

**NOVEMBER
2021**



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 Nollaig

Monthly Management Report for consideration at the December 2021 Monthly Meeting.

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

FINANCE - Appendix 1

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Tullamore This Christmas

This will return on Saturday 11th December from 11am to 7pm in O'Connor Square, Tullamore and promises to be very festive with outdoor markets, street theatre, live music, local choirs and Santa's Secret Monster Tractor Truck.

This event is funded by the Local Live Performance Programming Scheme Phase 2, Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media and supported by Offaly County Council, Tullamore and Clara Lights Committees and managed by UP Close and Personal Promotions. Details of other events held are at the end of this report.

Grow your Business

A lot has changed in life and in business in the last 2 years and will continue to change. How will business owners prepare their #Offaly Business? We have a new GROW YOUR OWN BUSINESS programme to help companies create and navigate a strategic growth plan for their business in Jan 2022. **Please join our FREE INTRODUCTORY WEBINAR to establish if this course could help you or somebody you know - just for 1 hr on Wed Dec 15th from 9.30am. Register at <https://lnkd.in/e6mJtWhc>.**

REPORT AT A GLANCE

Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme funding announcement for Offaly

Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys T.D., has announced a €200,000 grant for Clashawaun River Walk Amenity, Clara and project development grant for Derrounce Lake and Trails. See planning section for further details.

Tree of Hope; the Chairman's initiative

Following an Expression of Interest call to community groups and further liaison with TTN's 18 groups have been identified to date to receive a tree under the Chairman's Tree of Hope initiative. Sites are now being assessed by Dermot Ward, Woodfield Garden Centre who will supply and plant trees and is currently working with groups to determine what tree or group of trees would work best in their area. Mountain Ash, Hornbeam and Crab Apple are the trees available and have been selected to suit a range of environments and for their rich biodiversity. A video will also be supplied to explain aftercare to the groups. Site assessments will be completed in the coming days and planting will be completed in December.

PLANNING

	To end Nov 2021	To end Nov 2020	Total 2020
Planning Applications	751	582	674
Extensions of Duration Applications & Assessments	13	11	11
Warning Letters and (Enforcement Notices) issued	30(2)	14(2)	14 (2)

Development Management

Development management has grown year on year since 2014 with an overall growth of in excess of 150% over that period. The growth in 2021 represents an increase of close to 30% on 2020. The larger applications submitted including Strategic Housing Developments, Solar Farms, Windfarms. Larger scale Commercial / Industrial Developments have put extra pressure on service delivery over the past two years. In excess of 300 Pre-planning consultations have taken place during 2021 so far. The Area Planner for Tullamore has moved on to new employment and a new Area Planner is anticipated to commence over the coming weeks.

Greenways

Public meetings took place in October in respect of Feasibility Studies for a possible Shannon Monastic Greenway from Shannonharbour to Athlone via Clonmacnoise and from Kilbeggan to Mullingar. Both these Feasibility Studies are being led by Offaly County Council. A Section 149A agreement between Offaly & Westmeath Councils is in place, which allows this working in cooperation. An

options report for both routes is the next stage. If both these greenways were constructed it would result in a c.150km off-road greenway linking Tullamore, Mullingar, Moate, Athlone, Shannonbridge, Shannonharbour, Ferbane and Pullough.

The Council is preparing a submission to Transport Infrastructure Ireland in relation to future greenways. T.I.I. has taken over the funding of greenways from the Department of Transport during 2021.

It is hoped that funding in respect of the Turraun to Shannonharbour section of the Grand Canal Greenway will be secured in 2022, in addition to funding for the Leabeg to Lough Boora Discovery Park link. The council worked with the Department of Transport during 2021 to progress this to initial design stage.

Regeneration - Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme funding announcement for Offaly

Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys T.D., has announced a €200,000 grant for Clashawaun River Walk Amenity, Clara requiring €23,000 matching funding from Offaly County Council. This project consists of creating a new 400m river walk amenity along the banks of the River Brosna at Clashawaun, Clara, to help restore connections to the river for the community and visitors.



Also announced by the Minister was a project development grant for Derryounce Lake and Trails. The €50,000 grant will provide for a development plan for the expansion and new complimentary uses at the already successful Derryounce Lake and Trails. The first phase of ORIS 2019 funding for Derryounce is due for completion shortly.



The Chief Executive welcomed the positive news of ORIS funding for Clara and Derryounce and Offaly County Council understands the important of developing outdoor amenities and activities.

She added “Outdoor recreation and activities play a key role in the development of sustainable tourism in Offaly, and both these projects will encourage tourists and locals alike to experience the unique Offaly countryside and natural environment.”

Architectural Services

The Architects Department provides a cross departmental service throughout the County Council, particularly in areas of Planning, Conservation and Public Realm. The Architects Department continues to make a significant contribution to the County Development Plan in the running of the Record of Protected Structures, 2020-

2021 involved additions and deletions to RPS and compilation of final database and document. This includes the upkeep of the multifaceted database, Section 57 Declarations and all planning permission files related to protected structures. Advice and assistance is also given on a regular basis to owners and community groups regarding proposals for the upkeep or re use of existing protected structures.



Additional projects for planning consist of providing technical advice on large scale planning applications; the production of site specific documents relating to possible future developments. Note marked increase in Planning Applications in 2021, 85 reports Jan to September compared to a total of 67 in 2020.

Built Heritage Investment Scheme €94,800



More applications were received in 2021 for this scheme than any other year. Out of 39 applications, 24 were approved a Provisional Grant from the allocation of €94,800 by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. 9 applicants withdrew from the scheme while 15 have been successfully completed. Projects vary from slate roof to thatch repair, historic sash window to stained glass repairs, structural repair to stone walls or bridges to streetscape enhancement projects in the form of lime render to front facades. Works involves dealing with applicants and queries, site visits, interim reports for the Department, collation of payment material

and preparation of final reports and accompanying Department forms for each of the 15 completed projects. (Thatch repairs Galross)

Historic Structures Fund €335,000

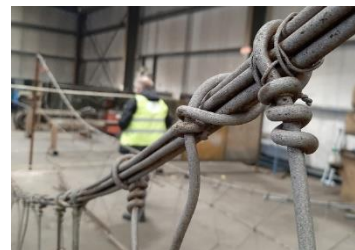
18 applications were received and assessed for the 7 projects allowable to put forward to the Department. 5 were selected by the Department including 2 state projects (Coillte and Waterways Ireland), giving a total of €335,000 allocation for Offaly, managed by the Architects Department. Works involves dealing with applicants and queries, site visits, interim reports for the Department, collation of payment material and preparation of detailed final reports and accompanying Department forms for each of the 5 completed projects. 1 such project includes the council owned Birr Courthouse a significant 2021 project. (Sample projects: Emmell Castle, Tullamore Gaol railings and Woodfield Barn Tullanisk)



Creative Ireland €15,000

As well as being part of the 5-person team managing the Creative Ireland annual programme, the Architects Department oversees conservation works to a Folly project with a Creative Ireland allocation of €10,000 since the publication of the book *Flights of Fancy, Follies Families and Demesnes* in County Offaly in 2017. The project this year consist of the Suspension Bridge in Kinnitty which has come in under several funding schemes. 3 projects have formed a small and very successful Vernacular Architecture projects €5,000, the repair of a 18th century wrought iron gate at Woodfield, Clara, restoration of a blacksmith forge Killyon and repairs to a thatched cottage and gate at Derrybeg Tullamore.

