

LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE LAOISE



MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT

JULY 2022

TUARASCÁIL BHAINISTÍOCHTA

IUÍL 2022

**To: Each Member of Laois County Council**  
**Do: Gach Ball Comhairle Chontae Laoise**

Section 136(2) of the Local Government Act, 2011 as inserted by Section 51 of the Local Government Reform Act, 2014, requires the Chief Executive to prepare monthly management report. The report for July 2022 is as follows:-

**Finance, & Allocations Notified**

To be submitted...

Expenditure and income to the 30/06/2022 is summarised below:

Service Division	Budget Allocation	Expenditure to 30/06/2022
Housing and Building	19,748,000	7,708,034
Road Transportation and Safety	22,946,000	5,781,660
Water Services	3,259,000	1,751,244
Development Management	9,706,000	3,719,603
Environmental Services	7,939,000	2,645,729
Recreation and Amenity	4,361,000	1,834,367
Agriculture, Education, Health and Welfare	786,000	256,844
Miscellaneous Services	9,453,000	4,135,137
Central Management Charge	10,139,000	4,297,763
<b>Total</b>	<b>88,337,000</b>	<b>32,130,381</b>

Service Division	Budget Allocation	Income to 30/06/2022
Housing and Building	21,415,000	8,155,883
Road Transportation and Safety	18,682,000	2,514,310
Water Services	4,380,000	2,252,887
Development Management	6,946,000	3,339,013
Environmental Services	1,942,000	986,038
Recreation and Amenity	781,000	546,044
Agriculture, Education, Health and Welfare	314,000	109,365
Miscellaneous Services	8,702,000	2,641,157
Superannuation	714,000	331,679
Local Property Tax	9,065,150	4,532,574
Rates	14,662,952	7,185,750
Capital transfer	732,898	
<b>Total</b>	<b>88,337,000</b>	<b>32,594,700</b>

HOUSING DELIVERY

Housing Delivery Action Plan 2022 to 2026

Laois County Council’s Housing Delivery Action Plan has been formally approved by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and is now published on [www.laois.ie](http://www.laois.ie).

The following targets have been approved for social housing delivery and update those targets published last year under “Housing For All” (534 homes) -

Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
Units	254	365	175	66	40	900

Social Housing Schemes completed to end of Q 2 (January to June 2022)

Location	No. of Houses	House Types	Constructed by	Comment
Coolroe, Ballybrittas	1	3-bed bungalow	LCC Construction	Complete
The Orchard, Ballylynan (Phase 1)	2	2 No. 3-Bed 2 Storey	LCC Turnkey	
Droughill Lawns, Portarlinton	26	14 no. 2-beds (8 bungalows) 12 no 3-beds	Oaklee Housing	Tenanting imminent
Bruach Na Habhainn, Killeen (Phase 1)	3	3 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey	LCC Turnkey	
Rathvarna, Killeshin	2	2 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey	Part V	Delivered & Tenanted
<b>TOTAL HOMES COMPLETE</b>	<b>34</b>			

Social Housing Schemes Currently Under Construction – LCC & AHB

Location	Total No. of Houses	House Types	Constructed by	Comment
Moore St, Rathdowney	6	6 No. 2 Bed 2 Storey	LCC (Construction)	On site – expected delivery Q1 2023
Pattison Estate, Mountmellick	10	10 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey	LCC (Construction)	On site – expected delivery Q3 2022
Gleann na Glaise, Ballyroan	10	10 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey	LCC (Construction)	On Site – expected delivery Q3 2022
Sean Doire, Durrow	22	10 No. 2 Bed 2 Storey 8 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey 4 No. 2 Bed 1 Storey	LCC (Construction)	On Site – expected delivery Q3 2022
Harbour Court, Mountmellick	6	6 No. 2 Bed bungalows	LCC (Construction)	On Site – expected delivery Q2 2023
Featherbed Lane, Borris-In-Ossory (Ph 2)	5	5 No. 3 Bed 2 storey	LCC (Turnkey)	On Site – expected delivery Q3 2022

