



# Chief Executive Report November 2024

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# Community Development

## Longford Local Community Development Committee

A meeting of Longford Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) was held on 22 October 2024.

## LEADER Programme

The first two projects of the new LEADER Programme were approved at the October LCDC meeting. A large number of Expressions of Interest have been received since the start of the new programme.

A Festivals and Events Targeted Call was issued by the implementing partner, Longford Community Resources Clg on behalf of the local action group Longford LCDC. This is to support the development and scheduling of festivals and events in County Longford for 2025. A budget of €75,000 is available under this call with EOIs open until 20 November 2024.

## Community Safety and Wellbeing Expo 2024

The Community Safety and Wellbeing Expo 2024 was delivered in partnership between Longford Community Safety Partnership, Healthy Longford and Sláintecare Healthy Communities on November 19 in St Mary's Community Centre Edgeworthstown.

Over 50 agencies hosted exhibition stands showcasing their work. There was participation from school and community members on the day. This Expo event aimed to showcase services and projects available in Longford to support people's sense of community safety and wellbeing

(financial, mental, health, relationship, physical).

Dr Katriona O'Sullivan (author of bestselling book 'Poor') was the keynote speaker. During her keynote talk Katriona spoke of her struggles growing up in poverty and how she overcame adversity. She motivated and inspired the audience with her story of resilience.



## Sláintecare Healthy Communities

Community engagement sessions regarding the planned development at Palace Crescent were held on 17 and 21 November. The Community House was open to residents of the Ardnacassa area to view the plans of the proposed development of the green that is currently under Part 8 planning application. Full details of the proposed development can be viewed on the

# Community Development

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[No.124 - Palace Crescent Ardnacassa](#) webpage on Longfordcoco.ie.

The model developed by Planning was present in the house alongside printed plans and a discussion with residents took place. Feedback from residents has been noted and submitted to the Planning Department.



## Healthy Longford

### Period Poverty Project

Funding of €8,000 received in 2024 from Department of Health meant that community partners in the project could update their sanitary products and dispensers. During November, Healthy Longford is using the remaining funding to link with transition year classes and youth projects to deliver workshops on menstrual health for adolescents.

### Healthy Longford Newsletter

Healthy Longford is putting out a quarterly newsletter which will be a resource which signposts to various health and wellbeing information on events and programmes happening across Longford each month. The content of the newsletter

incorporates Healthy Ireland themes including:

- Mental health
- Nutrition
- Physical activity
- Sexual health
- Spaces and places for health and wellbeing
- Tobacco and alcohol
- Older people
- Children
- Adolescents
- Workplace wellbeing
- Family wellbeing

All information can be found on the Healthy Longford webpage under the Community section of Longfordcoco.ie.

### We are Breastfeeding Friendly Longford

Longford Breastfeeding Project marked National Breastfeeding week 2024 with a very successful launch of We're Breastfeeding Friendly Longford in Edgeworthstown Library on Monday 7 October.

We are Breastfeeding Friendly Longford is a Healthy Longford initiative, lead by an inter-agency Longford Breastfeeding Project. This is a working group including members from the following organisations: Cuidiú, Healthy Longford, the HSE, HSE Health Promotion, Longford Libraries, Sláintecare Healthy Communities, Longford Westmeath CYPSC,



# Community Development

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Longford Community Resources Clg, Longford Women's Link, Bridgeways Family Resource Centre, Lus Na Gréine Family Resource Centre, TUS Athlone, Longford Westmeath Community Families, Foróige Longford (Leap Project) and Longford County Childcare Committee.



## Extension to the Longford Roma and New Communities Project

On the 3 November, Minister of State at the Department of Rural and Community Development Joe O'Brien TD announced the extension of the seven Community Development Pilot Programmes nationally. This includes the Longford Roma and New Communities project.

The Community Development Pilot Programmes aims to trial community-led interventions that address poverty, social exclusion and inequality and promote human rights. The grant aid will be €125,000 annually per project. The programme will continue to be delivered by Longford Community Resources Clg and the extension will allow them to continue to facilitate collaborative relationships between marginalised groups and mainstream services.

## Comhairle na nÓg Annual Youth Conference

Longford County Council Cathaoirleach Cllr Mark Casey opened Longford Comhairle na nÓg Annual Youth Conference on Thursday, 24 October in the Longford Arms Hotel. The conference was a huge success with young people in attendance from our nine post primary schools and youth services from across the county.

