts-based activities, workshops and events throughout the year. These have included: Visual Arts, Music, Poetry, Playwriting, Screenwriting and Creative Writing; a Lego Clinic; Creative Movement; Dance; Ceramics; Drama; Radio, Photography and

more. Towards the end of the year, the project saw a more collaborative way of working emerge with different groups across the Community coming together to respond to the ethos of the project. For example, the ASD Friends for Life group, The Parkview Residents Association, The Rainbow Room - parents group at St. Patrick's Primary School, Edenderry Library and more. Creative Places, Edenderry funded six Creative Grants of €500 each in the Community and three Artist Commissions ranging from €4500 - €12,000. Seonaid Murray, Creative Places Edenderry Co-ordinator has said 'I am most proud of the growth in confidence within the Community and witnessing the realisation that this really is an all-inclusive project where all Creative ideas are welcome and supported in a safe, positive environment.'

CAPITAL PROJECTS

Edenderry Library and Arts Base

The Arts Office continues to work in close collaboration with the county librarian in the development of plans for a Multi-Purpose Arts space and Artist's Studio's to be incorporated into the planning of the new library for Edenderry, this include the audience and participant development as part of the Creative Places Edenderry project.

HEALTHY OFFALY



As year-end approaches work has significantly ramped up on all Healthy Offaly Round 4 year 1 actions. All Healthy Offaly actions are due to be completed before 31st December with financial and progress reporting to be submitted to Pobal by 16th February 2024.

At the final quarterly Healthy Offaly Subcommittee meeting, a new '*one stop shop*' progress report was launched. The [report](#) (click link to access) lists details on the composition of the Subcommittee, the genesis of Round 4 and most importantly, a progress report on the six actions currently being rolled out. All six implementing partners gave submitted updates for the progress reports which were discussed at the minute. The Healthy Ireland Coordinator gave a detailed briefing to the partners on what financial and progress information is required to be submitted at year end.

Healthy Offaly Subcommittee



In addition to year end reporting work is also ongoing to identify potential new projects to be rolled out for year 2 of the fund in Offaly. The Healthy Libraries '*Minding me*' action has been fully prepared and will commence in early January. The '*Cycling without Age*' online

booking project is also being finalised with Bord Na Mona to report in mid-December that a supplier has been identified to provide the booking service.

A deadline of 19th January 2024 has been set for all implementing partners to submit their invoices/bank statements/payslips and final project progress reports. In addition to proof of spends and action summaries a list of pre and post project participant questionnaires have been requested from the partners to be submitted to the Healthy Ireland Coordinator. From there the questionnaires will be analysed with Dr. Diane Cooper from Edufit and a report, on whether the goals set by our increasing physical activity and combatting obesity have been achieved, will be drafted. The report will be available for viewing in February 2024.

SPORTS



November proved quite busy as the majority of the Sports Partnership's school programmes were finishing up for Christmas; while work commenced on the establishment of our newest sports hub in Ballycumber.

Education & Training

Offaly Sports Partnership's new sports coaching programme for transition years concluded in St Mary's Secondary School, Edenderry and Colaiste Naomh Cormac, Kilcormac.

The 50 participating students from across the two schools supported the delivery of:

- an adapted sports day for 60 primary school children attending SEN units
- the ACE Coordinator alongside Offaly SP staff and tutors to deliver the Tullamore Harriers based "Fast Feet" regional competition in November
- schools coaching in Ballybryan NS



Funding

Energy Support Scheme phase 3 – five clubs / organisations sought support under this scheme. Confirmation of allocation not yet received

Programmes

ACE programme – Liam O Reilly

November saw the conclusion of the "Fast Feet" programme with five days of fun competition held in Edenderry, Ballycumber, Tullamore, Drumcullen and Portarlinton across the week of 20th to 24th November. 31 national schools took part in the week of competition; with 33 schools taking part across the entire six-week programme. The talent on display was exceptional; while the feedback from the schools has been very positive. I would like to thank the programme staff for their support in delivering the in-school programme and competition; and the various venues that hosted the competition throughout the week.



