



Chief Executive Report July – August 2026

Longford County Council

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July/August Highlights

Samantha Healy appointed New Chief Executive of Longford County Council

Samantha Healy has been confirmed as the new Chief Executive of Longford County Council. Ms Healy was formally recommended for the position by the elected members of Longford County Council at a special meeting on Tuesday, July 28, 2026.

Speaking about her appointment as Chief Executive of Longford County Council, Samantha Healy said, "I am deeply honoured and delighted to be appointed Chief Executive of Longford County Council. I believe strong local government should be ambitious, responsive, and rooted in the needs of the people it serves. I want Longford to be a county where people can access quality homes, build rewarding careers, grow successful businesses, raise families, and thrive in vibrant, connected communities. I look forward to working with our elected members, staff, communities, and partners to build on Longford's strengths and create lasting opportunities for current and future generations"

Samantha Healy brings more than 20 years' senior leadership experience across local and central government in Ireland and the United Kingdom. She has served as Director of Services with Longford County Council since 2022, where she has led major service areas and delivered strategic initiatives across housing, infrastructure, community development, climate action, and corporate services. Prior to joining Longford County Council, Samantha held senior leadership roles with Leitrim County Council and the

UK Government, working across local government, science, innovation, and public policy.

Throughout her career, she has demonstrated a strong commitment to public service, collaborative leadership, and delivering meaningful outcomes that improve the lives of citizens and strengthen communities.



Farrell Clan Rally honoured with Official Welcome by Longford County Council

Longford County Council was proud to celebrate the Farrell Clan's links to County Longford with an Official Welcome in July to mark the vibrant history and enduring connection between members of the Farrell Clan and their ancestral home of County Longford.

Almost 200 guests from Ireland, the UK, America and Australia were warmly welcomed by Cathaoirleach of Longford Municipal District Kevin Hussey to Áras an Chontae to mark the opening of the 10th International Farrell Clan Rally.

July/August Highlights



The first day of the rally started with a tour of The Camlin Quarter in Longford Town, an area with deep historical links to the Farrell name. A gathering also took place at The Remembrance Garden on Great Water Street before the Official Welcome in Longford County Council buildings which was then followed by a Parade of Nations through the town, led by the Longford Pipe Band.

A key highlight of this year's rally was the inauguration of the new Farrell Clan Chieftain, Charlotte O'Ferrall, who succeeds her father, Conal, who has led the clan with dedication and distinction since 1993.



Barbara Heslin retires as Director of Services with Longford County Council

Tributes were paid to Barbara Heslin, who retired from Longford County Council in July as Director of Services after 11 years with the local authority.

Barbara retires from her role as Director of Services for Physical Development, with responsibility for Roads and Transportation, Environment, Climate Action, Water Services, Planning, Fire and Emergency Services, the Physical Development SPC, and Granard Municipal District.

The Longford native leaves behind a remarkable legacy of professionalism, integrity and dedication to local government. Her extensive knowledge of local government legislation, combined with her attention to detail and thorough understanding of rules and procedures, made her a trusted



July/August Highlights



authority whose expertise was regularly sought by local authorities across the country.

Her distinguished service has made a lasting contribution to local government and will be remembered with great respect and appreciation by colleagues, elected members and communities throughout County Longford.

Barbara is a graduate of NUI Galway and a Chartered Accountant. She has extensive experience in both the public and private sectors. She joined Longford County Council in 2015 as Director of Services, having previously worked with the Irish Prison Service and KPMG.



Corporate Services

Corporate Management Supports and Customer Services

The Customer Services desk received 587 calls during the months of June and July, as well as 524 emails via the CRM.

Register of Electors

In June, a milestone moment was achieved by the Longford County Council Franchise team as they oversaw the final steps in migrating to the new Voter.ie system. The move was the culmination of many months of work, involving the translation of over 1,500 townlands, polling places, Electoral Divisions and Polling Districts, the updating of over 1,031 possible duplications on the system and many rigorous data quality checks.

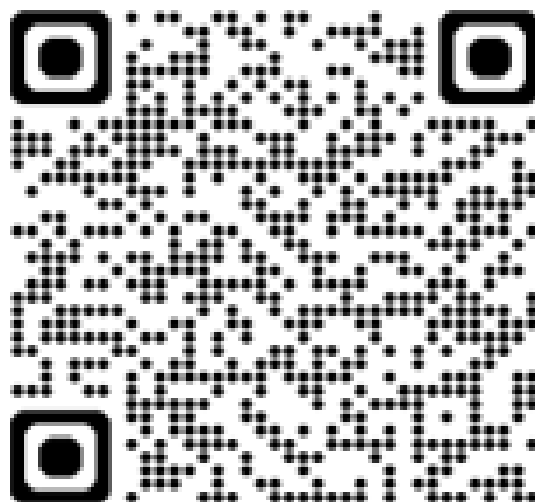
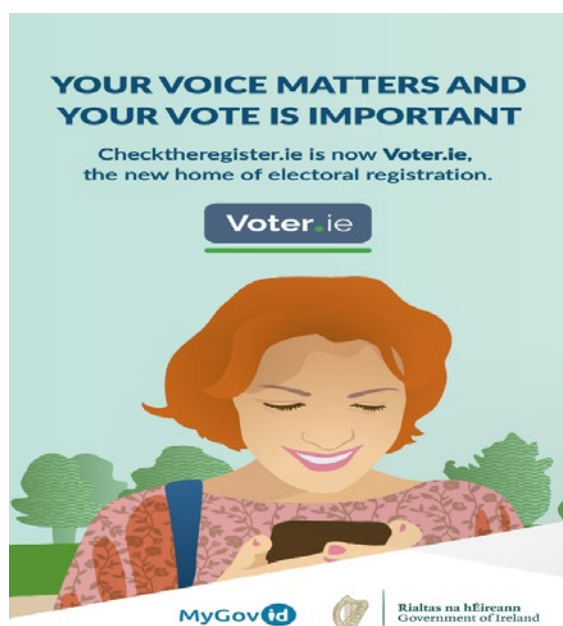
The phased migration to the new Voter.ie system began earlier this year, with all four Dublin local authorities having completed their migration process to the new centralised Voter.ie system on 25 May. Longford

County Council, alongside Wicklow, Kerry and Wexford County Councils, moved to the new portal on 10 June.

All remaining local authorities will migrate over the coming months. It is anticipated that all local authorities will be using Voter.ie to manage their electoral registers by the end of 2026. The establishment of a new central electoral registration system is a key part of the electoral registration measures introduced in the Electoral Reform Act 2022.

The new system provides for a much more streamlined process for electors and administrators alike and paved the way for significant improvements in the quality of the data that is held on the register.

In order to build on this work, Longford County Council began an intensive data quality project in June. Letters were sent to over 13,000 electors in the county who were missing important data from their entry on the Register of Electors. The importance of capturing unique data such as PPSN's has increased, as it allows Local Authorities to cross-



Corporate Services

check identity data and improve the accuracy of the Register. Thanks are extended to those who have returned their forms and anyone who has not yet returned their forms or updated their details online is encouraged to now do so. Forms can be returned by Freepost to the Franchise Office or details can be updated on the new voter.ie website.

Official Languages Act

Work continues to meet the obligations under Section 10A of the Official Languages Act (Amendment) 2021. Among the obligations under the Act, the Local Authority is obliged to ensure that:

at least 20% of annual advertising is to be conducted in Irish.

5% of the advertising budget is to be spent on advertising in Irish language media.

Documents setting out public policy proposals, audited accounts or financial statements, annual reports and strategy statements are published simultaneously in Irish and English.

All signage placed by a public body or on its behalf must be in Irish or bilingual, in accordance with the regulations.

To date in 2026, 13.84% of advertisements placed comply with the Acht Teanga.

Freedom of Information/Access to Information on the Environment/Office of the Ombudsman

	Year to Date
No. of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests received	59
No. of Access to Information on the Environment (AIE) requests received	9
No. of Office of the Ombudsman complaints received	3

Corporate Services

Meetings Administration

Meetings and events which took place in June and July 2026 detailed below:

8 June	Granard Municipal District Committee Meeting
10 June	Corporate Policy Group Meeting
	Longford County Council Meeting
	Cathaoirleach Awards 2026
18 June	Ballymahon Municipal District Committee Meeting
	Ballymahon Municipal District AGM
19 June	Longford County Council AGM
22 June	Granard Municipal District Committee Meeting
22 June	Granard Municipal District AGM
24 June	Longford Municipal District Committee Meeting
	Longford Municipal District AGM
29 June	Oireachtas Members Meeting
8 July	Corporate Policy Group Meeting
	Longford County Council Meeting
20 July	Physical Development Strategic Policy Group Meeting
	Social Development Strategic Policy Group Meeting
	Official Welcome for the Farrell Clan
21 July	Corporate Policy Group Meeting
22 July	Economic, Enterprise and Rural Development Strategic Policy Group Meeting
	Ballymahon Municipal District Meeting
	Ballymahon Municipal District Committee Meeting
27 July	Corporate Policy Group Meeting
	Granard Municipal District Committee Meeting
	Granard Municipal District Meeting
28 July	Longford County Council Committee Meeting

Corporate Services

Cathaoirleach Awards 2026

The Cathaoirleach Awards are an annual initiative to acknowledge and reward voluntary activity which contributes greatly to the quality of life in communities across County Longford.

The 2025 awards took place on Wednesday, 10 June in Áras an Chontae.

The recipients of this year's Cathaoirleach Awards were:

- James Cawley Jnr, Cathaoirleach Award, nominated by Cllr Garry Murtagh
- Rosemary Gaynor, Granard Municipal District Award, nominated by Cllr Turlough McGovern
- Newtowncashel Drama Group, Ballymahon Municipal District Award, nominated by Cllr Martin Skelly
- St Christopher's Services, Longford Municipal District Award, nominated by Cllr Uruemu Adejinmi



Corporate Services

Cllr Gerry Hagan elected as new Cathaoirleach of Longford County Council

Cllr Gerry Hagan was elected to the role of Cathaoirleach at the council AGM which took place on Friday, 19 June. He replaces Cllr Garry Murtagh who held the role of Cathaoirleach for the past year.

Cllr Mark Casey was elected Leas Cathaoirleach of Longford County Council for the year ahead following on from Cllr Niall Gannon's term.

Cllr Gerry Hagan has vowed to work tirelessly to promote County Longford as well as delivering key projects over the course of his term.



Cllr Padraig McNamara appointed Cathaoirleach of Granard Municipal District

The Annual General Meeting of Granard Municipal District took place on Monday, 22 June in Áras an Chontae.

Cllr Padraig McNamara was elected to the role of Cathaoirleach. He replaced Cllr Turlough McGovern who held the role of Cathaoirleach for the past year.

Cllr Colin Dalton was elected Leas Cathaoirleach for the year ahead.



Cllr Kevin Hussey appointed Cathaoirleach of Longford Municipal District

The Annual General Meeting of Longford Municipal District took place on Wednesday, 24 June in Áras an Chontae.

Cllr Kevin Hussey was elected to the role of Cathaoirleach. He replaced Cllr Uruemu Adejinmi who held the role of Cathaoirleach for the past year.

Corporate Services

Cllr Martin Monaghan was elected Leas Cathaoirleach for the year ahead.



Cllr Mark Casey appointed Cathaoirleach of Ballymahon Municipal District

The Annual General Meeting of Ballymahon Municipal District took place on Thursday, 18 June in Áras an Chontae.

Cllr Mark Casey was elected to the role of Cathaoirleach. He replaced Cllr Martin Skelly who held the role of Cathaoirleach for the past year.

Cllr Paul Ross was elected Leas Cathaoirleach for the year ahead.



Official Welcome – Farrell Clan

Longford County Council was proud to celebrate the Farrell Clan's links to County Longford with an Official Welcome on Monday, 20 July to highlight the vibrant history and enduring connection between members of the Farrell Clan and their ancestral home of County Longford.



Corporate Services

An Official Welcome is one of the highest honours awarded by Longford County Council and is reserved for individuals and groups whose achievements bring pride to the county and their local communities.

Almost 200 guests from Ireland, the UK, America and Australia were warmly welcomed to Áras an Chontae to mark the opening of the 10th International Farrell Clan Rally.

Communications

June, July and August 2026 saw a number of high-profile positive news events in Longford County Council. Major events in June included the annual Cathaoirleach Awards, the election of the new Longford County Council Cathaoirleach, the opening of the new Active Travel Scheme in Granard, the sod turning of the €9m THRIVE Connolly Barracks Reimagined project and the launch of the new VisitLongford.ie Tourism website.

A social media campaign, **Love Life: Love Longford**, also launched in June, celebrating the many positive stories, people and places that make Longford a great place to live, work, visit and invest. The campaign featured a series of video messages from Longford Municipal District Councillors, well-known Longford figures and members of the public. The extensive campaign also included media releases, radio interviews, creation of handheld signs, a street banner and a series of radio adverts.

The month of July featured a visit from the Ambassador of Latvia to open a major Abbé Edgeworth

exhibition in Edgeworthstown, the all-island launch of the Home of Halloween programme, an official welcome for the Farrell Clan Rally as well as the VEX IQ Robotics Competition.