Discussions were held on a variety of topics and workshops of interest to young people. The Cathaoirleach acknowledged the ongoing work of the present Comhairle na nÓg members who are ensuring the voice of young people from County Longford is heard at both a national and local level. Comhairle na nÓg Steering Committee Chairperson Cllr Niall Gannon closed the event. He encouraged young people to have their say in matters in their county that affect them and he looks forward to reading the outcomes of their discussions at the conference.



# Community Development

## CLÁR 2024

Longford County Council is pleased to confirm a recent funding announcement by Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD.

Twelve projects in County Longford have been awarded a total of €459,755 under CLÁR 2024 Measure 1: Developing Community Facilities and Amenities funding. This programme is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and forms part of the Government's

ambitious five-year policy for rural Ireland, Our Rural Future. CLÁR is a targeted investment programme for rural areas that aims to provide funding for small infrastructural projects in designated rural areas.

CLÁR funding works in conjunction with local funding and on the basis of locally identified priorities. Longford County Council will support these projects by contributing up to a further 5% in funding. See County Longford - Measure 1: Developing Community Facilities and Amenities funding details below:

Organisation	Project Description	Funding Allocated
Abbeylara Parish Centre	Installation of a stage curtain system, supply and fit steel structure and ancillary works.	€45,000
Ballymahon GAA	Construct a community walkway, replace fencing and the planting of trees, shrubs and hedgerow.	€44,863
Carrickedmond GAA	Stand improvements	€50,000
Clonbroney Parish Hall Committee	Renovate the toilet facilities in the parish hall.	€9,449
Colmcille GFC	Tarmac and line the carpark.	€49,725
Granard Community Centre	Install heating and cooling units, ductwork, piping and control systems	€46,958
Killoe Community Group	Create an outdoor sensory space, a biodiverse garden and improve access to the existing exercise area at Killoe Community Walkway and Exercise Garden	€28,719
Leebeen Park Development CLG	Tarmac and line the two car parks at the facility	€27,900
Lisryan & District Development Committee	Create a sensory garden in a designated area of community park.	€17,929
Longford County Council	Resurface tennis and basketball courts, replace fencing and tennis net at Higginstown Granard.	€45,449
Moyne Community School	Provision of a sensory garden, polytunnel, raised beds, benches, pathways.	€49,094
Newtowncashel Gun Club	The provision of a wheelchair accessible toilet block with septic tank and associated filter system	€44,690

# Community Development

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## IPB Pride of Place competition 2024

The awards ceremony for the IPB Pride of Place competition 2024, in association with Co-operation Ireland, was held in the Hillgrove hotel in Monaghan on 2 November. Congratulations to the two groups who represented Longford who both received runners up awards in their category:

- 1798 Ballinamuck commemoration committee - Population category
- Clonbalt Woods Estate - Urban Neighbourhoods and Better Estates category

## LGBTI+ Dormant Accounts Funding

Longford County Council secured €21,562.90 from the Department of Rural and Community Development to support the delivery of LGBTI+ projects.

Lus na Gréine Family Resource Centre was one of the projects awarded funding which received €15,000 to deliver services. The grant has enabled them to extend their drop-in facility which resulted in the provision of an additional 'drop in' service on a weekly Tuesday evening in their centre in addition to the existing Thursday and Friday sessions.

The group have used the arts to help increase their visibility and have continued to express themselves through their creative writing as well as through drama, art and music. On Friday, 11 October, they held an open

evening to launch a book entitled 'Voices' a compilation of original poets, poetry and historical fiction by local poet and writers from Granard.

## Longford Local Community Safety Partnership

### New Chairperson appointed for Longford Community Safety Partnership

In October 2024, the Minister for Justice formally appointed Seamus Boyle as the new Chairperson of Longford Community Safety Partnership, following an interview process. This appointment is for a three-year period.

The Community Safety Partnership acknowledges the fantastic work of our previous Chairperson, Martina Moloney, who chaired through the national pilot period and was instrumental in providing strategic vision and leadership for our successful pilot. We look forward to working with the new chairperson to design our second Community Safety Plan in 2025.

### All Ireland Community Safety Network - Road Safety Event

Longford Community Safety Partnership were delighted to lead the second All Ireland Community Safety Network event, that focused on community responses to road safety. There were over 80 attendees including local authority road safety officers, PCSPs from Northern Ireland, community groups and victims support groups.