Community Sports Development Programme – Denise Coghill

The o50s boccia programme continued throughout November with 24 teams participating across three leagues – mens, womens and mixed

Community sports hubs – Jean Brady, Denise Coghill & Liam O Reilly

November saw the ongoing delivery of various sport and physical activity programmes across our sports hubs in Daingean (managed by Liam O Reilly) and Mucklagh (managed by Jean Brady)

Among the programmes being delivered in Daingean sports hub are: -

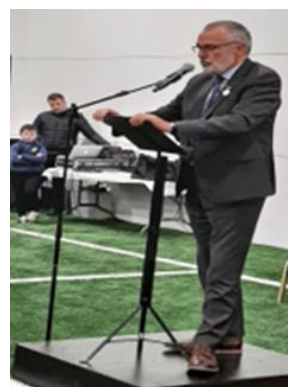
- play school activities for 48 children across the months of October, November and December
- after school coaching with a focus on basketball on Mondays
- badminton on Friday nights from 6.30 – 8pm
- pilates with Sean on Wednesdays at 11.15am
- strength and conditioning for older adults – a new tutor has been sourced to continue delivering this programme to year end. Alana Roddy is now delivering the classes on a Monday and Wednesday with an average attendance of 16 per class

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank Shauna Sweeney for her work in Daingean Sports Hub in recent months; and to wish her well in her new venture



Denise also commenced work on establishing our newest sports hub in Ballycumber. The new hub is being hosted by Ballycumber GAA; and the sports hub programmes will be delivered in the new Ballycumber Activity Centre which was officially opened by the President of the GAA at the end of November. Among the programmes delivered in the hub in November were: -

- “Fast Feet” - five schools in the Ballycumber catchment area availed of this programme; and the hub hosted also one of the regional finals
- walking football for adults aged 30+ yrs. also commenced in the hub in November. With an average attendance of 12 at each session and numbers slowly increasing, one lady aged 73 yrs. came down for 10 mins just to say she had played on the new astro, but then stayed on to participate in the full session and has indicated her intention to keep participating on the programme



Official opening of the Ballycumber Activity Centre & Sports hub



Walking football in the Ballycumber Activity Centre

Healthy Offaly funded “Drop & Move” – Liam O Reilly

The Healthy Offaly funded “Drop & Move” programme continued in nine locations (Arden View, Ballycumber, Bracknagh, Clareen, Cloneyhurke, Kinnitty, Mucklagh, Rhode and Tullamore) for over 100 adults.

Sports Inclusion Development Programme – Jean Brady

November saw the ongoing delivery of various adapted sport and physical activity programmes in schools and communities including: -

- two adapted physical activity sport days for primary schools, supported by Transition Years from St Mary’s Secondary School in Edenderry and Colaiste Naomh Cormac in Kilcormac, in Mucklagh and Ballycumber sports hubs



- “woodlands for health”
- 1:1 physical activity supports
- a presentation on adapted physical activity for “Active Healthy Me” trainees who will be delivering sport and physical activity programmes for service users of adult disability day services

The “Learn to Swim” programme in association with Birr Leisure Centre concluded in November

Women in Sport

The eight week “Her Moves” boxing programme continued throughout November for 16 teenage girls in association with Spartacus Boxing Club. Gráinne Walsh, 66kg Elite Champion joined the group in mid-November for a quick spar and chat, and also presented the participating girls with their “HER Moves” gear.



Four teenage girls have since joined Spartacus Boxing Club in Tullamore; and the programme will conclude in December with a fun outing where the girls will choose an activity of their choice to attend together

For more information on the work of Offaly Sports Partnership, check out www.offalysports.ie or our social media feeds on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

LIBRARY SERVICE

Feeling Festive at Offaly Libraries!



We're inviting all to get into the Christmas spirit with us here in Offaly Libraries where we have something for everyone; for all ages and interests.



Enjoy all the beautiful Christmas Decorations and book displays when you visit our branches as well as the many family events and activities that we will have planned to celebrate **Family Time at your Library (FTAYL)** !



Christmas story times, crafts and movie screenings are just a taste of what's on offer across our library branches, not to mention a special appearance by Mr. Claus himself at Edenderry Library!



We also look forward to hosting merry music recitals from local groups including Silver Strings, Le Cheile Choir and St. Marys Secondary School Choir of Edenderry.

In December, we will have **FTAYL**, with class visits and outreach visits to schools. We will also have Zoom storytimes for the schools who may not be able to come into us.



Family Time at your Library is a core tenet of the national Right to Read initiative which aims to support the involvement of the whole family in children's reading.

More information on all our events can be found on our events calendar at offaly.ie/libraries.