During July, Longford's 'Creating the Demand – Shaping Our County's Future' and 'STEM education in the Midlands' were two of the projects featured in the Irish Regions showcase at the EU Committee of the Regions in Brussels with representatives from Longford County Council joining in the celebratory event. July also saw live music, family entertainment and community celebration with Longford Family Fest 2026.

July and August also marked some major high-profile events with the retirement of the outgoing CE Paddy Mahon and the appointment of Longford County Council's new CE Samantha Healy. July also saw the retirement of Director of Services Barbara Heslin.

All of these events require the assistance and support of the Communications section including pre and post publicity. Work includes event planning and management, invites, press releases, radio interviews, national and local coverage, media relations, communications strategy and advise, media queries from local and national press, radio advertising, digital communications strategy, official openings, management of all social media platforms, video content creation, paid social media advertising campaigns, content management of Longford County Council website and

Corporate Services

dealing with website content requests from all sections of the county council.

Press Releases

A total of 28 press releases were issued in June, July and August 2026 on a range of issues, representative of all council sections as referenced above.

Media enquiries

A total of 24 media queries were received and processed by the Communications Section in June/ July/August 2026 from both local and national print, online and broadcast media with common themes including, environmental issues, housing, roads and fire services.

Communications Strategy

Work continued on the development of a new five-year Communications Strategy in conjunction with RPS Consulting Engineers following a Communications Audit.

The Communications Officer has held weekly workshops with RPS to draft and develop the new five-year strategy, and the final draft is currently at layout and design stage and will be presented to management for feedback in due course.

LCC Website

The Communications and IT section are progressing the development of a new county council website, following the recent tender process and appointment of the winning tender. As part of the preparation

in advance of a new LCC website, our Digital Communications Officer has continued work on a detailed clean-up/audit of existing content and pages with a view to having all existing website pages ready for migration to a new website. The Communications section is currently working with the newly appointed website developer on the initial phase of this project and detailed design workshops will take place with staff from various sections. It is expected that it will be Spring 2027 before this extensive project is fully completed.

VisitLongford.ie

The Digital Communications Officer worked with the Tourism Officer and the website developer for the development of a new Tourism website and the launch of the new Tourism website took place in June 2026. The website provides a clear and easy way for visitors to plan a trip to County Longford. It brings together information on attractions, food, festivals and events, outdoor activities, heritage sites, and accommodation in one place. It is a dedicated visitor-facing platform that elevates Longford as a sustainable visitor destination, offering memorable slow and gentle visitor experiences that are grounded in regenerative tourism. Visitors can search for features by location, activity or accessibility.

Video Content Creation

Video content creation continues to play an important role in our social media strategy and our two Digital Communications Officers are continuing to develop, create,

Corporate Services

edit and schedule video content to promote all the positive news stories from Longford County Council. One example of this was the extensive Love Life, Love Longford social media campaign which involved the filming, editing and scheduling of a total of 20 videos from Longford Municipal District Councillors, well-known Longford figures and members of the public as well as the creation and scheduling of social media graphics.

This campaign ran over a 7-to-8-week period and also included media releases, radio interviews, creation of handheld signs, a street banner and a series of radio adverts. The campaign resulted in particularly strong reach and engagement figures for our social media statistics on Facebook and Instagram.

LGMA Communications Conference

The annual LGMA Communications Conference takes place this year in the Radisson Blu Hotel, Athlone from 24-25 September. The Communications Officer with Longford County Council will feature as one of the guest speakers at this year's event. Mairead O' Shea will join the panel discussion 'Inside the Newsroom: What's the Story: What Journalists actually want from you'. This event brings together communications professionals from local authorities across Ireland. It is a valuable platform for city and county council teams to share insights, explore ways to strengthen public engagement, and build trust through effective communication.

Social Media Stats

Key Social Media Statistics

The following statistics cover the period from 1 June to 19 August 2026 and are compared against the same period from 1 June to 19 August 2025.

- 785 posts published across social platforms, representing a **31.3% increase** compared to 598 posts.
- 1,414,101 total impressions, an **increase of 83.4%** on the 771,044 impressions recorded in the previous period.
- 1,266 post shares, reflecting a **40.2% increase** compared to 903 shares in the previous period.
- 11,321 post reactions and likes, **an increase of 135%** 4,818.
- **Followers increase by 19.7%** (19,409) compared to the 16,212 in the previous period.

Video views **increased by 864.6%**, rising to 259,748 compared with 26,927 in the previous period.

The growth in our social media performance can be largely attributed to the increased use of video content on Facebook and Instagram, with Love Life, Love Longford campaign posts driving particularly strong reach and engagement. On LinkedIn, audiences responded most positively to people-centred stories, with the announcement of Samantha Healy as Chief Executive and retirement posts recognising Paddy Mahon and

Corporate Services

Barbara Heslin among the platform's top-performing content.

Ireland Reads Campaign

A recent evaluation report from Ireland Reads Day 2026 revealed that County Longford reached second place in the country for digital content in relation to this campaign and was in fact the top performer in the country in terms of digital reach efficiency per in person events.

Ireland Reads is delivered by Ireland's 30 library authorities, supported by the Local

Government Management Agency (LGMA) and funded by the Department of Health took place on 28 February 2026.

As in previous years, the campaign focused on in-person events, traditional media coverage,

social media promotion, and local outreach. Events took place in the week leading up to

Ireland Reads Day, as well as on the day itself. County Longford was proud to be in the top ten performers by digital reach for their social media promotion across multiple social media platforms for the Ireland Reads Campaign. In terms of digital reach efficiency per in person events, County Longford was the top performer in the country with a higher percentage of reach per event than any other county. The Communications team was proud to have played their part in helping to achieve these figures.

Table 6.4: TOP 10 PERFORMERS BY DIGITAL REACH

County	Total Digital Reach
Fingal	111,799
Longford	62,691
Westmeath	27,695
Kildare	23,425
Tipperary	17,291
Wexford	16,000
Dublin City	15,858
Leitrim	15,237
Kilkenny	10,868
Cavan	10,138

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Table 6.5: DIGITAL REACH EFFICIENCY - ALL COUNTIES

County	Events	Digital Reach	Reach per Event	Rating
Longford	11	62,681	5,698	☆☆☆ Exceptional
Fingal	30	111,820	3,727	☆☆☆ Exceptional
Leitrim	6	15,208	2,535	☆☆☆ Exceptional
Clare	5	9,579	1,916	☆☆☆ Exceptional
Sligo	7	8,880	1,269	☆☆☆ Exceptional
Tipperary	14	17,334	1,238	☆☆☆ Exceptional
Roscommon	4	4,533	1,133	☆☆☆ Exceptional
Louth	6	5,858	976	☆☆ High
Monaghan	9	8,633	959	☆☆ High
Westmeath	29	27,699	955	☆☆ High
Carlow	4	3,408	852	☆☆ High
Kilkenny	13	10,870	836	☆☆ High
Waterford	12	9,456	788	☆☆ High
Cork City	19	10,627	559	☆☆ High
South Dublin	15	7,014	468	☆ Good
Wexford	36	16,000	444	☆ Good
Limerick	3	1,189	396	☆ Good
Kildare	75	23,465	313	☆ Good
Kerry	11	1,673	152	☆ Good
Cavan	74	10,079	136	☆ Good
Offaly	23	2,543	111	☆ Good
Cork County	98	10,268	105	☆ Good
Galway	15	1,490	99	Standard
Meath	41	2,310	56	Standard
Dublin City	398	15,875	40	Standard
Wicklow	312	7,219	23	Standard
Donegal	25	261	10	Standard
DLR	281	2,681	10	Standard
Laois	17	51	3	Standard
Mayo	14	25	2	Standard

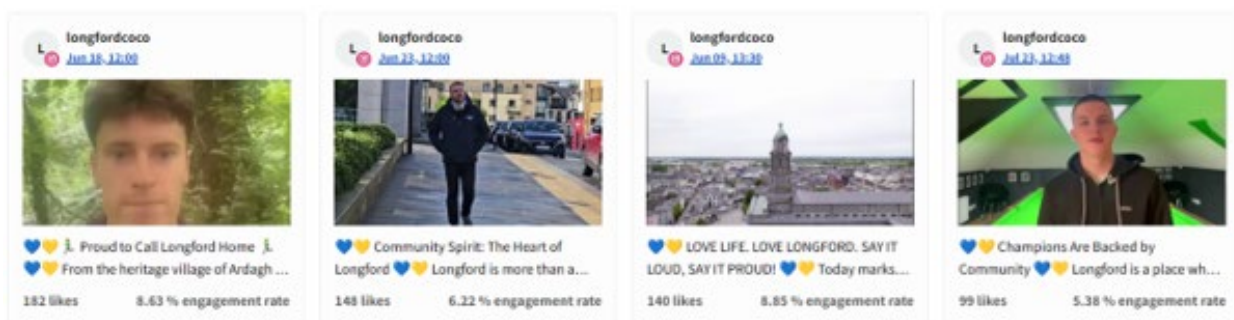
Corporate Services

Social Media Best Performing Posts:

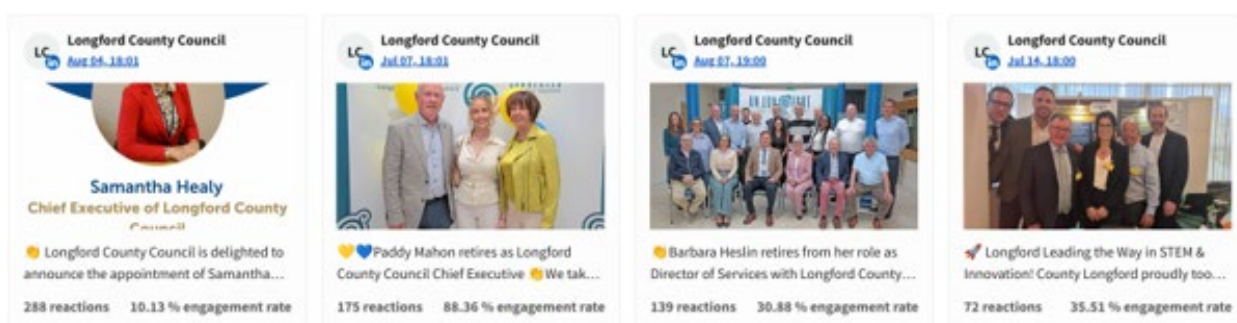
Facebook:



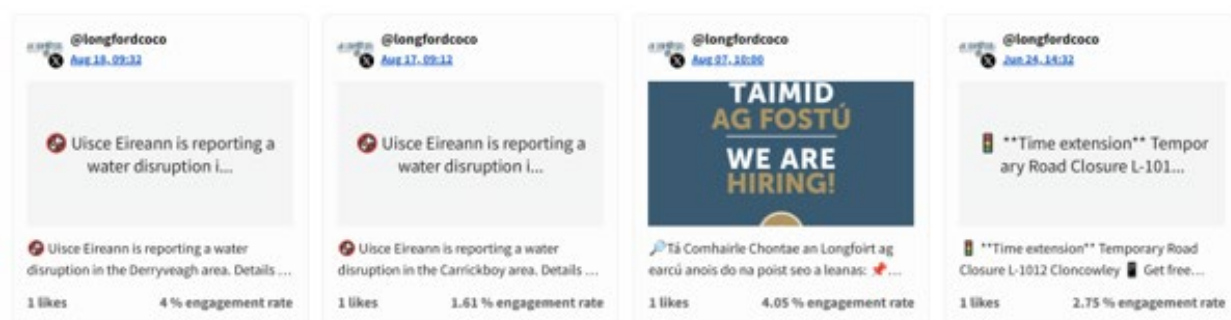
Instagram:



LinkedIn:



X:



Corporate Services

Website

The following statistics cover the period from 1 June to 19 August 2026 and are compared against the same period from 1 June to 19 August 2026 2025.

Longfordcoco.ie recorded 32,658 visits, representing an increase of 1,258 visits (4%) compared to this time last year.

The most popular sections were:

- News (6,931)
- Planning (4,594)
- Housing (4,289)
- Careers (3,085)
- Environment (2,513)

During this period, the following view counts were recorded across other council websites:

- VisitLongford.ie (11,219)
- Longford Libraries (7,427)
- LongfordSports (1,598)

Data Protection & Information Compliance

Overview

During the period January to June 2026, the Data Protection Team continued to provide advice, guidance, and support across all sections of Longford County Council while ensuring compliance with data protection legislation and

promoting a strong culture of data protection awareness throughout the organisation.

Key Statistics (January – June 2026)

Data Breaches - Since January 2026, Longford County Council has recorded six data breaches. Any incidents deemed to present a risk requiring notification were reported to the Data Protection Commission within the statutory 72-hour reporting timeframe. All breaches were appropriately contained and managed, with corrective and remedial actions implemented to minimise the risk of recurrence.

Data Subject Access Requests (DSARs) - During the reporting period, Longford County Council received and completed five Data Subject Access Requests (DSARs). All requests were responded to within the statutory one-month timeframe.

DPIAs and Data Sharing Agreements - During the reporting period, the Data Protection & Information Compliance Officer reviewed:

- Six Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs)
- Seven Data Sharing/Processing Agreements

These reviews ensured that appropriate safeguards, controls, and compliance measures were in place prior to implementation.

