

**JULY / AUGUST
2022**



Comhairle Chontae Uíbh Fhailí
Offaly County Council

MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT

#Do: Baill Comhairle Chontae Uíbh Fhailí

To: Each Member of Offaly County Council

Tuairisc mhíosúil bainistíochta a bhreithniú i gcomhair tionóil mí Meán Fómhair

Monthly Management Report for consideration at the September 2022 Monthly Meeting.

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS:

A schedule of Chief Executive Orders is included with the Council Agenda.

FINANCE:

Finance Report– Appendix 1

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

PRIDE OF PLACE COMPETITION 2022

For 2022 the following communities were nominated by OCC:

Community	Category	Municipal
Geashill Tidy	Creative	Edenderry
Mucklagh	Population	Tullamore
Pullough Village	Community Resilience	Birr MD

The awards ceremony is due to be held in Dublin on **21 January 2023** where we wish each entrant every success.

OFFALY LIBRARIES STEAM PROGRAMME 2022/23

Offaly Libraries is looking forward to celebrating Space Week, 4th – 10th October

REPORT AT A GLANCE

Heritage Week in Offaly

Heritage Week saw a welcome return to communities and groups hosting events in person with over 30 well attended events throughout the county.



*Caimin O'Brien at Glass Furnace event
August 2022*

Built Heritage

The total funding in 2022 towards the conservation of the built heritage is €428,900, with 32 projects to be completed on site by October 2022.

Local Enterprise Office

Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail, Damien English, T.D., made a visit to Offaly in July where he met with council officials and members of the Local Enterprise Office Offaly team as well as some of our client companies.

PLANNING

	To end Aug 2022	To end Aug 2021	Total 2021
Planning Applications	466	540	831
Extensions of Duration Applications & Assessments	12	12	13
Warning Letters and (Enforcement Notices) issued	31(5)	21(1)	30 (2)

During the month of July and August 2022, the following large planning applications were received:

Summit Solar Ltd.	Solar PV development on two separate and detached parcels of land at Rathure North (parcel 1) and Parkmore (parcel 2).
Nicholas O' Neill	24 no. dwellings at Figile Manor, Clonbullogue.
Renewable Energy Systems Limited	Planning permission for 10 years to construct a solar pv energy development in the townlands of Ballyteigue Little and Derrygrogan Big, Tullamore. Total site area 73.9 hectares to include

	other ancillary infrastructure.
Bord na Mona Powergen	Construction of a pilot scale hydrogen electrolysis plant with associated infrastructure and site development works, within the Mount Lucas windfarm.
Reusable Plastic Ltd	Construction of 7 no. Industrial units, entrance and ancillary works, Syngefield Industrial Estate, Birr.
Brendan and Maeve Garry	Change of use from resource & leisure to 12 no. self-contained apartments comprised of 5 no. one bed apartments and 7 no. studio units with alterations to existing elevations and layout along with all associated site development works at the Maltings, Castle Street, Birr. The proposed development will consist of works to a protected structure ref no. 53-206

B.P.I. Investments Ltd	Three storey primary care centre with treatment rooms, offices, surgery space, pharmacy, structure for waste, generator and external plant, an ambulance base, car parking, new access road and all associated site development works at Railway Road, Birr.		associated site development and landscaping works. The application seeks permission for the solar farm to remain for 40 years and for permanent permission for the substation. Townlands of Trascaun and Clondoolusk.
Elgin Energy Services Limited	PP for a 10 year permission (to construct development) for a solar farm comprising the installation of photovoltaic panels on ground mounted frames in rows on an area of c.83.55ha. The development will also comprise a single storey on site 38kv substation within a compound, 2 no single storage containers. 45 no. battery storage containers within a compound, 40 no. inverter stations, ducting & underground cabling, perimeter fencing, mounted cctv cameras, provision of internal access tracks and all	Cush Wind Limited	Continued operation of existing 80m mast and all ancillary infrastructure and associated site development reinstatement works, increase height of mast from 80m to 100m. Operational lifetime of proposed development will be 5years. AA screening report with application. Galross West, Five Alley, Birr.
		The Estate of Anthony Mulvin	5 individual blocks consisting of 17 no. Two-storey 3-bedroom terrace houses, new vehicular site entrance, car parking, new landscaping and all associated site development works at Rhode.

Forward Planning

Following the pre-draft consultation undertaken in June to assist in the preparation of the draft Birr Local Area Plan (LAP) 2023-2029, Forward Planning have written up the draft LAP, which will be placed on public display 15th September 2022.

Architecture

BHIS 2022

27 applicants received Provisional Approval, total allocation of **€126,400**. 5 projects complete, 4 withdrawn, 18 to complete with all paperwork to OCC by September 23.

Sample project underway Mallet Tavern (Before and current)



HSF 2022:

Three projects underway, Lowland House (€38k) – window repairs, Tullamore Gaol (€25) - railings and wall repair and Cloneyhurke House (€38k) – arch, steps and render repair.

Sample project Cloneyhurke House – arch repairs (bricks with frost damage and mortar wash-out: Before, during and current)



Creative Ireland

Annual Follies Project €10,000, Bloomfield Mausoleum underway, site visits reports etc. Vernacular Architecture fund projects €5,000



Banagher windows and rear door complete €3,600 (based on old photo)



Follies Trust

Provided funding towards repairs of Bloomfield Mausoleum **€3,500. Works complete for 2022** (separate phase may include repairs to stone apron)

Heritage Council Stewardship

Funding: €15,000 approved for OCC, 4 new Offaly projects. Funding includes edits and printing costs for new publication - Traditional Architecture in Offaly by Rachel Mc Kenna, to printer by October 2022, c.286 pages.

Hawkswood Dowry Chest – repairs complete €1,300 (only sourced Dowry Chest in Offaly to date, in outbuilding, conserved and returned indoors)

**CMF**

Application by AP, Emmel Castle roof repairs underway to be monitored by Architect, **€85,000** funding

Architectural/Conservation Report

Planning Applications and Pre Planning, note significant increase in number of reports required each year.

- 2019 – 17 Reports (Jan-May)
- 2020 – 23 Reports (Jan-May)
- 2021 – 47 Reports (Jan-May)
- 2022 – 51 Reports (Jan-May)

Birr Destination Town

Continue to work with team, meeting every three weeks moving on €650k Failte Ireland Funding, liaise with consultants for new entrance to The Green, Tender to determine costs due back September.

Greenways

Work has commenced the c.5km stretch of the Grand Canal Greenway (North Bank) between Henesey's Bridge Rahan and Pullough. This will move the greenway to a much more lightly trafficked route and will also bring it right through Pullough Village, giving scope for economic development opportunities.

Residential Zoned Land Tax

In accordance with the Finance Act 2022, the council has commenced the mapping exercise to identify zoned land eligible for the tax. This is a very considerable piece of work and is being led by the Forward Planning section.

Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) Review

Under its statutory Programme of Planning Reviews under section 31AS of the Planning & Development Act, the OPR initiated its review process of Offaly County Council in April 2022 and the formal notification came in June. The planning section provided information for the review and staff from the OPR's office visited the council for 2 days in August. The report will issue in due course.

