

**SEPTEMBER
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 Deireadh Fómhair

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

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

FINANCE - Appendix 1

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

N52 Tullamore to Kilbeggan Link

Public consultation stage 3 is ongoing via an Online Virtual Consultation Room on the dedicated website. The public consultation documentation is also available to inspect in Aras an Chontae. Closing date for public feedback to the Project Team is October 29th 2021.



TKL Dedicated Website Homepage

REPORT AT A GLANCE

Climate Action

ENCORE CONFERENCE 2021 Regional Collaboration for a Green and Sustainable Transition

This conference was hosted by the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly, the 14th Environmental Conference of the Regions of Europe, ENCORE 2021 took place online on September 24th. The bi-annual conference of the ENCORE Network, ENCORE 2021, hosted 'virtually' from Tullamore in the Irish Midlands, was attended by political representatives from across Europe and wide-ranging stakeholders.

The conference culminated in the signing of the 'Tullamore Declaration' by member regions - a statement of common intent which will guide regions to effectively exert their collective influence on the formulation of environmental policy within the European Union.

PLANNING

	To end Sept 2021	To end Sept 2020	Total 2020
Planning Applications	610	467	674
Extensions of Duration Applications & Assessments	12	2	5
Warning Letters and (Enforcement Notices) issued	23(1)	6(2)	13 (2)

Development Management

Planning applications continue to grow year on year with Applications received to September reflecting a growth of 31% on 2020. During the month of September, the following larger applications were received:

Illera Ltd	3 large Commercial units incl. Health Clinic at Ferbane
Michelle Leonard	44 Residential Units at Clara
Kilcush Solar Farm Ltd	Solar Farm and 10 year operating licence

Forward Planning

The Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027 was adopted at a Special Council Meeting on 10th September 2021. It will come into effect on 22nd October 2021.

Greenways

Plans for a Part 8 for A Greenway Extension, on the North Bank of the Grand Canal between Henesey's Bridge (Rahan) and Plunketts Bridge, Pollagh (5.5km) are at an advanced stage with landowner

consultation ongoing. Following this, plans can be finalised and it is hoped to publish this Part 8 in October /early November.

This would represent a more 'Off road' / Greenway alternative to the current 'shared surface' arrangement on the southern towpath, which is a public road for 5.5km. Funding has already been approved from the DTTAS for these works (pending Part 8 approval) as part of the 2020 allocation, under the National & Regional Greenway Strategy Fund.

Works are continuing on 16.3 km of Greenway from Daingean to Edenderry, in 4 separate phases/ contracts and should be significantly complete by December 2021, weather dependent. This could feasibly complete a Grand Canal Greenway link between Edenderry and Lough Boora, in early 2022.



New Greenway parking at Turraun



Western approach to Molesworth Bridge, Daingean - viewed from the Grand Canal Greenway.

The public consultation stage for 2 no. Feasibility studies have commenced for;

- A new Greenway from Shannon Harbour in Offaly to Athlone in Westmeath via Clonmacnoise
- A new Greenway from Kilbeggan to Mullingar in Co. Westmeath

These feasibilities are funded by the Carbon Tax Fund and are to be undertaken by Tobin Consultants behalf of OCC and WCC.

ROADS

Roads Programme 2021

All construction works commenced on the 4th May and Roads and the three MDs are progressing works throughout the County.

Active Travel and Outdoor Recreation

The NTA Active Travel and Outdoor Infrastructure schemes are progressing throughout the County to improve walking and cycling infrastructure and changes to traffic management arrangements to facilitate the reallocation of overall road space to improve facilities and safety for pedestrians and cyclists. The dedicated Active Travel Team is expected to be in place in the coming weeks. Construction work on NTA funded Bus Stop near Aldi in Tullamore is complete and open to the public.



Bus Stops R420 Cloncollig Tullamore

National Road Pavement Improvements

Works are ongoing (thru the HD28 & Capital Maintenance programmes) and pavement works on the N62 at Arden (c.600m) and the N80 East of Killeigh (c.400m) will commence this month.

Edenderry Town Inner Relief Road

The Contractor, Tower Civil Engineering has been appointed. Construction works will commence on 18th October. 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. Works within the MD's are ongoing for LIS programme delivery.

CLÁR 2021

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 and salting of the busier Offaly routes will be undertaken as required until the end of April 2022. The Winter Service plan covering the 2021/2022 winter period has been approved and will be available on Offaly.ie to be viewed by members of the public.



ENVIRONMENT AND WATER SERVICES

Peatlands Climate Action Scheme

A site visit took place on the 30th September to Pollagh Bog to view the rehabilitations works which have taken place, under the Peatlands Climate Action Scheme. A number of Councillors and staff attended. Bord na Mona can organise another site visit in the Edenderry area if required.



Environment

Tullamore Living River Project

Work continues on the Tullamore Living River Project site, with a clear impression of the project now visible. This project sets out to deliver a landmark project for the residents and future visitors to Tullamore town which provides amenities, improves water quality, enhances biodiversity, allows flood relief and engages the local community with their spatial surroundings. Most of the excavation work has been completed, with the finer shaping works continuing before planting of the Wetlands can begin at an appropriate time within the season.

The first phase of a comprehensive “River Clean” was carried out in conjunction with Tullamore Tidy Towns, Shannon Sub Aqua Club, Tullamore MD and OCC. Waste items including 20 shopping trolleys, bicycles and over a tonne of other material was removed to Derryclure.