Kinnitty Bridge-progress and Killyon Forge





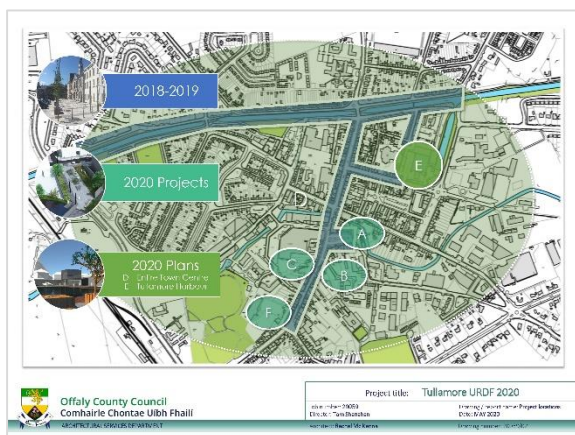
Derrybeg Thatch before + after

Follies Trust €4,500

The Follies Trust have again agreed to assist with the folly project for 2021, Kinnitty Suspension Bridge and have pledged €4,500 towards conservation repairs.

Tullamore URDF

Provision of accompanying documentation, sketch designs, photomontages, and suitable examples of materials and finishes to feed into the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund funding applications.



Project F: Acres' Folly Enhancements

Acres' folly is an unusual lower-like structure, which rises to some 9m in height from a ground plan measuring approximately 4m x 6m. Internally it contains a vaulted undercroft, while the upper rooms were originally divided by a partition in a proportion of one third to two thirds. Within the smaller space a timber staircase rose to what appears to have been a roof terrace, while the larger space provided basic, limited accommodation heated by an open fireplace in the gable end.



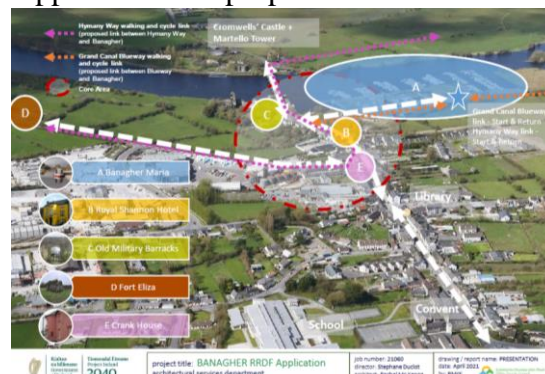
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RRDF, Urban & Village Renewal, Outdoor Dining Schemes etc

Preparation of documents to assist
Regeneration Team with funding
applications. (Sample Banagher RRDF
page, sample Clara TVR page)

Birr Destination Town €650,000

Working with Birr MD and Heritage Office and Failte Ireland funding, Birr MD €400,000 for The Green Enhancement Works, working with Heritage Office appoint of consultants, design and Planning Application for proposed new entrance to



Birr Demesne €100,000, remaining €150,000 for Interpretation and Design.



Birr Courthouse €347,600

Working with Heritage Office and various funding sources HTI (Heritage Office), HSF (Architects), Creative Ireland, OCC and Birr MD contributions; repairs to roof, lead valleys, windows and door to front façade.

Shopfront Enhancement Scheme

Assist LEO and Senior Planner with assessment of applications.

Team Administration

Relevant paperwork and resources in management of 4-person team and required H&S.

Outlook for 2022

1. Planning – RPS, S57 Declarations, Planning files on protected structures, Planning reports on large applications etc.
2. Built Heritage Investment Scheme – funding increased by 36%
3. Historic Structures Fund - funding increased by 36%
4. Birr Courthouse – continuation of project, dependent on funding sources
5. Birr Destination Town – Fáilte Ireland funding continues into 2022
6. Tullamore URDF – Steering Committee

7. RRDF – New projects assistance and Steering Committee for successful applications
8. TVR – New project design and assistance with funded projects
9. Shopfront Enhancement Scheme – Continued assistance (new and current schemes)
10. New Schemes – assist sections with new schemes as they arise
11. Team Administration

Heritage

The Heritage Office works with the Offaly Heritage Forum to deliver the **Offaly Heritage Plan 2017-21**. The forum usually meets four times a year and is made up of people from state agencies, council staff and NGOs. All meetings in 2021 have been by zoom.

The National Heritage Council provides funding towards the running of the Heritage office (25%) and also gives an allocation towards the delivery of the Offaly Heritage Plan of €30,000. This year the funding went towards the county archives service; the Birr Courthouse Conservation Master Plan and Communications. The heritage office has one full time officer and part time administration support from mid-2021. In 2021 the heritage office received additional funding from the Historic Towns Initiative, the Creative Ireland programme; the National Biodiversity Action Plan and the new Community Monuments Fund. This report is set out as an update on all 8 actions in the Offaly Heritage Plan 2017-21.

Offaly County Council Heritage related projects such as 1916/2016 Centenary Commemorations and the follow on programme Creative Ireland; management of key county sites such as Durrow and Clonmacnoise, public realm plans and ongoing projects as they arise.

Birr Courthouse Conservation Master Plan

The Courthouse in Birr came into Offaly County Council's ownership in the summer of 2021. In order to plan for its future conservation and use, Howley Hayes Cooney conservation architects were commissioned to develop a detailed conservation master plan. This was funded by the Heritage Council, Creative Ireland and a contribution from Birr Municipal District.

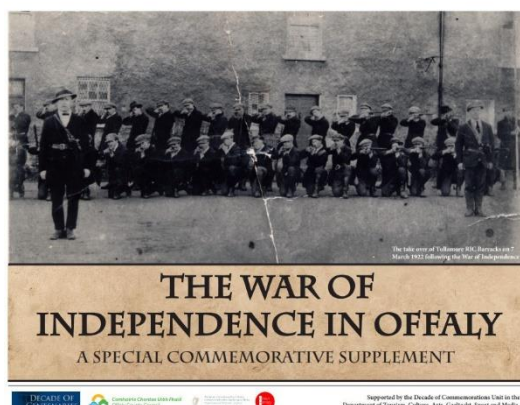
Historic Town Initiative

In 2021 under the **Historic Towns Initiative** €220,000 was allocated to the conservation of Birr Courthouse roof and façade windows and doors. This is the first time this funding has been secured in Offaly from this scheme. It was combined with **Historic Structures Funding** and a contribution from Offaly County Council and this physical element of works will be completed by year end.

Decade of Centenaries

Funding of €57,000 was received in 2021 and a compressive programme of publications, videos, blogs, and material hosted on the website has been developed in partnership with Offaly History.

Image: Supplement in the Tribune Oct 2021



Creative Ireland

Creative Ireland 2017-22, places creativity at the centre of public policy focusing on projects that are collaborative involving the arts, heritage and libraries



with strong community reach. The Heritage Officer is the county co-ordinator working with the team from the Arts Office, Architect, Library Service, Community and Local Development and the Local Enterprise Offaly. In 2021 €160,161 has been allocated to the diverse range of programmes.

Image: A very engaging collage event held during Vintage / Heritage Week in August and winner of the County Heritage Week award.

Lough Boora Sculpture Park

The heritage officer is on the working group of 3 Council and 3 Bord na Mona representatives to manage the sculpture park and is involved in the reports currently being undertaken.

Heritage Council Community Grants

Partnering with local communities and societies working on heritage projects, ranging from the Tidy Towns network to Historical Societies.