HERITAGE

Offaly Heritage Plan 2023-2027

The plan has been drafted and out for public consultation with the amended plan being presented at the September County Council meeting.

Heritage Council funding

Funding has been assigned for the following projects.

- Streetscape projects for O'Connor Square and High Street in Tullamore and Market Square and Castle Street in Birr examining the condition of the facades and usage. Lotts Architecture are carrying out the architectural input and Offaly History are doing the historical analysis.
- Arctron 3D scanning project - hosting the carved 3d scans of carved stone, Ardara Bridge and the Glass Furnace near Shinrone on Sketchfab online.
- Publication about the Camcor River researched and written by John Feehan

Offaly Biodiversity

- **National Biodiversity Action Plan Funding** – works are planned for Syngefield Demesne this autumn to proactively manage the 8ha for biodiversity within the context of the demesne landscape. In order to air the Council's plans for the site, an event was held for Heritage Week with a walk over of the site led by the heritage officer and John Feehan.
- The series **Wildflowers of Offaly YouTube** videos by John Feehan continues to develop and is hosted on the Offaly Heritage YouTube channel.

<https://www.youtube.com/user/offalyheritage>

- Working with Laois County Council we have continued with the commissioning of **In Your Nature Podcasts by BIRDWatch Ireland**.
- The **Biodiversity Summer School** led by John Feehan was able to run again in 2022 and focused on the Camcor River for the five days

Creative Ireland

In 2022 a budget of €145,000 has been allocated to the Offaly Creative Ireland core programme with additional funding for Older Persons project and Cruinniu Children's Day in June. In Offaly the team involves the libraries, arts, architecture, heritage, enterprise and community all working together with the heritage officer as county co-ordinator. A wide range of predominantly community led projects are facilitated and supported and can be viewed on <https://www.creativeireland.gov.ie/en/offaly/>

A new five-year Creative Ireland plan for Offaly is currently being prepared and an open meeting was held in each MD last week to provide community input.

Decade of Commemorations

A grant offer of €57,000 was received following a joint proposal from the Council with Offaly History. A comprehensive body of work is being delivered with blogs, podcasts and a website.

<https://www.offalyhistory.com/offaly-and-the-decade-of-centenaries>

We are also working with the community in Crinkill where a series of events have been delivered to mark the events at Birr Barracks in Crinkill.

Community Monuments Fund

Four projects received funding in 2022 of c €85,000 each:

- Conservation of the medieval sections of the boundary walls of Seir Kieran graveyard in Clareen. In addition to conservation works, the heritage office supported a geophysical survey of the wider monastic site and a community event to provide an update on works during Heritage Week.
- Emmel Castle roofing and repairs
- Castlearmstrong near Ballycumber (phase two) – conservation of castle masonry walls
- Kilcomin Church near Shinrone – conservation of masonry walls and collapsed boundary wall

Medieval Churches

- We are now mid-way through year 2 of the Just Transition Project led by the Laois Heritage Office. The churches being conserved in Offaly are Monasteroris in Edenderry, Kilbride (nr canal) in Tullamore and Kilmurryely near Shinrone in Birr MD. The conservation plans are all drafted. Initial vegetation control has taken place. Revamp Contractors have been appointed and are currently on site in Laois. They are due at Monasteroris at the end of September.
- The maintenance programme at the medieval church sites that have been conserved in recent years continues.

Offaly Archives Service

Continued liaison with Offaly History to deliver the County Archive Service.

Tidy Towns' Network

Working with the Community Section, we continue to support Tidy Towns groups including those who participated in the Pride of Place competition in August.

REGENERATION

Town Regeneration Officer

Offaly County Council has appointed a Town Regeneration Officer, Olwen Cummins. Town regeneration officers will be crucial in managing the implementation of the Town Centre First Policy at a local level and ensuring the development and implementation of Town Centre First plans. A national Town Centre First office will drive the delivery of many of the recommendations outlined in the policy and support the co-ordinated roll-out of the policy by local authorities, town regeneration officers and town teams.

Town Centre First, Clara 2021

Urban Agency Architects Ltd. were appointed as the successful tenderers, on 19th July 2022, to prepare the Clara Town Centre First Plan.

The Clara Town Team has been established with members representing the following groups supported by Offaly County Council:

- Community Council
- Heritage Society
- GAA
- Tidy Towns
- Family Resource Centre
- Roman Catholic Church
- Church of Ireland
- Local Primary Schools
- Local Business Owners
- Local Councillors
- Chamber of Commerce

The initial stages of the plan-making process has commenced with the Project Team from Urban Agency, representatives from Tullamore MD and Offaly County Council's Regeneration Team meeting with the Clara Town Team, on Wednesday 10th August 2022.

The Consultants are currently in the process of preparing the Inception Report for the plan, based on information and data gathered at this meeting and directly from Offaly County Council. Presentation of the Inception Report, including the Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy, will mark the completion of the First Stage of a Six Stage process.

Streetscape Enhancement Measure

Tuesday 30th August, 2022 Minister Humphreys announced the successful nominated towns under the Streetscape Enhancement Measure 2022. Clara is Offaly's town for this Measure in 2022. Only one town per Local Authority is eligible. This Measure supports streetscape improvements such as painting (including murals), signage replacement, shopfront improvement, lighting, and canopies. The Regen team in consultation with Clara Tidy Towns have successfully received approximately 60 applications. These applications will be assessed for eligibility and will be sent on to the DRCD for final approval, closing date 7th October.

Town and Village Renewal Scheme

The Department of Rural and Community Development announced a call for TVR 2022 funding on 27th May, 2022. 10 applications were developed and prepared in a very quick turn around time by Regen Team in conjunction with other relevant sections, community groups and stakeholders for the closing date 22nd July, 2022.

Offaly County Council advertised for expressions of interest on potential projects from community groups on the 8th June. The criteria measures highlighted for support in 2022 were:

- tackling dereliction and bringing vacant properties back into use,
- marketing campaigns to attract remote workers,
- investments in Plazas, green spaces, parks and recreational amenities,
- night-time economy projects

A new strand of TVR in 2022 was a **Building Acquisition Measure**, which allowed a grant for the Council to acquire maximum of 2 vacant/derelict town centre properties for redevelopment for community use only. In consultation with the Community Development groups in Moneygall and Ballyboy 2 such properties were selected and a Letter of Understanding has been signed with the DRCD to acquire a property in Ballyboy and Moneygall subject to terms and conditions.

There are currently 13 active TVR projects from 2019-2021 as follows:

Birr MD	Edenderry MD	Tullamore MD
Shinrone phase II (2019)	Blundell Park (2019)	Mount Bolus phase I (2019)
Pollagh (2020)	Cloneygowan (2020)	Mucklagh (2020)
Ferbane Fairgreen (2020)	Daingean Phase II (2020)	Mount Bolus Phase II (2020)
Ballyboy (2021)	Kilmalogue (2020)	Killeigh (2021)
	Clonbullogue (2021)	

Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF)

Successful RRDF projects progress update

2021 Edenderry Phase II

- Demolition and site clearance of 33/34 JKL Street is now complete
- Contracts signed with Sean Harrington Architects as design team for community library
- OPW site acquisition ongoing



Pictured at the signing of contracts for Design Team Services for the new Community Library at Edenderry were:

Seated: Mr. Stephane Duclot, Acting Chief Executive, O.C.C., Mr. Sean Harrington, Sean Harrington Architects and Cllr. Robert McDermott, Cathaoirleach of Edenderry Municipal District.