Burial Grounds

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

Litter & Waste Management

Litter and Waste Enforcement continued over the summer months, with each complaint received being logged and investigated. There are a number of legal actions for littering and illegal dumping under various Sections of the Waste Management Act 1996 before the courts. An increased number of these legal actions are in relation to individuals paying unauthorised contractors to remove waste. Under WMA 1996, it is an offence to give waste to an unauthorised waste collector.

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.

Soft Plastic Recycling

Householders can now place all plastic packaging into the household recycling bin - once it is clean dry and loose. This

includes both **soft and rigid plastics** everything from a plastic bottle to the plastic film on fruit packs!

This is a welcome development, as currently in Ireland we recycle less than one third of all our plastic packaging. A big percentage of our plastic waste now ends up in the general household bin, and unless this plastic packaging is collected and separated, it will never be recycled. Collecting soft and rigid plastics in the household recycling bin is a big step towards separating available recyclable plastics that are currently being sent to landfill and energy recovery.

2018 Irish data show us that of the 264,000 tonnes of plastic packaging generated, we only recycled 82,000. To achieve targets for plastics of 50% by 2025, and 55% by 2030, the recycling of plastics in Ireland will have to increase.

By putting all clean dry loose plastic packaging into the recycling bin we can ensure that no recyclable plastic inadvertently ends up in landfill. As technology improves and more types of plastic can be recycled, recycling system will be able to sort and pick them up without delay.

Wastewater

Aecom Consultants have been appointed for the upgrade the of the Edenderry Plant, this project will be led by Irish Water, a site visit took place in September.

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

Water

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

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

Find and fix works are ongoing in Clonbullogue, Banagher, Edenderry, Pollagh, Dunkerrin and Brosna. Works are due to start in Croghan, Portarlinton, Ferbane and Geashill.

Watermain rehabilitation works are ongoing in Newtown and Croghan and due to commence on the Clara Rd.

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

Rural Water Programme

The Multi-Annual Rural Water Programme 2019 – 2021 is ongoing. Of the 19 projects awarded funding 8 are now complete and the remainder are due to be completed by the end of quarter1/22. An additional 4 projects have requested extra funding for projects that have arisen during the term of the current funding programme and these requests have been forwarded to the Dept. Of Housing for their consideration.

The Annual Group Water Scheme Subsidy Applications have been received by the Rural Water Team and are currently being processed and paid.

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

September Housing Update

- There are 522 on the Social Housing List awaiting housing support at the end of September 2021.
- A further 800 active tenancies are currently being supported under the Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Scheme, 9 signed up for HAP and 15 exited from HAP in September.
- At the end of September, 15 single people and 5 families were being supported in emergency accommodation.
- 23 Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans applications have been received in 2021. 6 have been approved, 9 declined, 2 ineligible, 2 withdrawn and the remainder are ready for referral to the Housing Agency. Overall 15 RIHLs have been drawn down since the commencement of the programme.
- The Rent Review of Local Authority housing units was

finalised and the revised rent took effect from 9th October.

- Social Housing Assessments (SSHA) 2021 is to be completed by 17th November 2021. All qualified applicants have been notified and outstanding returns should be submitted to the Housing Section without further delay, but no later than 16th October 2021.

Housing Stock – Number, Maintenance & Repair

- Total housing stock at end of September 2021 is 1,942.
- 265 maintenance calls were logged in September. Maintenance of non-emergency works is continuing with Covid-19 precautions in place.

Housing Capital Programme Update

- Raheen, Clara development (38 units) – Stage 3 approval application (permission to proceed to Tender) was received from the Department on August 26th 2021; Works Tender will be advertised on etenders in October 2021. Stage 4, permission to proceed to construction will be submitted in Q4 2021.
- Dargan Drive, Chancery Lane (20 Units) – received Stage 1 approval in April 2020. Stage 2 submission to the department will issue in mid-October 2021.
- Moneygall (4 units) – Two no. Tenders were received on August 23rd 2021. Stage 4 submission will be submitted to the Department in October 2021 with a view to starting on site in November 2021.
- Beechgrove Belmont (7 units) – Four no. Tenders were received on August 19th 2021. Stage 4 submission was submitted to the

Department in September 2021. Works should commence on site in October/November 2021.

- 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 October 2021.
- Banagher, Kylebeg (18 Units) – Stage 4 approval received on 25th June 2021. Contractor has been appointed (Pat Loftus Construction Ltd.) Construction due to start on site on October 19th 2021.
- Circular Road, Daingean (9 units) - Stage 3 approval was received in March 2021. Works Tender will issue in Q4 2021 with a view to commencing construction in Q4 2021.
- Circular Road, Daingean, Site 2 (9 Units) – Stage 1 approval application was granted on August 3rd 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 appointments are in progress along with site investigation procurement. Stage 2 application to be submitted in Q4 2021.

Vacant Houses Initiatives

- 1 Newbridge Street, Birr: Refurbishment of derelict dwelling to provide retrofitted 3-bedroom dwelling. Tender issued on September 6th 2021. 3 no. Tenders were returned on 28th September 2021. Stage 4 submitted to Department on October 4th 2021

with a few to commencing works in November 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) complete 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 (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.

Turnkey Developments/Part V

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

Housing Grants

The Department has advised that €1,368,805, of which €273,761 is to be provided from Offaly County Council own revenues, will be made available for private housing grants, i.e., Housing Adaptation Grants for Older People; People with a Disability Scheme and Mobility Grants. Funds are being allocated to qualified households and staff are following up with households who were awarded grants to ascertain the status of the work programme. On 28th September, the Department approved a request from the Council for additional funding towards housing grants. An additional €184,956, was approved bringing the total allocation in 2021 to €1,600,000.