A number of communities were successful in receiving **Heritage Council Community Grants** and support was provided in completing these for the Kilcomin graveyard group management plan; St Brendan's Hall, Birr conservation report for the Church of Ireland Vestry in Birr; conservation of archival material for Offaly Archives and the replacement of Killaun walkway by St Brendan's Secondary School.

Camcor River Study

part of the team working with Birr 20:20 community group on this study on managing the Camcor and its banks between Springfield Bridge and Croghan Bridge.

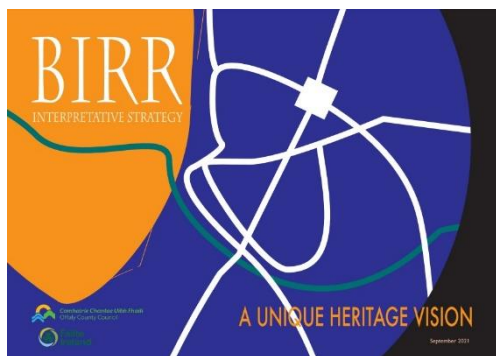
Heritage and Tourism

Making sites accessible and improving signage and information including inputs to www.visitoffaly.ie

Birr Destination Town Working Group

The heritage officer is part of the team working to deliver the Birr Destination Town project comprising of public realm works at the Green; a second entrance to Birr Demense at the Green; and delivering interpretation for Birr.

On this third element a community engagement project was carried out by consultant Alan Hill in 2021 - ***Birr Interpretive Strategy***



County Archive Service

Developing a County Archive Service in partnership with Offaly History, the Library Service and private owners.

The County Archive Service has been developed by Offaly History and supported by Offaly County Council as a priority project of the Offaly Heritage Plan 2017-2021. The specially designed archives building in the Axis Business Park opened in the spring of 2020 is fully operational now albeit with Covid 19 restrictions.

Work continues to develop the county archive service website www.offalyarchives.com which hosts catalogues and certain digitised material. Under a SLA the archives of Offaly County Council are managed by the Offaly County Archive Service.



Medieval churches/Monastic Site

Conservation of the structures, management plans and access (these sites are predominantly in Offaly County Council ownership)

Just Transition Medieval Churches Conservation and Pollination Project €880,000

This is a joint project with Laois County Council from 2021 to 2023, conserving a medieval church in each MD and managing the area for pollinators. The three Offaly churches are Kilmurry-Ely in Birr MD, Kilbride in Tullamore MD and Monasteroris in Edenderry MD.



Community Monuments Fund - €135,000

The Offaly Heritage Plan focused on medieval churches as they are owned by the Council however in 2020 a new funding stream opened for buildings in public and private ownership. This in 2021 work was able to be carried out at the Council owned Blundell Castle in Edenderry and at Castle Armstrong, Ballycumber (private).

The Council was also able to support the development of a conservation report for Seir Kieran graveyard wall which was commissioned by the Church of Ireland and support was also provided for signage at Lynamonastic site.

Maintenance of Medieval Churches and Burial Grounds

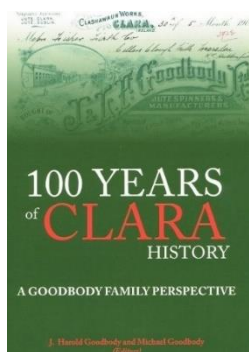
A maintenance programme has been put in place for medieval churches that have been conserved including Lynamonastic, Lemanaghan, Drumcullen, Kilbride Clara, Croghan and Roscomroe.

Publications –commissioning of and assisting with publications, specifically Offaly Castles and demesne landscapes which are currently in preparation.

Killaun Bog, nr Birr

A publication on the past, present and future development options for this bog researched and written by John Feehan will be published in November– funded by National Biodiversity Action Plan.

100 Year's of Clara's History by Michael Goodbody was supported through the Decade of Commemorations programme and will be launched in 2021.



All Ireland Pollinator Plan

Biodiversity -promotion of the All Ireland Pollinator Plan, submitting records to the National Biodiversity Data Centre and control of invasive species with particular focus on Japanese species and Himalayan knotweed and Himalayan Balsam.

National Biodiversity Action Plan

Under the National Biodiversity Action Plan an allocation of €25,000 was allocated towards the following projects.

Killaun Bog near Birr

The boardwalk on this bog was installed by St Brendan's Community School 30 years ago and support from a number of schemes has meant that it is fully replaced and reopened in 2021. Ongoing research at this site has included bird surveys by BirdWatch Ireland, mollusc survey by Roy Anderson, spider survey by Myles Nolan and bryophyte surveys by Blackthorn Ecology.

Barn Owl Survey

A County Barn Owl survey was undertaken by BirdWatch Ireland and nest boxes were erected where good locations were found with thanks to landowners' goodwill.

Invasive Species

Offaly has two main invasive alien species which are being tackled by the County Council. The species was noted spreading on the Camcor and Little Brosna Catchment and work continued to removal the plant. The second species is Japanese knotweed which has been tackled by Offaly County Council for the past decade. Work continues to combat this destructive plant and to try and contain it, involving annual treatment and a mapping programme along with contacting private landowners where the species is noted. An additional €16,000 was allocated for removal of invasive Himalayan balsam on Camcor and Little

Brosna Catchment and Japanese knotweed county wide.

Access to heritage -coordinating and management of events such as Heritage Week, Offaly Naturalists' Field Club, Annual Offaly Heritage Seminar and awareness of Offaly's heritage through all appropriate means.



Instead of physical events the heritage office worked with John Feehan and continued the very successful series of *Wildflowers of Offaly* and *Story of the Bogs* youtube videos bringing the total views to 39,405 views to date in 2021.

Image: John Feehan in Story of the Bogs Part 1

Heritage Week

Heritage Week went ahead online had a mixed format of online and in person events in 2021. The **Annual Offaly Heritage Seminar** will not go ahead in its usual format but information on projects will be disseminated.

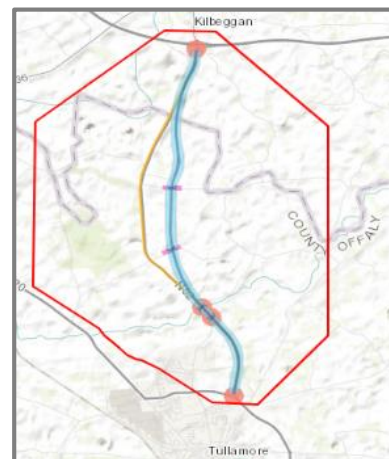
ROADS

Roads Programme 2021

All construction works commenced in May. Roads and the three MDs are progressing works throughout the County. By end of the month, the bulk of 2021 planned works within the county are complete or nearing completion.

N52 Tullamore to Kilbeggan Link

Public consultation stage 3 (emerging preferred corridor) has concluded. The conclusion of the Route options selection process is now scheduled for early in Q1 2022.



TKL Emerging Preferred Route Corridor

Active Travel and Outdoor Infrastructure

The NTA **Active Travel** and **Outdoor Infrastructure** schemes are progressing throughout the County. The dedicated Active Travel Team i.e. Senior Executive Engineer and Executive Technician are in place with remaining member to join the team shortly.

National Road Pavement Improvements

Improvements that have been completed. Surface improvements on the N52 at Durrow, Durrow Cross, and on the approach to a number of roundabouts along the Tullamore bypass constituted the bulk of the recent schemes.