Standing: Ms. Sharon Kennedy, Director of Service O.C.C., Ms. Louise Direen Staff Officer, Edenderry Municipal District, Ms. Eimear McGinn, Offaly County Librarian and Mark Mahon, District Engineer, Edenderry Municipal District.

2020 Banagher Regeneration

- A 2nd public consultation phase for the Architectural and Tourism Master Plan for Banagher Marina and environs is ongoing with a second public survey live on social

media platforms, closing date Sept 25th.

- Shannon Royal Hotel site acquisition ongoing
- Other project elements to progress in 2022 once Master Plan process is fully complete.

2021 – Ferbane Regeneration

- St Joseph’s Convent purchase complete
- Preparing procurement documentation for design team for Convent redevelopment.
- Meanwhile additional community uses are being explored.

Outdoor Recreational Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS)

Successful ORIS projects progress update

2019 – Clara footpath linkage to Bog Boardwalk

- Nearing completion

2020 - ‘Route to the Slieve Bloom Mountain Bike Trails’, ‘Kinnitty Woods Novice-Grade MTB Loop’, and “Rediscovering Castle Bernard’s Historic Bridges”

- Part 8 now in place
- Progressing to tender for “route to the trails” from Kinnitty village
- Novice loop to be constructed by Coillte
- Rediscovering Castle Bernard’s Historic Bridges project underway

2021 – Derrycastle Lakes and Trails, project development

- Steering group established
- Tender documents for development plan being prepared

2021 – Clashawauk River Walk

- Initial consultation in progress

ROADS

Electric Vehicle Charging Points (DC/Fast Charging)

The Roads Department of Offaly County Council have been working in partnership with Eir/Easy Go in order to delivery 11 new DC charging points across our County. The proposed scheme is classified as a public private collaboration designed to provide DC charging points across critical nodes on our Roads Infrastructure while also serving our rural communities in order promote our migration as a County towards Zero Emission transport options. The new EV chargers are to be installed in:

- Tullamore
- Edenderry
- Birr
- Kilmalogue, Portarlinton
- Clara
- Banagher
- Ferbane
- Daingean
- Kilcormac
- Shinrone &
- Rhode

Offaly County Council have further secured funding from our partners in the Department of Transport's Zero Emission Vehicle Ireland (ZEV) for the installation of two fast charging points at Aras an Chontae and the Machinery Yard in Tullamore as part of a pilot scheme.

Roads Programme 2022

Delivery of the 2022 Roads programme is now substantially completed with remaining schemes now at construction stage with a view to completion in October 2022.

Birr Distributor Road

Contracts have been signed between Offaly County Council and Tobin Consulting Engineers for the provision of Technical

Consultancy services for the Design and Construction of the Birr Distributor Road. Design works have now commenced with a view to construction commencing in Q1 of 2024 subject to approvals and funding.

The objective of the proposed Road Scheme is to create a road link between the Tullamore Road (N52) at Woodlands and the Birr to Banagher Road at Cappaneale (R439). This critical link will:

- relieve congestion in Birr Town by providing an alternative to the existing routes through the town
- provide better access to the national road network for major local industry
- open up zoned development lands,
- provide improved access to St Brendan's Secondary School
- allow the tourism potential offered by Birr Castle and the town's historic and unique Georgian town centre to be realized.

Additional LIS Allocation for the works Program 2022

Offaly County Council received an additional allocation of approximately €294,025 under the LIS program. The total allocation under the LIS program for 2022 now equates to €674,785. Works on all approved schemes are ongoing and scheduled for completion in early Q4 2022.

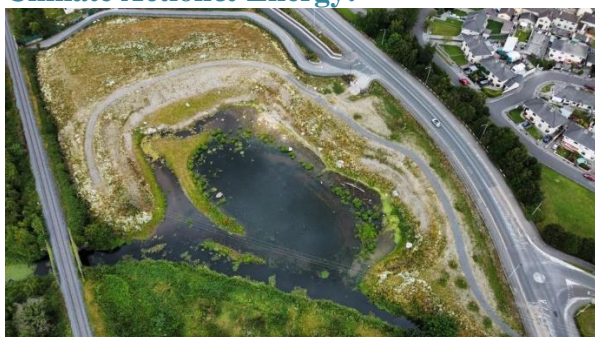
Killina Cycleway

The new link from the Grand Canal Greenway is now completed and opened for use by all stakeholders. This link onto the Grand Canal Greenway delivers on the vision as described under the recently issued 'National Sustainable Mobility Policy'. That vision commits 'To Connect people and places with sustainable mobility that is safe, green, accessible and efficient.'



ENVIRONMENT AND WATER SERVICES

Climate Action & Energy:



Tullamore Living River project continues to take shape as shown in this drone shot. Planting of trees will take place over the next few months. A guided walk of the project took place during heritage week, and was very well attended.

Environment

Community groups in Offaly have undertaken 208 litter picks, with pickers and bags supplied by OCC. Overall, 20 tonnes have been collected this year.

Two solar bins gone into Birr area – Emmet Sq. and Crinkle. Three more bins are due to go into Tullamore and Edenderry in September.

OCC had a successful prosecution case in July where the defendant was convicted of illegal dumping.

Rural Water Programme

The next Multi Annual Rural Water Programme circular and measures are due

to be issued to Local Authorities in q4/22 and we are contacting all relevant Group Water Schemes to advise them to begin preparing their submissions. We are currently assessing viable candidate area in the county and will be entering the feasibility report stage of the process soon. The implications of the new MARWP measure – A8 – Waste Water Collection and Treatment Needs for Villages and Settlements without access to Public Waste Water Services are being considered and we are currently assessing viable candidate areas in the county.

All GWSs Annual Subsidy applications have been received and we are currently in the process of paying subsidies to the applicable schemes.

Burial Grounds.

Construction works commenced in August 2022 on the extension of Kilcoursey Cemetery Clara



Pictured above are, Mr. Tom Shanahan, D.o.S., O.C.C., Cllr. Frank Moran, Cathaoirleach of Offaly County Council, Mr. Gordon Healy, Healy & Sons Civil Works Ltd. and Mark Maken-Finlay, A.O., O.C.C. (photo by Paul Moore, paulmoorephotography.ie)

The total extension of the lawn cemetery will cover of 2.246ac. (0.909 ha.), and in total, the development will provide 1028 no. new graves spaces. It is estimated that the extension will provide capacity for at

least 50 years. The works will be carried out in phases and 138 no. graves will be provided in Phase 1 along with a new entrance from the Horseleap Rd., provision of car parking spaces in the extension, resurfacing of the current car parking space on the Kilbeggan Rd and landscaping. The works should be substantially completed in 6 to 8 weeks. Subsequent phases will comprise construction of footpaths and headstone foundations as the need arises.

Water Services

There are a number of schemes being designed, developed and constructed around the County.