Corporate Services

Data Protection Awareness and Training

The Data Protection Team issued its Q2 Data Protection Newsletter in June 2026 to all Longford County Council staff. The newsletter keeps colleagues informed of current data protection developments within the Council and provides practical guidance, tips, and advice to support ongoing compliance with data protection obligations and good information governance practices.

Data Protection Induction Training was delivered to 21 new employees during Q1 and Q2 2026.

In addition, 30 Summer students received data protection training to ensure they understood their responsibilities when handling personal data during their employment with the Council.

Data Protection Queries

The volume of data protection queries received continues to increase steadily across the organisation. Since January 2026, the Data Protection Team has responded to 234 queries from staff and service areas.

Over the past four years, the number of queries received has increased by an average of 98%, demonstrating growing engagement with the Data Protection Team and reflecting the success of Longford County Council's Data Protection Awareness Programme.

The increase in staff seeking advice and guidance before undertaking activities involving personal data is a positive indicator of the organisation's commitment to data protection

compliance, accountability, and good information governance.

National and Regional Engagement

The Data Protection & Information Compliance Officer continues to actively contribute to data protection governance at both regional and national levels.

The officer remains a member of the:

- National DPO Network
- Regional DPO Network
- National DPO Working Group

As a member of the National DPO Working Group, the Data Protection & Information Compliance Officer participates in the review of national Data Sharing and Processing Agreements on behalf of all 31 Local Authorities. This work supports a consistent, collaborative, and compliant approach to data protection governance across the local government sector.

Conclusion

The first six months of 2026 have seen continued engagement with the Data Protection Team across all Council services. The increasing number of advisory queries, ongoing training initiatives, timely management of data breaches, and proactive review of DPIAs and data sharing arrangements demonstrate Longford County Council's continued commitment to data protection compliance, accountability, and the protection of personal data.

Corporate Services

Health & Safety

Health & Safety Inspections

A total of 16 Safety Inspections were completed by the Health and Safety section and the Management Team.

Health and Safety Training

Ongoing risk assessment briefing sessions are held with each section of the council. Five new employee health & safety inductions were completed.

A total of 34 Summer students completed a health & safety induction in July as part of their work experience programme.

Gas Networks Ireland

Representatives from Gas Networks Ireland delivered 'Safety Around Gas Pipelines' health & safety training to the South Area Roads crew on 19 June 2026.



Asbestos Awareness Training

Asbestos awareness training was completed with an external provider on 3 June with housing and building facilities employees.

Communication and consultation

Safety Monitoring Consultative Committee (SMCC) Meetings

These meetings are an opportunity for the councils Safety Representative to raise concerns regarding health and safety issues. The meetings are chaired by the Director of Service and Head of Finance. Four SMCC meetings were held in June.

Safety Management Team (SMT) Meeting

A meeting of the SMT was held on 8 June 2026. This meeting is attended by the Directors, Training Officer and Health & Safety Officers. The Safety Management Team monitors progression on the Safety Management System and hears issues not resolved from the SMCC meetings. There were no issues referred to the SMT during this period.

Internal Health and Safety Audits

Health and Safety Internal Audits were completed in the following section

- Housing, Fire Services, Regeneration and Active Travel

Temporary Traffic Management (TTM) Audit & Inspection

An audit and inspection of temporary traffic management audit was completed within the Roads Section on 9 and 10 June 2026. The Auditor commended the Roads Team on the high standard of TTM delivered through the areas. He noted the good quality of documents, layouts, methods statements and risk assessments prepared for each site and quality of implementation by crews on each site which he attended.

Library, Heritage and Cultural Services

Age Friendly

Age Friendly Walkability Audit

Age Friendly Ireland and Longford Age Friendly team recently organised and participated in a walkability audit of Edgeworthstown Railway station, part of the community engagement phase of the four-step process towards gaining Age Friendly status for the railway station. Participants included rail users from Longford Age Friendly Older Persons Council, Irish Wheelchair Association, Gardai, Local Link, St Christopher's, Parents and Toddlers and representatives from Irish Rail. Following the train station visit the group returned to Edgeworthstown Library for a group discussion led by Declan Gaffney, National Technical Programme Manager, Age Friendly Ireland and Irish Rail Age Friendly Programme Manager Emmet Cotter.



Midland Sports Taster Day, TUS Sports Arena

Over one hundred older people from five counties including Longford attended the Age Friendly Midland Taster Day, which was held in TUS Sports Area in Athlone on Friday, 3 July. Everyone participated in a range of activities such as Pole Walking, Walking Football, Chair Yoga, Tai Chi, Go for Life Games and STEM-based games, adding a creative and engaging dimension. The day was a collaboration between Age Friendly and Sport Partnerships within the five Local Authorities. The event was officially opened by Minister with responsibility for older persons, Mr Kieran O' Donnell TD with Mr Kevin 'Boxer' Moran, Minister of State at OPW also in attendance. The day highlighted the importance of physical activity, social connection and wellbeing in later life for older people and encourage them to seek out these kinds of activities within their own communities.



Library, Heritage and Cultural Services

Bosca Beo

Longford, as the lead authority, has been successful in securing 'Creative Health and Wellbeing in the Community 2026-2028' funding from Creative Ireland. This will help roll out the project further within the county, but also in the partner counties of Laois, Westmeath, and Offaly.

The project will encourage more older people in each county to tell their life story in a fun, creative, and engaging way.

Longford and Laois County Councils unveiled Bosca Beo in March 2026 as an innovative project designed to help people record, collect, cherish and share their life memories with loved ones. The Bosca Beo has been distributed widely within the community through the library network, through organisations and nursing homes. Workshops will also be delivered in each county to support the project's further delivery in 2026 and 2027.

On 21 May, Ciaran Lennon from Creative Ireland was in Granard Library to introduce Bosca Beo to three groups from the area. A total of 42 people attended.

Longford Age Friendly Alliance

Tributes were paid to retiring Longford County Council Chief Executive Paddy Mahon as he chaired his final meeting as Chair of Longford Age Friendly Alliance on Friday, 5 June. Paddy has been a key component in the founding and flourishing of the aims and achievements of Age Friendly Ireland in County Longford

for the past ten years. Kitty Hughes Longford Older Persons Council Vice Chair and former National Older Persons Councils Chair spoke on behalf of the alliance stakeholders when she alluded to his support for many age friendly initiatives including walkways and greenways, age friendly public realm projects, climate action initiatives, healthy homes, digital supports, and very strong heritage and cultural initiatives.

Tributes were paid to the strong positive leadership that Paddy displayed particularly during Covid where the needs and worries of older people were listened to and acted upon through the collaborative work of the Longford Community Forum.

Longford Age Friendly Programme Manager Martina Needham made a presentation on behalf of Age Friendly Alliance to Paddy and wished him well on his retirement.

Age Friendly Awards

The Longford Storm Ready Packs were shortlisted for an Age Friendly Award in the Safety and Security category. The judging took place on 23 July in Library HQ. The judges were Pat Dowling and Madeline Quirke. The presenters on the day were Kitty Burkhill (OPC Chair), Sr. Elizabeth McNamee (OPC committee member), Cllr David Cassidy and Martina Needham. The winners will be announced at the Age Friendly Awards on 8 October hosted by Limerick City and County Council.

Library, Heritage and Cultural Services

Archives Service

Donations

The Archives Service received donations recently including documents from the GAA County Board from 2025, some items relating to the Church of Ireland community in the county and a collection of programmes from St Mel's Musical Society and Longford County Choir. They have been organised and stored in archival-quality folders and boxes.

Records Management

The Archivist continues to receive a high volume of enquiries about record-keeping and requests for file searches from staff in various departments. Selected summer students will be working on a project to index the paper records currently in storage. This work will assist with the management of records held by Longford County Council.

Commemorations Fund

The Archivist administers the annual funding for commemorations, which is provided by the Department of Culture, Communications and Sport. A contribution was given towards the exhibition on Granard's history which was organised as part of the fortieth anniversary of Rath Mhuire Resource Centre on 27 June.

Small Grants for Local Books

The Archivist administers the annual grant scheme for local books, which concluded in July. Three publications were each awarded €1,000.

Abbé Edgeworth exhibition

The Archives Service has been working on a major exhibition on the life of Abbé Henry Essex Edgeworth. A native of Edgeworthstown, he was the priest who attended King Louis XVI of France at his execution in 1793. The exhibition was launched in Edgeworthstown Library on 13 July by His Excellency, Mr Juris Štālmeistars, Ambassador of Latvia. The exhibition sheds new light on the Abbé and his family, and includes archives, books and a portrait which are borrowed especially for the occasion.

Born in Edgeworthstown in 1745, Abbé Henry Essex Edgeworth was a relative of the renowned author Maria Edgeworth. After his family moved to France, he was ordained a priest in 1769 and later became confessor to King Louis XVI and the King's sister, Madame Elizabeth, during the French Revolution. Following the King's execution in 1793, Edgeworth fled France and eventually became chaplain and almoner to the exiled King Louis XVIII. He died in 1807 in present-day Jelgava, Latvia.

The exhibition brings together rare archives, artefacts and historical objects from collections across Ireland, many of which have never previously been displayed publicly. Loans have been secured from several institutions, including the National Library of Ireland, the Archives of the Irish Capuchin Province, Glenstal Abbey and the Maria Edgeworth Centre, whose collection contains many important items connected with the Edgeworth family.

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Thanks was extended to Bernadette Fitzherbert, the Maria Edgeworth Centre, the National Library of Ireland, the Irish Capuchin Archives and Glenstal Abbey, County Limerick, for loaning such outstanding items.



Arts Office

The period March to July has been extremely busy in the Arts Office with the direct delivery of projects, development of art programmes, partnerships, open calls and grants. The Warehouse continues to provide increased capacity for the development of Arts in County Longford by providing space to build, store, train and practice for artists and local community. This resource is helping the Arts community in Longford to scale up in activity and quality for the eventual opening of the Arts making space in Thrive.

After four years of expedient Arts activity expansion and development - the resources of the Arts Office are at full capacity.

Development of new Children's Arts Festival

Longford Arts Office are partnering with Backstage Theatre and Mide Arts Group to resurrect the very successful Aisling children's Arts festival. The festival has appointed Darren Yorke as Artistic Director and will take place 18-24 April 2027. The partners have applied for festival grants and begun planning.

Art Exhibitions

There are two Art Exhibitions during this period. Edgeworthstown Photography Exhibition displayed in Longford Library and Gordon Farrell's Exhibition which was on display in Áras an Chontae.

Artist Collaboration Award

A new award was developed and issued in March. The award seeks to encourage Longford based artists to collaborate with artists from other counties / countries.

Spectacle Training Project

Longford Arts Office delivered a large spectacle / street theatre training project involving 20 artists from eight counties. The training was delivered by Spraoi Waterford over two residential weekends. The programme ended with a small parade in Longford Town and resulted with a partnership with the Cavan Arts Festival.

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RACE Project Phase 2

Longford Arts Office have been partnering with Mayo County Council for two years in developing a pilot project funded by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This project seeks to develop leading sustainability practices for artists delivering festival based work in Ireland. Phase two, where participating artists developed individual projects is now complete. The project will conclude this October with a presentation and dissemination of results.

European Network of Cultural Centres

Longford Arts Office joined a large relevant arts centre network in 2025. The Arts Officer attended the annual conference in Lisbon. The conference provided an opportunity to network and develop potential projects for future EU applications.

Making Moving Art Summer Programme

Longford Arts Office organised a two-week summer circus camp for participants on the Making Moving Art (MMA) programme. This programme gave children with less opportunities access to circus skills and development.

Abu Music Festival

Longford Arts Office developed an ambitious live music festival in Ballymahon on 11 July. The audience of approximately 350 teenagers and young adults attended the music event. Due to the success of the event, the Arts Office is planning to make this project an annual event.

The Arts Officer mentored a group of older teenagers to deliver this event, developing event management, stage management, budgeting, marketing, promotion and administrative skills.

Earth Man Machine Project Phase 3

Longford Arts Office in partnership with Backstage Theatre and director Andy Crook have applied for 170k to the Arts Council to deliver the theatre spectacle Earth I Man I Machine in June 2027. This project has been in development for over four years and will represent a major artistic treatment of Longford's bogs and relationship with Bord na Mona throughout the 20th century.

Culture Night Open Call

There has been a great response to the Culture Night open call in both Longford Town and the county. Grant offers have been issued, and plans are currently underway to deliver a high-quality Culture Night experience for citizens. Longford Arts Office are partnering with Nighttime Economy to deliver Culture Night in Longford Town.

Mural Artists Open Call

There has been a great response to the national open call for artists to join a panel for developing Art in County Longford. There are plans for a large mural to be rendered by end of year. Longford Arts Office are partnering with Longford Tidy Towns to deliver this programme over the next five years.

Artists CPD

Continuous Professional Development has been organised for Longford artists for November. The

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training will focus on proposal and grant writing. This is timed to occur before the Longford Arts Office Arts grant open calls are published.

Transition Year Arts Programme

TY programmes have increased to six different creative forms for the academic year 2026-27. The programme now include singing, performing, visual art and circus skills. There are approximately 120 TY students, and nine artists will be involved in this programme.