Offaly Libraries STEAM Programme

Offaly Libraries celebrated an excellent programme of Science Week events during November



72 students from across the county enjoyed **Micro:Bits workshops**, delivered in Birr, Clara, Edenderry and Tullamore libraries.

Library staff were delighted to attend a Science Fair at St. Francis Boys National School, where we facilitated Lego challenges and provided Virtual Reality demonstrations for the entire school.



We also delivered exciting VR experiences to students of Rahan National School, as well as providing a story time and fun activities for the children to take home.



Midlands Science put together an exciting programme of Science Week events, which Offaly Libraries were thrilled to host.

Clara Library played host to a fantastic Midlands Science story time with **25 students** in attendance and a lovely evening was had by all **43 attendees** at the



Science of Music event on Thursday, 9th November.

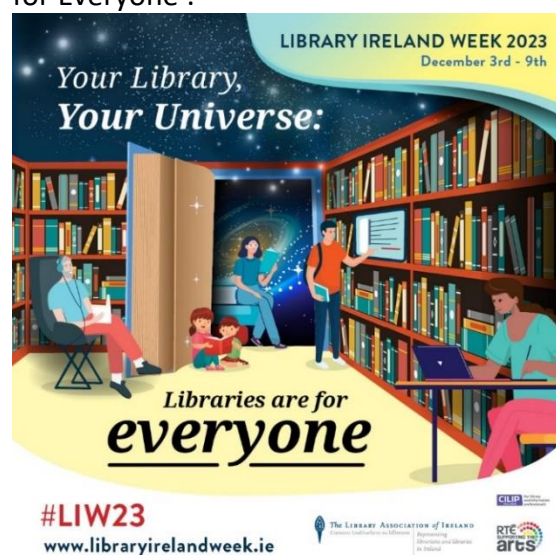
49 people attended a special late opening of Tullamore Library on November 17th, where they explored pre-historic evolution with best-selling author Steve Brusatte in conversation with Ricky Whelan, Offaly County Council's Biodiversity Officer.



Steve, and his wife Anne, also performed a special story time reading of their children's book and a Dinosaur craft for **31 attendees**.

Library Ireland Week 2023

Library Ireland Week takes place from Sunday 3rd December to Saturday 9th December 2023 and this year's theme is 'Your Library, Your Universe: Libraries are for Everyone'.



In keeping with this theme, our library staff have curated an awareness campaign highlighting the many ways Offaly Libraries and its staff ensure our libraries remain spaces for all.

Open days are planned at Banagher, Birr and Tullamore libraries, encouraging all current and prospective members to come in and enquire about their library.

[More information available here.](#)

My Bedtime Story Bags



All children aged 4 and under are invited to pick up a free bedtime story book and library card wallet at their local library.

Parents can choose a bedtime story book in either English or Irish.

This exciting initiative aims to engage all parents of young children to read stories with them at bedtime.

The Little Library Book at Bedtime initiative, part of the First 5 strategy, runs from October to the end of December 2023.



Beat the Energy Bills this Winter

Save energy and reduce your bills with a Home Energy Saving Kit, free to borrow from Offaly Libraries!



Each kit contains five tools and six practical exercises to help measure heating, hot water and electricity consumption.

They will also help identify problem areas such as appliances that may be driving up electricity bills.

[Get in touch with your local library to reserve a kit this Winter](#)

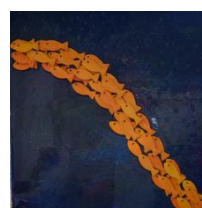
Poetry Book Launch at Birr Library

Birr poet, Eileen Casey, will launch her collection of poems, *River Songs*, in Birr Library at 18.30 on Wed 13th December



River Songs, awarded by Creative Ireland, also enabled Eileen to facilitate poetry workshops in both Saint Brendan's Primary School and The Mercy Convent Primary School, during 2023.

Art Exhibition at Tullamore Library



A collection of artwork produced by Edenderry artist, Jenny Bergin, will be on display in Tullamore Library for the month of December.

Jenny uses wide range of mediums in her art, such as air-dry clay, pebbles, wood, glass, paint and each individual piece is unique.