Leak Reduction Programme –Find & Fix

The following District Meter Areas (DMA) have recently been completed within their desired targets - Clonbullogue, Lisduff, Dunkerrin, Kinnitty and Croghan

While our contractors are currently working in the following areas - Birr East, Birr Town Centre, Doon, Edenderry East, Blundelwood High, Fahy Rhode, Croghan, Rhode Garcarrig, Cloncollig and Tullamore

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

- There are 532 on the Social Housing List awaiting housing support at the end of August 2022.
- A further 690 active tenancies are currently being supported under the Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Scheme, 15 signed up for HAP and 16 exited from HAP in July and August.
- At the end of August, 19 single people, 14 families and 24 children were being supported in emergency accommodation.
- Revised Differential Rent Scheme becomes effective from 1st September 2022.
- 13 Local Authority Ireland Home Loans applications have been received in 2022 to date. 3 has been approved, 6 declined, 3 ineligible

and the remainder are awaiting decisions.

- Summary of Social Housing Assessments (SSHA) 2022 to determine all open and qualified applicants as at 1st November 2022. All relevant applicants have been written to and are requested to submit the form and supporting documentation by 16th September 2022.

Housing Stock – Number, Maintenance & Repair

- Total housing stock at end of August 2022 is 2001.
- 271 maintenance calls were logged in August.

Housing Capital Programme Update

- Raheen, Clara development (38 units) – The Revised Stage 4 approval application was lodged with the DHLGH on 18th August 2022 following the retendering process using the new Public Works Form of Contract.
- Dargan Drive, Chancery Lane (20 Units) – Part 8 passed in May council meeting. Stage 3 to be submitted to the Department once ESB lines on the site are undergrounded.
- Moneygall (4 units) – Contractor commenced works on site on 31st January 2022. Due for completion in Q4, 2022.
- Beechgrove, Belmont (7 units) – Project commenced on site on 10th November 2021. Due for completion in Q1, 2023.
- Sr. Senan, Edenderry (4 no. Older Person's dwellings) – Stage 4 approval was granted on 11th April 2022, contractor appointed and due to start on site on 12th September 2022

- Banagher, Kylebeg (18 Units) – Stage 4 approval received on 25th June 2021. Project is due for completion in Q4, 2022.
- Circular Road, Daingean (9 units) - Stage 4 approval was received on 8th March 2022 and works were due to commence on site in May 2022, however department advised that scheme had to be re-tendered. Tenders are due back on 12th September 2022.
- Circular Road, Daingean, Site 2 (10 Units) – Stage 1 approval application was granted on 3rd August 2021 for the site adjoining the OCC housing site on Circular Road. Stage 2 is due to be lodged in 2022. Surveys have been procured and will commence shortly.
- Sycamore Drive, Ballycumber (9 Units) – Stage 1 approval was granted by the Department on 11th May 2021. Design Team have been appointed and all surveys completed. Stage 2 lodged with the Department on 28th July 2022. Part 8 to follow once Stage 2 is granted.
- 1 Newbridge Street, Birr: Works are now complete and the dwelling allocated.
- 4 Holly Park, Birr: Consultants have been appointed; Enabling works contract to determine works required is currently out to tender. Works tender will issue with brief based on opening up works.

Approved Housing Bodies Schemes

- Cluid Housing Association: Jackson's Hill, Tullamore - Construction ongoing on 26 units Scheme is complete
- Cluid Housing Association: Hawthorns, Tullamore – 16 Units Complete and allocated in 2022

- Oaklee: Clonminch, Tullamore (19 units) – Completion in Nov/Dec 2022
- Oaklee: Kearney's Field, Tullamore (41 Units) – Completion in Q1/Q2, 2023
- Sofia Housing: Stage 2 approved (39 units) at Presentation Lands, Portarlinton. Planning Application to be lodged
- Sofia Housing, Clonamore Hotel – Contractor has been appointed and works have commenced

Turnkey Developments/Part V

- Woodfield, Birr, 35 units - 20 completed to date. All completions will be in 2022
- Bog Road, Portarlinton, 28 units - Under Construction, completion in Q1 2023
- Walsh Island, 4 units - Under Construction. Complete in 2022
- 12 x Part V Units at the Hawthorns, Tullamore complete
- 2 x Part V units under construction at Ard na Carriage, Edenderry. Completion in 2022
- Part V units in Redwood, Tullamore under construction

Housing Grants (Private)

Housing were notified on 28th March that the 2022 Allocation - Housing Adaptation Grants for Older People and People with a Disability Scheme for private homes is €1,543,750 which is composed of €1,235,000 exchequer funding (representing 80%), and €308,750 matching local authority funding (representing 20%) to be provided from Offaly County Council's own resources.

Housing are progressing the 2022 works programme and continue to liaise with all applicants who have been approved for works in an effort to ensure that all works

are progressing and to facilitate the timely drawdown of funds. Additional funding to ensure maximisation of the Council's allocated budget was sought from the Department in July 2022.

Disabled Person's Grants (Social Housing)

On 31st March 2022 Housing were advised that the allocation for Disabled Person's Grants for Social Housing Units is €658,800 (representing 90%), with €65,880 matching local authority funding (representing 10%) is to be added from Offaly County Council's own resources.

Retrofit Programme

The Council received notification on 22nd October 2021 of an increase in their allocation under 'Just Transition for the Midlands Region' programme to €4.2m.

Lot 1&2, Birr: Works are complete to 31 Houses in Birr Town.

Lot 3&4, Tullamore: Tender analysis is under way with a view to appointing the most advantageous tenderer in the coming weeks. Letter of Intent will issue shortly.

Lot 5&6, Edenderry, Daingean, Clara, Ferbane, Shannonbridge, Cloghan: Tender analysis is under way with a view to appointing the most advantageous tenderer in the coming weeks. Letter of Intent will issue shortly.

LOCAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Offaly Community Response Forum

The Community Response Forum continues to coordinate the response to the Ukraine crisis. The membership of the Forum includes the following agencies: Offaly County Council; Health Service Executive; Offaly Local Development Company; Offaly Volunteer Centre; TúsIa; County Childcare Committee; Department

of Social Protection; An Garda Siochána; Civil Defence; Local Link Laois Offaly; Offaly Library Service; Family Resource Centres; Citizens Information Service; SVP and Laois Offaly ETB.

The total numbers of Ukrainians in Offaly has increased over the summer. On 12 June 2022, 419 PPS numbers were allocated in Offaly, this had increased to 577 PPSN by 23 August, 2022. The majority of the families are accommodated in Tullamore, Birr, Portarlinton and Moneygall.

A successful Jobs Fair was held on 2 July. A number of Ukrainians attended and have been supported in securing work. Assistance is being provided with CV preparation and translation services are provided to assist with interviews. The Fáilte Isteach Programme is also very useful in providing conversational English classes.

Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

Offaly LCDC held their monthly meeting on Thursday 14th July, 2022. Main agenda items included the Rural Development LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020 & Transitional LEADER Programme 2021 – 2022, Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme 2018 – 2023 (SICAP) - Mid-Year Review, Case Study and the Ukrainian Supports and the Age Friendly Development Strategy Update. LEADER Projects: Seven LEADER Projects were approved to the value of €110,847.86.