Home of Halloween Parade

Longford Arts Office is responsible for the delivery of the Dead of Night parade - a centre piece of the Home of Halloween programme. Development of the programme is currently underway. There was funding by Fáilte Ireland, Home of Halloween fund and Culture Ireland. The theme of the parade is Halloween Storytelling throughout Europe.

Artist Recognition Awards Event

Longford Arts Office in partnership with the Longford Leader are developing the inaugural Arts Recognition Awards event to be held in Backstage Theatre on 25 September. This will be an opportunity for the Arts Community in Longford to celebrate their achievements and showcase their creativity. Save this date in your diaries.

Creative Ireland Longford

Cruinniú na nÓg, the National Day of Creativity for children and young people, took place all over Ireland on 6 June. The Creative Ireland team,

based in Library and Cultural Services, programmed an extensive range of activities on the day.

In the Granard Municipal District, the Granard Library hosted a LEGO workshop titled 'Unleash Your Creative Spark'. A total of 25 children explored their creativity as they designed and constructed everything from colourful characters to imaginative landscapes. Children at Drumlish Library engaged in LEGO Block Printmaking Workshops, using bricks as printing tools to create unique patterns, textures, and designs. Those designs were converted into unique warble badges.

Ballymahon Library hosted the launch of 'Hidden Wonders', a wonderful, illustrated book of poems, as well as a host of creative, fun activities. Lanesboro Library featured a Wind Chime workshop where children created colourful wind chimes using recycled materials. In Edgeworthstown Library, families discovered the hidden beauty of the microscopic world in a creative, hands-on workshop.

The Cruinniú hero event for the county took place in Longford Library with the unveiling of a commissioned LEGO sculpture of St Mel's Cathedral, followed by fun events including workshops, free building, and music.



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Goldsmith International Literary Festival

The Goldsmith International Literary Festival which took place over the June Bank Holiday was a great success with large numbers attending all events. Founded to celebrate the literary genius of Oliver Goldsmith and to promote Goldsmith Country as tourist attraction it has over the years explored many aspects of Goldsmith's life, society, and writings. This year's festival featured a variety of activities including lectures, music, literary tours and a poetry competition. Ballymahon Library hosted a lecture delivered by Prof. Michael Griffin called 'Trust- A Brief Introduction to Goldsmith's Poetry' on Saturday, 30 May and the Goldsmith Miscellany on Sunday, 31 May which featured a number of speakers including Raymond O' Hanlon, was also held in the Goldsmith Room of the Library. This event was funded by Creative Ireland.



Funding

Longford County Library service has been allocated targeted funding of €43,438.80 under the Small-Scale Capital Fund to enhance accessibility, sensory spaces and broadband speeds across all libraries.

Our allocation will be spent on new wheelchair accessible shelving, creation of new sensory walls, upgrade of our existing sensory space in Edgeworthstown Library and investing in new ICT hardware upgrades to enhance broadband speeds in our libraries.

Healthy Ireland

A full programme of events is planned for Healthy Ireland from June until September. These include Healthy Eating talks with Sinead Costello from the HSE, Scooch workshops, Sensory Play workshops to be held in all branches throughout July and August in conjunction with Ickleminds, Mother and Baby workshops with Miriam workshops and a series of talks on anxiety with Dr. Mary O'Kane. Mindfulness workshops continue to be held every Wednesday in Drumlish library.

Men's Health Week

Longford Libraries organised a series of events to promote men's health. On 15 June Granard had a morning celebrating Men's Health Week. Events included an exercise class for men, and a barber was present. Both Granard and Ballymahon Libraries welcomed their local Men's Shed to take part in a game of Scooch.

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Right to Read

Summer Stars series returns to spark a love of reading in children across County Longford.

Summer Stars is a free national programme that encourages children to read for fun during the school holidays. Whether it's picture books, graphic novels, or audiobooks, every child can take part and enjoy reading at their own pace. Children can track their reading and take part in fun library events and activities hosted by their local libraries.

Longford Libraries are once again inviting children of all ages to dive into the joy of reading with the Summer Stars Reading Programme this Summer.

There are six libraries in County Longford: Ballymahon, Drumlish, Edgeworthstown, Granard, Lanesboro and Longford Town. Children can set their own reading goals, and they will receive a special activity book and a bookmark.

All children registering for Summer Stars in Longford will be entered in a draw for monthly prizes. Prizes available in June, family tickets to Lough Ree Access for All Boat Trip, in July, family tickets for the bowling alley and in August, family tickets to the cinema. At the end of the summer all returned cards will be entered into a draw for a chance to win a bike.

A special Summer Stars collection is available on BorrowBox, the free library app offering eBooks and audiobooks to all library members.

As part of the initiative, Longford Libraries will host a wide range of free

events and activities, including story times, drama workshops, arts and crafts, music workshops and more. Families are encouraged to follow our social media pages to stay up to date with what's happening in their local library.

Library membership is free for everyone of all ages. People can join online or in person. Visit www.longfordlibrary.ie to find out more.

Children's Photography Competition

Longford Library Services in conjunction with Longford Tourism, has announced the launch of the Explore Longford Young Photographer's Competition for 2026. This competition is designed to encourage children to discover and document the county's natural beauty through their lens.

The competition, open to children aged 6-13 years, invites young photographers to submit one photograph showcasing any aspect of County Longford. Entries will be accepted from the competition launch date until Saturday, 29 August.

Photography Workshops with Shelley Corcoran were held in the three Municipal Districts of Longford to help prepare the young photographers, which included Granard on Saturday, 27 June and in Longford and Ballymahon on Wednesday, 8 July.

The winning photographs will be printed as greeting cards giving young photographers the chance to see their work reach a wider audience.

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National Book Tokens will be given as prizes.

A selection of the finest entries will feature in an exhibition in Longford Library.

The competition forms part of the council's broader commitment to engaging young people with their local heritage and environment whilst developing creative skills.

Children aged 6-13 years are invited to enter the Explore Longford Young Photographer's Competition by emailing their entry to photocompetition@longfordcoco.ie. Strictly one photograph entry per child.

My Little Library Bags

My Little Library Bags have been delivered and will be distributed to all children due to start Primary School in County Longford in September 2026.

Families are invited to the library to collect their own My Little Library Bag. The bag contains picture books to help children with the big step of starting school, finding friends and dealing with big emotions. Books are available in both Irish and English.

Twinning- Granard town

On Friday, 19 June, Granard Library hosted a twinning reception for French visitors from East Rouen who are twinning with Granard. This event was supported by the elected members in the Granard MD. The event was well attended, and this was the first event in a packed four- day visit.

TUS Learning Gates Partnership

The libraries hosted the second in a series community lectures as part of a new community learning initiative called the Demystifying series. The first lecture called Demystifying Power of Attorney took place online hosted by Library HQ on Friday, 15 May and the second one was held on 19 June called Demystifying AI -AI made simple- understanding AI in everyday life and work.

Regeneration and Active Travel

Regeneration

Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme

The local Expression of Interest process for the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme 2026/2027 progressed during July. The closing date for Expressions of Interest was extended to 24 July, with shortlisted proposals to be developed into applications under Measure 1, Measure 2, Measure 3 or the Project Development Measure.

Construction works commenced on the Legga (Leggagh) to Moyne Walking and Cycling Trail and the Derrycassin Woods Carpark projects.

Work also continued on closing out existing ORIS projects, with the Ballinalee Walkway project being completed during the reporting period.



Town and Village Renewal Scheme

The Ballinalee Community Park project is nearing substantial completion. During August, the Department approved a change of purpose to include a memorial area for bereaved parents. The principal construction elements have been delivered, with seasonal landscaping to be completed during October and November.

The renovation and adaptive reuse of the former derelict Mahon's Building on Main Street, Edgeworthstown, was substantially completed during the reporting period. The project has transformed a vacant town centre property into a new community asset comprising a charity shop and social enterprise facility, named 'Fabulous Finds.' Final handover and fit-out activities were ongoing at the end of the period. The project represents a significant town centre regeneration intervention, bringing a prominent derelict building back into productive use.

EU Just Transition Fund

Part 8 Planning Approval was secured for the Clondra Village Enhancement project, with construction works now underway. The project will deliver a range of public realm, tourism, recreation enhancements at Richmond Harbour and throughout the village, including visitor interpretation and wayfinding signage, canal-side safety railings, accessible seating and picnic facilities, bicycle parking, outdoor exercise equipment, a covered performance space and associated public realm improvements. The Clondra Village Enhancements Project is co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union through the EU Just Transition Fund.

The Clondra to Tarmonbarry Cycleway Scheme progressed during the reporting period, with a public consultation and open day held on 28 July to present route options and gather stakeholder feedback. The project team advanced the feasibility study and Preliminary Business Case, with the completed Business Case scheduled for submission on 28

Regeneration and Active Travel

August. The Clondra to Tarmonbarry Greenway Cycleway Scheme is co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union through the EU Just Transition Fund.



THRIVE — Connolly Barracks Reimagined

The Connolly Barracks Reimagined Project continued to progress during the reporting period and reached a significant milestone with the official sod-turning ceremony held on 29 June, marking the transition from project planning into the delivery phase. Following completion of the design, statutory approvals and procurement processes, a pre-start meeting was held with the preferred contractor, with commencement of works on site to follow. Connolly Barracks Reimagined is co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union through the ERDF Southern, Eastern and Midland Regional Programme 2021–2027.



Rural Regeneration and Development Fund

The Granard Motte Heritage and Adventure Park project continued to progress during July and August. Development of the design is ongoing and is due to be completed in advance of the submission of the Part 8 planning application. Work during the reporting period also included further development of the operational plan.

Longford Enterprise — Old Post Office

The Longford Town Old Post Office project continued to progress during July and August, with enabling and structural works advancing on site. Tender processes for enabling works were completed and construction activities commenced, including roof and intermediate floor works, with ongoing coordination between the design team, conservation architects and contractor.

Active Travel

Ballymahon Pedestrian and Cycle Scheme

The contractor has been appointed and construction work commenced from 18 August on a new Active Travel project for Ballymahon. Local contractor Tower Civil Engineering Ltd, based in Tullamore, has started the first phase of works which involves the installation of a new surface water drain along within the R392 carriageway. The project is expected to take up to ten months to complete and will see the creation of new walking and cycling facilities

Regeneration and Active Travel

on the R392 between St Matthew's National School and the Moygh Road junction. The project will involve boundary wall setback, footpath construction both sides of road and a new two-way cycle track. Other project features will include provision of new public lighting, removal of overhead ESB lines, road realignment and raised pedestrian crossings.

StonePark to Silver Birches Pedestrian and Cycle Scheme

Construction works have commenced on a new shared pedestrian and cycle facility linking the housing estate at Silver Birches to Stone Park school and GAA grounds over a distance of 700 metres. Features will include upgrading of the existing crossing at the school to a raised Zebra crossing, new surface water drainage and boundary treatments. The contractor, Tower Civil Engineering Ltd, is currently installing the drainage and service ducting along the road verge to facilitate removal of the overhead lines.

Bus stop enhancements in Drumlish

Two new bus shelters have been installed in Drumlish as part of the bus stop enhancements in the village. These new accessible bus stops have been designed and installed to the latest standards, incorporating extended hard standing areas, special kerbing, crossing facilities and line marking. The works completed so far include the junction realignment at the entrance to Church View Drive estate. Current works on site have shifted across to the Garda Station

road junction where permanent junction tightening works are underway to replace the temporary arrangement that was installed at the end of 2024.



Regeneration and Active Travel

Safe Routes to School

Scoil Bhríde Killasonna

Construction works are nearing completion by Longford County Council's area staff on a traffic calming and school zone features for the school. Works have involved the re-alignment of the Abbeylara road junction adjacent to the school along with coloured road markings, additional street lighting and signage and resurfacing works. Yet to be installed are two new speed ramps to further act as a traffic calming measure on approaches to the school.



St. Earnan's NS Killashee

Works are underway on the creation of a school zone in the vicinity of the school. When complete features will include extended footpaths, a new raised Zebra crossing, speed ramp, additional public lighting, road markings and signage. This marks phase one of the Safe Routes to School initiative for the school. Phase two will be rolled out in the coming months and will involve further traffic calming features and footpath connection along the N63 approach route to the school. Details of phase two will be presented to the public through in the coming weeks for submissions through section 38 of the Roads Act.

Separate to the Safe Routes to Schools programme new pencil bollards have been installed at both Newtowncashel NS and St. Joseph's NS Longford Town in recent weeks with additional coloured road markings to be added at St. Joseph's in the coming weeks. Works at both schools were carried out by the area staff of Longford County Council and are funded through the NTA's Active Travel programme.

Town Centre First

Town and Village Renewal

The Town Centre First Department has secured funding under Town and Village Renewal Scheme Building and Land Acquisition Measure towards the purchase of two properties in Ballymahon. This forms part of the work by the Town Centre First Department to address vacancy and dereliction in our towns and villages and bring activity back to these areas.

Just Transition START and Rural Regeneration and Development Fund

Applications were submitted under Just Transition START and Rural Regeneration and Development Fund for projects in Granard and Newtownforbes. Funding announcements are expected in the coming months.

Photos below of the Newtownforbes project and vision for the site:



Horizon Europe



The Town Centre First Department were successful in an application under Horizon Europe for a project exploring innovative street furniture, let by the Austrian Institute of Technology, that reimagines and co-creates street furniture as a catalyst for beautiful, inclusive and sustainable public spaces. Together with communities, cities, designers, researchers and place makers, it will co-create and test accessible, circular and climate—resilient solutions across seven European pilot cities, including Longford.