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. €790,556 has been approved for works, of which €79,056 is to be provided from Offaly County Council own revenues. Design details and tenders are currently being progressed for several extension and adaption grants.

Retrofit Programme

The Council received notification on 8th September 2020 that €3.3m was being awarded to Offaly for the 'Just Transition for the Midlands Region' programme.

Lot 1&2, Birr: The Contractor for the works has been appointed (Retrofit Design Ltd.) The Contractor started enabling survey works and tenant liaison on 23rd September 2021 on the 35 houses.

Lot 3&4, Tullamore: The appointed consultants have surveyed the 42 houses in Tullamore and are preparing the works tender which will be advertised on www.etenders.gov.ie.in Q4 2021.

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.in Q4 2021.

LOCAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

COMMUNITY

Offaly Covid-19 Community Response Helpline

From the weekend of 25th September the operating hours of the Offaly Community Call Helpline changed to 9.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday helping those who are vulnerable and who need help accessing essential services or a listening ear. Calls have remained very low with no weekend calls received by the Helpline from April to September. The Helpline

number for Offaly is FREEPHONE: 1800 81 81 81. A dedicated team of Community & Culture staff answer queries.

All 4 calls received in September were queries about Covid tests.

SUMMARY OF MONTHLY CALLS TO COVID HELPLINE 2020-2021					
2020			2021		
	No.	%		No.	%
Apr	312	57.7	Jan	19	3.5
May	93	17.2	Feb	11	2.0
Jun	19	3.5	Mar	9	1.7
Jul	8	1.5	Apr	13	2.4
Aug	8	1.5	May	9	1.7
Sep	7	1.3	Jun	3	0.6
Oct	9	1.7	Jul	3	0.6
Nov	3	0.6	Aug	3	0.6
Dec	8	1.5	Sep	4	0.7
2020 & 2021			Total	541	

Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

Offaly LCDC held their monthly meeting on Thursday 9th September, with members attending by video link. Main agenda items included the Rural Development LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020 & Transitional LEADER Programme 2021 - 2022; Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme 2018-2022 (SICAP); Offaly Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021 (Review); Offaly Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2021-2025 and the Community Enhancement Programme 2021.

LEADER: Projects were approved under the Transitional LEADER Programme 2021-2022, the amount of funding awarded was €21,279.19.

SICAP: Members were informed of the Minister's request that LCDCs and Local Development Companies are now required to engage in a mid-programme review

process and agree a set of SICAP priorities for the remainder of the programme.

Offaly Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021: A presentation was provided to the members in relation to the review of the community elements of the Offaly LECP 2016-2021 and actions progressed and/or completed to date by Lead Agencies were outlined.

The Offaly Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2021-2025 was approved by the Members.

Social Enterprise Capital Grants Scheme 2021: Members were informed that the Minister for Rural & Community Development has approved funding of €1m to be allocated nationally to the Dormant Accounts Fund Social Enterprise Capital Grants Scheme 2021 and that the allocation for Offaly of €25,779.48 is to be rolled out through the LCDC. Details of the Scheme were presented to the members.

Public Participation Network

Work is underway to commence the filling of PPN Rep vacancies arising on Boards and Committees. An article will be published in the local Newspapers to make people aware of the upcoming PPN elections.

The Draft Community Wellbeing Statement is ready to go to print. In November, in-person PPN Municipal District meetings highlighting funding opportunities will be held in Birr, Edenderry & Tullamore. This will take place via a ticket booking system. Speakers from Offaly Co. Co. and OLDC will be present.

Make Way Day celebrating O'Connor Square as a universally accessible public space, took place on Sept 24th 2021.

Cathaoirleach of Tullamore MD, Councillor Tony McCormack opened the event which was organised by ODEN (Offaly Disability Equality Network) with support from OLDC, OCC and the PPN. ODEN are members of Offaly PPN. The event was well attended with the Dog Stencilling Grids on show in the Library alongside a video showing the Dog Fouling project in operation. Refreshments on the day were compliments of Tullamore Chamber of Commerce.



Posters are displayed by retailers in Tullamore acknowledging their understanding of the need to be inclusive. This is in conjunction with Tullamore Chamber of Commerce.



Age Friendly Alliance

The Age Friendly Alliance met at the end of September. A review of the Age Friendly Strategy 2018 – 2021 is underway. The Age Friendly Alliance Interdepartmental group is now established and has met on one occasion to date. Interesting interviews take place each Sunday on Midlands 103 between 8-9am on 'Chatters and Matters', with the working group meeting twice monthly to manage the content and insure

up to date relevant information is reaching Older People.

The Autumn issue of *Connecting the Faithful* issued this month. A number of activities including Walks, Activator Poles, Talks and online Storytelling and Poetry engaged people during *Positive Ageing Week*.

Comhairle na nÓg

The members of the Comhairle na nÓg Executive consulted on possible names for the Arts Centre on the 1st of September 2021 to give their opinions from a young person's perspective.

On the 4th of September 2021 Kenneth Bracken spoke on Midlands Radio 3 about his experience in Comhairle na nÓg on the show 'Chatters and Matters'.

Three members of the Executive travelled to Dublin to do a workshop on public speaking for 'TED Junior' which will be held in November in Dun Laoghaire. They very much enjoyed the experience.