TII Fencing Retrofit

Upgrading of fences comprising horizontal rail elements bounding National Roads recommenced in November. Works will continue until Christmas and c.700m of existing post and rail fencing will be upgraded to the TII's approved Tension Mesh Fence near Derrinlough on the N62.



Example of Tension Mesh fencing installed in 2020 at N62 Corr Hill

Edenderry Town Inner Relief Road

Works on this project commenced in October. Works progressing well. Cut and fill of preparation layer complete. Drainage works 70% complete. Ducting works well underway. Footpath/kerbing 50% complete. Construction works to deliver the scheme will be ongoing into 2022.

Local Improvement Scheme 2021:

OCC received a total allocation of €545,240. The scheme was publically advertised and applications received. LIS upgrades within the MD's are nearing completion.

Offaly County Council received an allocation of €47,025 under **CLÁR 2021** Measure 1 and 2 funding from the Department of Department of Rural and Community Development in August. Delivery of projects is ongoing.

Winter Service

The winter service period commenced in October 2021. The weather has been mild but limited salting has occurred. The Winter Service plan covering the 2021/2022 period is available on Offaly.ie to be viewed by members of the public.

Grand Canal Greenway

Roads are continuing to deliver the Greenway in Offaly. Significant progress has taken place between Daingean and Edenderry, which should be in completed by year end. Greenway proposals for 2022m including amenities and enhancements are presently under consideration by the TII.



Enhancements on Grand Canal Greenway – Daingean to Edenderry Section.

ENVIRONMENT AND WATER

Climate Action

Economic Conference

On Tuesday 12 October and Wednesday 13 October 2021, a virtual conference entitled 'Climate Action Economic Opportunities – Local Authorities Supporting Enterprise', took place, supported by Ms. Anne Marie Delaney.

This conference is part of the work of the Climate Action and Economic Opportunities project steering and working groups convened under the Business, Enterprise, Innovation and Urban/Town Economic Renewal (BEIUR) Committee of the County and City Management Association (CCMA).

The conference was building on the success of the inaugural conference in October 2019, and facilitated sharing of the latest research undertaken by the local government sector to explore how local

authorities can, through their economic remit, support, encourage and nurture new and existing business and enterprise as they transition to a net-zero economy through innovation, digitalisation and the adoption of more sustainable practices.

The conference showcased examples of how businesses are pivoting to capitalise on new opportunities and in doing so are becoming green economy pioneers, with the support of local authorities in areas such as: Renewable energy, Circular economy, Research and innovation, Rural working hubs, New technologies, Bio-economy and SMART cities.

Environment Burial Grounds

Kilreghan cemetery extension has been completed, and works continue on the tender documents for Kilcoursey cemetery extension. It is hoped the tender issued before the end of 2021 with works to commence in 2022.

Litter & Waste Management

An Taisce Report – IBAL Anti-Litter League, Round 1, 2021 Tullamore: 12th out of 40 towns surveyed. Clean to European Norms. Another excellent showing by Tullamore in what has been a fine year for Midlands towns. All three approach roads surveyed got the top litter grade, creating a positive first impression of the town. This high standard was maintained for many of the other sites surveyed, a couple of which deserve further mention e.g. The Square is a beautifully laid out town centre environment which was excellent with regard to litter. Columcille Street was very much deserving of the top litter grade and clearly a careful eye is kept on the boarded up white premises as there was no litter directly associated with it. By far the most heavily littered site in Tullamore was the Bring Centre, Council Car Park – the

environment section will work with all relevant stakeholders in an effort to improve this situation.

Christmas Market

E&WS supported the recent Christmas market event in O'Connor Square by providing segregated bins for the public. The aim was to lead by example with such events by giving options for the public to dispose of their waste sustainably. E&WS hopes to expand on this with any future events.

Green Schools

E&WS continues to support the Green Schools programme by having an on-line teacher training seminar with An Taisce. All schools in Offaly, Westmeath and Laois were invited to attend on November 16th for advice and information on obtaining their green flag. E&WS also supported the recent initiative with Comhairle na nOg with secondary schools becoming single use plastic free. Eight schools so far have signed up to participate and it has proved to be hugely successful.

There has been 932 litter and waste complaints investigated year to date; with 152 fines issued with 72 paid to date and 251 community clean ups done resulting in over 73 tonnes of waste collected by local volunteers supported by OCC.

Water Quality

The *Draft River Basin Management Plan 2022-2027* was published on 27th September 2020. The document sets out the current situation in relation to water quality in Ireland, which despite focus and progress in recent times, the overall water quality is again in decline in Ireland, primarily due to nutrient pollution. The plan is now open for public consultation until 31st March 2022 and is available at www.gov.ie/draftRBMP.

The *Draft River Basin Management Plan 2022-2027* sets out a Program of Measures on how Ireland proposes to protect and restore water quality focusing on a wide range of pressures. Appendix 3 of the document sets out the proposed “Areas for Action” with a total of 26 identified in Co. Offaly.

Wastewater

Aecom Consultants have been appointed for the upgrade of the Edenderry Plant, this project will be led by Irish Water, a site visit took place in September, and surveyors have commenced work. The next site visit is scheduled for December 2021.

Rahan WWTP: This plant is ready to be commissioned once the ESB connection is made.

Daingean WWTP

Works have been carried out; these improvements will enable better management of the plant and also help to ensure that the plant can achieve its monthly compliance limits.

In Kilcormac a tree root was discovered obstructing the sewerage network near to the treatment plant, it will be removed.

Banagher Network

Currently examining the Harbour Road & Surrounds network as network is regularly surcharging during storm conditions. To help the problem with storm water, the Area Engineer has laid approx. 150m of 300mm pipe plus 2 No. Manholes which will add extra capacity to the network.

Water

Works on the upgrade of the Tullamore, Birr and Clonaslee Water Treatment plants are on-going, it is expected these plants will soon begin their 1 year operation phase,

after which time they will be returned to OCC staff to operate.

Find and fix works are ongoing in Portarlinton, Clonbullogue, Edenderry, Banagher, Ferbane and Croghan.

Watermain rehabilitation works are ongoing in Tullamore and Newtown Rahan.

Design work has commenced on the rising main between Agall and Holmshill and on 12km of watermains in the Pollagh area.

Disinfection programme is nearing completion at Tubberdaly, Coolderry, Clonbullogue, Edenderry and Walsh Island. Design works have commenced in Geashill and Holmshill.

A pressure reducing valve is being installed in Walsh Island.

Rural Water Programme

The Multi-Annual Rural Water Programme 2019 – 2021 is ongoing. Of the 19 projects awarded funding 14 are now complete and the remainder are due to be completed by the end of quarter 1/22. In addition, two Group Water Schemes have been approved for funding for projects that have arisen during the term of the current funding programme and two more projects are awaiting confirmation from the Rural Water Unit.

Annual Group Water Scheme Subsidy payments have been made to 17 GWSs to the value of €976,350.00

HOUSING

Covid-19 – 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
Housing Leasing Enquiries	leasing@offalycoco.ie
Anti-Social Behaviour	ASB@offalycoco.ie

October Housing Update:

- There are 483 on the Social Housing List awaiting housing support at the end of November 2021.
- A further 795 active tenancies are currently being supported under the Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Scheme, 9 signed up for HAP and 12 exited from HAP in November.
- At the end of November, 13 single people and 4 families were being

supported in emergency accommodation.