# Community Development

Presentations on the day came from the PSNI, An Garda Síochána, the Road Safety Authority with interactive good practice sessions from the Fire Service Northern Ireland, the Road Ahead Support Groups, and Kids Court from Longford.

An interactive workshop at the end of the event developed several excellent initiatives that could be rolled out locally with community partners to help improve road safety for pedestrians, school children, bicycle users and around eScooters.



## Community Safety Fund 2024- Successful grant applications

Longford Local Community Safety Partnership was successfully awarded €200,000 for eight projects under the Community Safety Fund 2024. These will be done with Longford Sports Partnership, the Environment team, the Arts Office and Age Friendly Programme and deliver projects such as:

- Walkability and community safety audits for Longford, Drumlish, Edgeworthstown and Lanesborough
- LED lighting to be installed at Garvey's Yard, Longford
- Community Safety Ambassador Programme
- Several innovative sports programmes aimed at disadvantaged groups, new communities and those at risk of engaging in anti-social behaviour or criminality
- Development of a community circus programme



# Longford Sports Partnership

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## **Steady Steps Exercise Programme**

A Steady Steps Exercise Programme in Aughnacliffe was recently completed through the Volunteer Support Fund with oversight and governance through Physical Activity for Health Programme. This initiative was designed to improve balance, strength, and overall mobility among older adults and those at risk of falls.

Delivered in a supportive and welcoming environment, the programme incorporates evidence-based exercises tailored to individual abilities, fostering confidence and independence. By addressing fall prevention and promoting active aging, Steady Steps empowers participants to enhance their quality of life while engaging with their community.

Its success in Aughnacliffe reflects the importance of accessible, targeted health interventions in rural areas. The programme continues with financial support from the participants with programme oversight provided through the Physical Activity for Health Programme.

## **Disability Services Boccia League and Tournament 2024**

In October the Disability Services Boccia Games League was launched. It has 17 amazing teams from St Christopher's, RehabCare, The Irish Wheelchair Association Day Service, Irish Wheelchair Association School Leavers, and Disabled People of Longford.

Over the past seven weeks, players showcased incredible skill and

sportsmanship, with the top eight teams now advancing to the first Longford Sports Partnership Boccia Tournament.

At the tournament, teams will compete for the prestigious LSP Boccia Winners Trophy, and all participants will be celebrated with a Boccia Medal for their fantastic efforts. Good luck to our finalists. We're excited to crown our champions and celebrate everyone's achievements.

## **Girls Get Active**

Girls Get Active aims to inspire and support more teenage girls to be active. It's about empowering all young women, building confidence, and providing motivation to find something that gets you moving. The programme is aimed at girls in transition year (TY).

Longford Sports Partnership is supplying tutors to deliver different activities. Four tutors are taking part, and they attend the schools for one hour a week for four weeks, running a different activity each week. These include Pilates, handball taster session, functional fitness and Boxercise. The school provides a suitable venue or space to run these activities.

The programme started in Longford Convent in November 2024. Three additional schools are participating including Moyne Community School, Cnoc Mhuire Granard and Ballymahon Convent. Almost 200 TY girls will be participating during November and December 2024.

# Longford Sports Partnership

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## Longford Sports Awards 2024

Longford Sports Partnership together with the Longford Leader is excited to announce that the Longford Sports Awards are back for 2024. Ten award winners were selected from nominations submitted by the public along with the five special awards.

Each of the winners will be presented with a memento in recognition of their outstanding achievement in their own sporting field or their immense contribution to community sports in County Longford, at a gala presentation function in the Longford Arms Hotel on Saturday, 30 November 2024.



# Human Resources

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## Learning and Development

The following business skills training took place:

- Moving into Management
- Intermediate Excel
- LGMA Local Government Human Resources Conference
- IPA Commercial Rates Law
- Resilience Training for Frontline Staff
- Strategic Workforce Planning Workshop
- Planning Administration Fundamentals
- Planning Enforcement Fundamentals
- Forward Planning Fundamentals
- IPA Standards for Rented Houses
- ICSH Finance and Development Conference 2024
- Personal Safety at Work
- Environmental Services Training Group Conference
- Microsoft Excel Level 3 - PivotTables and VLOOKUP
- Women's Leadership Programme (Administrative Officers)
- Protected Disclosures
- Budget Management & Costings
- PAPS – Pay Adjustment Orders
- Cybersecurity Training
- IPA - Scenarios and Roleplay Training for Housing Practitioners