Vacant Homes Unit

Under the new Housing Plan, Delivering Homes, Building Communities a commitment was given by Government to provide additional support for the refurbishment and conversion of above the shop vacant space for use as homes.

The Vacant Homes Unit is consistently working with the public to support the upgrading of vacant and derelict properties throughout the county. The recently expanded Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant offers significant financial support for refurbishing of vacant or derelict properties. New expanded grants are:

- VPRG – Above the Shop Grant
- VPRG – Commercial to Public Use Building
- Expert Advice Grant Scheme

Town Centre First

Update to date data on the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant as follows:

- Total Applications 317
- 93 paid out to date
- 210 Approved in total
- 36 Withdrawn
- 18 Rejected

VPR Above the Shop

- Two applications received.

Enterprise and Tourism

Local Enterprise Office

National Enterprise Awards 2026

Eilish and Siobhan McLoughlin of Dial a Chef, represented the Local Enterprise Office Longford at the 26th National Enterprise Awards, which was held on 18 June 2026 in the Round Room at the Mansion House, Dublin. The annual awards, attended by Peter Burke TD, Minister for Enterprise, Tourism and Employment, celebrate Ireland's leading small businesses.

Dial a Chef was recognised as Longford's County Enterprise Award winner, reflecting the company's commitment to delivering fresh, high-quality catering services with consistency, efficiency and exceptional attention to detail. As a successful and growing business, Dial a Chef also makes an important contribution to the local economy as a significant rural employer in North Longford, creating quality employment opportunities while demonstrating the strength and potential of enterprise in rural communities.



Financial Assistance

The Evaluation Committee approved nine applications for grant aid with a total of €185,500 awarded in funding to start up and expanding businesses across the county to date. A further €79,375 was awarded to nine businesses in Energy Efficiency Grants while five businesses availed of Digital Vouchers to the value of €25,000. Three companies availed of Market Explorer Grants to explore new export markets for their business to the value of €20,722.

Training & Mentoring

A total of 672 clients availed of training while 128 businesses availed of one-to-one advice and consultancy for their business in the past six months. Training programmes included Starting Your Own Business, Small Business Accounts, Retail specific training and the very popular Digital Marketing and Managing Your Online Presence. The biggest demand for one-to-one consultancy came from business planning and access to finance along with specific HR and Health and Safety guidance.

Night-Time Economy

Productive Summer Period

The summer months have seen continued growth and positive momentum for Longford's Night-Time Economy. Through a combination of cultural programming, strategic partnerships, national promotion, and community-focused initiatives, Longford has continued to strengthen its reputation as a welcoming and

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vibrant destination after dark. Strong attendance figures, successful collaborations, and new funding opportunities have contributed to a highly productive period.

Café Lates Returns with Sold-Out Events

Following the success of previous rounds, the Café Lates programme returned to Longford Town during June and July, offering a diverse range of evening experiences in welcoming and accessible settings. Events included live music performances, storytelling, creative workshops, and community gatherings hosted by local cafés and cultural spaces.



The programme attracted strong public interest, with a number of events selling out in advance. The continued popularity of Café Lates demonstrates the growing demand for alternative evening experiences and highlights the value of creating inclusive social opportunities beyond traditional nightlife settings. The initiative continues to support local businesses while encouraging greater participation in Longford's evening economy.

Museum & Gallery Lates Funding Secured

As part of ongoing efforts to diversify the county's night-time offering, two Longford venues were successfully allocated funding under the national Museum and Gallery Lates initiative.

The Athena Gallery and the Maria Edgeworth Centre secured support to develop and deliver a series of



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evening cultural experiences, opening their doors beyond traditional operating hours and creating new opportunities for public engagement. These programmes will enhance access to the county's cultural assets, attract new audiences, and further strengthen Longford's cultural night-time economy offering.

The funding represents an important recognition of the quality and potential of Longford's cultural sector and supports the wider objective of animating the town after dark through arts, heritage, and creative engagement.

Home of Halloween national launch & PR activity

The Night-Time Economy Office, in partnership with Longford Community Safety Partnership (LCSP) and Longford Tourism, coordinated a media familiarisation visit to promote Longford's role in the national Home of Halloween campaign. The itinerary showcased key locations on Longford's Samhain Trail, highlighting the county's rich mythology, heritage, and connection to the origins of Halloween.

The NTE team played a key role in planning the programme,



coordinating stakeholders, managing logistics, and hosting visiting journalists and content creators throughout the visit. The trip provided valuable national exposure for Longford and helped build awareness of the county's Halloween events and unique cultural offering ahead of the autumn season.

Safe & Sound Online Training platform roll-out

June and July saw the continued rollout of the Safe & Sound Online Training Platform, providing businesses, event organisers, staff, volunteers, and community groups with access to free, practical training resources.

The platform focuses on promoting safer, more inclusive, and more welcoming night-time environments, covering areas such as event management, bystander awareness, safeguarding, accessibility, and customer care.

Stakeholder engagement with the platform continues to grow, with promotion taking place through business networks, community organisations, and tourism partners. The initiative forms a key part of Longford's commitment to fostering a safe and sustainable Night-Time Economy for all.

One@One Late Night Bus continues to deliver

The One@One Late Night Bus Service continues to demonstrate strong positive impact across Longford and the wider Midlands region.

Enterprise and Tourism

Recent performance figures indicate continued uptake of the service, providing a safe, reliable, and affordable transport option for those accessing employment, social, cultural, and entertainment activities during evening and late-night hours. The service plays an important role in supporting accessibility, reducing transport barriers, and encouraging participation in the Night-Time Economy.

Feedback from users remains positive, with the service increasingly recognised as an essential component of Longford's evening infrastructure and a valuable support for businesses, venues, and event organisers.



Collaboration & Strategic Development

Engagement continues with local stakeholders, cultural organisations, businesses, tourism partners, and fellow Night-Time Economy Advisors nationwide. These collaborations ensure that Longford remains at the forefront of national Night-Time Economy developments while continuing to deliver initiatives that respond to local needs and opportunities.

The positive outcomes achieved during June and July provide a strong foundation for an exciting autumn programme, with major cultural events, tourism initiatives, and community-led activities planned for the months ahead.

Tourism

VisitLongford.ie launched by Tourism Minister

The new Visit Longford tourism website was officially launched by the Minister for Enterprise, Tourism and Employment, Peter Burke TD, at Backstage Theatre, Longford in June.

The visitlongford.ie website and digital transformation have been developed through Fáilte Ireland's Digital Transformation Programme, which is co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union through the EU Just Transition Fund.

The website provides a clear and easy way for visitors to plan a trip to County Longford. It brings together information on attractions, food, festivals and events, outdoor activities,

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heritage sites, and accommodation in one place.

The platform also gives space to the often-overlooked details that make a place special. It highlights lesser-known hidden gems and local stories, offering visitors a more personal view of County Longford. From quiet heritage spots to community-led events, the website reflects the character of the county in a way that is true to place.

Developed by awardwinning web agency Purple Sheep, the site is designed to be simple to use, accessible to all and optimised for search engine and AI visibility. It is a dedicated visitor-facing platform that elevates Longford as a sustainable visitor destination, offering memorable slow and gentle visitor experiences that are grounded in regenerative tourism. Visitors can search for features by location, activity or accessibility.

The platform will support local tourism providers by amplifying their online presence and helping more people discover what County Longford has to offer. It also reflects a strong sense of local pride. The content is shaped by the people, history and traditions of Longford, ensuring that what is presented is not only useful but authentic. This approach helps visitors connect more closely with the county and discover experiences that go beyond the expected.

The new digital brand presented on visitlongford.ie will be rolled out across all touch points for Longford Tourism.



Longford and Westmeath Hub hosts All Island launch of Ireland, Home of Halloween 2026

The Longford and Westmeath Home of Halloween Hub was privileged to host the All-Island launch of the Ireland, Home of Halloween programme at The Hill of Uisneach.

Officiated at by Minister Peter Burke TD, the event was attended by Hub representatives from all over Ireland as well as Tourism Ireland Chief Executive Alice Mansergh, Tourism Northern Ireland Chief Executive

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Laura McCorry, and Fáilte Ireland Chief Executive Caroline Bocquel.

Following a hugely successful 2025 that welcomed over 22,000 people to Home of Halloween events across the Longford and Westmeath Hub, the launch also saw the unveiling of the new Samhain in the Heartlands brand which promises an even bigger and better celebration of our rich Samhain traditions, culture, food and heritage, with 50 events scheduled from 2 October to 8 November.

The event on the day of the launch also incorporated a mini-food festival to demonstrate the benefit of the Food Festival Funding that has been granted this year.

The impact of Ireland, Home of Halloween is growing as it extends the tourism season, supporting local businesses and showcasing authentic Irish culture to visitors from across the world.



Samhain in the Heartlands

The launch also saw the unveiling of the new Samhain in the Heartlands map and website which was promoted through a Samhain PR Tour through counties Longford and Westmeath. This massive undertaking saw approximately 30 content creators and stakeholders networking, engaging and enjoying a number of stops on the Samhain Map and generated significant social and media activity. The trip culminated in the arrival of the group to the All

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Island Launch event at the Hill of Uisneach, where they got to network and participate in the mini-food festival. They also got the chance to experience Halloween spectacle in July, thanks to the presence of some of the incredible PÚCA festival pieces.

The Samhain in the Heartlands map lists food, drink, heritage and history led visitor experiences that have a part to play in sharing the Origins of Samhain across Longford, Westmeath and Roscommon. Full details of the programme of events taking place from 2 October to 8 November are now available on www.samhainheartlands.ie.



Departmental Visit to Just Transition Tourism Projects in North Longford

Representatives from Failte Ireland's EU Just Transition Team, Ireland's Hidden Heartlands and The Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment visited two of the EU Just Transition Fund supported new businesses that are in development and open in north County Longford.

Enda Macken of Firecracker Sauna at Leebeen Park in Aughnacliffe showed the group of delegates around his facility on 1 July while Damien and

Sharon McKenna of Lough Sallagh Lodges treated the group to a sneak preview of the beautiful lakeside lodges that they are developing in Ballinamuck. Lough Sallagh Lodges is due to open in Q3 of this year.

Milwaukee IrishFest

Visit Longford and Longford Community Safety Partnership were delighted to work together on attending the CelticMKE Milwaukee Irish Fest this month in partnership with Westmeath County Council. With 16 stages of live music on a 75 acre site completely dedicated to celebrating Irish and Celtic heritage and tradition, it was an overwhelmingly positive experience to promote #VisitLongford.ie and Samhain in the Heartlands programme of events for Ireland, Home of Halloween. The enthusiasm and interest in coming to Longford to Discover the Hidden was palpable. So many small bespoke groups are looking for immersive nature and agri-tourism based experiences and activities, where they get to slow down, relax, recharge, take in the fresh Irish air, explore the heritage and history and have the craic. The new tourism businesses that are opening across County Longford are exactly the right fit to meet the expectations of visitors.

From Farrell Clan descendants, Famine Way Pilgrims, rebel and literary history enthusiasts, foodies who wanted a farm-to-fork cookery experience, outdoor explorers, archaeology fans and genealogy and heritage hunters - they took on board the wonderful offering available from

Enterprise and Tourism

business owners and community groups in Longford and Westmeath.

The delegation included Tourism Officer Denise Canavan, Janine Bartley of Longford Community Safety Partnership (promoting Samhain in the Heartlands in the dedicated Ireland, Home of Halloween Tent, Longford County Council Cathaoirleach Cllr Gerry Hagan and Westmeath County Council Tourism Officer Una Doris and Just Transition Tourism Activator Helen de Lacy who partnered with us on the Longford-Westmeath stand.

It was an honour to be invited to City Hall in Milwaukee and to support our Cathaoirleach Cllr Hagan in presenting Longford-made gifts to Milwaukee Mayor Cavalier Johnson as well as West Allis Mayor Dan Devine and Wauwatosa Mayor Dennis McBride. We also availed of the opportunity to discuss the promotion of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands with Minister Sean Canney, TD.



Enterprise and Tourism

Other Tourism Promotional Events undertaken

- Farrell Clan Rally – registration info stand,
- Information Stand at Two Provinces Tri
- Gaelforce Great River Swim
- New e-Newsletter launching at end of Summer

Advertising Campaigns

- Go West Magazine
- IHH Supplement in Clare Echo, Cork & Galway Advertiser
- Spirit of Ireland Magazine
- Longford Life Magazine
- Your Daily Adventure Travel Guide

Congratulations and welcome to the new businesses that have opened around County Longford this summer.

The 10th International Farrell Clan Rally

County Longford hosted hundreds of visiting Farrell Clan members from all over the world over the last week of July for the 10th international Farrell Clan Rally. Highlights of the rally this year included the inauguration of the new Farrell Clan Chieftain Charlotte O'Ferrall at the summit of the Motte in Granard. The historic event was live streamed to a crowd at the Knights &

Conquests Centre, thanks to the support of the LEADER programme and funding from Longford Tourism. A wonderfully vibrant and colourful parade of nations marched through the streets of Longford to the steps of St Mel's Cathedral on the Monday evening, following a very successful and well attended Official Welcome hosted by Longford County Council. Sincere thanks to the Corporate Section and Longford Civil Defence for their support over the course of this important week for Longford Tourism.