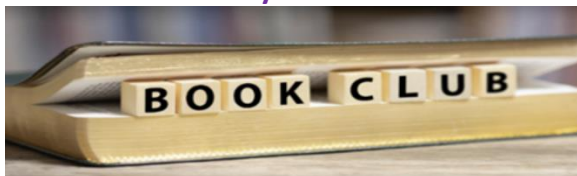
Photography Exhibition, Birr Library

Tom O'Hanlon's 'The Sun, Moon and Stars' photography exhibition will be on display during the month of December with a formal launch taking place on Wednesday, December 6th in Birr Library.



Tom is an award-winning photographer who has built a strong reputation as one of Ireland's leading Astro-photographers, and was shortlisted for the Royal Museum Greenwich Astronomy Photographer of the Year 2023.

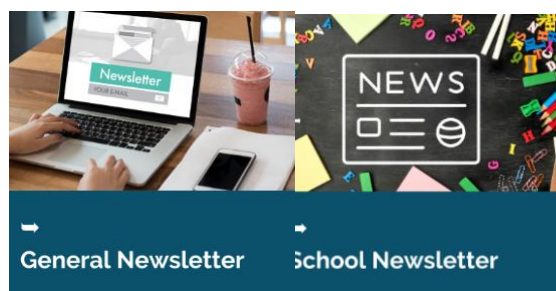
Book Clubs at Offaly Libraries



Did you know that Offaly Libraries have **book clubs** spread across our library branches?

[Check out all our Book Clubs here](#)

Sign up for our Library Newsletters



General Newsletter

School 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 Newsletters](#) and by following [our social media channels](#)

Currently we have **2,727 email subscribers** to the general newsletter and **77 teachers subscribed** to our school newsletter!

Offaly Libraries: Always Open Online!

Access our full range of online services using your library card number and your pin!



Find new and exciting titles on eBooks and eAudiobooks through [Borrowbox](#)

Learn new skills like knitting or accounting with [Universal Class](#)

Learn a Language with over 800 to choose from on [Transparent Language](#)

Get the latest eNewspapers from around the world with [PressReader](#)

[See our full Catalogue of Digital Services here](#)

Christmas Arrangements

NOLLAIG SHONA MERRY CHRISTMAS		
Branch	Last Day of Business	Re-opening Dates
Banagher	*Friday 22nd Dec	Wednesday 3rd Jan
Birr	*Friday 22nd Dec	Tuesday 2nd Jan
Clara	*Friday 22nd Dec	Tuesday 2nd Jan
Daingean	Thursday 21st Dec	Tuesday 2nd Jan
Edenderry	*Friday 22nd Dec	Tuesday 2nd Jan
Ferbane	Thursday 21st Dec	Tuesday 2nd Jan
Kilcormac	Thursday 21st Dec	Tuesday 2nd Jan
Tullamore	*Friday 22nd Dec	Tuesday 2nd Jan
*Libraries will close at the earlier time of 4pm on Friday, 22nd Dec		

Climate Action Environment Water & Transportation

ENVIRONMENT

Climate Action

Local Authority Climate Action Plan

Offaly County Council have developed our draft Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 for adoption before 23rd February 2024. As part of this process and in line with Section 16 of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, this draft plan is currently on public display for consultation purposes.



The public consultation period runs from **24th October until 4.00pm, Wednesday 6th December 2023**, and submissions or observations are welcomed in writing or by using our dedicated on-line portal available through the council website.

<https://www.offaly.ie/climate-change-action-plan-consultation/>

Copies of the draft Plan, in Irish and English, together with the associated SEA Environmental Report and AA Natura Impact Report are available to view at the following locations:

- Áras an Chontae
- Tullamore MD, Acres Hall
- Tullamore Library
- Edenderry Town Hall
- Edenderry Library
- Birr Civic Offices
- Birr Library

All submissions and observations on the LACAP are welcome.

Community Climate Action Fund

The Community Climate Action Fund (CCAF) will be launched within Offaly on 13th December 2023, and remain open for application for 12 weeks, until 6th March 2024. The Community Climate Action Programme, under the Climate Action Fund, has been developed under two strands addressing both direct climate action, and climate education and capacity building.

Strand 1 has two parts: strand 1 entitled "Action: Building Low Carbon Communities" for €24 million, and strand 1a entitled "Shared Island Community Climate Action" for €3 million.

