



# Chief Executive Report May 2023

# Contents

---

May Highlights	3
Community Development	4
Tourism	6
Longford Local Sports Partnership	7
Human Resoures	9
Information Technology	11
Housing	13
Roads	16
Environment	20
Civil Defence	24
Climate Action	25

# May Highlights

## Longford's Microsoft Dreamspace Showcase success

The inaugural Longford Microsoft Dream Space Showcase took place in Edgeworthstown on 26 May. Over 300 pupils and teachers shared STEAM projects from 11 different primary schools around Longford.



## The Gathering of Longford Twinning Committees

For the first time, committees of our four twinning groups came together for a valuable workshop. Special guest Honorary French Consul Catherine Gagneaux also attended as well as supporting functions of the Council.



## Huge success as hundreds turn out for Bike Week 2023 events

Bike Week 2023 saw hundreds of cyclists gather for events all around the county hosted by Longford Sports Partnership.



## Moyne Student takes home national Enterprise Award

Moyne Community School's Caitlyn Morris takes Intermediate Category in National Finals of Student Enterprise Awards with 'Clip Clop Designs'.



# Community Development

---

## Longford Local Community Development Committee

A meeting of Longford Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) was held on the 17 April 2023.

## Community Grant Support Scheme 2023

Applications for the Community Grant Support Scheme were considered at the Longford County Council May meeting. Applicants are to be advised of the result of their submission.

This scheme supports activities and projects from community groups focused on different areas, including:

- the elderly
- the arts
- community development
- environment
- heritage
- sports and recreation

## Intercultural Grants 2023

At the May meeting of Longford County Council, €20,000 in Intercultural Grants were allocated towards intercultural activities to support groups to host a variety of programmes and events throughout 2023.

This funding will help to celebrate the rich diversity of cultures in Longford.

## National Comhairle na nÓg Showcase Event 2023

Longford Comhairle na nÓg members joined over 500 young people from around the country in Croke Park on Tuesday, 4 April to showcase their achievements. Taoiseach Leo Varadkar opened the event which highlighted the importance and value of enabling young people to have a voice on issues and services that impact their lives.



## Period Poverty Initiative 2023

Longford County Council secured €6,000 from the Department of Health to support the implementation of period poverty mitigation measures.

The funding allowed Longford County Council to provide free period products across our public buildings and facilities.

Services who work with disadvantaged and vulnerable groups were also identified and arrangements were made for the provision of free period products to their services.

# Community Development

## Africa Day 2023

Longford County Council secured €6,500 on behalf of Longford African Network who hosted an Africa Day event on Saturday, 27 May.

The theme for this year's event was 'Africa: Opportunities in Challenging Times'.

There was a keynote address and panel discussion on business and partnership opportunities in Ireland and African countries.

There was also an awards ceremony for 'Outstanding Africans and Allies', as well as music arts, entertainment and sports activities.

Africa Day celebrations are organised by Irish Aid at the Department of Foreign Affairs, in partnership with African embassies in Ireland and local authorities around the country.



## CLÁR 2023

Thirty-two applications were received under Measure 1 of CLÁR 2023.

Longford County Council will prioritise 15 of these for consideration by the Department of Rural and Community Development. Announcements are expected in September 2023.

Measure 1 of the CLÁR scheme supports several capital interventions that contribute to the enhancement of community recreation facilities or the development of new, accessible facilities.

Projects that may be supported include small scale renovation works to community centres, AstroTurf facilities, playgrounds, community gyms, sensory gardens and improving access at sports grounds.

Minimum grants are €5,000 and maximum grants are €50,000. The scheme provides up to 90% of the cost. The remaining 10% or balance of the cost must be provided through the local authority, the community, or another resources. Philanthropic contributions are accepted as full or part of match funding costs.

This grant scheme is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development. It is delivered by local authorities in consultation with schools, local community and voluntary groups and local development companies.

# Tourism

## Joint Twinning Event

A representative from Longford Tourism attended a town twinning event in CO:WORX in Edgeworthstown recently.