Enterprise and Tourism



journey through the 20th century, shopping experiences of all types are re-constructed since the late 1800's. Alongside that, a wonderful cafe and giftshop with artisan and high-end products are available for purchase on site. Niamh is also a regular participant at the Ballymahon Market with her Heartlands Orchard Chutneys.



Canal View Lodges, Foigha

Wonderful to see new accommodation businesses doing so well immediately on their opening. Congratulations to John and Alan Rowan on the launch of Canal View Lodges at Foigha, Ballymahon. The six lodges on the banks of the Royal Canal opened this summer, with a spa area and right around the corner from Foigha Bar, Lounge & Restaurant. A perfect short break stay, with fishing, cycling and beautiful bog walks all around.



New business Openings

Retail Therapy Museum, Abbeyshrule

Congratulations to Niamh and Graeme Parkes, the couple behind The Retail Therapy Museum which opened its main exhibition space in July. With an amazing collection of items taking visitors on a nostalgic



Enterprise and Tourism

Woofland Dog Park, Cloondara/Clondra

The Woofland Dog Park Longford location officially opened in July. The dog park provides a safe and secure, stress free outdoor, fully enclosed, 2.5 acre, off-leash area for dogs to exercise, play and explore. Positive feedback is already mounting for the unique agility zones constructed from recycled materials. An ideal space for training, high-energy exercise, or reactive/nervous dogs.



Festivals & Events

Congratulations to so many of our Tourism Stakeholders throughout the county who have held some fantastic events this year and over the summer months supported by the Fáilte Ireland Regional Festivals and Participative Events Fund - including:

- Maria Edgeworth Festival
- Granard Booktown Festival

- Fleadh Ceoil Newtownforbes
- Bridgeways 20-year celebration and Ballymahon Landevant 25 Year Celebration
- Farrell Clan 10th Anniversary Rally
- Feile Joe Callaghan
- The Marquee in Drumlish
- Latin Hedge School May Gathering
- Longford Family Festival
- Longford Pride
- Two Provinces Triathlon
- Inaugural County Longford Golf Club Scratch Cup
- Ballinamuck Old Fair Day
- Corlea Bog Events Day for French Visitors

Best wishes to all involved in the upcoming programme of events for Culture Night and Samhain in the Heartlands.

EU Just Transition Tourism Activator

EU Just Transition Tourism Activator Activity Update Summer to End of August 2027.

Fáilte Ireland / Hidden Heartlands have commissioned Bane Mullarkey to conduct a review and conclusion strategy for the formal winding down of the Just Transition Activator Programme to Ireland's Hidden Heartlands at the end of December 2027.

A formal seminar on this issue and key handover themes and process occurred in Tullamore in early July

Enterprise and Tourism

and was followed up with extensive interview analysis.

Of the 12 remaining live projects in Longford, seven are concluded or in the very final stages of draw down, six are still progressing, with all of them encouraged to seek the timeline review till March 2027 if needed. The good weather of the summer has been kind to many of the outdoor build works.

Brussels

The Activator was a key expert witness to the EU Committee of the Regions in Brussels on 17 July to deliver on the ground experience of the tourism programme rollout in the Hidden Heartlands Just Transition Area. Many budgetary and policy hurdles remain during the Irish Presidency for a new EU Just Transition Fund to be delivered but the larger states may win the argument. This means that the conclusion of the first programme is still suspended until Q4 of this year. Certainly, it may well be 24 months from 1 Jan 2027 before a new version of Just Transition hits the Irish landscape.

The Training of Volunteer Visitor Guides in June was offered to all in the Network and the five community sites as well as the PPN and this will conclude with the field trip on Sunday, 29 September.

Preparation is underway for our first ever participation in Schools Marketing programme.

The Activator continues to liaise with all project promoters, regularly and has dealt and advised a number of

private promoters on developing their tourism proposals past planning and into feasibility.

The Services/ Facilities emerging map of the Lough Ree Cluster Area is being finalised with An Ambassador Program being developed alongside for front line / front facing service personnel, to be rolled out in October.

The Activator in facilitating Tourism and Sustainable Community Development in Lanesborough/ Ballyleague with his Roscommon counterpart delivered a series of community workshops / seminars and then facilitated over 2.5 days of briefings and meeting with nearly 30 representative organisations on both sides of the river over late July. Feedback and route mapping the "Re-imagining of our Community" sessions will occur in Faithleach's and St. Mary's Hall on Tuesday and Wednesday, 22 and 23 of September with a view towards a definitive plan for development, priorities, resources and Governance to come back to both communities at end of October 2026.

It was noted that in attempting to future proof the work of the Activator and the Sustainable Network generation – applications for funding are being prepared with viable stakeholders for various EU and domestic Training and other Grant Aid schemes.

A partnership is being sought by the Cluster of Counties around Lough Ree for a pilot EU project under the auspices of the ATU Sustainability Tourism & Visitor Network / Observatory to seek partners and

Enterprise and Tourism

grant aid for transnational projects in Slow and Sustainable Tourism.

Extensive Preparations are being made by the Activator to produce a 2.5-day Familiarisation Trip for Key independent Tour Guides and key members of the Travel Writers Trade and Bloggers in the Lough Ree Cluster Discovery Area on for 17/18/19 November. It is envisaged that all will be accommodated in Longford and participants will get to learn about many of the new EU Just Transition Funding projects and attractions in the area.

Media and PR Training has been identified for the project promoters and over the months of late September and October this training will be delivered to the Just Transition clients.

A full programme of soft openings and official opening moments is being finalised for Q3, Q4 and possible Q1 2027 with colleagues in Hidden Heartlands and Fáilte Ireland.

The Activator remains engaged in supporting when called upon to assist with key aspects of general Tourism promotional activity and indeed with advice and support to Night-Time Economy.

Finance

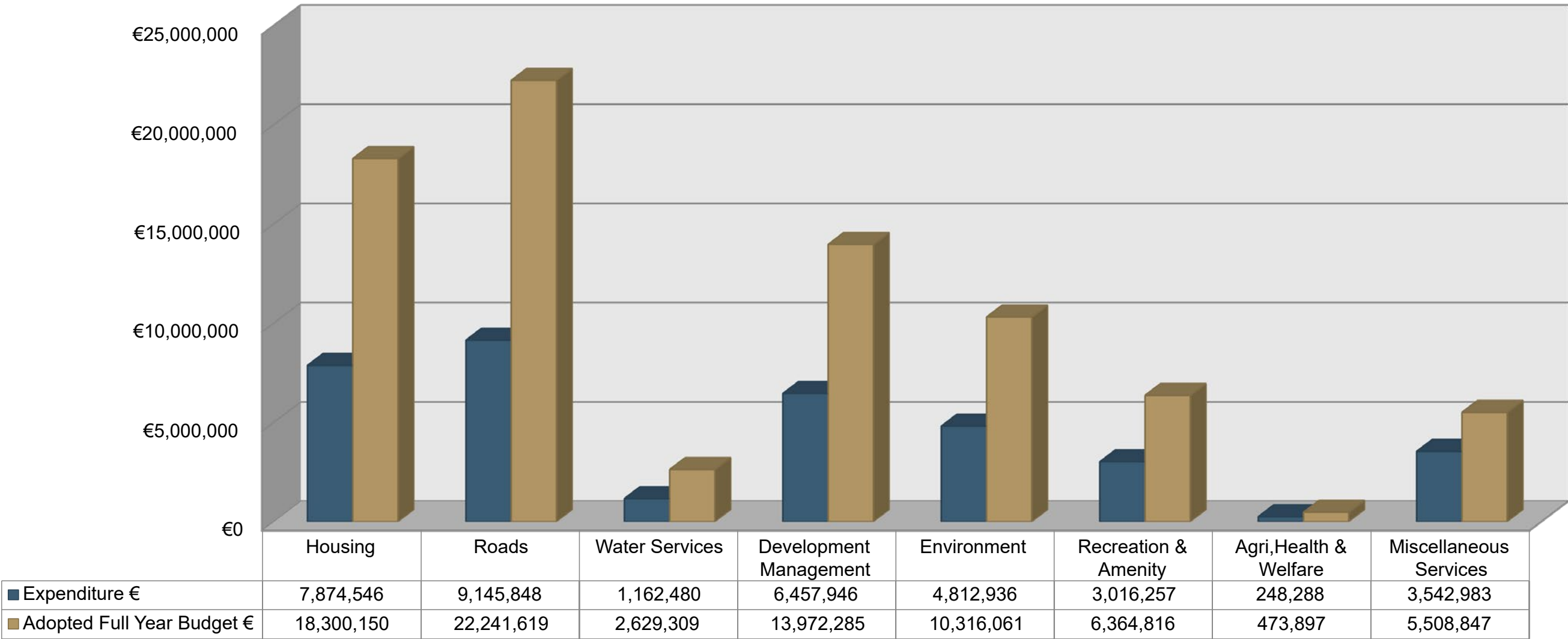
Revenue Account Income and Expenditure Summary by Service Division

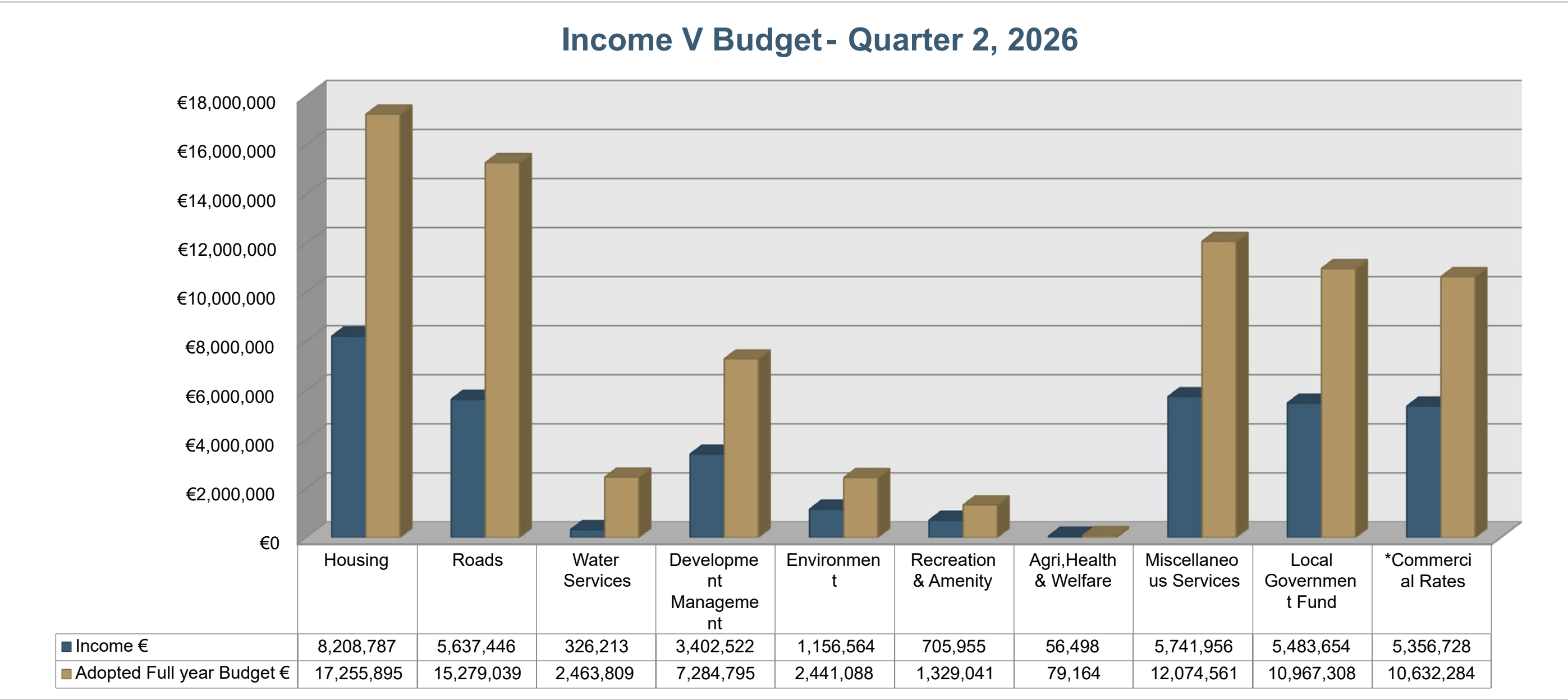
Year to Date to Quarter End 30/06/2026

	EXPENDITURE				INCOME				NET
	Expenditure €	Adopted Full Year Budget €	% Budget Spent to date	Budget Remaining €	Income €	Adopted Full year Budget €	% Budget Raised	Budget Outstanding €	Actual Overall Surplus/ (Deficit) €
Housing	7,874,546	18,300,150	43%	10,425,604	8,208,787	17,255,895	48%	9,047,108	334,241
Roads	9,145,848	22,241,619	41%	13,095,771	5,637,446	15,279,039	37%	9,641,593	(3,508,402)
Water Services	1,162,480	2,629,309	44%	1,466,829	326,213	2,463,809	13%	2,137,596	(836,267)
Development Management	6,457,946	13,972,285	46%	7,514,339	3,402,522	7,284,795	47%	3,882,273	(3,055,424)
Environment	4,812,936	10,316,061	47%	5,503,125	1,156,564	2,441,088	47%	1,284,524	(3,656,372)
Recreation & Amenity	3,016,257	6,364,816	47%	3,348,559	705,955	1,329,041	53%	623,086	(2,310,302)
Agri,Health & Welfare	248,288	473,897	52%	225,609	56,498	79,164	71%	22,666	(191,790)
Miscellaneous Services	3,542,983	5,508,847	64%	1,965,864	5,741,956	12,074,561	48%	6,332,605	2,198,973
Local Government Fund			0%	0	5,483,654	10,967,308	50%	5,483,654	5,483,654
*Commercial Rates					5,356,728	10,632,284	50%	5,275,556	5,356,728
	€36,261,284	€79,806,984	45%	€43,545,700	€36,076,323	€79,806,984	45%	€43,730,661	(€184,961)

These figures were submitted to the Department on Monday 24th August 2026.