- IPA - Understanding Local Government Finance
- IPA A to Z Local Government
- Environmental Legislation Training
- Legal Island - Annual Review of Employment Law 2024
- Design & Build for Performance
- Energy Ireland - National Retrofitting Conference 2024

The following health and safety training took place:

- First Aid Responder
- Safety Representative Training
- Safe Pass
- Fire Warden Training
- Manual Handling

The following climate action training took place:

- Climate Action – Raising Awareness

## Health and Wellbeing

### Breast Cancer Awareness Month

As part of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Breast Cancer Awareness pins were made available for purchase at €3 each in the canteen. Links to information and advice at Breast Cancer Ireland and The Irish Cancer Society were made available to staff.

# Human Resources

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## **Winter Flu Vaccination**

All staff were offered the opportunity to avail of the Winter Flu vaccination again this year. A vaccination Clinic took place in the Goldsmith Suite on 21 October

## **Lunchtime Yoga**

Lunchtime yoga classes recommenced on 7 November.

## **Mental Resilience**

A resilience session for frontline staff was delivered by our Employment Assistance Programme providers, Abate in October. The session focused on practical strategies for managing stress, anxiety and coping with difficult encounters with customers and clients.

Additionally, a separate session was delivered specifically for line managers. It focused on resilience in leadership, managing stress, and handling challenging workplace interactions.

## **Social Wellbeing**

A function and presentation night for employees who have retired from Longford County Council since 1 January 2023 took place on 28 November. This function is to acknowledge and thank our retirees for their contribution to Longford County Council and the citizens of our local communities in Longford.



# Tourism

## Longford operators experience the Royal Canal Greenway

Ireland's Hidden Heartlands in association with Longford Tourism organised a familiarisation trip on the Royal Canal Greenway in County Longford and County Roscommon. This was for public-facing hospitality operators and team members. The trip offered the chance to experience first-hand the visitor experience of cycling parts of the Royal Canal Greenway and visiting some attractions and experiences along the way.

The morning kicked off with a visit to the working farm, demonstration kitchen and a breakfast at Fiona Egan's Cloughan Farm and Cookery School in Abbeyshrule. Next stop was Ballymahon's Greenway Cycles. John from Ballymahon's Greenway Cycles shared some of his insights of dealing with Greenway visitors since their business opened before cycling with us to guide us on our way to Corlea.

A short pedal brought us to Brannigan Harbour in Ballymahon, Alan Barr of Alan's Yippee Kayaking talked us through the experience he offers visitors on the Royal Canal at Ballymahon, Abbeyshrule and Mullingar for daytime and nighttime paddles. Lunch was provided by Foigha Bar and Lounge.

The party then continued to Corlea Bog and Trackway Visitor Centre. From there, the bus transferred us to Killashee where we met with Robert Crilly of Midlands Cycle Hub, another bike hire operator on the canal who shared his insights on the Greenway experience.

Cycling from Killashee to Clondra, the next stop was The Richmond Inn where Niamh McPartland discussed

the opportunities for visitors to experience and enjoy Longford, as well as the challenges faced by operators along the Greenway.

The bus then brought all participants to Strokestown Park House for a tour of the National Famine Museum there, one of the biggest attractions on the Royal Canal Greenway and the starting point for the National Famine Way.



# Tourism

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## Visitor Information Signage

Work is underway on the design and installation of a new sign to highlight the position of the Longford Tourism Office on Market Square as a visitor information centre.

Updated visitor information signs have also been prepared for St Mel's Cathedral and Corlea Bog Trackway Visitor Centre highlighting Longford as part of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands.

Work is also continuing on the upgrading of visitor information boards in towns and villages throughout the county.

## EU Just Transition Fund Investment Grant-Aid Scheme for Private and Community SMEs

The appointment of a new Just Transition Tourism Activator for County Longford eight weeks ago has formalised the work being undertaken to support those moving forward with a full application for funding under the Just Transition Regenerative Tourism and Placemaking scheme.

With some seven weeks to go until the application deadline on 13 January 2025, the immediate priority is to support those moving forward to submit strong and viable applications.