Strand 1: Action: Building Low Carbon Communities

€444,000 is being provided to Offaly Co. Co. to work in partnership with communities, large and small, rural and urban, within their areas of operation to build low carbon communities in a considered and structured way. The projects will address the following five themes:

- Home/energy
- Travel
- Food and waste
- Shopping and recycling
- Local climate and environmental action

Strand 1A: Shared Island Community Climate Action

In addition, a total of €3 million is being provided by the Government's Shared Island Fund to support cross-border and all-island community climate action initiatives as an integrated part of the

Community Climate Action Programme. Strand 1a enables communities and LAs to propose a cross-border project in partnership with organisations in Northern Ireland. The themes are the same as strand 1.

Offaly County Council is hoping to receive applications to avail of the €444,000 allocated for community groups in Strand 1. Suitable projects will receive 100% funding and must be completed within 18 months of the signed grant agreement (between OCC and relevant community group). The Community Climate Action Officer will co-ordinate this fund within Offaly Co. Co. Expressions of interest will be through an on-line application form available on www.Offaly.ie

Energy

Offaly County Council Energy Action Team launched their “Energize Offaly” campaign aimed at raising awareness amongst staff and elected members of the work done to date to increase energy efficiency across the organization and promote further action to help achieve statutory targets.

Offaly County Council have again signed up to the SEAI “Reduce Your Use” for 2024, which aims to reduce unnecessary energy consumption across the public sector.



Environmental Management

From January to end of November, the Environment Section received 926 environmental complaints. All were investigated in a timely manner and resolved where possible.

Complaint Category	No
Litter pollution (fly tipping/casual litter/litter on property)	634
Waste (dumping/burning/unauthorised sites)	99
Noise (community/commercial/industrial)	20
Control of Horses	21
Control of Dogs	72
Water Quality/Services	37
Abandoned vehicles	16
Air Pollution	27

Environment Complaints

Offaly County Councils website has been updated to include an online environmental complaint form. This means that it is easier for members of the public to register a complaint. Environments Complaints Handling procedure has also been amended.

Litter Management

Following the positive feedback from the area offices regarding the solar compaction litter bins, Environment applied for and was approved for funding for additional bins under the Anti-Dumping Initiative. This allowed the Council to increase the quantity of bins across the county to 15. The bins can hold up to 8 times more litter than a conventional litter bin and allow for more efficient streamlining of the Council’s Street cleansing services. Bins were installed in the following locations:

- ✓ Heritage Centre, Ferbane & Emmet Square, Birr & Market Square, Birr & Clara Square

- ✓ Tullamore – Millenium Plaza & St. Kyron Street & O'Connor Square
- ✓ Edenderry – JKL Street. & Town Hall, Medical Hall & Main Street
- ✓ Mountbolus Park
- ✓ Harbour Road, Banagher
- ✓ Crinkle Village and Cloneygowan Village

An additional benefit is that the bins have advertising panels on each side, which allow for environmental messages and themes to be exhibited. Environment has taken the opportunity to promote the Council's Climate Strategy to raise awareness among the public. These panels can be changed to allow for any environmental theme to be advertised.



Environmental Awareness

The Environment Department participated in a pilot programme "Composting for Schools". Four schools who expressed an interest in composting were selected to work with Composting Ireland. The programme consisted of workshop training for teachers and community members, on-site training on how to compost, develop wormeries and manage organic waste

within the school. The schools who are participating are: Scoil Naomh Mhuire, Cloneygowan, St. Mary's NS, Pullough, Scoil na Croise Naofa, Geashill and St. Josephs NS, Arden, Tullamore. So far, the feedback has been very positive, and it is hoped to extend this programme in the coming year to more schools.

Burial Grounds



St. Mary's Cemetery, Edenderry: We are currently in the process of tendering for the construction of the extension to St. Mary's

Cemetery Committee Grants: This year we have supported seventeen cemetery committees with grants for the upkeep and enhancement of their local cemeteries. The overall standard of work carried out by these volunteer groups continues to be very high and we will continue supporting these groups in 2024, and we look forward to working with new committees in 2024.

RURAL WATER SERVICES

Subsidies The GWS annual subsidy was paid to the 15 no. Private and Public Group Water Schemes, amounting to €1,072,067.00

Capital The Rural Water Unit of the Department of Housing have advised that the next Multi-Annual Rural Water Programme capital funding scheme will be announced imminently. Under the most recent programme over €2m of funding was secured for 24 separate projects ranging from public health measures to amalgamation of group water schemes.



Well Grants Grants are available from Offaly County Council to assist with the improvement of a water supply to an individual private dwelling (this means a water supply providing water intended for human consumption and domestic purposes that serves only one house).