The event was attended by the Town Twinning committees from Longford, Edgeworthstown, Ballymahon and Ballinamuck.

Longford Tourism gave a presentation at the event and detailed itinerary ideas for their French visitors when they come to County Longford.

Longford Tourism also provided an information pack to each attendee. It was an excellent networking opportunity providing the committees with relevant information required to make the planning of their trips easier.

A workshop was also provided at the event by Honorary French Consul with responsibility for Twinning Catherine Gagneaux.



## Rose of Tralee



Longford Tourism is currently working with the Rose of Tralee organisers to plan an itinerary for their visit to County Longford on 14 August.

Longford Tourism is providing all details of places to go and things to do in County Longford.

The organisers will then choose their itinerary to fit into their schedule and theme.

Congratulations and best wishes to Grace Kemple who will be representing County Longford at the International Rose of Tralee festival.

# Longford Local Sports Partnership

## Parkour

Parkour sessions took place at Longford Sports Hub from 22 May to 26 May. Three local schools took part: St Mary's National School in Edgeworthstown, St Mel's National School in Clondra, and St Teresa's National School in Killoe. The turnout was impressive, with over 120 children joining in.



The feedback from participating schools was fantastic and it emphasised the positive impact the activity had on the students. This event successfully combined fun, physical activity, and development of skills. It made for a memorable and rewarding experience for all involved.

## Bike Week 2023

Bike Week 2023 took place in May, with many events including a Family Cycle, Bikers' Lunch and Royal Canal Greenway Cycle.

The Family Cycle took place on Sunday, 14 May. Families came together to

enjoy a fun-filled day of cycling along the beautiful Royal Canal walking and cycling loop in Longford Town. Participants of all ages took part in this event which coincided with a nationwide Family Cycle Day.



The Bikers Lunch was held on Tuesday, 16 May, starting at Market Square in Longford Town. Bikes were available for those who needed one, ensuring everyone could participate.

After an enjoyable ride around town, everyone completed the Royal Canal Greenway Longford Town Loop, covering 6.5km. It was followed by lunch which was a fantastic opportunity to connect with fellow cyclists, soak up the beautiful scenery, and indulge in some well-deserved refreshments.

The event was a huge success, creating lasting memories and fostering a sense of camaraderie among the participants. The event received positive feedback, highlighting the joy of outdoor activities and quality family time.

# Longford Local Sports Partnership



The Royal Canal Greenway Cycle took place on Saturday, 20 May. There were two routes for participants to choose from: Clondra to Kilashee and return, covering a distance of 14km, or Clondra to Kenagh and return, which is a longer 30km route. Both routes made for a wonderful opportunity for individuals to explore the scenic beauty of the Royal Canal Greenway.

## Africa Day Races

Longford and Offaly Local Sports Partnerships joined forces to celebrate Africa Day on Wednesday, May 25 in Tullamore. The event was all about embracing the richness of African cultures and recognizing the valuable contributions of people of African descent to Irish society.

There were two distinctive events on the day: the Diversity Games, and the Fast Kidz Africa Sprints. The

Diversity Games were a fantastic multicultural team event that brought together children from various ethnic backgrounds. The Fast Kidz Africa Sprints, a thrilling 60m sprint competitions exclusively for children of African heritage.

Over 350 primary school children from nine different counties took part. These counties included Dublin, Galway, Kildare, Laois, Sligo, Westmeath, Wicklow, along with Longford and Offaly. Schools included St Michael's National School and St Joseph's National School, who had a remarkable turnout of over 60 talented children representing Longford. Their outstanding performances earned them many well-deserved medals. It was a day filled with joy, unity, and celebration, showcasing the beauty of diversity and the spirit of inclusivity.





# Human Resources

---

## Learning and Development

Longford County Council held a number of business skills and health and safety training courses during the months of April and May.