Expenditure V Budget- Quarter 2, 2026





Finance

Summary of Major Revenue Collections – Quarter 2, 2026

	Opening Arrears	Billed	To be Collected	Collected	Closing Arrears	Collected
Quarter 2, 2026	€	€	€	€	€	%
*Rates	€871,941	€10,712,780	€11,539,805	€6,469,381	€5,070,424	56%
Rents (inc. RAS)	€2,347,391	€5,670,678	€7,999,008	€5,462,113	€2,536,895	68%
Housing Loans	€266,049	€672,024	€898,074	€711,440	€186,634	79%
	Opening Arrears	Billed	To be Collected	Collected	Closing Arrears	Collected
Quarter 2, 2025	€	€	€	€	€	%
*Rates	€1,150,292	€10,136,707	€11,246,822	€7,116,465	€4,130,357	63%
Rents (inc. RAS)	€1,947,411	€5,284,132	€7,231,540	€5,242,000	€1,989,540	72%
Housing Loans	€275,575	€618,505	€894,079	€649,988	€244,091	73%
	Opening Arrears	Billed	To be Collected	Collected	Closing Arrears	Collected
VARIANCE YOY	€	€	€	€	€	%
*Rates	(€278,351)	€576,073	€292,983	(€647,084)	€940,067	-7%
Rents (inc. RAS)	€399,980	€386,546	€767,468	€220,113	€547,355	-4%
Housing Loans	(€9,526)	€53,519	€3,995	€61,452	(€57,457)	7%

Community

Longford Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

A meeting of Longford LCDC was held on 14 July 2026.

LEADER 2327 Programme

Two LEADER projects were approved at the July LCDC meeting to a value of just over €130,000.

Longford Community Safety Partnership

Longford Community Safety Partnership continues to work collaboratively with local communities, An Garda Síochána, and partner agencies to improve safety, reduce crime, and enhance wellbeing across County Longford.

On 5 July, Longford Community Safety Partnership attended the Longford Agricultural Show, engaging with members of the community and promoting the Longford Community Safety Survey. The event provided an excellent opportunity to speak directly with the public, raise awareness of the survey, and encourage people to share their views and experiences to help shape future community safety priorities across County Longford.

On 14 July, Longford Community Safety Partnership Committee members participated in a Media Workshop. The workshop provided a valuable opportunity to strengthen media engagement skills, develop key messaging techniques, and enhance the Partnership's ability to communicate effectively with local

communities, stakeholders and the wider public.

On 20 July, Longford Community Safety Partnership was involved in the national launch of Home of Halloween 2026 at the Hill of Uisneach. The event provided a valuable opportunity to engage with key stakeholders and partner organisations, support the promotion of Ireland's Samhain heritage, and celebrate the culture, creativity and tourism potential of the Midlands region.



Community

National Play Day

This year's National Play Day was held at the Ballymahon Vocational School campus.

Dozens of children, their parents, friends, and neighbours enjoyed a wonderful afternoon of fun, activities, laughter and play.

Thanks is extended to all clubs, organisations, volunteers, and partners who helped make the day such a success, and especially the Community & LCC Staff, Longford Sports Partnership, Healthy Ireland Longford, Longford PPN, Longford Community Safety Partnership and the Civil Defence.

The community spirit on show made National Play Day 2026 a wonderful occasion for young and old!



Human Resources

Learning and Development

The following training courses were attended during the months of June and July 2026

Business Skills Training

- Compulsory Purchase Order & Dereliction
- Young Ireland Programme
- Transport Ireland Conference
- SPS Leadership Accelerator Programme 2026
- Traveler Accommodation Programme Training
- Housing Affordability
- Overview of the Facilities Managements Framework and DPS Arrangements
- Drone Compliance and Operating Principles
- Employment Law - Discipline, Grievance and Workplace Investigations
- Introduction to Microsoft Copilot
- Housing first- Community of practice
- Information Session re Karshan Settlement & Revenue 5 Step Decision Approach
- Green Public Procurement Officer Training
- Public Lighting Workshop
- Climate Action Raising Awareness

Health & Safety Training

- Manual Handling
- Safe Pass
- Asbestos Awareness

Health & Wellbeing

The following events relating to the four pillars of wellbeing as identified in the LGMA Wellbeing Strategy – Mental Wellbeing, Physical Wellbeing, Social Wellbeing and Financial Wellbeing took place during the months of June and July 2026.

Physical Wellbeing

Lunchtime Circuits classes continued Tuesdays & Thursdays in the Longford Athletics Centre

Men's Health Week – Range of activities in collaboration with Community section – health checks, free haircuts, fitness challenges.

Financial Wellbeing

Employee Financial Wellness Programme. Monthly online masterclasses and one-to-one guidance clinics are ongoing. A total of 404 staff engaged with the programme for this year to date. Sessions have focused on key financial topics including savings and investments, AVCs, and planning your financial future as well as supporting staff to make informed longterm decisions.

Human Resources

Social Wellbeing

Line Dancing Classes – Programme continued on Monday evenings in the Atrium, with a full class of 20 participants. A summer barbeque and line dancing night also took place in collaboration with LCC Social Club.



Mental Wellbeing

Parent Talk Webinar – ‘The juggle is real’ - a free webinar with practical steps to help staff manage time and create a better balance between work and family life.

Ice Cream Treat – Annual summer visit of the ice cream van.



Roads

National Roads

The N4 Mullingar to Longford (Roosky) Scheme is currently progressing well through Phase 3 (Design and Environmental Evaluation) of the TII Project Management Guidelines.

Ground investigation works, topographical surveys and environmental surveys along the extent of the N4 corridor continued through the months of June and July.

In mid-July the Project Team wrote to all landowners within the area of current design proposals advising them that a member of the Project Team will be in contact in the coming weeks to discuss the developing design.

Longford County Council have appointed Consultants Atkins Realis Ireland Ltd to progress the N55 Granard By-Pass Scheme through Phases 2, 3 and 4 of the TII Project Management Guidelines.

N63 Gowlan Pavement Schemes

Works on the N63 Gowlan Pavement Scheme and N63 Aghnaskea to Gowlan Pavement Rehabilitation Scheme commenced on 20 July. The two schemes were combined with the agreement of TII to reduce the length of the N63 road closure required to facilitate the works and minimise disruption to the public. The Aghnaskea to Gowlan section is a relatively straight forward overlay/ resurfacing scheme with cold milling of the existing pavement where required. This was followed by an overlay of bituminous regulating material where necessary followed by binder course and surface course to achieve the designed levels.

The N63 Gowlan Pavement Resurfacing Scheme involves pavement renewal including associated ancillary works on approximately a 1.3km section of the N63 National Road at Gowlan in County Longford. The nature of the works includes but is not limited to the following, cold milling of the existing pavement, pulverizing of the existing plastic mesh within the existing Cl804, recycling of the existing subbase with LEBM (Low Energy Bound Mixtures) material, resurfacing of the pavement, lining, studs, associated accommodation works and traffic management.

Roadstone are the appointed Contractor for the Works which are expected to involve a closure of the N63 for approximately six weeks and cost approximately €1.6 million.

N55 Rathmore to Tang

Resurfacing works at the County Westmeath boundary with contractor (Breedon) has been appointed. A road closure has been advertised. Works are due to commence on 4 August with a closure of the N55 for four weeks to facilitate the works.

National Roads HD28 Retexturing Works

Retexturing works commenced on the N4 between Longford and Edgeworthstown on 20 July with works being carried out at night-time. Retexturing work will be ongoing at various sites (N4 Longford By-Pass, N5 Kilmore Cross, N63 Ballinalee Road and New Street) during late July/ early August.

Roads

Municipal District Works

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

Restoration Improvement and Restoration Maintenance Works on Regional and Local Roads continued in the Municipal Districts during June and July. These Programmes of Work are well advanced with only a few roads remaining to be completed. Substantial price increases of bituminous materials have impacted these programmes resulting in reduced road lengths being treated.

Bridge Rehabilitation Works are due to commence in early August. Two works contracts have been tendered and awarded for the rehabilitation of five bridges and replacement of three bridges.

Public lighting maintenance and upgrade works are continuing. Public lighting in McEoin Park (part) is being upgraded in conjunction with the Longford MD footpath upgrade project. Planned upgrades in Ardnacassa Lawns are due to commence shortly.

Work continues on Phase 2 of the National Speed Limit Review. Draft Bye-Laws are being prepared for Public Consultation.



Roads

Road Safety

The Department of Transport hosted a Road Safety Officers Workshop on 29 June 2026, bringing together Road Safety Officers from across the country to share experiences, best practice and updates on key road safety initiatives.

The workshop provided valuable information and discussion on a range of topics, including the RSA Collision Data Map, the Speed Limit Review, Phase 2 of the Road Safety Action Plan, the Just 1 Life (J1L) Road Safety Programme, the evolving role of Road Safety Officers, the development of Local Road Safety Plans, and opportunities for enhanced cooperation and engagement between Road Safety Officers.

Minister Canney attended the workshop and acknowledged the commitment, engagement and contribution of Road Safety Officers in advancing road safety objectives at local level. The Minister welcomed the presentations delivered and commended attendees for their continued dedication to improving road safety outcomes within their communities.



Parking Bye-Laws

Longford County Council is currently reviewing the Parking Bye-Laws applicable within the Pay and Display areas of Longford Town. The review aims to ensure that the regulations are clear, up to date and aligned with current operational and enforcement requirements. The review includes enhanced provisions for the management of electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure, including the designation and appropriate use of EV charging bays, together with measures to prevent misuse. It also incorporates age-friendly parking measures, including the provision and proper use of dedicated parking spaces to support older persons and those with reduced mobility, in line with broader accessibility objectives. In addition, the review is examining wider improvements to traffic management, parking controls and the overall user experience across all Council-operated car parks.

The draft Parking Bye-Laws were placed on public display from Wednesday, 24 June 2026, to Friday, 24 July 2026. Members of the public and interested stakeholders are invited to make submissions or observations, with submissions accepted up to and including Monday, 10 August 2026. Stakeholder engagement forms a key part of the review process. Following consideration of all submissions received, the revised Bye-Laws will be progressed through the statutory process for formal adoption by Longford County Council.

Roads

Traffic Department Data 2026

Offence	Fines Issued Jan-March 2026	Fines Issued April-June 2026	Total to date
Parking Fines	137	342	479
Non-Display of Tax	48	175	223
Breach of Parking Regulations 1997	64	306	370
TOTAL	249	823	1072

Climate Action

The N63 Gowlan Pavement Resurfacing Scheme involves cold milling of the existing pavement and recycling of the existing subbase with LEBM (Low Energy Bound Mixtures) material.

The use of LEBM reduces the carbon footprint associated with the scheme.

Environment and Climate Action

Biodiversity Summer School 2026

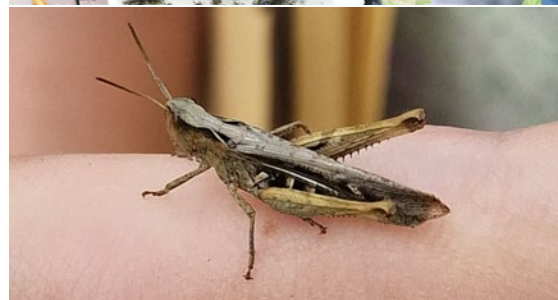
Longford County Council ran its much anticipated second Biodiversity Summer School from 4 August to 7 August in Edgeworthstown Library for children aged 7 – 12. The event saw 29 students signed up for the week of fun and learning, with places filling up within three hours of being advertised.

Themes of each of the days were boglands, pollinators, woodlands, and aquatic life. These were covered through games, activities, and talks. Field trips to sites around County Longford helped to showcase the ecosystems and species that exist on our doorstep. Field trips included a visit to Corlea Trackway, a walk around Edgeworthstown, a visit to Newcastle Woods and a trip to Lenamore Stream in Legan.

During the Biodiversity Summer School children were given a backpack with the Longford County Council and National Parks and Wild Life Service (NPWS) logos. Each backpack contained copies of Longford's Woodlands Wildlife Workbook, notepads, bird watching stickers, and biodiversity identification swatches.