The key features of the scheme are:

- The grant payable for rehabilitation works is 85% of approved costs subject to a maximum of €3,000.00, where the Local Authority agrees that this is the most appropriate solution.
- The grant payable for the provision of a new well is 85% of approved costs subject to a maximum of €5,000.00, where the Local Authority agrees that this is the most appropriate solution.
- The provision of a water quality treatment system (typically filtration and Ultra Violet treatment) qualifies for 100% funding up to a maximum of €1,000.00, where the Local Authority agrees that this is the

most appropriate solution. This can be claimed on its own or in addition to either the grant for rehabilitation works or the grant for a new well. This does not include water softeners in hard water areas.

- The minimum grant threshold is €750.00

Please note that this scheme does not apply to houses to which a Public Water Supply or a Group Water Scheme has already been provided or can reasonably be provided.

In the past 12 months we have assisted 15 households with grants under this scheme totalling €65,549.95.

Domestic Waste Water Treatment The DWWTS grant scheme will be amended from 01/01/2024, removing the requirement for the septic tank to be registered and also increasing the grant to 85% of allowable costs up to a maximum of €12,000.00

Grants for a Septic Tank or Domestic Waste Water Treatment System (DWWTS), to assist with the costs of remediation, repair or upgrading works to, or replacement of, such DWWTS are only available from a Local Authority where a septic tank has been inspected by the Local Authority or Local Authority Waters Programme Office (LAWPRO) under one of the following inspections regimes:

National Inspection Plan

- Prioritised Areas for Action, as outlined in the River Basin Management Plan, and remediation, repair or upgrading works or replacement of the DWWTS is recommend after inspection by the Local Authority.

- Where a dwelling is in a High Status Objective Catchment Area, and remediation, repair or upgrading works or replacement of the DWWTS are recommended after inspection by the Local Authority.

If persons have been recommended remediation, repair or upgrading works or replacement of your DWWTS as per above then they may be entitled to a grant towards the works required and the application form for the DWWTS grant will be provided to you by Offaly County Council.

Domestic Lead Remediation Grants

The Domestic Lead Remediation Grant Scheme has been in existence since 2016 and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage have revised the eligibility criteria with effect from 1 December 2022.

Lead is a naturally occurring metal that was used for pipework and plumbing in some houses built up to, and including, the 1970s. However, exposure to lead in drinking water has been identified as a serious public health risk. The grant scheme was introduced in line with the Government's National Lead Strategy in order to reduce people's exposure to lead in drinking water.

The aim of the grant is to assist households with the cost of replacing lead pipes and fittings within the boundaries of the property. The grant is available if you receive a water supply from either a public or private water supplier.

According to the World Health Organisation, there is no completely safe level of lead in drinking water. The best and most effective way of dealing with lead in drinking water is to replace all lead pipes

and all lead plumbing delivering drinking water to the house concerned.

The new eligibility conditions in the revised grant include:

- Removal of the means test requirement;
- Introduction of a uniform grant rate of 100% of the eligible costs of the replacement of any such lead pipes and/or related fittings, or €5,000, whichever is the lower;
- An additional eligible cost can be claimed to a maximum of €200 for the provision of a certificate from a laboratory or notification from a registered building professional, as outlined at (b) and (c) above and provided for in Regulation 5(1)(b) and 5(1)(c). This cost is to be included in the calculation of the maximum eligible cost total of €5,000. Note, any indirect costs incurred by the applicant themselves are not eligible costs;
- The house concerned must be occupied by the applicant as their normal place of residence;
- Minimum expenditure on eligible works in order to qualify for a grant has been increased from €200 to €750.

Grant application forms are available on offaly.ie or from the CAERW section by contacting 057 9357403

Veterinary

control of Dogs In the past 12 months we have cared for over 300 dogs in the Dog Shelter which is an approximately 10% increase on the previous 12 months.

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 72 since the start of the year and

brought 2 successful prosecutions through the courts in 2023.

Control of Horses We have dealt with 21 complaints under Control of Horse legislation from January to August 2023, which resulted in the seizure of 11 horses and donkeys.

Veterinary Inspections Offaly County Council continues to operate the Shared Service Agreement for Veterinary Services

in the Westmeath County Council administrative area.