- 27 Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans applications have been received in 2021. 6 have been approved, 9 declined, 2 ineligible, 2 withdrawn and the remaining 8 are at various stages. Overall 15 RIHLs have been drawn down since the commencement of the programme.
- [Social Housing Assessments \(SSHA\) 2021 was completed and submitted to the Department, as required, by 17th November 2021.](#)
- [Following a competitive tendering process, a consultant has been appointed to carry out Private Rented House Inspections to ensure that the property complies with the Minimum Housing Standards Act.](#)

Housing Stock – Number, Maintenance & Repair:

- Total housing stock at end of November 2021 is 1,944.
- 332 maintenance calls were logged in November. Maintenance of non-emergency works is continuing with Covid-19 precautions in place.

Housing Capital Programme Update:

- Raheen, Clara development (38 units) – 7 no. works tenders were received on 19th November 2021, four of which were valid tenders. Post tender checks are taking place at present and a Stage 4 approval application will be submitted to the Department upon completion of the Tender checks and Report. Works will commence on site in Q1, 2022.
- Dargan Drive, Chancery Lane (20 Units) – Stage 2 was approved on

17th November 2021. The Pre-Part 8 process will take place in December 2021 and Part 8 consultation will be advertised in January 2022. Stage 3 submission is due to the DHLGH on 23rd March 2022.

- Moneygall (4 units) – Stage 4 approval was granted on 15th November 2021. Works will commence on site in Q1, 2022.
- Beechgrove, Belmont (7 units) – Project commenced on site on 10th November 2021. Due for completion in Q3, 2022.
- Sr. Senan, Edenderry (4 no. Older Person's dwellings) – Stage 3 approval was granted on 2nd September 2021. Works Tender will be advertised on etenders in December 2021.
- Banagher, Kylebeg (18 Units) – Stage 4 approval received on 25th June 2021. Contractor has been appointed (Pat Loftus Construction Ltd.) and work has commenced on site. Project is due for completion in Q4, 2022.
- Circular Road, Daingean (9 units) - Stage 3 approval was received in March 2021. Works Tender was advertised on etenders on 9th November 2021 with a closing date of 10th December 2021. Upon identification of the preferred Tenderer Stage 4 will issue to the Department in Q1, 2022. Works should commence on site in March/April 2022.
- Circular Road, Daingean, Site 2 (9 Units) – Stage 1 approval application was granted on 3rd August 2021 for the site adjoining the OCC housing site on Circular Road. Stage 2 due to be lodged in March 2022.

- Sycamore Drive, Ballycumber (10 Units) – Stage 1 approval was granted by the Department on 11th May 2021. Design Team have been appointed and Stage 2 will be lodged in Q1, 2022 on completion of site surveys and investigations by appointed contractors.

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Vacant Houses Initiatives:

- 1 Newbridge Street, Birr: Stage 4 approval was granted on 21st October 2021. The preferred Contractor will be appointed to carry out the works in Q4, 2021 and works will commence on site in mid-December 2021.
- 4 Hillview, Holly Park, Birr: Progressing as an acquisition.
- 121 Lakeview, Clara: Stage 1 submission will be submitted to the Department in Q4, 2021
- 3 x Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) completed in 2021.

Approved Housing Bodies Schemes:

- Cluid Housing Association: Construction ongoing on 26 units with completion date projected for February 2022.
- Oaklee: Clonminch, Tullamore (19 units) – Contractor is appointed and construction is progressing well.
- Oaklee: Kearney's Field, Tullamore (41 Units) – Contractor is appointed and construction is progressing well.
- Sofia Housing: Stage 2 approved (39 units) at Presentation Lands, Portarlinton. Stage 2 submission was made in October. Sophia Housing have lodged a planning application for the development – further information is being sought from the AHB.
- Sofia Housing, in a joint initiative with Midlands Simon Community,

acquired Clonamore Hotel in Q3, 2020. The facility will be developed as an enhanced centre for the provision of supported accommodation for homeless people. Under the terms of a landmark agreement Midlands Simon Community will operate the facility, with a team of qualified social care workers providing support on a 24/7 basis. Following refurbishment, the facility will provide professional supports for up to 17 people. Permission to proceed to tender was lodged with the Department on the 6th August 2021.

Turnkey Developments/Part V:

- Main Street, Daingean (8 Units): houses completed and 8 families allocated to their new homes.
- 6 Turnkey Schemes (82 units) which received departmental approval in December 2020 are progressing as follows:
 1. Mucklagh, 8 units - Under Construction
 2. Woodfield, Birr, 34 units – 3 complete
 3. Bog Road, Portarlinton, 28 units - Under Construction
 4. Walsh Island, 4 units - Under Construction;
 5. Tullamore, 5 units – discussions ongoing
 6. Cloneygowan, 2 units – completed and allocated
- 4 No. Part V units in Silverbrook Drive, Tullamore have been completed and allocated.

Housing Grants:

The total allocation in 2021 towards private housing grants, i.e., Housing Adaptation Grants for Older People; People with a Disability Scheme and Mobility Grants was €1,600,000. 20% of this funding is provided from the Council's Housing

resources. Housing staff are liaising with all applicants who have been approved for works in an effort to ensure that all works are progressing and to facilitate the drawdown of funds.

Disabled Person's Grants:

The Council received notification from the Department for a significantly increased funding for Disabled Persons works on Local Authority housing units for 2021. A number of adaptations and extensions are progressing and finalising on a number of our housing units.

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: The Contractor for the works has been appointed (Retrofit Design Ltd.) and works are in progress on the Birr houses.

Lot 3&4, Tullamore: The closing date for the Works Tender for the 42 houses in Tullamore was 24th November [2021. 4 no. tenders were returned. The preferred Tenderer will be appointed to the works once all due diligence required by the contract is completed. Works should begin in Q1, 2022.](#)

Lot 5&6, Edenderry, Daingean, Clara, Ferbane, Shannonbridge, Cloghan: The appointed consultants have surveyed the 43 houses and are preparing the works tender which will be advertised on www.etenders.gov.ie Q1, 2022.

Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2022-2027

The *Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2022-2027*, drafted by the Offaly Housing and Disability Steering Group, will be considered at the Housing SPC on 7th December 2021. The Housing and

Disability Steering Group, which consists of representatives of the HSE, Offaly County Council, Disability Sector Representatives and AHB representatives, will work collaboratively to achieve the goals and objectives set out in the strategy.

Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland, launched in September 2021, acknowledges the need to prioritise the delivery of an appropriate range of housing types and related support services, in an integrated and sustainable manner, recognising that it is critically important in order to promote equality of opportunity, individual choice and independent living for people with a disability. Objective 7 of *Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland* identifies six key deliverables to increase and improve housing options and supports. A new *National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2022 – 2027*, is currently being prepared by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Department of Health. Stakeholder and public consultation are ongoing and it is anticipated that it will be published by the end of 2021. A key focus of the National Strategy will be to detail the co-ordination and alignment of housing, health and community supports.

Following the adoption of the national strategy Offaly Housing and Disability Steering Group will review the objectives and implementation plan outlined in the *Offaly Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2022 - 2027* to ensure that they both support and incorporate the themes and strategies provided for in the national strategy.

In accordance with objective 7 of *Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland* quarterly updates will be provided by the Housing and Disability Steering Group to the Housing SPC and the Chief Executive.

LOCAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

COMMUNITY

Offaly Covid-19 Community Response Helpline

The Offaly Community Call Helpline and Community Response Forum ceased operating at the end of October 2021 due to the reopening of the economy and society, as well as the significant fall in demand for the services provided under the Community Call initiative. Currently any calls made to the Helpline number 1800 81 81 81 during normal opening hours are diverted to staff in Community Section for response. Calls received out of hours are diverted to the Emergency Out of Hours service in Dublin. Sincere thanks were expressed to the agency members of the Community Response Forum in Offaly and the staff of Offaly County Council who responded to calls to the Community Call Helpline at the November meeting of the Local Community Development Committee.

Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

Offaly LCDC held their monthly meeting on Thursday 11th November, 2021 with members attending by video link. Main agenda items included the Rural Development LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020 & Transitional LEADER Programme 2021 – 2022 with LEADER Projects to the value of €221,389.47 approved; the Covid Community Response Forum – learnings from the emergency response by local agencies working in partnership; Community Planning - the supports available from Offaly Local Development Company to assist communities to consider and agree priority actions for their areas, and an update on the work of Offaly's Public Participation Network. Members were advised of the announcement of a once-off Community Activities Fund and

Offaly's allocation of €277,101 to be administered by the LCDC.

Age Friendly Alliance

The Offaly Older Person's Network hosted a Storytelling and Information Session on 24th November, which included stories from the '*People of Killeigh and Beyond*' collection and from former Bord na Móna workers, along with recollections of life in the 1960s in Tullamore and information on staying safe, fire safety etc.

Work is being finalised on the '*The Way We Were*' a book of memories, stories, prose and poetry which will be published early December. Many of the contributors attended creative writing workshops during the year and Offaly Age Friendly Alliance were delighted to be in a position to include all contributions received.

The review of the Age Friendly Strategy 2018-2021 commenced in November.

Work continues on a bi-weekly basis to organise content for the Chatters & Matters weekly Programme.

The *Connecting the Faithful Newsletter* Winter/Christmas edition was finalised and will be circulated across the county in the first week of December.

Traveller Interagency Group

Offaly Traveller Interagency Group held its second meeting by video link on the 25th November 2021. Following the first meeting on 30th September, one to one online meetings were held between Offaly County Council and individual member agencies. Mechanisms for representation and consultation were explored. All members of the TIG have been invited to participate in Cultural Awareness Training provided by Offaly Traveller Movement and sponsored by Offaly County Council.

LECP 2022-2027

Guidelines for the next LECP 2022-2027 were officially launched on the 11th November. The new revised guidelines build on the lessons learned from the current LECP, as well as reflecting the needs of communities as we emerge from the pandemic. The new approach to the process, with a Framework LECP coupled with Implementation Plans covering a shorter period, will ensure LECPs are more agile and allow for emerging needs. DRCD will support the development of the LECPs through a series of training webinars in the coming months to ensure each LCDC and Economic SPC will have the necessary skills to develop and implement their LECP.

Community Activities Fund

A new scheme called The Community Activities Fund was launched on Thursday 11th November by the Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, and the Minister of State with responsibility for Community Development and Charities, Joe O'Brien TD. This once-off fund will be allocated under the Department's Community Enhancement Programme and will be administered locally by the Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs). Offaly has been allocated a total of €277,101 to support groups, particularly in disadvantaged areas. A subgroup of the LCDC will consider the fund criteria and application details will be advertised in December.

MUSIC GENERATION OFFALY/ WESTMEATH

Uilleann Pipes Update

Classes began in Kilclonfert Broadband Connection Point on the 18th of November with a lovely intergenerational family group taking advantage of the opportunity.



Funding

- Mitigating Against Educational Disadvantage Fund: The fund, administered by Laois-Offaly ETB has awarded MGOW nearly €5k which will cover the cost of purchasing 4 new MacBooks and related software so we can work bring our mobile recording studio out to where young people are creating music and work with them to capture their music.
- Local Creative Youth Partnerships: MGOW has been awarded €5k towards the purchase of additional musical resources that will be used to support our on-going work in Co.Offaly youth groups.

Planning

MGOW is in the process of finalising its annual planning for 2022 with initial drafts due for submission on 30th November.

MGOW Programme

MGOW continues to offer a hybrid programme combining face to face tuition with a range of online groups and classes.



Social Media / Website

We are very active on all our social media outlets and working to keep our website

(www.musicgenerationoffalywestmeath.ie) updated. We also produce regular newsletters which are circulated with our subscribers and partner schools.

SPORTS

Strategic plan 2021 – 2025

- Offaly Sports Partnership's newest strategic plan has been published; and will be launched on Wednesday, 15th December by John Treacy, Chief Executive Officer, Sport Ireland.
- Members of the Sports Partnership have sent good wishes to Mr. Treacy on his imminent retirement as Chief Executive Officer of Sport Ireland at the end of the year.

AGM

The AGM of Offaly Sports Partnership will also be held on Wednesday, 15th December.

Offaly Sports Partnership New Management Committee

- An independent selection panel is currently reviewing applications received for seats on the new Management Committee of Offaly Sports Partnership.
- It is anticipated that the selection committee will notify Offaly Sports Partnership of its decision by Monday, 13th December.
- The new Management Committee will sit for the duration of the next strategic period 2021 – 2025; and will consist of 14 members (seven male and seven female).

Programmes

Education & Training

- Two Safeguarding 1 (child welfare and protection basic awareness) training programmes delivered for 30 volunteers.

Community sports development programme

Various programmes ongoing including: -

- fitness sessions in the south Offaly sports hub, Crinkle Sport & Recreation Centre every evening
- fitness sessions for adults and older adults in Cloneyhurke.

Schools programmes

- Multi-sport and athletics programmes underway in 15 schools.

Sports Inclusion Development Programme

Various programmes ongoing including: -

- activator poles for people with disabilities
- outdoor fitness sessions for people with disabilities
- physical activity supports for day care centres catering for people with disabilities
- physical activity supports for special education needs units in five primary schools.

Dormant account funded programmes

Community volunteer supports – three sports first aid programmes underway for 25 volunteers across a variety of clubs.

Sports inclusion capital supports – additional adapted equipment in the process of being purchased for inclusion in all ability kits due to be disseminated to schools, clubs and organisations catering for people with disabilities.



Adapted equipment – All ability kits

HEALTHY OFFALY



Despite the granting of a 3-month extension to the Round 3 of the Healthy Ireland Fund, work has continued a pace with all

Implementing Partners continuing to progress projects to a conclusion. This will allow for Round 4 planning in the first quarter of 2022. Also this month there has been a notification from Pobal that any changes to current actions must be submitted to Pobal by Friday 3rd December 2021.

Healthy Offaly has applied to Pobal for approval to fund a series of 'Social Hubs'

where older/vulnerable people can meet up and socialise in a Covid guidelines compliant manner to combat social isolation. The 'Hubs' will become live in early 2022. Activities to take place are supervised walks, nutrition and Health & Well-being talks. With tea and refreshments to be provided afterwards. The idea was proposed at the October meeting of the LCDC. The LCDC were keen that Healthy Offaly could support this initiative. Mount Bolus, Kilcormac and Rath are the three pilot sites for these 'social hubs'.

Finally, as part of the evaluation and review process of HIF Round 3 an online questionnaire is being compiled and distributed by the Healthy Offaly Subcommittee which will be sent to the relevant Implementing partners and community leaders to evaluate Round 3 of the fund; where the successes/challenges were and what improvements could be made for round 4. This survey will be sent out in early December.