However, with the significant number of project promoters that have come forward, there is a clear opportunity for the development of an enhanced tourism network or cluster in this region, especially with the LEADER Programme also open to accepting certain tourism related applications. This will emerge as a

significant priority for this role in the year ahead, with ample opportunities for developing the tourism industry throughout the county.

## Learning and Networking

Longford Tourism has attended the following learning and networking events:

- Tourism Officers Network Meeting with Cork City Council
- The launch of the Feasibility study on the future development and Greening of the Cruise Hire Sector
- Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Community Tourism Workshop
- Failte Ireland Festival and Events Masterclass
- Tourism Hospitality Research in Ireland (THRIC) and International Regenerative Tourism Conference
- Midlands Ireland Food and Drinks Food Tourism and Awareness Group

## Christmas Lights and Grafton Court Christmas Fair

Longford Town's Christmas lights were switched on on Friday, 29 November. The new Grafton Court Christmas Fair along took place on Friday, as well as on Saturday, 30 November.

The Local Enterprise Office was inundated with requests for stalls for high quality, sustainable local craft and products and it's a great sign of

# Tourism

the potential of future similar events in Longford Town.

Meanwhile a new and exciting Christmas lights display was projected onto the Market Square Building above the Longford Tourism Office on Friday and Saturday evening. It will

also be shown from 5-7pm each day from 20-23 December.

These events have been organised by Longford Tourism, Longford Nighttime Economy Officer, the Local Enterprise Office, Longford Local Community Safety Partnership and Longford Municipal District.



The poster for the Grafton Court Christmas Fair features a vibrant illustration of the Market Square Building in Longford, Ireland, adorned with Christmas lights. A large, decorated Christmas tree stands in front of the building, and several people, including Santa Claus, are depicted in the foreground. The text 'Grafton Court Christmas FAIR' is written in a stylized font. The event dates and times are prominently displayed: '4-9pm Fri 29 November' and '2-7pm Sat 30 November'. A call to action encourages visitors to see Santa turn on the Christmas lights at 6pm on Friday, buy local gifts from stalls, and get into the festive mood. The poster includes logos for Longford Tourism, the Local Enterprise Office, and the Longford County Council.

**Grafton Court Christmas FAIR**

**4-9pm Fri 29 November**  
**2-7pm Sat 30 November**

See Santa turn on the Christmas lights (6pm, Friday), buy local gifts from the Christmas stalls and get in the festive mood!

LONGFORD TOURISM  
Oifig Fiontair Áitiúil  
Local Enterprise Office  
AN LONGFORD

# Housing

Project (number of houses)	Status
Cranleymore Abbeylara (3)	Stage 3 approved. Site cleared of Japanese knotweed. Tender for Contractor being prepared.
St Rita's Park Road Phase 1 (6)	Stage 2 approved. Part 8 Planning approved for Phase 1 (6 houses). Site cleared of Japanese knotweed. Awaiting costs for Stage 3 submission. Tender for Contractor to follow.
St Rita's Park Road Phase 2 (7)	Phase 2 draft plans under revision. Awaiting updated plans.
Radharc na Muileann, Lanesborough (22)	Stage 2 approved. Advertised for Part 8 planning in August 2024. Further information Submitted. Awaiting approval.
Drynan, Ballymahon (13)	Stage 1 approved. Stage 2 submitted. Department have requested design changes. Planning to wait until WWTP updated by Uisce Éireann.
Cnoc na Greine, Granard (8)	Stage 1 approved. Stage 2 submitted October 2024. Awaiting approval.
Clough Dillons Keenagh (4)	Unfinished estate. Stage 1 approved. Legal issues to be sorted before can proceed.
Lamagh, Newtownforbes (6)	Stage 2 approved. Part 8 planning approved October 2024. Consultants to review planning conditions and progress project.
2 Legion Terrace (4)	On site. Was on hold considerable length of time awaiting Irish Water connection. Connection due to be completed this week. Completion delayed until December 2024.
Richmond Street (23)	Complete. Handover 4 November 2024.
Corneddan, Ballinalee (1)	On site. Due for completion Q1 2025.
Houricans Hotel, Granard (8 and parking)	Consultants preparing plans for combined Stage 1 and 2 submission shortly. Awaiting road safety audit and flood risk assessment.
Butchers, Market Street, Granard (3)	Consultant preparing plans for Stage 1 submission shortly.
Aghaboy, Killoe (Ennybegs) (4/6)	Stage 1 approved. Consultant preparing plans for Stage 2 submission.
Casey Court, Keenagh (2/3)	Infill site. Stage 1 approved. Consultant preparing plans for Stage 2 submission.
Shanmullagh, Ballinamuck (10)	Stage 1 approved. Consultant preparing plans for Stage 2 submission.