Bruach Na Habhainn, Killeen	1	1 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey	LCC (Turnkey)	On Site – Phase 1 (1 unit) delivery Q2 2023
The Orchard, Ballylynan (Phase 2)	3	3 No. 3-Bed 2 Storey	LCC (Turnkey)	On Site – Phase 2 (3 units) delivery Q4 2022
Church Avenue, Stradbally	31	9 No. 4 Bed 2 Storey 20 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey 2 No. 2 Bed 1 Storey	LCC (Turnkey)	On site – delivery Q4 2023
Market Square, Portarlington	18	15 No. 2 Bed 1 Storey 2 No. 2 Bed Apts 1 No. 3 Bed Apt	LCC (Turnkey)	On site – delivery Q2 2023
Oak Park Halting Site	4	4 no. serviced bays	LCC	TAU funded scheme. Issues have arisen with discovery of an underground ESB cable on site. Estimated delivery date Q1 2023 but dependent on ESB addressing issue as a matter of urgency.
Aughnaharna, Portlaoise	2	2 No. 3 bed Semi Detached	Part V	Delivery Q3 2022
Harpurs Lane, Portlaoise	44	20 no. 2 bed 16 no. 3 bed 4 no. 1 bed apt 4 no. 2 bed apt	Respond Housing	On site – expected delivery Q1 2023
Clonrooske Abbey, Portlaoise	32	28 no. 3 bed 2 storey 4 no. 4 bed 2 storey	Cluid Housing	On site. ESB and IW connections made in Phase 1; noted that Phases 1 and 3 will deliver to AHB in October. Phase 2 at first fix so likely won't be delivered until 2023. Portlaoise MD Members being regularly updated in this regard.
The Maltings & Roselawn, Portlaoise	55	Roselawn (15 no. 3 bed 2 storey) Maltings (40 no. 2 bed apts – over 55's)	Cluid Housing	On site. Phase 1 (15 units) expected delivery date Q4 2022
Holdbrook, Portlaoise	10	10 no. 2 bed apts (over 55's)	Cluid Housing	On site. Expected delivery Q3 2022
The Springs, Kilminchy, Portlaoise	43	43 no. 3 bed houses	Cluid Housing	On site - Phase 1 (19 units) expected delivery Q3 2022; Phase 2 (24 units) expected delivery Q4 2022.

Goldencroft, Portlaoise (Old CBS site)	67	13 no. 2 bed apts 24 no. 3 bed houses 26 no. 2 bed houses 4 no. 2 bed bungalow	Cluid Housing	3 Phases – on site. First phase (13 units) delivery Q4 2022
Ballymorris Green, Portarlinton	46	46 no. 3 bed houses	Cluid Housing	3 phases. Currently on site - Phase 1 (15 units) expected delivery Q3 2022.
Doirinn Alainn, Ballylinan	9	6 no. 3 bed houses 3 no. 2 bed houses	North & East Housing	Last phase of this development – on site; expected delivery Q4 2022.
South Dublin Road, Kilminchy	36	13 no. 2 bed houses 23 no 3 bed houses	Cooperative Housing	On site – 3 phases for delivery during 2023.
The Meadows (old Midland Dairies site), Portlaoise	48	19 no. 3 bed houses 9 no. 4 bed houses 20 no. 2 bed apts	Cluid Housing	Currently on site – expected delivery Q3 2023
St. Kieran's Errill	14	6 No. 2 Bed 2 Storey 8 No. 2 Bed 1 Storey	LCC (Construction)	Stage 4 approved in Q2 2022. Contractor appointed
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>520</b>			

#### Social Housing Schemes at Planning, Design or Tender Stage – LCC & AHB

Location/Scheme	No of Houses	House Types	To be constructed by	Comment
Mooreville, Rathdowney	7	3 No. 2 Bed bungalow 4 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey	LCC (Construction)	Stage 4 submitted in Q2 2022.
Carraig Glas, Stradbally	26	15 no. 2 bed houses 9 no. 3 bed houses 2 no 4 bed houses	LCC (Construction)	Stage 3 submitted in Q3 2022.
Clonrooske, Portlaoise	11	8 No. 2 Bed 2 Storey 3 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey 1 No. 3 Bed 1 Storey	LCC (Construction)	Stage 2 approved in June 2022. Part VIII public consultation advertised.
Iona, Portlaoise	7	2 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey 1 No. 2 Bed 2 Storey 4 No. 1 Bed Apt	LCC (Construction)	Stage 2 to be submitted in Q3 2022
Doonane	12	12 no. 3 bed 2 storey	LCC (Construction)	Stage 2 to be submitted in Q3 2022
Derry Road, Durrow	22	9 No. 1 Bed 1 Storey 4 No. 2 Bed 2 Storey 5 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey	LCC (Construction)	18 dwellings and a minimum of 4 serviced sites proposed Stage 1 Approved
Ballyadams	1	1 no. 6 bed bungalow	LCC (Construction)	Stage 1 Approved – Design Team appointed; proceeding to detailed design