TRANSPORTATION

Electric Vehicle Fleet

The Roads and Infrastructure Department has taken delivery of 5 new Electric Vehicles which will be deployed in the coming weeks. The 5 new vehicles will play a significant role in Offaly County Council's migration towards service provision using Zero or Low Carbon Fleet. The arrival of these vehicles coupled with the commencement of the migration of the remaining fleet towards Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil in 2024 will on completion provide a Corporate Fleet Carbon reduction well in advance of 90%.

Edenderry Inner Relief Road

The main contractor is making good progress on the delivery of Stage 2 of the Edenderry Inner Relief Road. The works remain on schedule for a completion date of April 2024.

Grand Canal Greenway

Works on the remaining 3 contracts on the Grand Canal Greenway project are progressing on program. It is anticipated that the entire Grand Canal Greenway mainline scheme will be completed in Q1 2024. Funding to commence the links to the Greenway has been secured for 2024 with the Edenderry Harbor to the Greenway due for tender in Q1 of 2024. Approval has also been secured for the

Ballycommon Trailhead scheme to proceed to tender and it is anticipated that this will be constructed in 2024 subject to funding approval. It is also planned to commence and progress a feasibility study with regards to continuing a link from Shannon Harbour to Banagher in order to terminate the scheme within an urban setting.

Proposed Part 8 Schemes

The following Part 8 schemes will be progressed in the coming weeks and presented to each of the respective Municipal District Meetings prior to public consultation.

- Cloghan Active Travel Scheme
- Daingean Active Travel Scheme
- Monasteroris / Rhode Road Improvement Works

Speed Limit Review

Following engagement with Transport Infrastructure Ireland we are awaiting final agreement from TII on minor amendments to the speed limits on the National Secondary Road Network. It is anticipated that the Speed Limit review will now come before the members in February 2024

Public Lighting Maintenance

Due to the nature of the asset and the ongoing failure rate across our Public Lighting Network, our maintenance contractor has deployed additional resources to Offaly County.

The following is a breakdown of the Public Lighting stats as of the 12th of December. There are 253 faults on the system of which 40 require third party intervention and as such cannot be repaired by the maintenance contractor.

Therefore, the current actionable faults amount to 213 faults or 2.29% of the lighting stock. It is expected that this number will greatly reduce due to the additional resources assigned across the County from week beginning the 11th of Dec 2024.

The breakdown of the 213 faults across each MD are as follows:
Of the 201 faults recorded the following is a breakdown per Municipal District.

MD	No Of Faults	Total No of Lights in the MD	% fault of MD Lights Only	% fault per MD of the Countywide Public Lighting Stock
Birr MD	64	2962	2.16%	0.69%
Tullamore MD	100	3933	2.54%	1.07%
Edenderry MD	49	2405	2.03%	0.53%

Anna Marie Delaney, Chief Executive

Finance

Draft Consolidated Revenue Account Income & Expenditure Summary by Service Division to 30 September 2023			
	Expenditure €	Income €	
Housing & Building	13,139,666	13,056,983	
Road Transport & Safety	24,220,069	18,838,941	
Water Services	3,491,093	3,302,418	
Development Management	9,149,702	4,534,910	
Environmental Services	7,225,597	1,500,055	
Recreation & Amenity	3,961,021	424,268	
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	483,834	189,672	
Miscellaneous Services	6,225,098	7,224,766	
Local Government Fund / GPG		6,238,345	
Gross Rates Income		12,623,230	
	67,896,080	67,933,588	
Deficit to 30th September 2023		37,508	
OCC to 30th November 2023	<u>Rates</u>	<u>Rents</u>	<u>Loans</u>
	<u>€m</u>	<u>€m</u>	<u>€m</u>
Opening Balance January 1, 2023	3.00	0.56	0.10
Net Invoices & Adjustments, waivers	13.72	7.32	0.49
2023 Cash Collected to end of November	14.41	7.34	0.54
Closing Balance November 30th 2023	2.31	0.53	0.05
2022 Cash collected to November 30th	13.22	6.75	0.51
% Collection at this point in 2022	109%	109%	105%
*** Collections impacted in Q1 2022 by waiver uncertainty and effect of lockdowns			
Bank Overdraft to 30th November 2023			% YTD
Number of days Overdrawn in Bank year to date		58	17%
Bank Interest and non conforming charges to November 30th 202		€10,385	
Bank Administration and transactional charges to November 30th		€33,648	