# Housing

Project (number of houses)	Status
Canal Court, "Fondermans" (2)	Existing building formerly used for district heating. Decommissioned and cleared out. Consultant preparing plans for Stage 1 submission shortly.
Willow Park Halting site (2)	Proposals submitted to CENA. CENA to submit Stage 1 shortly.
Vacant / Derelict houses, Great Water Street (15)	Tender for surveys and masterplan to go out shortly.
Farrell's Ballinalee (4)	Turnkey approved. Not started. New submission to be made.
Forthill, Aughnacliffe (13)	Turnkey approved. Complete.
Forthill, Aughnacliffe Phase 2 (4)	Turnkey approved. On site. Due for completion Q4 2024.
Longford Road, Ballinalee (14)	Turnkey approved. Not started. New submission to be made.
Market Square (2)	Turnkey approved. On site. 1 no complete. Second due for completion November 2024.
Colmcille Terrace, Granard Phase 1 (19)	Complete. Four completed in Q4 2023, remaining 15 in 2024.
Colmcille Terrace, Granard Phase 2 (7)	Under negotiations.

## Climate Change

The Energy Efficiency Retrofit Scheme is ongoing with the focus this year on targeting the houses with the lowest BER rating. In 2024, the Department has set a target of 45 units and to date works have been completed on 17 units at Canal Court, Longford and works will shortly be completed on six units at St Anne's Ballymahon, six units at Abbeycartron Lane and six units at Casey Court, Kenagh. Energy Efficiency works have also been completed on 13 of our Void Properties in our social housing stock.

## Repair and Leasing

Works are underway on seven apartments at 42 Main Street, Longford this an approved housing body (ABH) led scheme with Kilkenny Voluntary Housing Association and comprises of four one-bed apartments and 3 two-bed apartments.

## Social Housing Applications

478 social housing applications have been received year to date.

# Housing

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## **Housing List**

586 households are currently on the housing waiting list, with a further 163 in the assessment process.

## **New Tenancies**

164 new local authority, AHB and Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) tenancies have commenced this year to date. 268 additional households are currently supported via the (Housing Assistance Payment) HAP scheme.

## **Summary Social Housing Assessment 2024**

All relevant households have now been reviewed under the Summary Social Housing Assessment 2024. The return is currently being prepared for submission by 2 December 2024.

# Roads

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## Municipal District Works

Road maintenance works continued in each municipal district in October and November. These works include footpath repairs, drainage and pothole repairs.

Restoration Improvement and Restoration Maintenance works on regional and local roads were completed in each of the municipal districts.

Works on the Bridge Rehabilitation Programme, Safety Improvement Works Programme, Climate Change Adaption and Resilience Works Programme are all substantially complete.

Works on 11 Local Improvement Schemes took place and were completed in October and November, costing €564,965.

Footpath works on two Community Involvement Schemes at the Ballymaurice Road, Granard and the old school road in Drumlish are substantially complete.



Regional and local road funding applications under the various grant headings were submitted to the Department of Transport for 2025. A three-year multi-annual Restoration Improvement Work Programme 2025-2027 has also been submitted.

Maintenance of tracks and trails is ongoing in each municipal districts.



# Roads

## National Road Schemes

Works on the N4 Newtownforbes to Clonihir pavement overlay contract commenced in November. The works involve a 4km overlay of a section of the N4. Roadstone are the appointed contractor and they carried out advance works on a section of the road which was in very poor repair. The main body of work will be carried out in January and February 2025.

HD28 resurfacing pavement works were carried out in October and November 2024 on the N55 at Carrickboy.

N63 Earl Street and Market Square Junction works took place.

The N4 Mullingar to Longford (Roosky) is currently at Phase 2 option selection is taking place. It is envisaged that the Preferred Route Corridor will be identified by the end of 2024.