### Business skills training:

- Interview preparation
- Contract Variations 2023: Essential Update on the New Regulations
- Office of Government Procurement Procurement Essentials
- Dog Warden Legal Training
- Irish Sign Language Training
- Institute of Public Administration Budget Management and Costing
- Climate Action Green Public Procurement Strategy
- Sustainable and Green Procurement
- Local Authority Climate Action Plans – Achieving Local Authority Targets
- Relevant Contracts Tax Training
- Professional Services With- Holding Tax Training
- Introduction to Public Procurement
- Housing Practitioners Conference
- Excellence in Customer Services
- Appropriate Assessment Training
- New e-Tenders Platform Training
- Media Training
- Smartphone Video Training
- Junior School Warden Training

### Health and safety training:

- Confined Spaces City and Guilds (Medium Risk)
- Confined Spaces City and Guilds (High Risk)
- First Aid Responder Refresher PHEEC
- Manual Handling for office based employees
- NON CSCS Mobile Access Tower
- Asbestos Awareness
- Temporary Traffic Management – Inspection and Audit
- Safe Pass

# Human Resources



Before and after photos of the 60 employees participated in the Noel McManus Walk, Run or Cycle on Good Friday.

## Health and Wellbeing

Health and wellbeing initiatives which took place in April and May included:

- Lunchtime Yoga which took place every Tuesday and Thursday in the Mall Complex.
- HSE Living Well Programme, a six-week online programme for persons living with long term chronic illness.
- Spring Fitness Challenge 2023 which was in partnership with Longford Local Sports Partnership. It was an eight-week lunchtime Couch to 5K programme and walking training. From this, 60 employees participated in the Noel McManus Walk, Run or Cycle on Good Friday, 7 April.
- Mental Health Champion with 13 staff participating in a one-day Mental Health Champion training course designed to give participants the skills needed to be effective workplace champions for mental health. The course was highly practical with scenario-based exercises and group discussions aimed at reducing workplace stigma and normalising mental health at work.
- Financial wellbeing initiative which promoted a better understanding of superannuation. For this, an online information session was delivered on 10 May. It was attended by 160 staff.
- Bike Week 2023 with employees participating in a lunch time cycle on Tuesday, 16 May.
- Local Government Management Agency Wellbeing Workshop on 10 May. This coincided with the announcement by Government of targeted funding to support local authorities embed workplace wellbeing initiatives.

# Information Technology

## Longford Microsoft Dream Space Showcase 2023

Longford Microsoft Dream Space Showcase was held on 26 May with over 300 primary school children from 11 schools across County Longford showcasing their projects completed as part of the Microsoft Dream Space Academy education programme.

Microsoft Dream Space Academy introduces STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) subjects at primary level in a creative, fun and collaborative way.

This work is part of a national pilot, with Longford being only one of two counties in Ireland taking part.

For this, Longford County Council Information Technology section and Longford County Council Library Services teamed up with Microsoft. Over a 10-week period, Microsoft provided participating schools with online tutorials to help students use small computers called micro:bits. These

micro:bits are a great introduction to computer technology, problem solving skills and critical thinking.

The Longford Microsoft Dream Space Showcase event was a celebration of all the schools' journeys. On the day, they presented projects and learnings from this programme.

Several Longford County Council services also exhibited at the event, including Civil Defence and the Fire Service.

The project was also supported by industry partners Ericsson and HP. Offaly County Council STEM Officer Dean Hodge facilitated the demonstration of VEX Robotics.

Longford Microsoft Dream Space Showcase and Microsoft Dream Space Academy were funded by Creative Ireland. They are supported by the Department of Public Expenditure National Development Plan Delivery and Reform, under the Public Service Innovation Fund 2023, and Longford County Council.



# Information Technology

---

## Technology Infrastructure

The ServiceDesk dealt with 1,245 queries in April and May.

New mobile device management software set up and migration process has started. In addition, a new Security Operations Centre pilot has also started. Security information and event management proof-of-concept is now completed.

Geographic Information System infrastructure upgrade has also been implemented

Procurement completed for firewall replacements and upgrade planning has started.

An additional redundant fibre link was installed in the Camlin Court Council offices.

A Data Subject Access Request has been processed.