SICAP Mid-Year Review

Members were advised that following an LCDC Empowering Communities Working Group (ECWG) meeting held on 30th June 2022 to consider the SICAP Mid-Year Review, the sub-committee had considered the Mid-Year review in full and were satisfied that sufficient progress has

been made in delivering SICAP and recommended formal approval by the LCDC. Members were then provided with a comprehensive overview of the Mid-Year Review outlining progress across both Goals, and detailing a broad range of programmes, events, training courses, activities and supports that have been provided to date in 2022. The members approved and welcomed the SICAP Mid-Year Review 2022 as presented.

SICAP Additional Funding – Ukrainian Supports

Members were advised that following previous notification in relation to funding of €5 million for the SICAP Programme/Local Development Companies to assist the community response to support people arriving from Ukraine, the allocation for Offaly SICAP is €63,526. This funding will support and enhance the work taking place to deliver vital supports and services and will continue to assist in the integration of the Ukrainian people in Offaly communities. Members welcomed the additional funding, noting the positive impact it will have to sustain the level of support and assistance given to Ukrainian people in Offaly.

SICAP 2022 Case Study

Members were advised that the proposed case study for 2022 would focus on the area of Social Enterprises and the key resources they provide in communities across the county. The case study will be presented in video format and showcase the role Social Enterprises have in the community and the variety of key supports and services they provide. Members agreed to proceed with the Case Study 2022 as outlined.

SICAP 2022 – UN Public Services Award

Members were informed that the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) has won the prestigious 2022 United Nations Public

Service Award in the category ‘Institutional Resilience & Innovative Responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic’. Members congratulated the SICAP team for their continued good work in Offaly and agreed it was a wonderful acknowledgement of the immense work of the programme, particularly over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Age Friendly Development Strategy

Members were provided with a comprehensive presentation in relation to the preparation of Offaly Age Friendly Strategy 2022-2027. The process involved was outlined along with the timeframes for implementation. A review of the current plan has taken place in consultation with members of the Age Friendly County Alliance, Older Person’s Council and OCC Interdepartmental Team, as well as with older people across Offaly. Thematic areas identified were highlighted. The strategy aims to be a collective plan across agencies and organisations in the county to collaborate with older people and to work creatively together to deliver achievable, realistic and timely actions and results that respond to issues identified in the consultation process.

Public Participation Network

The new PPN Website is now live and re-registration of the over 700 member groups is underway. A number of new representatives have come on board with plans underway to deliver Induction and training in Sept/ October 2022.

Offaly PPN had a stand at the Tullamore Show on 14th August, which was very well received.

Preparation for the PPN Social Inclusion week, which will take place 12 – 16th September with the Social Inclusion

Showcase taking place on September 14th in the Tullamore Court Hotel.



We are promoting the PPN at the Mucklagh Community Centre during the Pride of

Place visit and also at the Community event on the evening of 24th August at the same venue. Ongoing support was provided to the Pride of Place entrants including site visits, wishing all three every success showcasing the great work they are undertaking in their communities.

Offaly Age Friendly

On reviewing the Consultation carried out in the Tullamore Court, it became apparent that two areas of the county were under represented. To address this shortfall, a follow up consultation took place in Kilclonfert and a further consultation is planned for September in Shinrone. The Age Friendly Alliance also met in July with good attendance and a full rundown of upcoming activities was presented.

Work is under way for Positive ageing week with plans already in place for a number of activities. A further roll out of online Age Friendly Business training focusing on Shopping Centres is currently being promoted.

Pride of Place Competition 2022

The IPB Pride of Place is an all-island competition that allows communities to demonstrate their pride in their place by presentations where they highlight community activities, culture and many other aspects that contribute to their pride of place. Local authorities from across the island of Ireland nominate groups in their communities who they feel have made a significant contribution to improving their

neighbourhood, working in a collective manner.

Judging for the three Offaly entries took place on 24th and 25th August 2022. Mr. Tom Dowling and Ms Katrina Murphy were the judges for the Mucklagh and Geashill entries, and Ms Katrina Murphy and Mr Peter Hynes were the judges for Pullough. They had a difficult task of running the rule over the three entries where impressive presentations showcasing the varied strengths of their communities were provided.



Geashill Creative Place Judging



Mucklagh Community Centre



Pullough Village Judging event

Arts Report

Funding Applications

The Arts Office are currently in the process of developing two funding application to the Arts Council, one for annual partnership funding for the arts programme 2023, plus an application for the Invitation to Collaboration which is a proposed collaborative project that will take place at Lough Boora Sculpture Park and Tir Saile in County Mayo in 2023.

FilmOffaly Awards 2021

The Arts Office FilmOffaly Award 2021 winner Mixed Bag Media's film *Personal Space* will be premiered at the 2022 OFFline Film festival. 2021 FilmOffaly award included a strong mentorship element to the programme, which enabled local film professionals to work under the mentorship and experience of the production company Mixed Bag Media

The FilmOffaly Award 2022

The application process is in progress. Mentoring workshops were held for the shortlisted candidates in July, with interviews due to take place in early September.

FilmOffaly Review

The Arts Office have put out a call for a researcher to carry out a review of Film in Offaly. The review will examine the development of film production and the film sector in Offaly to date and will offer recommendations for the potential growth of Film in Offaly going forward. The report will focus on the developments of the film commission FilmOffaly, the Offaly County Council Arts Office and Creative Ireland Film and animation programmes, and other key film activity that takes place in the county. The purpose being to demonstrate the value of Film to the county as a social, cultural and economic driver.

Birr Writer's Residency

The Arts Office provided funding for the delivery of the Birr Writer's Residency, which is now underway. Five writers selected to the residency programme for 2022, included an additional residency for a writer to work in schools through Irish as part of their residency.

Art in Landscape

Following on from the successful online seminar that took place at the end of May, registering over 240 people for the event, the presentations by all the speakers are now available on the Art in the Landscape website at www.artinthelandscape.info

The seminar also presented a film of local participants who had engaged in artist workshops, expressing their own views on the future potential of Lough Boora Sculpture Park, this can also be viewed on the website at <https://www.frontedbyhumans.com/studioresponse/resources.html>

The seminar was the culmination of work being carried out by a partnership between Offaly County Council and Mayo County Council's Arts Office with Visual Artist Ireland and funded by the Arts Council under their Invitation to Collaboration funding stream. The purpose being to explore the intersection between art in the landscape, culture, environment, tourism and social engagement. The Arts Office plan to continue this exploration by applying for continuation funding from the Arts Council for this project.

Continuing Programming Culture Night

Planning for Culture Night has been taking place during July and August, with the launch of the programme due the first week of September. Once again Offaly is in for a treat, with an array of activities across the county due to take place on 23rd September.

This year the theme of the national programme of is One Night For All.



Hullabaloo

Planning for Hullabaloo Children's Art Festival has been taking place during July and August with partner organisations, Offaly County Council Arts Office, Birr Theatre and Arts Centre, Clara Resource Centre and Offaly Libraries. Collaboration has also taken place with artists and organisations in Edenderry and Tullamore. This year the programme is fully back with in-person events at all locations. The festival will take place between 2nd-5th November. The full programme of events will be available September/October.