The Executive prepared a short video for the virtual exhibition at the ENCORE Conference 2021 to showcase the app they are developing to help schools in Offaly become single use plastic free. The Executive held a meeting on the 30th of September to discuss the launch of their app and the plastic free campaign 'Trash Talk'



which is to be rolled out in 7 secondary schools in Offaly starting in October 2021.

Several members took part in national consultations during the month of September including consultation with the Department of Education and a steering group for Dáil na nÓg's 20th anniversary which will be in December.

Traveller Interagency Group

In June 2021, Offaly LCDC members formally approved the establishment of the Offaly Traveller Interagency Group. The inaugural meeting of the group was held on the 30th September 2021.

The membership of the Group currently includes: Offaly County Council Community, Housing & Environmental Section staff; Offaly Traveller Movement; Birr Travellers & Settled Peoples Group; OLDC/SICAP; Department of Social Protection; Túsla; Health Service Executive; Offaly Community Childcare Committee; Laois Offaly ETB; An Garda Síochána and AIT.

The work of the Traveller Interagency Group will include:

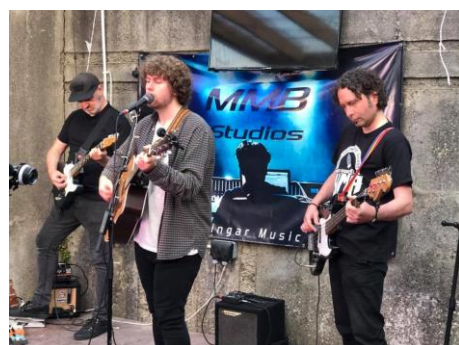
- Working in a collaborative manner to develop a *County Offaly Traveller Inclusion Strategy* based on the National Strategy and in pursuance of Objective 6 of Offaly LECP 2016- 2021.
- Seeking access to such funding and supports that may be available to implement the actions arising from the Strategy.
- Reporting at regular intervals to the LCDC.
- Noting that it is not intended that the work of this Group will impinge on the statutory role of the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee.

LECP Review

The September meeting of the LCDC was advised that Guidelines for the next Local Economic and Community Plan 2022-2027 are being finalised by the LGMA and should be circulated in the coming weeks. A review of the community elements of the Offaly LECP 2016-2021, was carried out and presented to the LCDC members. A summary of the actions progressed and completed by lead agencies was provided. A review of the Economic elements of the LECP is also being completed and will be presented to the Land Use, Planning and Economic Development SPC in October.

Music Generation Offaly/Westmeath Culture Night Activities | Music Box Album Launch:

On Friday 17th September as part of Culture night 2021 *The Music Box Originals* project held a launch party and livestream sharing the music and videos created as part of the Music Box Residency 2021. Hosted by Youthwork Ireland (Midlands), the residency involved young people from all over Offaly and Westmeath and they along with their families viewed the videos for the first time as they were simultaneously live- streamed on Music Generation Offaly/ Westmeath's Facebook page. Some of the videos are prefaced with super interviews with the participating musicians talking about their experience.

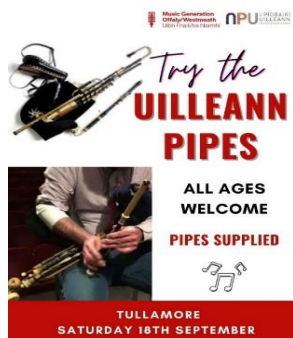




Link to video compilation 1:
<https://youtu.be/O5NUpGNhH0U>
Link to video compilation 2:
https://youtu.be/ME-M_RNaToc

Uilleann Pipes

We were delighted to welcome pipers from Na Píobairí Uilleann to Tullamore Town Park for a Try the Pipes session and look forward to working with them and Offaly BCP to deliver Piperlink with an initial pilot programme planned for the Kilclonfert BCP. There were many requests that Music in the Park become a regular feature.



Back to schools for 2021-2022

We are already back in a number of our partner schools and community settings with programmes back up and running for the academic year 2021-2022.

Online programmes in September

- Monday morning music for pre-schoolers,

- Choral activities for all ages - Singfest Choirs
- Our Sinfonia Ensemble
- Rock at 2pm for children and young people based in SEN/ ASD units
- Music Production and song writing

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.

ARTS

Arts Council Funding In the Open | Faoin Spéir



The purpose of the award is to generate a sustained and curated programme of multidisciplinary, inclusive arts activity in public or open spaces in towns and communities around Ireland between July 2021 and April 2022. This is a collaborative partnership, led by Offaly County Council's Arts Office, including Birr Theatre and Arts Centre and Birr Festivals Collective. With the aim to develop an exciting and innovative curated programme of outdoor events, planned for Birr, Lough Boora, (in conjunction with the Sculpture Park) and Tullamore, in anticipation of the opening of the new Arts Centre for the town next year. The planning and programming is underway and will be launched October.

Creative Places

This ambitious three-year funding stream is being led by Creative Lives in partnership with Offaly County Council Arts Office and Edenderry Municipal District. The partnership held their first meetings in

September, and plans are underway for the launch of the programme and PR to take place Oct/Nov

Capital Projects

Tullamore Art Centre

Work continues with regards to the opening of the Arts Centre in 2022. The Arts Office are continuing to develop a series of arts events, funded by Creative Ireland Funding and this will also include events as part of the In the Open | Faoin Spéir project. This programme will aim to re-engage an audience / local community participation in advance of the Art Centre opening. The Arts Office, in conjunction with the Arts Centre committee developed a questionnaire to assess local community, art organisations and artist's interest in room rental as an information gathering exercise to be used by the Art Centre management upon opening. 21 arts organisations from the Tullamore area responded to the questionnaire.