Other ongoing technology infrastructure work includes:

- Procurement for annual renewals and hardware replacements/ upgrades
- Mobile phone administration and support
- Support for community CCTV project
- Irish Water transition work progressed

## Digital Services

An electronic Performance Management and Development System (ePMDS) software update is completed. The countywide rollout of Longford Text Alert is ongoing. This is an app and accompanying website which sends local people crime prevention text alerts and community notices.

## Geographic Information Systems

ArcGIS platform upgrade and migration project is taking place.

Data is being gathered for the National Database of Sport and Recreation Amenities

Data reporting is ongoing to support Residential Zoned Land Tax.

Burial grounds mapping is taking place.

Procurement and implementation of Digital Communications Platform is taking place.

## Town WIFI

The free Town WIFI in Longford, Ballymahon and Drumlish had 405 new guests and 1,715 returning guests during the months of April and May.

## Broadband Connection Points

County Longford Broadband Connection Points had 55 new guests and 353 returning guests.

# Housing

## Capital Housing Update

Project	No of Houses	Status
Cranleymore Abbeylara	3	Stage 3 approved. Tender to remove Japanese knotweed advertised. Once removed will advertise for main Contract.
St Rita's Park Road	12	Stage 2 approval received. Part 8 Planning approved for Phase 1 (6 houses). Tender to remove Japanese knotweed advertised. When costs known will submit stage 3. Once JK removed will advertise for main Contract.
24 Congress Terrace	2	Stage 4 approved 19 April 2023. Started on site 2 May 2023. For completion Dec 2023.
Woodland Path, Keenagh	4	On site. Due for completion Q4 2023
Radharc na Muileann, Lanesborough	20	Stage 1 approved. Stage 2 to be submitted shortly. Awaiting drawings from Consultants.
Woodlawn Path, Keenagh	5	Turnkey On site due to be completed in Q3 2023
Drynan, Ballymahon	13	Stage 1 approved. Stage 2 to be submitted shortly. Awaiting drawings from Consultants.
Clough Dillons Keenagh	4	Stage 1 approved. Legal issues to be sorted before can proceed.
Cnoc na Gréine, Granard	6	Stage 1 approved. Stage 2 to be submitted shortly. Awaiting drawings from Consultants.
2 Woodview, Newtownforbes	2	Single Stage approval received. Contract signed. Started on site 25 April 2023. For completion Q4 2023.
Lamagh, Newtownforbes	6	Stage 2 approved. To submit for Part 8 planning Q2 2023.
2 Legion Terrace	4	Contracts signed. Started on site 24 April 2023. For completion Q1 2024
Richmond Street	23	Turnkey approved. Contracts signed. On site. Due for completion June 2024.
Farrell's Ballinalee	4	Turnkey approved. Not started, awaiting contracts.

# Housing

Project	No of Houses	Status
Forthill, Aughnacliffe	13	Turnkey approved. On site. To be completed by Q4 2023
Longford Road, Ballinalee	14	Turnkey approved. Not started, awaiting contracts.
Colmcille Terrace, Granard Phase 1	19	Stage 4 approved 27 April 2023. Works due to commence in June 2023.
Corneddan, Oghill, Drumlish	1	Consultants appointed. Surveys complete. Preparing Part 8 planning documents.
Abhainn Glas, Edgeworthstown	4	Turnkey approved. On site. Due for completion Q4 2023
Cluain Rí, Ballymahon	16	Turnkey approved. On site. Due for completion Q4 2023
Creevaghbui, Creevaghbeg, Ballymahon	4	Turnkey approved in May 2023. Due for completion Q4 2023

## Vacant Homes Unit

The vacant homes unit continues to work on a range of supports available under the national Vacant Homes Action Plan.

Launched in January 2023, this project aims to return as many recoverable vacant properties back to viable use as possible and increase the supply of housing available, whilst also revitalizing the vibrancy of local communities.

## CPO and Derelict Sites

Early this month, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) introduced the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) Activation Program as part of the 'Housing For All' plan which aims to

promptly identify and activate vacant and derelict properties.