LIBRARY SERVICES

Celebrating the holiday season at Offaly Libraries!

Start celebrating the holiday season with us in Offaly Libraries where we have something for everyone; for all ages and interests. Enjoy the beautiful Christmas Book Displays, Christmas Trees and Window Decorations in all our branches. We kicked off our *Family Time at Your Library 2021 / Christmas 2021* on Friday 26th November to coincide with The Late Late Toy Show.

Call into your local branch to pick up a free Crafty Bag! There are two craft activities: a Snowflake with



embellishments and a Christmas Wreath embroidery kit.



As part of *Family Time at Your Library*, we have lovely family events and activities taking place online and in libraries during the month of December to support the involvement of the whole family in children's reading. *Family Time at Your Library* events aim to support a family-focused approach to reading with children as part of the national Right to Read campaign and increases awareness of the benefits of reading as a fun, recreational activity for children. Keep an eye on our Social Media pages for details on all our events.

Offaly Libraries are also offering some fun Christmas Colouring pages on our Children's Corner [website](#) for you to download and print.



First 5 Little Library Initiative at Offaly Libraries

Offaly Libraries are delighted to support the second stage in the First 5 Little Library Book Bag Initiative. This initiative aims to develop a consistent link between early learning and care settings and their local libraries to encourage a love of stories and reading among young children.

Following the success of the first phase of this initiative in May, we are delighted the First 5 Little Library Book Bags are now available to all early learning and childcare service providers via Offaly Libraries. Our library team look forward to providing these quality book titles in English and Irish as an added resource to further support early language and literacy development, whilst promoting a love of reading in young children across the County of Offaly.

Pictured is Jacqueline McIntyre, Executive Librarian with Offaly Libraries when she visited Sandra Clarke and the children of Little Treasures Montessori Preschool to



present them with their Little Library Bag of books.

Libraries Ireland Week at Offaly Libraries

Library Ireland Week is an annual initiative of the Library Association of Ireland. 2021's theme is **Our Future Story: Recharge, Reconnect & Re-emerge**, in recognition of how libraries and library staff are looking towards a future beyond COVID-19. The public are invited to share what their library has meant to them this year for the LIW Competition using the #LIW21 hashtag.

This Library Ireland Week we celebrate our wonderful library staff who have continued to adapt their skills to a changing environment. Pictured here is Tullamore Library's Clare (aka Einstein O'Brien) delivering a captivating online storytime to local schools!



Autumn/Winter Online Programmes in Offaly Libraries It was a busy few months with lots of online events for our patrons.

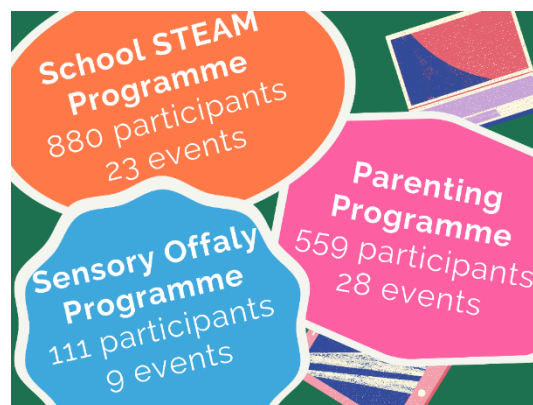
Our extensive **Parenting Programme** funded by the **Dormant Accounts Fund** covered very relevant topics affecting all areas of parenting babies to teens.

The **Sensory Offaly Online Webinar Series** 2021 funded by Laois Offaly CYPSC and Healthy Ireland included excellent events such as the Sibshop Workshops to support the siblings of children with additional needs, sensory workshops, a talk on supporting your child with Dyslexia at School, Executive Function: Strategies to help Neurodiverse Teenagers and ADHD – causes, diagnosis, impacts, and supports.

The Sensory Offaly Toys and Equipment collection will soon be available with over 100 items to borrow. Contact [Tullamore Library](#) for more information.



The **School STEAM** programme funded by the Dormant Accounts Fund has been a huge hit with participating schools. **23 workshops were attended by 880 students from 35 schools around the county.** The programming in 2021 focused on space innovation and the everyday application of amazing maths and science discoveries. Specially selected science themed videos received 274 views with the *Strong Women of Science* proving a big hit with their juggling of custard and hula hooping experiences. Next semester's STEAM programme is currently being finalised and will be promoted via primary schools in January 2022 – we look forward to innovative and exciting events in the areas of engineering, technology and biodiversity



Library Improvement Works Underway

We are completing refurbishment works in Kilcormac and Daingean libraries with the installation of new shelving and improved accessibility features. We look forward to officially launching these improved spaces in the new year.

Work is also underway in Tullamore Library with the creation of a dedicated Local Studies and Reading Room, our new *Creative Zone* and *The Space* events room. These new spaces will enhance the existing services already offered to our communities in Tullamore.

Offaly Archives building is officially opened

The official opening of Offaly Archives was carried out on Thursday 18th November by Minister of State at the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Malcolm Noonan (TD).

The new repository is a state-of-the-art archives building managed by a



professional archivist, and houses the collections of Offaly History, Offaly County Council and Offaly County Library Service. Offaly Archives is now a welcome asset for public benefit and brings together years of work in the collecting and conserving of historical records of note and archival value, all available from one quality service point. Professional management will ensure secure access and further the on-going work of all partners in the county in building on what has been achieved to date.

Offaly Libraries History Lecture Series 2021

The fourth and final lecture in the History lecture Series took place on December 9th. **Aspects of the Land War of the 1880s in Offaly** by Dr. Ciarán Reilly.

Full details on the series can be found here <https://midd.me/3bjb>

All presentations to date are now available on Offaly Libraries' [Facebook](#) and [YOUTUBE](#) channels. This series of events has been funded by Creative Ireland.



Adult Book Club

This adult book club will continue in the New Year. Email TullamoreLibrary@Offalycoco.ie if you would like to join the Book Club and to learn about upcoming titles. This county-wide club is open to all adults who enjoy lively conversation on books and sharing favourite reads.

Teen Book Club

The next teen book club is meeting on Thursday, January 6th and the book currently being read is Philip Pullman's *The Book of Dust: La Belle Sauvage*, available now on [BorrowBox](#).



A county-wide club for 12 to 17 year-olds that offers a virtual social space for open discussion on popular reads. New members welcome! Email TullamoreLibrary@Offalycoco.ie to join.

LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

Student Enterprise Programme Launches for its 20th Year

Ireland's largest student enterprise programme has been launched in what is now its 20th year. An initiative of the Local Enterprise Offices to encourage entrepreneurship in secondary schools, the Student Enterprise Programme has seen over 300,000 secondary school students take part nationally since it first began and over 12,000 taking part in Offaly.

Orla Martin Head of Enterprise at LEO Offaly said "*The Student Enterprise Programme continues to go from strength-to-strength year on year and the 20th year promises to be no different. In recent years we have seen students react to create businesses that are solving real world problems, whether it be pandemic related or within sustainability and the green agenda. Our students don't want to just create a business, but a business that makes a difference in the world and it's fantastic to see. We are looking forward to seeing what this year's students have to offer.*"

Since the Student Enterprise Programme began in 2003, over 300,000 students have taken part, learning key skills on how to create a business idea, start a business and grow a business. The Student Enterprise Programme also has new range of online resources for 2021 / 2022 at www.StudentEnterprise.ie, which will feature regular blogs and houses a full range of Student Enterprise resources for students and teachers.