Edenderry Library and Arts Space

The Arts Office will be continuing to work in collaboration with the county librarian in the development of plans for a multi-purpose arts space to be incorporated into the planning of the new library for Edenderry, this will include developments as part of the Creative Places Edenderry project.

Artist Support

We continually provide opportunities for artists to upskill and grow.

FilmOffaly

In September FilmOffaly concentrated on organising FilmOffaly's Industry Day, this is undertaken in collaboration with OFFline Film Festival and funded through Offaly Local Enterprise Office.

The FilmOffaly Script Mentorship programme under the facilitation of Mary Kate O'Flanagan is progressing as is the FilmOffaly Short Film Award 2021. Our FilmOffaly Short Film Award winner for 2019 is in the latter stages of completing their film (it was postponed due to Covid)

Poetry Town

For one week in September Tullamore became a 'Poetry Town' a programme collaboration between Offaly Arts office and Poetry Ireland.

Throughout the week 6 events took place

around Tullamore, with Poetry Slams, Poetry Workshops and Reveal of Poet Laureate Cormac Lally reaching seasoned and amateur poets of all ages. Over 23 local poets were involved attracting a ground audience of over 130 .



Also over 3000 mock receipts and prescriptions handed out to customers by staff across Tullamore businesses, the cards were of mixed poetry of either national poets or the Wordsmiths of Tullamore, 10 poets contributed 1 poem each, and 75 were printed out each for receipt and prescription.

Offaly Culture Night 2021

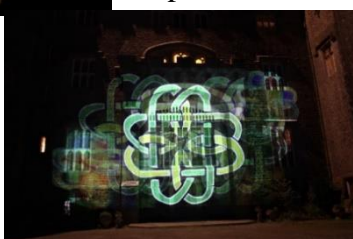
2021 Culture Night consisted of 19 online and offline events across Offaly at 11 venues with over 80 artists involved. The night attracted over 500 on the ground and a virtual audience of over 4000. There were



four specially commissioned art works for Culture Night, one of which, *Dance like a Girl* by the Donlon Dance Company featured on RTE Nationwide as a highlighted Culture Night Event.



In addition, we took the opportunity to launch our Youth Arts Strategy Report.



Hullabaloo! Offaly Children's Arts Festival

Scheduling for Hullabaloo was completed in September and we are now moving into the publicity campaign stage. The festival is undertaken in partnership with Birr Theatre & Arts Centre.

Youth Arts Commission

Evaluations were undertaken with respect to submissions of proposals for a €15,000 Youth Arts Commission. The successful submission was a project proposed by a collaboration of artists. Artist are currently awaiting Garda vetting prior to signing of contract documents.

Mini Movies Programme

Approximately 100 young people took part in our Mini Movies programme from three schools in Edenderry.



The programme was facilitated by Julie Forrester and consisted of learning skills in stop motion animation. The films will be

launched in Edenderry in October and will feature in OFFline Film Festival.

Art Event Highlights in September

- Tullamore International Summer Organ Series
- Culture Night
- Poetry Town
- Tullamore Stage School – CD Launch
- September Sessions (Local Live Performance (LLP) through Birr Municipal District)
- Tullamore Fayre in the Square (LLP through Tullamore Municipal District)
- Edenderry The Spirit of Edenderry Festival (LLP through Edenderry Municipal District)

SPORTS - Funding

Offaly County Council's funding scheme for governing bodies of sport to deliver projects in Offaly allocated €30,000 across five governing bodies: -

- FAI - €11,891
- Athletics Ireland - €6,845
- Hockey Ireland - €4,050
- Camogie Association - €3,624
- Golf Ireland - €3,600

Education & Training

- Safeguarding 1 delivered online via Zoom in September for 21 volunteers
- Youth / Sports leader training recommenced in schools - 17 courses due for delivery across six schools in the academic year 2021 / 2022 catering for 400 students. 10 courses underway at the moment

Programmes- Community sports development programme

- activator poles for older adults
- fitness sessions for men in Crinkle
- outdoor fitness sessions for women

Schools programmes

Schools programmes with a focus on fitness testing have recommenced in 20 schools

Sports Inclusion Development Programme

Various programmes recommencing 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

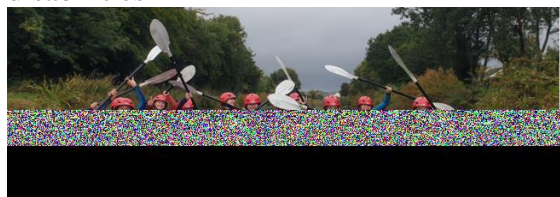
Community volunteer supports - swim programme for coaches supporting people with disabilities commencing soon

South Offaly sports hub - staff supported delivery of the sports partnership's summer programmes

Daingean sports hub

- Daingean hub coordinator appointed
- Yr. 2 funding secured; 75% drawn down

Sports inclusion capital supports – 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



Urban outdoor adventure – Splash & Dash sessions under way in Edenderry with primary and secondary schools



Adapted swim equipment

HEALTHY OFFALY

September was extremely busy for Healthy Offaly. The month began with a launch of the school's physical fitness diary called 'Active Me'. 10,000 copies were sent to every primary school and Gaelscoil in the County to assist teachers and school children in tracking their physical activity levels in the new school year. The diary provides tips and hints for parents and teachers to encourage children to become more active. Many schools are using the diary as part of their physical education curriculum and to assist them in their pursuit of the coveted Active Flag.