Such an approach is already in place in some local authorities. The main steps of the programme include:

- Identification of vacant and derelict properties,
- Identification of and engagement with owners,
- Communication regarding the various schemes and measures in place to support bringing the property back into use, and
- Where owners of vacant and derelict properties cannot be identified or where they are unwilling to engage, use of available legislative powers to compulsory purchase or acquire

# Housing

---

such properties using either the Housing Act, 1966, or the Derelict Sites Act, 1990.

The acquired properties may subsequently be used for social housing, made available for sale on the open market, or used for other purposes, for example, community use.

Works are underway to bring six properties back into use and make the units available for social housing through the CPO process. Ongoing update on our Derelict Sites Register to apply the annual derelict sites levy of 7% of market value on property that remains in a state of dereliction.

## Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant (Croí Cónaithe)

The scheme continues to support those who wish to refurbish their vacant/derelict property to bring it back to use in the housing stock. Applications are accepted with respect to all areas in Longford. The Vacant Homes Unit was recently advised by the DHLGH that further changes to the scheme are proposed with effectiveness from 1 May 2023.

The grant will be increased from €30,000 to €50,000 for vacant properties and from €50,000 to €70,000 for derelict properties, extended to cover houses built up to 2007, and will be available for properties intended for rental as well as owner-occupied.

To date:

- 34 applications have been received
- Five have been approved
- Two are under revision
- Two were withdrawn by applicants
- 24 awaiting further information

## Repair and Leasing

To date, 10 applications have been received. For enquiries on the above scheme and on vacant properties generally, please contact Longford County Council's Vacant Homes Office [vacanthomesoffice@longfordcoco.ie](mailto:vacanthomesoffice@longfordcoco.ie)

## Homelessness

Longford County Council is undertaking a number of measures to ease the impact of the end of winter emergency period for those in Private Rented Accommodation with valid Notice of Termination and who are assessed as at risk of homelessness:

- Assist to secure alternative accommodation through Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Place Finder, if appropriate
- Allocate social housing tenancy, if appropriate
- Guide towards First Home Scheme if the household wishes to purchase the property [www.firsthomescheme.ie](http://www.firsthomescheme.ie)
- In some cases, it may be appropriate to guide household towards

# Housing

---

the Local Authority Home Loan which is available for second hand properties. (It should be noted that the Home Loan and First Home Scheme are two distinct schemes and cannot be combined.)

Where the individual/household is assessed as being at risk of homelessness (as defined by Section 2 of the Housing Act 1988) and that they are either eligible for social housing or are already a HAP/Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) tenant; and if they are not in a position to buy the property; then the local authority can consider whether it may be appropriate to acquire the house under the existing social housing tenant-in-situ scheme.

This is in order to prevent the individual/household from entering emergency accommodation, taking into account the availability of alternative accommodation such as a HAP or social housing allocation.

## Cost Rental Tenant In-Situ Scheme

The Cost Rental Tenant In-Situ (CRTiS) Scheme is a new scheme that is available where a tenant household faces the termination of their tenancy due to the landlord's intention to sell the property. The scheme is available if the tenant household:

- is not able to purchase the property from the landlord
- is at risk of homelessness
- is not eligible for, or currently in

receipt of social housing supports (that is in receipt of HAP or in the RAS).

Local Authorities have responsibility for the assessment of applicant tenant households in receipt of a valid notice of termination due to the landlord's intention to sell the property.

Potential applicants should contact their local authority and make an appointment to see the Housing Officer.

The Housing Officer will assess the applicant's risk of homelessness and whether they may be eligible for social housing.

When they get an appointment to meet the Housing Officer they will need to bring:

- a valid Notice of Termination
- proof of their income
- evidence that they have a long term right to reside in the country

An applicant tenant household must have net annual income of below €53,000. Net income means that income tax, Universal Social Charge, PRSI and superannuation contributions are deducted from the relevant assessable gross income.

If the local authority is satisfied that the applicant tenant household is eligible for CRTiS they will pass the details of the tenant and the property to the Housing Agency for consideration for potential acquisition under the CRTiS Scheme. The Housing Agency will then



# Housing

engage with the tenant and the tenant's landlord with a view to acquiring the property.