CAPITAL PROJECTS

Arts Infrastructure Strategy

The Arts infrastructure Strategy for the County continues to be progressed by People Places Consulting: Caoimhín Corrigan and Siobhán O'Malley. The strategy will explore how all the Arts Infrastructure (existing and planned) can be developed in a collaborative and harmonic manner, resulting in a cohesive, complimentary and self-sustaining network of arts infrastructure that is beneficial to the whole county.

Esker Arts

Work continues to great progress and the much awaited opening of the new art centre is drawing closer. The Esker Arts board of management have recently begun a recruitment drive and positions for jobs in the Arts Centre have been advertised locally and nationally.

Art Strategy 2023-2028

The Arts Office Strategy Inspire – Imagine – Involve 2018-22 is due to be revised and a new strategy researched and written for 2023. The Arts Office is currently working on a consultation brief. This will be progressed in Sept/Oct.

Festival Edenderry July 2022

Musician Educator and professional musician Dave Peyton started working with

the children and young people from Edenderry Youth Café in June and they had their debut performance in the Edenderry Festival on 4th of July.

SPORTS**Funding**

Sport Ireland Outdoors approved an allocation of €2,500 for Offaly Sports Partnership to support delivery of activities as part of the HER Outdoors week which took place from the 8th to 14th August 2022.

Programmes

July & August had a significant focus on the delivery of summer camps and activities across the county. These programmes were led out by Denise Coghill, Community Sports Development Officer; supported by Liam O Reilly, ACE Coordinator and various tutors of Offaly SP. Among the programmes delivered were -

Community Sports Development Programme

Activities on the green in association with the housing section of Offaly CoCo – Kilcormac, Puttaghan.

**Community Sports Development Programme**

Summer rounders programme for teens.

**Sports Inclusion Development Programme**

July provision – DEIS schools & Schools with special education needs units.



TOURISM

The tourism team are continuing to do what we can to support tourism businesses and drive demand and as we moved through the summer season, it is fantastic to see visitors arriving and the festival calendar was in full swing once again.

Radio Advertising

In Summer 2022 the tourism team continued to strengthen their radio presence with a number of campaigns on different radio platforms:

- Advertisements on the popular national stations Today FM & Newstalk ran for a 2 week period, commencing 20th May.
- iRadio campaign broadcast over three weeks in May/June 2022.

Media Coverage

Helen McGurk, editor of the Belfast News Letter, a daily newspaper based in Northern Ireland, visited Offaly recently with her family. Her well written article appeared in the travel section of the Newspaper.

Virgin Media's popular weatherman *Deric Hartigan*, a TV presenter, documentary maker and influencer visited Offaly twice in the past month. He first hosted his morning weather report from Birr in the build up to Birr Vintage Week & Arts Festival. His second visit was for two nights and it included visits to Birr Castle & town, Kinnitty Castle, Tullamore DEW and Banagher. Deric posted about his stay across his social media channels, which have a combined following of 131,000.

Exploring the astronomical playground that is Birr Castle & Gardens
#Offaly...so interesting learning about all the amazing feats of science and engineering in the town 🌞🌙🔭🌌 #staycation Birr Castle Gardens Visit Offaly



Offaly featured in the recent bi monthly magazine of *Ireland of the Welcomes*, Sep / Oct edition. It is the largest Irish-interest magazine in the world. Produced in Ireland by a team of top writers and photographers, each issue features lavishly-illustrated pieces on Irish beauty spots, its rich culture and millennia-spanning history. *'From saints to sailors, distilleries to demesnes, County Offaly has it all — including an inspiring resilience'*, writes Domhnall O'Donoghue as he tells a beautiful story of his visit and delights he encountered along the way including; Clonmacnoise, Tullamore Dew, Kinnitty, Lough Boora Discovery Park, Birr Castle Demesne and Shannonbridge.





County Offaly featured in the July Discover Ireland E-zine. The feature provided a link to the *'13 great things to do in Offaly*, providing valued exposure to a large captive audience.



Relax in Offaly

Voyage through the serene waterways of the River Shannon, find some quiet in the historic monastery of Clonmacnoise and stroll through the beautiful gardens of Birr Castle. Offaly provides great opportunities to slow down and reconnect.

Plan your short trip to this gem within Ireland's Hidden Heartlands.

Take a break in Offaly

Festivals & Events

Festivals & Events provide unique and compelling reasons for visitors to choose a destination. Summer 2022 saw the return of our much loved events including, Tullamore Show & FBD National Livestock Show, Scripts Ireland's Playwriting Festival, Festival Edenderry and Birr Vintage Week and Arts Festival. Attendance and participation was very

positive this year as the event organisers worked hard to attract visitors from near and far.

The Experience Offaly Pavilion returned to the Tullamore Show, Ireland's Premier Show & Country Lifestyle Event, this August and provided great interest for visitors. The pavilion hosted 28 exhibitors from a variety of craft, artisan food and tourism providers in the county. The atmosphere on the day was electric as visitors enjoyed experiencing all of the best that Offaly has to offer, while the sun shone! Offaly Tourism's stand at this year's event was bigger and better than ever with a 4.5x2.5m screen showing our tourism videos to full effect.



LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

National Women's Enterprise Day - Midlands Events (Offaly, Westmeath, Laois and Longford)

National Women's Enterprise Day is coming soon on Thursday, 13th October, at the Lakehouse Hotel, Glasheen from 10:30am – 2:00pm. The Local Enterprise Office along with Enterprise Ireland provide a wide range of help, incentives, training, and development programmes to female entrepreneurs.



The theme this year is ***Our Future, Our Way***. This event will showcase female entrepreneurs from a spectrum of business sectors and stages of their business journey from each County in the Midlands.

Local Enterprise Village at the National Ploughing Championships

Acoustic Interiors, winner of the Offaly Enterprise Award and also Best Start-Up at the National Enterprise Awards will have an opportunity to promote themselves at one of Ireland's biggest events as part of this year's Local Enterprise Village at the National Ploughing Championships from the 20-22nd September in Rathiniska, County Laois.

Derek McCreanor, Acoustic Interiors pictured with Minister Damien English earlier in the summer, also in the photo are Edel Boyd and Orla Martin from LEO Offaly.



Minister Damien English was greeted at Birr Civic Centre by Leas Cathaoirleach of Offaly County Council, Cllr. Tony McCormack, Chief Executive, Anna Marie Delaney, Head of Enterprise, Orla Martin, Cathaoirleach of the Birr Area, Cllr. John Carroll, Cllr. John Clendennen and Pat Gorman, member of the Evaluation and Approvals Committee. The Minister also met with finalists of the County Enterprise Awards and visited Euram Air Leases in Ferbane and Applied Concepts Ltd. in Birr.

Minister English said:

“The importance of the LEO network to local businesses cannot be overstated. They provide a vital service in supporting companies whether it is through training, mentoring or with other important supports. Our new Regional Enterprise Plans are very much region specific, building on local strengths, and in this regard, the LEOs have a hugely important role to play in their success and in helping to drive economic activity here in Offaly.”