Dermot Egan, Healthy Offaly Coordinator; Anna Marie Delaney, Chief Executive Offaly County Council; and Robert Mc Dermott, Chair Offaly Sports Partnership at the launch of the Active Me diary in August

Much of the work of Healthy Offaly in September centred around answering queries from Pobal regarding year 2 Healthy Ireland Fund Progress and

Financial reporting and Community Resilience Fund Progress & Financial reporting. The CRF was delivered on time and on budget with 17 additional actions delivered under the 'Keep Well' banner.

Finally, towards the end of September, the Minister of State at the Department of Health responsible for Public Health, Wellbeing and the National Drugs Strategy, Frank Feighan TD, visited three Healthy Offaly funded projects in Offaly. On 27th September the visit began with a tour of Moneygall Community Garden funded under Healthy Offaly actions 2 and 3 before moving on to Arden View Community and Family Resource Centre and Kilcormac Development Associations' Meals on Wheels' service on 28th September. The Minister was very impressed with all three projects and the visit was deemed a great success.



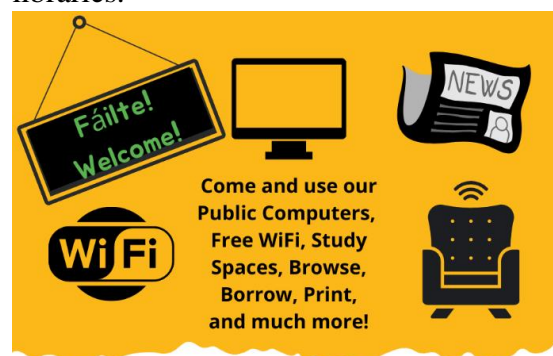
Photo L-R: Sarah Kennedy, Offaly Local Development Company; Eric Crowe, Community Garden Coordinator; Cllr John Clendennen; Minister Frank Feighan; Anna-Marie Delaney, Chief Executive, Offaly County Council; Dermot Egan, Healthy Offaly Coordinator and Brian Pey, Community & Culture Section, Offaly County Council.

LIBRARY SERVICES

Open again!

We are delighted to be back offering a variety of services in all 8 branches. In order to ensure that everyone has a safe and enjoyable visit, these services will be facilitated in accordance with government guidelines on social distancing. To avoid disappointment, [advance booking](#) is advisable.

Our staff are busy hosting school class visits again, reintroducing the many services and events we have on offer in our libraries.



Full details and opening information is available on www.Offaly.ie/Libraries

Children's Book Festival at Offaly Libraries

Our very successful Summer Stars programme wrapped up when the winners visited their local library to pick up their



prize of a Kindle. We are now celebrating a wonderful Children's Book Festival programme. There are over 31 events including family fun quizzes, Zoom into the Library storytimes, class events, crafty gift bags and a costume competition! The full Programme of Events is [here](#) and places may be booked [here on Ticket Tailor](#).

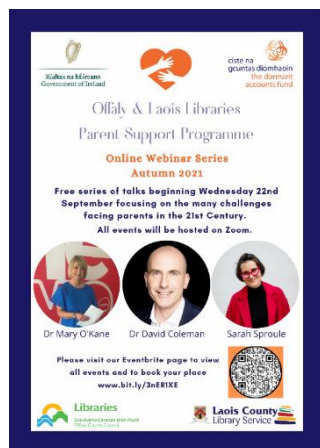


Offaly & Laois Libraries in partnership [Parenting Support Programme Autumn Series](#)

The Parenting Programme funded by the **Dormant Account Fund** started on Wednesday 22nd September and covers very relevant topics affecting all areas of parenting babies to teens. There have been **276 attendees at 6 events** to date.



ciste na gcuntas díomhaoin
the dormant accounts fund



The series includes a variety of interesting and well-known speakers including Dr. David Coleman, Dr. Mary O'Kane, and Sarah Sproule. The webinars are a unique way for parents to hear professional experts discuss topics that impact children both in and out of school. All

events may be booked on Offaly Libraries [Eventbrite](#) page and full details are available on our [website](#) and on our [social media channels](#).

Sensory Offaly Online Webinar Series 2021



This Sensory Offaly webinar series has been organised by Offaly Libraries as part of our larger Sensory Offaly Programme, with support from Laois Offaly CYPSC and Healthy Ireland. This online programme aims to support people in challenges they and their families may face due to disability and/or learning differences. It is free of charge to all attendees (parents, children, young adults, teachers, carers, SNAs, etc.). Advance booking is required. Book your place on [Eventbrite](#).

Culture Night 2021

Tullamore Library was delighted to host Donlon Dance Company, speed artist Sgl Turner, both commissioned by Offaly Arts Office of Offaly County Council, for Culture Night on 17th



PAW is a lovely festival and a way for us to appreciate the contribution and guidance the older person in our lives makes to society.

Black History Month at Offaly Libraries
Offaly Libraries are delighted to celebrate, honour, and commemorate Black History Month which takes place for the month of October. Black History Month is an opportunity for the black community to celebrate its many achievements. The

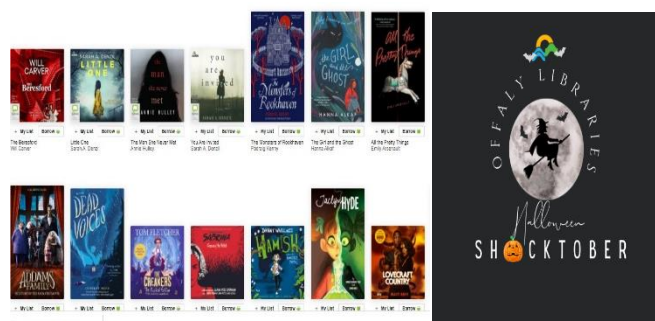


national theme for Black History Month 2021 is: The Black Family: Representation, Identity, and Diversity.