Offaly has had success over the years. Anthony Gorman set up his successful business from his own home in Killeigh in 2019. His handmade reindeer ornaments, which he constructs from wood in his shed at home, became a roaring success last November. After his mum, Martina posted an ad on the 'Shop in Ireland' Facebook group, which currently has over 231,000 members, demand for his €20 decorations sharply increased. Anthony is back in business for Christmas 2021 and has been busy creating the adorable reindeer for customers across Ireland. People can purchase the products through the 'Shop in Ireland' website, with more information on 'Anthony's Wooden Crafts' Facebook group.

To see hear Anthony speak about his venture, click [here](#).



Upcoming Events and New Initiatives Working with a Wordpress Website

WordPress started as a blogging platform but today powers 26.4% of the Web and is still on the rise. This workshop is designed for beginners who are new to using the

platform and may be experiencing issues when trying to make changes themselves.

The objective of this workshop is to address questions and potential issues that are common among WordPress beginners and help participants understand how WordPress works and how to make simple changes to their WordPress blogs and websites. All participants will need a laptop or tablet as the workshop will be a hands on learning environment.

Participants will also need to have access to their WordPress dashboard in order to follow the demonstration aspects of the workshop. The trainer will be Fiona McGuire of [Join the Dots Online](#). Priority will be given to participants from County Offaly. Please feel free to share this workshop with people that may be interested in it! The course will take place on 16 December 2021. Click [here](#) to register.

The Green for Micro programme

Offaly's small businesses are being encouraged to avail of The Green for Micro Programme, which is 2 Free Days of Consultancy to help them become more sustainable. The consultant will provide specific recommendations that business owners can implement. These recommendations could include improvements to energy efficiencies, reduced water usage, reduced or improved packaging, product design, materials etc. The Green for Micro programme is an initiative from the Local Enterprise Offices, with support from Enterprise Ireland, being rolled-out nationwide to help prepare small businesses for the low carbon, more resource efficient economy of the future. It is now available to businesses across Offaly via the Local Enterprise Office. To find out more about the new Green for Micro programme, contact LEO Offaly or go to

www.LocalEnterprise.ie/Green for more information.



Age Friendly Update

A successful Age Friendly County Programme works to create the kinds of communities in which older people live autonomous, independent and valued lives. Positive health and wellbeing as we age is fundamental to our vision for Offaly. Throughout 2021, LEO Offaly provided the following courses as part of the Age Friendly Alliance: “How to plan a new website for mature entrepreneur” and “Starting a new business for mature entrepreneur”. We had a combined 31 participants for the courses. For further information on our work with the Age Friendly Programme, contact us at info@leo.offalycoco.ie

Digital School of Food

Are you aware of companies that are developing [#Offaly](#) food manufacturing businesses from a start-up to the growth phase, then take a look at our Digital School of Food learning hub. It has been designed to support their business knowledge within 6 themes, each containing 2 to 3 courses. This programme is also supported by [Bord Bia - The Irish Food Board](#) - and [Enterprise Ireland](#) Find details and an intro video at <https://lnkd.in/gwBbdiz>.

Social Media Management Tender Request

Proposals must be received not later than 4 pm on 15 December 2021. The social media management role incorporates

content creation, promotion and engagement for the Local Enterprise Office Offaly (LEO Offaly). The Contractor will be required to work with the LEO Offaly to develop and promote their online presence through social media. The contractor will be expected to retweet and syndicate relevant content from Offaly County Council and Offaly business innovation centres i.e. The Junction Offaly, e-Hive and Stream. Full details of the tender request available on <https://www.etenders.gov.ie/>



New Offaly Shopping Voucher Scheme Unveiled

Great [#Shoplocal](#) news!! [Tullamore & District Chamber of Commerce](#) and [#Tullamore](#) Credit Union have announced that QUIDs Shopping Vouchers are once again available to purchase for gifts and rewards. Just in time for Christmas! This [#lookforlocal](#)-friendly QUIDs scheme allows employers to reward their staff with up to €500 in shopping vouchers tax-free. More info here at Offaly News - <https://lnkd.in/emfURrBR>



In-Focus

In the past week, Fáilte Ireland hosted one-to-one workshops and sales meetings with 155 Irish brands, including three in Offaly, to help drive demand for Ireland and among international visitors in both the leisure and the UltraLuxe markets. The three Offaly brands were Wild Food Mary, Tullamore DEW Distillery Experience and Gloster House & Gardens. The meetings, which took place virtually over four days, represent tens of thousands of possible visitors and hundreds of millions in revenue for Ireland, as Irish tourism attractions and activities across the country try to influence the travel itineraries of these high-profile tour operators and DMCs, for 2022 and beyond, Fáilte Ireland claims.

Paul Keeley, Fáilte Ireland's Director of Regional Development, commented: "Fáilte Ireland is really excited about the potential business that will come out of these virtual workshops for Offaly. Typically, higher spenders, these markets offer us an opportunity to deliver sustainable growth to Irish tourism in the longer term"

CHRISTMAS EVENTS

The Christmas event 'Tullamore This Christmas' on the 20th and 21st November in O'Connor Square, Tullamore was hugely successful. Commencing at 11am each day with outdoor markets, street theatre, live music, local choirs, Midlands Radio 103, a very popular large screen and special guest Dustin the Turkey the festive atmosphere was ongoing as it came to a close at 8pm Sunday night.



The Christmas event in Clara was on Saturday 4th December. Starting at 3pm with the outdoor market in the Trap 'Christmas Garden', Main Street Clara and an opportunity to meet Santa in the Clara Community & Family Resource Centre followed by live entertainment in the Square with a kids discos, The River Street Band, street theatre and more.

Anna Marie Delaney, Chief Executive

Draft Consolidated Revenue Account Income & Expenditure Summary by Service Division up to 30th September 2021

	Expenditure €	Income €
Housing & Building	8,739,415	8,274,201
Road Transport & Safety	16,250,323	11,048,131
Water Services	4,158,356	3,829,426
Development Management	8,691,788	5,036,708
Environmental Services	5,696,969	1,025,147
Recreation & Amenity	3,174,659	303,356
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	508,506	300,847
Miscellaneous Services	10,369,809	6,860,975
Local Government Fund / GPG		6,299,001
Gross Rates Income		13,539,497
	57,589,825	56,517,289
Deficit - Increase to 30th September 2021		(1,072,536)

OCC to 30th November 2021

	<u>Rates</u> €m	<u>Rents</u> €m	<u>Loans</u> €m
Opening Balance Jan 1, 2021	3.60	0.57	0.19
Invoices/Adjustments	13.97	5.94	0.45
2021 Cash Collected to end of November	13.10	5.96	0.51
Closing Balance November 30th , 2021	4.46	0.55	0.13
<u>2020 Cash collected to November</u>	7.87	5.76	0.50
% Collection at this point in 2020	167%	104%	101%

Bank Overdraft to 30th November 2021

Number of days Overdrawn in Bank year to date	42	13%
Overdraft Interest and non conforming charges to November 30th 2021 YTD		€21,064

**NOVEMBER
2021**

MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT

Bank Administration and transactional charges to November 30th 2021 YTD

€25,621