Upcoming Training & Mentoring Courses

In the Local Enterprise Office Offaly we provide a range of training courses and workshops designed to assist with the establishment and/or growth of local businesses which are tailored to meet specific business requirements. 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 links to book are here: <https://bit.ly/3B5LTku>

Training Courses 2022

Local Enterprise Office Offaly



BOOK ONLINE

TODAY!

www.localenterprise.ie/offaly/training-events/online-bookings

The Local Enterprise Office Offaly provide a range of training courses and workshops designed to assist with the establishment and/or growth of local businesses employing up to ten people. We provide a wide range of high-quality training supports which are tailored to meet specific business requirements. Whether it is starting a business or growing a business there is something suitable for everyone. Your first point of contact to discuss what supports your business needs and can avail of is the Local Enterprise Office Offaly.

Marketing and Strategy Courses	Mentoring Courses	Finance Courses
Turbo Boost Your Marketing	Digital Marketing and Social Media Mentoring with Keith Feighery of Digital Insights	Small Business Accounts
Grow Your Business Programme (nominal fee for comprehensive programme running over 8 weeks)	Mentoring Sessions with Bobby Connolly	Practical Guide to Income Tax for Businesses
Start Your Own Business Course Daytime	Public Procurement and Tendering Advisory Clinic – One to One Appointments	How to Submit Your Income Tax Return on ROS
Trading Online Voucher Webinar	Human Resources Mentoring with Fiona Brown Johnson	Financial Forecasting for Business
Digital Start Information Session	Digital Marketing and Social Media Mentoring with Keith Feighery of Digital Insights	Prepare Your Business for Customs

For further details on all our courses visit localenterprise.ie/Offaly



Comhairle Chiontae Uíbh Fhailí
Offaly County Council



Google, Enterprise Ireland and the Local Enterprise Offices partner to launch 'You're the Business' - a new digital training scheme for Irish SMEs

The new 'You're the Business' platform provides online training and resources for all Irish SMEs to help them get online, to grow their digital footprint and expand internationally. LEO Offaly are encouraging all local business to enter the competition to be in with a chance of winning one of ten prizes where participants will be awarded with a suite of customised digital supports from Google, including one-to-one mentorship sessions and ad funding supports. Details on how to enter are [here](https://yourethebusiness.withgoogle.com/): <https://yourethebusiness.withgoogle.com/>

Government opens second call under €100m Brexit response scheme for Agri-Food sector

The scheme is open to all Offaly enterprises, engaged in the processing and marketing of primary meat and dairy products. It is planned to provide a boost to Irish agri-food business, helping them continue to compete and win in international markets creating further jobs across the country.

Interested companies can make enquiries to CIS@enterprise-ireland.com and eligible companies are invited to submit applications from Monday 12 September until the closing date on Friday 11 November at 5.30pm. Find out more information from here: [Capital Investment Scheme for the Processing and Marketing of Agricultural Products](#)

LIBRARY SERVICES

Offaly Libraries Summerstars Reading Adventure 2022



Offaly Libraries have enjoyed another very successful year inspiring and encouraging the youth of Offaly to read over the Summer months. We are thrilled to report that **1,239 children** in Offaly signed up for the Summer reading adventure.

Weekly Arts and Crafts sessions were held in **Birr and Tullamore** Library over the Summer months, which proved very popular with **85 attendees in total**.

Weekly Storytimes in Tullamore Library enjoyed an audience of **93 attendees**.

All our library branches also ran a **Scavenger Hunt** for children over the Summer months and, to date, we have received over **230 completed scavenger hunt forms**. **8 online quizzes** attracted **34 participants** overall.



Sensory Offaly Seminar and Workshop Series 2022



Offaly Libraries is pleased to announce that the [Sensory Offaly Seminar and Workshop Series for 2022](#) is now live! This Sensory Offaly seminar and workshop series has been organised by Offaly Libraries as part of our larger [Sensory Offaly Programme](#), with support from Laois Offaly CYPSC.

This programme aims to **support the people of Offaly** with the challenges they and their families may face through disability and learning differences through seminars and workshops.



It is **free of charge to all attendees** (parents, children, young adults, teachers, carers, SNAs, etc.). Advance booking is required. Events are available to **book through [Ticket Tailor](#)** or by contacting the library hosting the event directly.

Sensory Room at Edenderry Library

Edenderry Library now have their very own Sensory Room and Magic Table! Available to book every Wednesday morning at 10am or 11am, the Sensory Room boasts two wall mounted sensory activity boards, a mobile sensory trolley stocked with toys, a projector and a Tovertafel Magic Table, preloaded with games to suit every age and need.

For information on how to use the Sensory Room at Edenderry Library, phone 046 9731028.or email edenderrylibrary@offalycoco.ie



An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
Community Development



Healthy Ireland at Offaly Libraries 2022

On 8th September we hosted a **free Healthy Ireland at Your Library talk** online entitled 'Gut Health: What You Can Do To Help'.



Delivered by Aoife McDonald, Registered Dietician and Nutritionist, the talk looked at all things gut health, including what foods to include for a healthy gut, prebiotics & probiotics, and lifestyle factors that can impact gut health. The talk was **well received by all in attendance**.

Gut Health: What You Can Do To Help



With Aoife McDonald,
Registered Dietician
and Nutritionist

Online talk on
Thursday, September 8th
at 19.00



Workshops for National Heritage Week 2022

Offaly Libraries celebrated National Heritage Week this





August with a series of fun workshops entitled ‘**Creating a Unique Bog Exhibition**’. Children were invited to create a bog landscape using as many natural materials as possible, together with clay and paints. The workshops took place in Birr, Clara, Edenderry and Tullamore Libraries and the creations are now on display in the four libraries mentioned.

VEX Robotics at Tullamore Library

Offaly Libraries were delighted to continue to support the VEX Robotics programme by offering a freeplay event in July which saw **23 attendees** and also by hosting **weekly Robotics workshops** in Tullamore Library throughout August.



Children aged 8 – 12 were invited to join the club in building the new ‘HeroBot’ and Arena for the VEX Robotics 2022/23 competitive season. The **August workshops were fully booked with 8 participants** and feedback was so positive

that Tullamore Library have decided to **extend the club until October** with new members welcome. Contact tullamorelibrary@offalycoco.ie to join.

Birr Library Parent and Toddler Group

We are very pleased to announce a new **Parent and Toddler Group** meeting in **Birr Library every Friday morning from 11am – 12pm.**

We look forward to welcoming young families to **the first meeting on Friday 9th September**, where toddler story time, songs and rhyme will be on offer for the little ones. All are welcome to register their interest with birrlibrary@offalycoco.ie

Tullamore Library also have a Parent and Toddler Group which meet **every Wednesday morning from 11am.**



New Library Service Leaflet Available in Ukrainian



We are delighted to unveil a new leaflet outlining the many beneficial services on offer in Offaly Libraries for our **Ukrainian visitors**. The leaflet contains information

on how to become a library member, locations and contact information of library branches within Offaly. Details of free Wifi, free use of computers and access to printing and scanning facilities are also included.

There are **many support services offered by Offaly Libraries**, both online and in our branches. **New titles in Ukrainian** are continuously added to our shelves and our online catalogues. The leaflet will be available in print form in all our library branches and also [online here](#).