The final day saw parents attend while the students received certs to show their participation in the summer school and lunch was provided for all in attendance. The children enjoyed great fun and they were already enquiring about next year's Biodiversity Summer School. There was such demand for the Biodiversity Summer School that a reserve list was drawn up and people will be offered places at a mid-term camp in October.

The summer school was funded by NPWS and Longford County Council under the Local Biodiversity Action Fund.



Environment and Climate Action

Launch of new Household Waste Survey initiative

In July, the Environment Section launched a new household waste survey initiative as part of its ongoing efforts to improve household waste management practices and increase participation in authorised waste collection services. A key feature of the initiative is the introduction of QR codes on Household Compliance Notices, enabling householders to quickly and easily submit evidence of proper waste disposal through an online Waste Compliance Form using their smartphone.

The surveys provide valuable insights into waste segregation practices and household attitudes towards waste management, enabling Waste Enforcement Officers to engage directly with residents and promote improved compliance. The initiative forms part of a broader programme aimed at tackling illegal waste disposal and backyard burning, while encouraging greater uptake of regular waste collection services.

The Environment Section continues to prioritise household waste surveys as both an enforcement and educational tool, particularly in larger towns and multi-unit developments. Increasing participation in authorised waste collection services remains a key objective, as evidence shows a strong link between the use of such services and a reduction in illegal dumping. Through continued engagement and awareness-raising, the initiative supports cleaner neighbourhoods, improved environmental outcomes, and greater compliance with waste management legislation across the county.

Field of Her Own – Empowering Women in Agriculture

Longford County Council Environment Section was delighted to attend 'Field of Her Own', an inspiring event hosted by the Irish Farmers Association (IFA) and IFA Farm Family as part of the International Year of the Woman Farmer, held in the beautiful surroundings of Coolamber House and Gardens.

The event brought together women from across the agricultural sector to celebrate their contribution to farming and rural communities. Through engaging speakers and panel discussions, attendees explored the vital role women play on farms, opportunities for diversification, and the importance of health and wellbeing in sustaining thriving farm families and businesses.

LCC was pleased to be invited by the IFA to host a stand showcasing the recently launched Farm Booklet and



Environment and Climate Action

Information Fact Sheet. The resources generated significant interest among attendees, with two Farm Advisors taking multiple copies of the information fact sheets and stickers to share with their farming clients. They commented that the topics covered are among the questions most frequently raised by farmers, highlighting the value and relevance of the materials.

It was an incredible event that provided a platform for learning, networking and recognising the essential contribution of women in agriculture, while fostering positive conversations about the future of farming and rural life.

Climate Action Training

Longford County Council recently supported staff participation in the Raising Awareness Climate Action Training, delivered through the Local Authority Climate Action Training Programme. The online course strengthened staff understanding of climate leadership, adaptation, mitigation and behavioural change, while highlighting practical opportunities to contribute to climate action through day-to-day work. The initiative forms part of the Council's ongoing commitment to building climate awareness and capacity across all service areas.

Overall, the Council achieved approximately 70% completion rate. To encourage engagement, all staff who completed the training were entered into a prize draw. Congratulations to Ava Donohue, Mary Nash O'Brien and Mary Donohue, who won two €50 vouchers and cinema passes. The Climate Action Team and HR would like to thank all staff for their participation.



Environment and Climate Action

Recommended minimum criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI) Plan 2026 – public webpage

The Environment Section have developed a new webpage, which facilitates the publication of the RMCEI Plan 2026. The public webpage improves transparency and public access to environmental inspection planning information. The webpage includes the RMCEI Plan together with inspection figures for 2025 and 2026.

The publication of the RMCEI Plan has been facilitated by the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) amendment of the 2026 RMCEI Plan template, which now allows local authorities to make the plan publicly available. This initiative supports greater openness regarding environmental inspection activities while ensuring consistency with EPA guidance.

Environmental Awareness Workshop highlights practical steps for Circular Living

Carla McGoey, Environmental Awareness Officer, delivered a workshop, at the Ballymahon Library, entitled "Rethinking Our Waste: Building a Circular Economy Together and Smart Waste Management at Home". Attendees learned how they can play a role in building a circular economy and received clear guidance on proper waste segregation in the home. The workshop also focused on reducing food waste, providing practical tips to help save money, minimise waste, and make better use

of food resources. Participants gained useful insights and simple actions that they could implement immediately to make a positive environmental impact. A range of helpful take-home resources and materials was provided to support more sustainable living. The workshop was highly engaging and generated excellent audience interaction.



Local Environmental Action Fund (LEAF) 2026

Applications for the inaugural LEAF grant, developed in partnership with Irish Public Body (IPB) Insurance and the County and City Managers Association (CCMA), were accepted by Longford County Council with a closing date of 27 July 2026. This fund was to celebrate and mark IPBs centenary in supporting Local Authorities nationally and its first year in supporting Tidy Towns groups.

The fund of €50,000 (with matched funding of €50,000 by Longford County Council), was made available to Tidy Towns groups, Residents Associations and other Public Participation Network (PPN)-registered community groups,

Environment and Climate Action

with strong collaboration being encouraged between the groups and sports clubs, men's sheds and other local organisations. The grant programme was aimed to support environmental enhancement, biodiversity and positive climate action projects across County Longford.

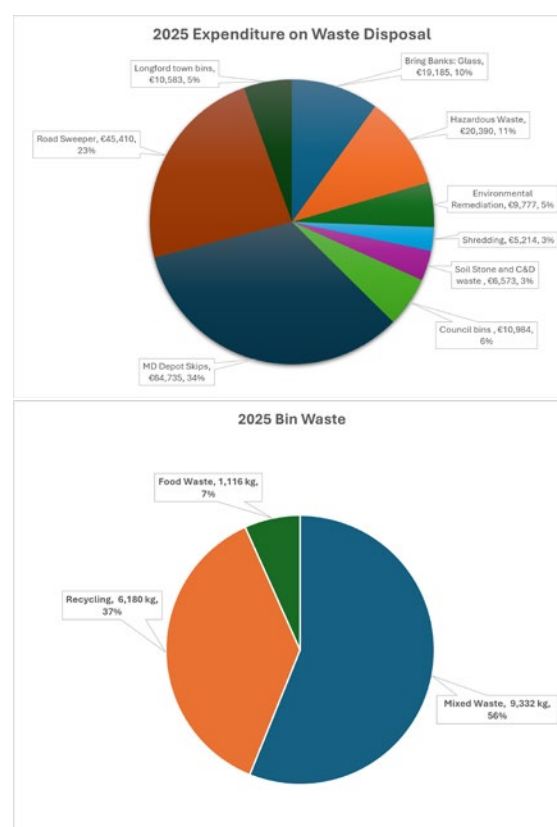
Nine applications were approved for funding in accordance with the eligibility criteria and recommended evaluation scoring system by IPB Insurance Guidelines.



2025 Waste Report

Longford County Council spent €192,850 on waste disposal and management activities in 2025, excluding waste arising from capital projects. A total of 688 tonnes of weighbridge waste was managed through authorised facilities, with the largest waste streams arising from road sweeping and Municipal District operations. The Council also continued to support recycling through 23 bring bank facilities and

hazardous waste collection events, while ensuring full compliance with waste management legislation through the authorised disposal of all road sweepings, soil, stone and C&D waste.



Particular focus has been placed on improving waste management within Council offices and facilities. Across the Council's 11 bin accounts, 16.6 tonnes of waste were collected during 2025, comprising 9.3 tonnes of general waste, 6.2 tonnes of recycling and 1.1 tonnes of food waste. While recycling performance has improved, general waste remains the dominant waste stream, highlighting the need for continued improvements in segregation practices. Larger office locations with dedicated waste infrastructure

Environment and Climate Action

generally achieved higher recycling rates, demonstrating the benefits of appropriately resourced three-bin systems. Áras an Chontae recorded the highest levels of recycling and food waste, accounting for 51% and 64% respectively.

The report recommends expanding three-bin systems across all Council offices, libraries, fire stations and operational facilities, alongside continued staff awareness initiatives to further reduce mixed waste, improve recycling rates and support the Council's circular economy objectives.

Environmental improvement success story

Following a complaint regarding the dumping of waste at the communal bin storage areas in Prospect Woods, Longford County Council carried out an investigation and found the area to be in a very poor condition. Working closely with the new management company, a range of preventative measures were introduced, including controlled access to the bin storage area and the installation of locked barriers to prevent unauthorised vehicular access. Longford County Council staff also distributed over 100 information leaflets to residents promoting proper waste segregation and the correct use of the three-bin system. In addition, clear signage was erected on each bin to help residents identify where food waste, recyclable materials and general household waste should be disposed of. As a result of these combined efforts, the area has greatly improved and continues to show positive progress

through increased vigilance, improved resident awareness and better waste management practices.



Environment and Climate Action

Household Waste Surveys

Longford County Council is currently carrying out Household Waste Surveys in an estate where numerous reports of illegal dumping have been received. The purpose of these surveys is to ensure that residents are disposing of their household waste correctly, either through a kerbside collection service with an authorised waste collector or by bringing waste directly to a civic amenity site. To enhance efficiency and make it easier for householders to respond, the Longford County Council Environment Administration Section developed a QR code system which allows residents to quickly complete and submit survey information online. Fixed Payment Notices (FPNs) may be issued to householders who cannot demonstrate where their waste is being disposed of. Residents are encouraged to retain waste collection records, receipts and lift histories as proof of compliance with waste management legislation. Uptake of the surveys has been very positive to date, with a 68% response rate from householders within the first three weeks. Longford County Council intends to continue carrying out further Household Waste Surveys in additional estates over the coming months as part of its ongoing efforts to tackle illegal dumping and promote responsible waste management practices.



Forward Planning and Enforcement

Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027

Variation no. 1 of the Longford County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 consists of the amendment to the ‘*Strategic Residential Reserve*’ Zoning Objective text contained in Volume 2: Appendices.

The reason for Proposed Variation no. 1 is in light of the updated policy objectives and growth projections set out in the First Revision of the National Planning Framework (2025) and associated guidelines, acknowledging the constrained delivery of housing in recent years. As such the Proposed Variation of the Development Plan now seeks to facilitate appropriate development proposals on lands zoned ‘*Strategic Residential Reserve*’. Activation of these lands will be subject to the principles of infrastructure-led compact growth, as well as the environmental considerations that underpin the Development Plan.

The Variation and associated environmental reports and determinations were adopted by the elected members on 10 June, upon which date the Variation came into effect.

On 20 July, the Physical Development Strategic Policy Committee was given an update in relation to the Variation.

Draft Sustainable Rural and Gaeltacht Housing National Planning Statement (NPS) (2026)

A submission was made in relation to the Draft Sustainable Rural and Gaeltacht Housing National Planning Statement (2026), which defines the planning and local-needs criteria that are to be applied in local development plans and in the assessment of applications.

Planning Enforcement

The Planning Enforcement Section involves investigating complaints from the public regarding unauthorised developments and non-compliance with planning conditions attached to planning permissions.

In June 2026, 13 new cases were opened, 13 warning letters were issued, and nine enforcement notices were served. There was one referral for prosecution and nine files closed.

In July 2026, two new cases were opened, 17 warning letters were issued, and four enforcement notices were served. There were no referrals for prosecution and four files closed.

Taking in Charge

Work has continued in June and July 2026 with EC Gearty’s to conduct the final part of the taking in charge process where 69 estates are being registered in Longford County Council’s name.

Fire Services

Training

- Five half day National Incident Command System training
- Emergency Services driving standard training for three students
- Critical Incident Stress Management Peer Supporter course
- Five Day Compartment Fire Behavior Training course

Operations

- Total callouts of 89 in the two-month July - August 2026 period

Fire Prevention & Building Control

- Two Fire Safety Certs were processed in July – August 2026
- Four Disability Access Certs were processed in July – August 2026
- 17 Commencement Notices issued in July – August 2026

Recruitment

Recruitment is ongoing to fill the five outstanding vacancies in Granard (one) & Lanesborough (four). One applicant from each station has been assessed with no issues identified. They are recommended for interview.

A driver mechanic position was advertised in June for Granard and Lanesborough. Applicants to be interviewed in early September.

Equipment Purchased

Six decontamination sheets

- 12 rolls of RTC Packexe
- 32 sets of Training Fire Kit
- 40 new firefighter helmets
- Sample firefighting gloves
- New charging units for radios
- Medical supplies
- Capital funded – 60 new breathing apparatus sets

Vehicles

Tenders were received and assessed for the purchase of two new specialist vehicles.

An emergency tender for responding to road traffic collisions, road hazard incidents, river rescues and hazardous materials incidents and other entrapment incidents was purchased. The contract, valued at €417,585.00 (including VAT), has been awarded to High Precision Motor Products Ltd. The vehicle will be 100% funded through Capital Funding.

A water tanker vehicle and portable dam system, designed to transport up to 8,000 litres of water to emergency incidents, thereby enhancing operational resilience and water supply capabilities at fire and rescue incidents was also purchased. The contract, valued at €417,280.43 (including VAT), has been awarded to Sídhéan Teo. The vehicle will be 100% funded through Capital Funding.

Fire Services

Major Emergency Management

- Longford County Council Major Emergency Plan updated with recent staff changes
- Longford County Council Major Emergency Plan appendices updated with recent staff changes
- The midland regional working group met in Longford Fire Station on 15 July