## Speed Limit Review

In April 2024, local authorities were notified by the Department of Transport of new road traffic legislation which was enacted. The impact of this legislation, with respect to speed limits on public roads was outlined as follows:

- A default speed limit of 60km/hr is to be introduced on all rural local roads. This default speed limit is due to be commenced on the 7 February 2025.
- A default speed limit of 30km/hr is to be introduced for urban areas. This default speed limit is due to be commenced by

end of June 2025 (date to be confirmed).

- A default speed limit of 80km/hr is to be introduced on all national secondary roads. This default speed limit is due to be commenced in 2025 (date to be confirmed).

On foot of these changes to the structure of speed limits in Ireland, local authorities were directed to review speed limits to meet the commencement dates. The rural local road review is currently ongoing.

## Road Safety

### Local Road Safety Action Plan 2025-2027

The Road Safety Working Together Committee has started work on the new Local Road Safety Action Plan 2025-2027. This new strategy follows the older 2022-2024 strategy and will be in line with the next phase of the Government Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030. This group is made up of members from Longford County Council, An Garda Síochána, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, the Road Safety Authority and the HSE.

### Community Safety and Wellbeing Expo

At the Community Safety and Wellbeing Expo in November, the road safety team actively engaged with both the public, including students from local schools, to raise awareness about the critical importance of road safety.

The team emphasized the dangers associated with driving under the



# Roads

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influence of alcohol and drugs, highlighting both the immediate risks to the driver and passengers, as well as the broader impact on other road users.

## Climate Change

In Department Circular RW12 2024, which deals with the Multi Annual Restoration Programme 2025-2027, local authorities are encouraged to engage in carbon reduction measures relating to this programme of works and assist in the objectives of the Climate Action Plan. The carbon saving measures include the following:

1. Use of Warm Mix Asphalts
2. Green Public Procurement
3. Pavement IAPDM Design
4. Climate Adaption Strategy for Regional and Local Roads – Critical Infrastructure Routes.

# Environment and Climate Action

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## Household Hazardous Waste Collection

Proper disposal of hazardous waste ensures it does not end up in landfills or other areas where it may seep into groundwater. Contaminated groundwater is not only dangerous to humans, but also to wildlife, animals, and ecosystems.

To improve collection rates and promote proper disposal of hazardous waste, the Environment team with the help of Municipal District staff held a second household hazardous waste collection in November 2024.

For this, a new traffic management system was put in place on the day to manage increased throughput of traffic. Card payments were facilitated for the first time. This was a huge success, with 65% of income being receipted through card payments.



## McEoin Park Edible Garden Initiative

In November 2024, 30 fruit and nut trees including apple, crab apple, plum and hazel nut trees were planted in conjunction with the residents of McEoin Park. The project transformed waste ground into a secure amenity area for the estate residents to enjoy and take ownership of.

This initiative was made possible through Longford County Council funding in December 2023 which was used to clear eight tonnes of waste from this isolated area.

The Anti-Dumping Initiative 2024 provided funding to erect 8ft high mesh fencing and gates to secure the area. The initiative was aimed at preventing the ongoing issue of illegal dumping and improve biodiversity in the area.

## Teagasc Farm Talk

Longford County Council were invited to take part in the County Longford Signpost Farm Advisory Programme run by Teagasc. The farm talk took place on the farm of Ray McCormack Fermoy Lane, Lanesboro on Wednesday, 2 October.

# Environment and Climate Action

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Climate Officer Gary Brady and Environmental Technician David O'Rourke spoke on the topics of climate change, farm inspections, enforcement, water quality issues, nutrient run off and water pollution, relating to farm activities.

Key areas of concern to Longford County Council included reducing farm carbon emissions, farm inspections and agricultural issues relating to water quality. Over 50 farmers were present on the evening. They were assured that Longford County Council would support farmers in the county to ensure compliance with the Acres and other agri-environmental schemes.



## XL Bully Type Dog Regulations

The XL Bully Type Dog Regulation came into effect on 1 October 2024. The owners of XL Bully type dogs have between 1 October 2024 and 31 January 2025 to apply for a Certificate of Exemption from the local authority in which the dog resides. From 1 February 2025, it will be illegal to own an XL Bully type dog without a Certificate of Exemption.

All relevant information in relation to applying for a Certificate of Exemption from Longford County Council can be found on the [Animal Welfare and Veterinary section](#)

under the Environment section of [Longfordcoco.ie](http://Longfordcoco.ie).