Offaly Libraries STEAM Programme 2022/23



Space Week, 4th – 10th October, kindly co-funded by the Department of Rural and

Community Development
Dormant Accounts Fund

We have plenty of workshops and events planned for Primary Schools with a mixture of online and in-person events centering around the science of Space, Astronauts and more!



We will also celebrate Science Week in November with more workshops catering to Primary Schools and we will provide Class Take Away bags for more rural schools.

[Check out our STEAM Brochure here.](#)

New! Children's Book Club at Tullamore Library

Tullamore Library are looking forward to hosting their first **Children's' Book Club** of 2022, Wednesday 7th September at 3.30pm.

Children aged 7 – 11 are more than welcome to join our monthly meetings, every first Wednesday in Tullamore

Library, where we will discuss books, play games and make friends in a fun and supervised environment.

To register your child, please email: tullamorelibrary@offalycoco.ie



BROADBAND / DIGITAL

Connected Hubs Fund – Broadband Connection Points (BCP)

In 2021 and 2022, Offaly County Council received funding under Connected Hubs with the aim to add additional capacity to the existing remote working infrastructure in Ireland by upgrading existing hubs and Broadband Connection Points (BCPs). The primary objective of the Connected Hubs Call is to support and complement the development of the National Hub Network, which is a key action of the Rural Development Policy - Our Rural Future and the National Remote Working Strategy – Making Remote Work.

The sites in Offaly upgraded and completed in April 2022 were:

- Kilclonfert Community Centre
- Croghan Community Hall
- Ballycommon Telework and Training Centre
- Killavilla Community Centre
- Clareen Community Hall
- Coolderry Community Hall
- Moneygall Community Centre
- Creative 65 (Private Hub in Edenderry)

These locations received the following:

- Office Furniture – Desks, office chairs and monitors.
- Large 65” touchscreens TV for BCPs and private hub.
- Energy Elephant, a billing and energy decision management service to assist BCPs in ascertaining energy use improvement.
- Extra Wi-Fi Access Points to improve Wi-Fi Coverage
- Mobile phone booster / repeaters.
- Installing Internet of Things sensors and an information dashboard for each BCP so that they become centres of excellence in energy awareness/management.
- Installation of additional IT equipment.
- Air Purifier for Private Hub.

Five of the locations above (except for Clareen/Cloghan Community Hall & Creative 65) also received additional funding under Connected Hubs in June 2022 for the following:

- External AED / Defibrillators - (all 5 BCP sites)
- 2 Charge points for Electric Vehicles - (all 5 BCP sites)
- Printer/Scanner as a managed service - (all 5 BCP sites)
- Combined Kitchen / Coffee Caddy Station - (all 5 BCP sites)
- Computers (Ballycommon Telework and Training Centre)
- Desk & Chairs & Dividers
- IT/Network infrastructure - (all 5 BCP sites)
- CCTV for security (Killavilla Community Centre)
- Phone Booth (Moneygall Community Centre)

- Integrated camera and sound bar for Combined 65 - inch Touchscreen TV - (all 5 BCP sites)

These five locations will soon offer remote working in each of their community centres/halls.

Offaly County Council also provides high-speed broadband and Wi-Fi in an additional 25 community centres in Offaly. If you are aware of a community centre that might benefit from Wi-Fi, please contact Ray Bell. The plan is to continue to work with these community centres/halls to delivery digital training / Remote working opportunities / additional IT requirements.

Fibre Connection

- OpenEir are nearly finished the fibre upgrade in Tullamore and now most premises in the town can receive Fibre via OpenEir wholesale network. This allows premises in Tullamore to receive a broadband service from all the main broadband suppliers.
- This was part of OpenEir Fibre rollout in main towns in Ireland. In Offaly, the other 4 towns are Birr, Clara, Edenderry and Portarlinton. We continue to work with OpenEir to try to get this rollout-completed quicker.
- SIRO started the rollout of a fibre network in Tullamore over the last few months and this will be completed in mid-2023.

STEM/STEAM/STREAM

(Science, Technology, Research, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEM) Education Programme with primary and post primary schools in Offaly using VEX Robotics

Offaly County Council hosted the Offaly Robotics Championships 2022 in

O'Connor Park on May 6th 2022. Thanks to the Elected Members for your continued support and for attending on the day.

- Video -
<https://www.facebook.com/offalycoco/videos/615283106249039>
- Photos -
<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.370024045160111>

the schools / teachers / students on the delivery of this programme.

Anna Marie Delaney, Chief Executive

During the 2021/2022 school year, this STEM programme had 50 primary schools and 12 post primary schools in Offaly involved. The event in O'Connor Park had 1500 students approx. competing. Offaly County Council believes that this programme is needed to ensure today's students are qualified for the jobs of tomorrow. This programme is an ideal introduction to students who we hope will drive Offaly's economic ambitions, support innovation, and provide the foundations for future prosperity in the county. These students will drive Offaly's economy for the next 50 years.

In March 2022, Cllr. John Carroll and Offaly County Council hosted the "Craobh Uile-Éireann STEM VEX Róbataic 2022 do Ghaelscoileanna" in Birr Castle, in partnership with Munster Technological University. This event was part of Seachtain na Gaeilge, Local Enterprise Week, and Engineers Week. We had a great event with Gaelscoil's from Donegal, Cork, Tipperary, Laois and Offaly all in Birr Castle for the day. TG4 covered the event: <https://twitter.com/NuachtTG4/status/1502369660955672585>

This school year 2022/2023 we are going to bring in the remaining schools in Offaly into the programme and we plan to have schools/teachers into the council chamber for training during October. We have a STEM Educational Officer starting in October on a 3-year contract to work with

Appendix 1

Draft Consolidated Revenue Account Income & Expenditure Summary by Service Division to 30th June 2022

	Expenditure €	Income €
Housing & Building	6,980,468	6,703,919
Road Transport & Safety	12,364,204	9,325,932
Water Services	2,346,354	2,304,658
Development Management	5,908,056	2,970,931
Environmental Services	4,305,902	826,125
Recreation & Amenity	2,336,780	303,180
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	288,996	82,578
Miscellaneous Services	4,147,633	3,287,864
Local Government Fund / GPG		4,200,861
Gross Rates Income		8,470,769
	38,678,393	38,476,817
Deficit to 30th June 2022		(201,576)

OCC to 31st August 2022

	<u>Rates</u> €m	<u>Rents</u> €m	<u>Loans</u> €m
Opening Balance Jan 1, 2022	2.77	0.48	0.13
Net Invoices & Adjustments, waivers	15.85	4.95	0.30
2022 Cash Collected to end of August	11.46	4.84	0.37
Closing Balance August 31st 2022	7.15	0.60	0.06
<u>2021 Cash collected to Aug 31st</u>	11.24 ***	4.26	0.37
% Collection at this point in 2021	102%	114%	99%

*** Collections impacted in 2021 and 2022 by waiver uncertainty and effect of lockdowns

Bank Overdraft to 31st August 2022

	% YTD
Number of days Overdrawn in Bank year to date	57 23%
Bank Interest and non conforming charges to August 31st 2022 YTD	€6,247
Bank Administration and transactional charges to August 31st 2022 YTD	€22,972