Offaly Libraries will [recommend and review books](#); each branch will showcase the wonderful books/audiobooks/films available, staff will contribute to blog posts, story times and books on race, racism and diversity on our digital library [BorrowBox](#).



Shock-tober in Offaly Libraries



Join us for this Halloween/Shocktober season for a fantastic selection of spooky books, music, magazines, comics and

movies inspiration for all ages! Check out the fantastically scary collection of ebooks and eaudiobooks on [Borrowbox](#) – if you dare!!

Offaly Libraries History Lecture Series 2021

The first lecture in the History lecture Series, 'The burning of the Big House in Offaly' by Dr



An Roinn Turasóireachta, Cultúir, Ealaíon, Gaeltachta, Spóirt agus Meán
Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media

Ciaran Reilly was commissioned in partnership with Offaly History as part of the Decade of Centenaries Programme and is now available on Offaly Libraries' [Facebook](#) and [YOUTUBE](#) channels. This series of events has been funded by Creative Ireland. The second lecture, The 1798 rebellion in Offaly will be available from October 14th.

Offaly Libraries 2021/22 School STEAM Programme

This innovative STEAM programme for primary schools in Offaly is a programming first for Offaly Library Service and is jointly funded by Offaly County Council and a Dormants Account award from DRCD.



Offaly Libraries will contact all schools in County Offaly providing details on our upcoming programme of workshops and talks which aim to give children the opportunity to engage with and explore **science, technology, engineering, arts and maths (STEAM) subjects** in a fun and stimulating environment. These events will take place

during school hours and can be booked through the school's local library.

The Spectrum Series

The [Spectrum Series](#)

has been set up by Laois Offaly Children and Young People's Services Committee (CYPSC) 'Learning and Development'

subgroup in response to a need for greater community autism supports in Laois and Offaly.

The Spectrum Series is a new 6-part webinar series each Wednesday morning running from September 22nd to October 27th 2021. Register to attend for free on: <https://bit.ly/3a8cfv1>



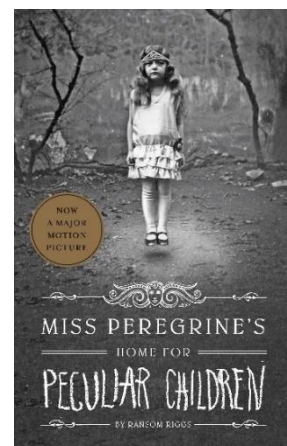
Adult Book Club

The selected book for October is 'Spare Room' by Dreda Say Mitchell which is available as an eBook or Audiobook on Borrowbox. The next meeting will held on Thursday, November 4th at 7pm. Email TullamoreLibrary@Offalycoco.ie if you would like to join the Book Club.



Teenage Book Club

Offaly Libraries' Virtual Book Club for Teens started in September and was a huge success with a lively discussion of Holly Race's book 'Midnight's Twins', which all members really enjoyed. The author, Holly Race, read about our book club on Instagram and thanked Offaly Libraries for discussing her book.

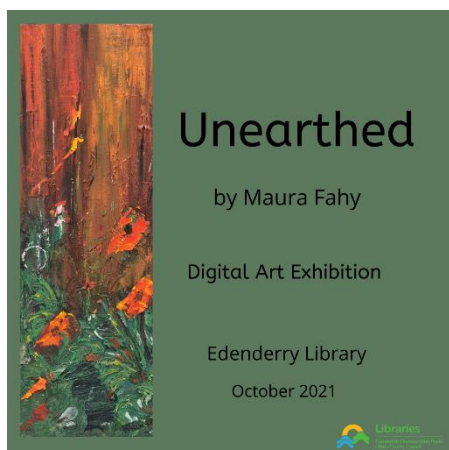


Our next read will be 'Miss Peregrine's

Home for Peculiar Children' by Ransom Riggs and we will be meeting on Thursday, 28th October at 7pm to discuss and watch segments of the movie adaptation. Those interested may register by email to mcronly@offalycoco.ie

Digital Exhibitions

Digital Exhibitions Edenderry Library is delighted to host **Unearthed** by Maura Fahy during October 2021. This digital exhibition will be on the large TV in the front window of Edenderry Library and will go live on our [Facebook page](#) and [Youtube channel](#) on October 13th.



Hullabaloo!

A selection of wonderful children's book themed events are taking place for this year's Hullabaloo! Children's Arts Festival, which will run from Wednesday 27th to Saturday 30th October. All of these events are live on Zoom and can be booked through www.hullabalooofestival.ie



Offaly Libraries helping third level students to stay connected with eduroam

As part of the **eduroam Everywhere** initiative by HEAnet, Ireland's National Education and Research Network, Offaly County Council's IT Department has connected all Offaly libraries to the eduroam network.

Eduroam stands for education roaming. It provides secure and easy-to-use wifi access in more than 12,000 locations across 106 countries worldwide. Students whose home institution participates in eduroam can simply open their laptop or mobile device within an eduroam hotspot to have immediate internet connectivity. Further details can be found on our [website](#).



LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE



We were so sorry to hear of the fire at Glenisk, but are grateful that everyone is safe and well. People in Offaly are justly proud of this great company, that has always inspired others by its ambition, hard work and resilience.

Hopefully, those traits, together with combined efforts of all will enable #Glenisk to re-establish before too long. LEO Offaly and the Managers of our Hubs have been in touch directly with Glenisk to see how we can help.

Upcoming Events and New Initiatives Irish Design Business Challenge

Calling all innovators, inventors, game-changers, leaders, can-doers, pioneers...business heroes! The deadline for the Irish Design challenge is looming! Enter your submission before Oct 25th at <http://dcci.ie/ibdc-2021> #IBDC21. The Design & Crafts Council Ireland Irish Business Design Challenge is open to micro, small and medium enterprises across Ireland that have developed products or services or re-imagined their business model to benefit customers. The overall prize fund is over €50,000. The winner of each category will receive €15,000 and €2,000 will be awarded to the runner-up in each category.

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.

Start Your Own Business Course

For potential business owners who are thinking of starting their own business, do

your homework now with the next round of FREE Startup training. Over the 5 sessions, potential business owners will learn about market research, business structure, business planning, sources of assistance, taxation issues and promoting your product or service. Join our 5 evening 'Start your Own Business' online course taking place between Nov 18 - Dec 2nd. It is conveniently timed at 6 pm - 9.30 pm. Go to: <https://www.localenterprise.ie/Offaly/Training-Events/Online-Bookings/Start-Your-Own-Business-Course-Evening.html> for more information

Grow Your Own Business Programme

A lot has changed in life and in business during the last 2 years. We have a new GROW YOUR OWN BUSINESS programme to help you create and navigate a strategic growth plan for your business in 2022. Join our FREE INTRODUCTORY WEBINAR to establish if this course could help you - just for 1 hr on Wed Dec 15th from 9.30am. Register for FREE here <https://lnkd.in/e6mJtWhc>

Calling all Vacant Property Owners

Do you own a commercial or industrial premises that is currently vacant? Do you have industrial sites? Interested in selling or leasing? If you like to be included in our FREE online property database, contact us at info@leo.offalycoco.ie

Film Offaly Industry Day

LEO Offaly is delighted to support the Film Offaly Day. The day consists of the essentials of how and when to pitch, loglines and the etiquette of pitching. Facilitator and presenter Mary Kate O Flanagan: well-known throughout the Irish and international film industry as being an exceptional screenwriter and script doctor, will be presenter for the day. LEO is delighted to support this type of event so as

to assist Offaly's film and creative industries sector.

GradStart Scheme Now Available for LEO Clients

The GradStart scheme is a 24-month graduate placement programme with funding of up to €30k (€15k per year). Local Enterprise Office client companies with at least 5 full time staff can apply for the GradStart programme. The objective of GradStart is to assist indigenous companies to scale and grow their businesses through the introduction of good graduate talent (with a minimum Level 6 Degree qualification) to deliver clearly defined projects.

Online Trading Sessions: Digital Marketing

For business owners looking to improve their social media skills, our heavily subsidised 6 session online Digital Marketing Course with Evan Mangan of The Marketing Crowd is a step in the right direction. Join us Fridays from Nov 5th to Dec 10th 2021 from 9.30am-12.30pm for online training sessions. It will explain how all the key aspects of website marketing and social media marketing fit together and how you can use digital marketing to increase your sales. Book it at <https://www.localenterprise.ie/Offaly/Training-Events/Online-Bookings/6-session-Digital-Marketing-Course.html>

In-Focus

Rhode Green Energy Park

Offaly County Council in collaboration with North Offaly Development Fund continue to develop opportunities at Rhode Green Energy Park.

In September, North Offaly Development Fund CLG successfully applied for funding for a Feasibility Study to The project will investigate the feasibility of creating a

green hydrogen demonstration hub at Rhode Green Energy Park, integrating energy from renewable electricity with the gas network. Project partners are NODF, SSE and Bord na Mona. The study will be carried out by RPS, NUIG and UCD.

Offaly County Council and North Offaly Development Fund have arranged a number of briefings to the emerging cluster of green energy companies establishing in an around Rhode Green Energy Park. These include a Biomass Gasification Plant, a Flywheel Battery Storage Plant, Wind Farm, Solar Farm, and a Battery Storage Plant. Planning permission has recently been given for a 50MW synchronous compensator and a biomass methanisation plant at Rhode Green Energy Park.

The recent announcement by Bord na Mona (detail below) confirms the importance of Rhode Green Energy Park/North Offaly and should offer opportunities for collaboration and development.

Anna Marie Delaney, Chief Executive

Revenue Account Grant Income & Payroll Summary to 30th September 2021

OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL	Full Yr Budget 2021 €m	Preliminary Value to September 2021 €m	% Year To Date
Payroll costs	28.03	20.55	73.3%
Grants and Subsidies Income	38.24	24.02	62.8%

OCC to 30th September 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	12.97	4.70	0.36
2021 Cash Collected to end of September	12.45	4.82	0.42
Closing Balance September 30th , 2021	4.12	0.45	0.13
<u>2020 Cash collected to September</u>	7.59	4.75	0.42
% Collection at this point in 2020	164%	102%	100%

Bank Overdraft to 30th September 2021

Number of days Overdrawn in Bank year to date	41	18%
Overdraft Interest and non-conforming charges to September 30th 2021 YTD		€15,841
Bank Administration and transactional charges to September 30th 2021 YTD		€19,588