If you are the owner of an XL Bully type dog, it is your responsibility to inform yourself of the new Regulations and ensure compliance with same. Please contact the Dog Control Service, Environment Department at [dogcontrol@longfordcoco.ie](mailto:dogcontrol@longfordcoco.ie) if you require any further information.

## Green Hubs Funding

In October 2024, the Environment Department secured €20,000 in funding from My Waste Ireland's pilot programme to create a Green Hub in County Longford. This initiative aims to encourage active engagement, and further strengthen the collaboration between local authorities, the waste industry, and local businesses. It will also support the current awareness campaign on the enhanced Commercial Waste Regulations.

The Environment Department will seek potential project leaders, partners and champions through local businesses and organisations to establish green business networks, providing mentoring and support on sustainable activities and initiatives aimed at increased levels of waste segregation.

## End-of-Waste Site Visit

In October 2024, the Environment team attended a site visit organised by the Eastern and Midlands Region WERLA at Integrated Material Solutions (IMS) in Hollywood, Co Dublin.

# Environment and Climate Action

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IMS were the first Irish company to be granted an End of Waste Decision from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPS) to allow the re-use of waste concrete into secondary aggregates. The reused aggregate, Greenstone, is produced for use in bound and unbound aggregate applications in civil engineering and road construction projects.

The purpose of the site visit was to share knowledge and information regarding the production of recycled aggregates in line with the National End-of-Waste Decision EoW-N001/2023. Time was allocated to visit the construction and demolition recycling process and review documentation required under the national criteria, testing methods and statements of conformity.



## Phone Recycling Initiative

Climate Action facilitated the recycling of desktop phones that would otherwise have been sent for disposal. The handsets became redundant after the Council changed to Microsoft Teams for all telecommunications. The phones were advertised on a social media platform used by local authority climate action staff and environmental awareness officers. Fifty headsets are being sent to Limerick City and County Council and discussions are ongoing with other interested parties.

## Climate Action

### Our Shared Plate

Our Shared Plate is a community-based project that unites people and neighbourhoods in a shared commitment to build a greener more resilient future through growing, cooking and eating together.

Across Laois, Kildare and Longford, Our Shared Plate empowers communities with practical knowledge and skills through activities, workshops and events, creating shared resources to enable other neighbourhoods nationwide to connect and cultivate positive change.

As part of this pilot project, funded under Strand 2 Pobal funding, three varying types of communities and groups were chosen to participate. In Longford, the three chosen groups were:



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- Old Ardnacassa Residents Association (MAK)
- Longford Women's Link
- Killoe Men's Shed

Some examples of the activities involved to date include a composting workshop, raised bed planting, wicker weaving, farm visit and bread baking workshops.



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## Longford Community Climate Action Programme

Some of the successful projects under the Longford Community Climate Action Programme Phase 1 Funding for Strand 1/1a are (funding provided is in brackets):

- Lus na Gréine Family Resource Centre, Granard, creation of a Community garden space (€7,808)
- EDI Training Centre, Longford Town Purchase of a Bio-composter (€23,154)
- Rathcline GAA PV Installation (€15,090)
- Clonguish GAA Windows and Doors Retrofit (€62,731.15)
- Ballymahon Tidy Towns Christmas Lights, Rambling Orchard, Bike Rack etc (€16,560)
- Drumlish Ballinamuck Area Development, Solar Project, Pollinator and Swift Projects (€13,731)





# Civil Defence

## Duties

Longford Civil Defence provided medical and welfare cover at 15 events during October and November

- Two Longford Town Football Club soccer matches
- Two Longford Athletics events
- Longford GAA event
- National Women's Enterprise Day
- We're Breastfeeding Friendly Longford
- Three Longford's Dead of Night 2024 events
- Well-being expo
- Blood bank clinic (3 events)
- Turning on of Christmas lights



## Training and operations

The Civil Defence section was audited as part of the external ISO:45001 health and safety audit.

Ten volunteers received water and flood awareness training.

Eight volunteers were certified as part of their community first responder advanced course.

Civil Defence attended drill night with Edgeworthstown fire station and provided first aid refresher demonstrations.

Volunteers took part in Restart a Heart Day with primary response agencies in Ballinamuck National school.

Volunteer Killian Reid won the award in the individual category at the Longford/Roscommon Garda youth awards.

A local training day took part in Connolly barracks. This was well attended by volunteers and training covered a variety of disciplines such as communications, search and rescue and medical treatment.