## Applications and Assessments

### Applications

A total of 244 new social housing support applications have been received up to the 30 May 2023.

At 30 May 2023, there are 707 approved housing applicants on our waiting list.

A further 140 are within the assessment process.

### Allocations

As of 30 May 2023, there were 78 offers of local authority, approved housing body (AHB) or leased housing that had been made. A further 17 properties had been advertised to let under the Choice Based Letting Scheme.

### New Tenancies

As of 30 May 2023, 65 new local authority, Approved Housing Body or leasing tenancies have commenced. A further 25 new HAP tenancies have also commenced.

#HousingForAll



**Want to bring a vacant property back to life?**

**The Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant can help.**

Get up to **€50,000** for works on vacant properties.

Get up to **€70,000** for works on derelict properties.

# Roads

---

## National Road Schemes

The N4 Longford By-Pass Phase 1 resurfacing works (N4/N5 Charlotte Brooke Roundabout to N4/N63 Leo Casey Roundabout) commenced in April and are currently ongoing. The works which are being carried out between 7pm and 4am to minimise disruption to the public are funded by TII under the National Roads Pavement Programme.



The N4 Longford By-Pass Phase 2 contract is currently at tender stage. It is envisaged that construction of Phase II works will commence when Phase I works are substantially complete. A total length of 4.5km of the N4 will be rehabilitated at an approximate cost of €5 million.

The N55 Meeltanagh Scheme (5km) is at tender stage with construction planned to commence later this summer.

Construction of the N63 Aughnaskea Scheme is due to commence in Quarter 3 this year.

The N55 Athlone to Ballymahon

Preferred Route Corridor was presented to the Members of the Ballymahon Municipal District on 25 May.

## Municipal District Works

Road Maintenance Works continued in each Municipal District in April/May. These works include footpath repairs, drainage, pothole repairs etc.

Restoration Improvement and Restoration Maintenance Works on Regional and Local Roads has commenced in the Municipal Districts. This Programme of Works will continue throughout the summer.

Bridge inspections are being carried out throughout the county with over 368 bridges inspected in Longford so far this year. A programme of bridge works is also ongoing with work on bridges at Fostragh and Lisnageeragh due to commence in the coming weeks.

Longford County Council continued upgrading public lighting with recent upgrades carried out on Main Street Lanesboro and on Main Street Drumlish.

Processing of Road Opening Licences is ongoing.

## Road Safety

The new Local Road Safety Plan 2022-2024 was presented by the Road Safety Officer at the Strategic Infrastructure Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) on 17 April 2023 and has now been formally adopted.

# Roads

A link to the plan on the Council website can be accessed here <https://www.longfordcoco.ie/services/roads/road-safety/road-safety-plan-2022-2024.html>.

This plan was developed by the Road Safety Working Together Group (RSWTG) which has been established in Longford to coordinate multi-agency road safety policy and implementation at local level.

This plan has been designed by the group in accordance with the 2021-2030 government Road Safety Strategy and will ensure a coordinated, collaborative and consistent approach among stakeholders to improving road safety for all road users.

An annual review of the County Longford Local Road Safety Plan and action plan will be carried out and published by the group. The Road Safety Working Together Group consisting of members from Longford County Council, An Garda Síochána, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, and the Road Safety Authority met on 16 May to review the actions within this plan, and this was followed by a meeting of the Collision Prevention Group.

## Education Opportunities

Junior School Warden training was conducted in Longford on 17 May 2023 incorporating schools in Longford and Roscommon that are actively engaging in the Junior School Warden

Programme within their schools.

The Road Safety Department also took part in the Microsoft Dream Space Showcase Day which was held in Edgeworthstown Community Centre on 26 May 2023. The Road Safety Team exhibited key aspects of Road Safety from the importance of PPE in the workplace, to cycle safety, to the promotion of "Keep the Race in its place" campaign. This was done in a fun interactive way with the hundreds of students in attendance on the day, who engaged in the face painting, remote car track racing, and in turn received an RSA bag pack for taking part.

## Traffic and Paid Parking

The Traffic Department of Longford County Council has responsibility for enforcement of illegal parking, non-display of valid parking ticket, permit or motor tax disc, or failure to pay the appropriate parking fees in enforceable parking areas. Two Traffic Wardens are currently assigned to Longford Town to carry out these enforcement duties.

## Traffic Department Data 2023

Offence	Fines Issued Q1
Parking Fines	184
Non-Display of Tax	156
Breach of Parking Regulations 1997	180
Total	520

# Environment

## National Anti-Dumping Initiative

The 2023 Anti-Dumping Initiative (ADI) aims to reduce incidents of illegal dumping nationally by providing funding for projects aimed at tackling the problem, using a collaborative approach involving local authorities, communities and other state agencies. The focus of the ADI funding continues to be on:

- prevention
- abatement
- education
- enforcement

Longford County Council received approval for €81,450 of ADI funding for 2023 as follows:

- Digital Solutions for Waste and Litter Investigations: €19,000
- Clonfin War of Independence Monument Clean Up: €5,500
- Corlea - Shannon Wilderness Park Clean Up: €6,000
- Mount Jessop and Kilsallagh Clean Up: €8,000
- Smart bins for Local Amenity Areas: €24,000
- Water Street Waste Ground: €18,950

## National Tree Week 2023

National Tree Week took place from 19-26 March 2023. The theme for 2023 was 'Biodiversity begins with Trees'. By doing something as simple as planting



a tree everyone can play a role in combating climate change.

Coordinated by the Tree Council of Ireland and Longford County Council and sponsored by Forest Industries Ireland, National Tree Week is a week-long festival of tree-related activities. The aim is to encourage people to plant more trees and to improve awareness, understanding and enjoyment of trees and forests across the country.

Oak, Silver Birch, Common Birch, Scots Pine, Hazel, Rowan and Alder were allocated on a first come first served basis to tidy towns groups, estate and schools.



## Environmental Events

A total of 17 Longford Schools were awarded a Green Flag at the Green Schools awards which were held in Athlone on Wednesday 24 May.

# Environment

The Environmental Awareness Officer, worked closed with the Schools to help them achieve and retain the Green Flag award.



Longford County Council sponsored a talk by Irish Peatland Conservation Council in Lanesborough Library, as part of a series of events to mark Environment Week.

Longford County Council sponsored a speaker at the Newtown Forbes Tidy Towns Summer Science Festival on Sunday, 21 May. Nuala Maddigan from Irish Peatland Conservation, spoke about bogland biodiversity and held a workshop with the children in attendance.

The Longford Microsoft Dream Space Showcase was held in Edgeworthstown Community Centre on 26 May.



Over 300 students and teachers attended. The Environment Section had a stand promoting our “Longford’s Green Keep it Clean Campaign”. Material on our Biodiversity and Climate Change programmes were also available on the day.

## Relove Fashion

The Relove Fashion Competition for 22/23 took place at the end of March 2023.



Two groups from Longford were nominated as finalists.

Ardscoil Phádraig Granard won the Best Casual Category.

# Environment

## Ireland's Best Kept Towns Competition 2023

As a result of the excellent performance in the 2022 Supervalu Tidy Towns Competition, Longford was nominated to participate in Ireland's Best Kept Towns Competition for 2023, in the Best Kept Large Town Award.

Ireland's Best Kept Towns Competition is an all-island initiative.

Participation is based on a town's performance in the Supervalu Tidy Towns competition or the Northern Ireland Amenity Council's 'Best Kept Awards' in the previous year.

Adjudication takes place during the month of May.

Staff in the Environment Department including the Litter Warden, the Community Warden, the Dog Warden as well as administrative and technical staff, all worked proactively with Longford Tidy Towns and community groups to enhance the visual appearance of the town.

The Environment Section also work closely with the the members of Longford Municipal District and the Regeneration Team to progress works and improve areas within their remit. The Probation Service are also assisting with additional litter picking and painting in areas which needed attention.

## Litter Management

- 749 litter complaints were logged to the Pollution Complaints System to date in 2023
- 580 complaints have been closed
- 169 complaints remain open
- 57 litter fines have issued in 2023, with 19 paid to date
- Prosecutions continue to be taken on a case-by-case basis

## Longford Veterinary Service

### The Longford Urban Horse Project

Longford Veterinary Service, Longford Local Sports Partnership, Longford Community Resources and Department of Agriculture provided this successful responsible horse ownership programme for young people in County Longford in 2022.

As a result of the ongoing success of the Longford Urban Horse Project it was shortlisted for a Local Authority Management Agency Award on 15 April 2023. Longford County Council is reviewing the project at the moment and plan on continuing improvement in our 2023 programme.



# Environment

## Responsible Dog Ownership leaflet produced

A revised "Responsible Dog Ownership" leaflet has recently been designed.

The Dog Warden, Community Warden and staff in the Environment Section are in the process of calling to various housing estates throughout the county, to distribute the leaflets and advise owners of their responsibilities in relation to dog control.



# Civil Defence

## Duties

Civil Defence provided medical cover at 13 events during April and May.

These included:

- Longford Town Football Club – five matches
- Longford GAA
- Primary Schools athletics
- The Royal Canal Run
- Community games finals
- Longford Tri Club – Tri a Tri event
- Darkness into Light
- Gaelforce 'The Big Swim' event
- Longford Microsoft Dream Space Showcase schools event



## Training and Operations

Four volunteers successfully passed their practical exams in Roscrea and are now qualified as Emergency First Responders (EFR).

A 'Food Safety and You' course was delivered to volunteers.

The Civil Defence Officer and five volunteers attended the 63rd International Military Pilgrimage in Lourdes.

Forty-one countries were represented at the five-day event. Two of our volunteers, Samantha and Bernie, received their three year Lourdes Service Medal.



Volunteers also provided CPR and radio communications demonstrations at the Microsoft Dream Space schools event that was held by Longford County Council.

Local training sessions were well attended, and volunteers received specific training on how to manage a hypothermic patient.



# Climate Action

---

## IT

The section continues to progress and implement several paperless projects which will have an instant positive impact on the organisation's carbon footprint.

A major update of the ePMDS software was completed and rolled out, with over 220 employees using the system, saving paper, time, and travel.

A new Blended Working App was launched, the app saves on over 200 multiple page paper applications and related processing and catches key environmental metrics for blended working.

The section continues to work with business areas to ensure all new schemes are rolled out on a digital first basis.

## Human Resources

Climate Action is included in all recruitment competitions and contracts of employment issued.

## Housing

A total of 28 houses will be fully retrofitted in Glebe View by mid-May 2023. A further 10 houses at Fairgreen View and 4 houses at Athlone Road went out to tender in February 2023 and have been assessed and are awaiting confirmation of a start date.

## Roads

The Department of Transport recently published a Climate Adaption Strategy for regional and local roads. This strategy for local authorities will improve the resilience of assets on the regional and local road network to the impacts of climate change.

The strategy identifies a number of actions required to improve climate resilience of assets including updating existing guidance documents, updating Maproad, producing vulnerability mapping, identifying critical infrastructure routes, works prioritisation methodology and finally annual review.

## Civil Defence

Our new communications unit had its first outing at the Microsoft Dream Space event in Edgeworthstown.

The unit houses solar panels on the roof and went without using any battery or generator power for the duration of the event.

This is an excellent move forward and gives us a good indication of how efficient the unit will be when using the solar panels for the running of internal lighting and software when it is stationary.

# CONNECTED

People • Place • Opportunity

---

Management Report for May 2023 prepared in accordance with Sec 136 (2) of the Local Government Act 2001, as inserted by Section 51 the Local Government Reform Act 2014. The report outlines key aspects of our service delivery and performance in May 2023 in securing the objectives set out in the Council's Corporate Plan.

Signed:   
Paddy Mahon  
Chief Executive