Stradbally Road, Portlaoise	80		Mixed Tenure	Masterplan for entire lands recently noted by Portlaoise MD members. Options being explored for tenure and delivery of scheme.
Bracklone St, Portarlinton	12	15 no. 2 bed houses	LCC (Construction)	Stage 1 To Be Submitted
Rushall Mountrath	2	2 no. 3 bed 2 storey	LCC (Construction)	Stage 1 To Be Submitted
Main St, Ballinakill	3	2 No. 2 Bed 2 Storey 1 No. 1 Bed Apt	LCC (Construction)	Stage 1 To Be Submitted
Moanbaun, Mountrath	9	4 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey 7 No. 2 Bed 2 Storey 4 No. 2 Bed 1 Storey	LCC (Construction)	Stage 1 To Be Submitted
Convent Lands, Portlaoise (CAS)	52	33 no 2 bed apts 15 no 1 bed apts 4 no. 2 bed houses	Sophia Housing	Stage 3 application approved; will now proceed to tender stage
County Hotel, Portlaoise (CAS)	10	8 no. 1 bed apts 2 no. 2 bed apts	Cluid Housing	Site investigations to inform Stage 2 application and Part 8 docs to be prepared thereafter for Council approval
Hepburn Court, Portlaoise	54	8 no. 2 bed bungalow 12 no. 2 bed 2 storey 34 no. 2 bed 2 storey	Cluid Housing	Part VIII approved; proceeding to site transfer to Cluid for commencement of construction in Nov 2022
Curragh na Mona, Abbeyleix Rd, Portlaoise	39	5 x 2 bed fully accessible apts 12 x 2 bed bungalows 6 x 3 bed house with downstairs bedroom 2 x 4 bed house with downstairs bedroom 2 x 2 bed apts – accessible (ground floor) apts 2 x 1 bed 1 <sup>st</sup> floor apts 4 x 3 bed 2 storey. 6 x 2 bed 1 <sup>st</sup> floor apts	Respond Housing	Contractor due to commence Sept 2022 subject to funding being in place.
Doran's site adj to O' Moore Place, Portlaoise	50		Cooperative Housing	Layout/number of units to be finalised.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>397</b>			

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Minimum targets recently issued by Dept of Housing in relation to the delivery of Affordable Purchase/Cost Rental housing by the local authority are as follows:

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	TOTAL
LA Affordable Purchase & Cost Rental Delivery Target	5	7	10	8	8	38

Call remains open for Expressions of Interest in respect of:

- a. Appropriately zoned land for housing development
- b. Advanced Turnkey Purchase arrangements for un-commenced residential developments

Expressions of Interest submitted for advanced purchase turnkey arrangements are currently being examined. Members are also advised that the Council's Housing Team has met local builders on a face to face basis to explore the potential of affordable and cost rental agreements.

## REGENERATION / VACANT HOMES

The **Croi Conaithe (Towns) Scheme** was launched on the 14<sup>th</sup> July 2022. A grant of up to a maximum of €30,000 will be available for the refurbishment of vacant properties for occupation as a principal private residence, including the conversion of a property which has not been used as residential heretofore. This will be subject to upper limits for the types of work specified below having regard to a reasonable cost assessment by the local authority. The grant is inclusive of VAT cost of the works.

Where the refurbishment costs are expected to exceed the standard grant of up to €30,000, a maximum top-up grant amount of up to €20,000 will be available where the property is confirmed by the applicant to be derelict (i.e. structurally unsound and dangerous) bringing the total grant available for a derelict property up to a maximum of €50,000.

Properties considered for inclusion must be vacant for two years or more and built before 1993.

For the purposes of this scheme, a property is deemed to be vacant if it has been vacant and unoccupied for a period of two years or more.

Confirmation of vacancy can be validated and verified by the use of, for example, Utility Bills which can help determine vacancy periods (e.g. pattern of usage or disconnection) or such other proofs as are available to the satisfaction of the local authority. Confirmation of vacancy must be validated and verified by the local authority prior to grant approval.

The Scheme to be administered by the Local Authority

Other schemes which continue to be in use are

- (a) **The Buy and Renew Scheme**
- (b) **The Repair and Leasing Scheme**

## CPO

Vacant Properties acquired by CPO now in Council ownership	15
Properties currently undergoing CPO	5

## Repair & Leasing

Applications received to date	38
Applications approved to proceed	7
Applications under consideration	3
No. of Leases commenced	1
Applications Refused	27*

\*Applications refused as properties deemed to be unsuitable for the R&L Scheme due to:

- (a) their location in areas of low housing demand or;
- (b) the extent of works required exceeded the Scheme limit or;
- (c) works were commenced or almost complete before an application was submitted, which is not permitted under the R&L Scheme.

## HOUSING STOCK

### Housing Re-Lets

Month	LA Keys Surrendered	Properties Acquired	Works Completed
January 22	9	0	3
February 22	6	1	11
March 22	5	0	4
April 22	5	0	14
May 22	6	0	5
June 22	3	0	7
July 22	3	0	3
<b>TOTAL (YTD)</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>47</b>

**NOTE:** There are currently 24 vacant units from our existing stock and a further 7 units that the Council acquired recently. Works are either ongoing on these properties or specifications are being prepared for works to be carried out.

**NOTE:** Laois County Council have been approved Voids Department funding in 2022 for 42 units at a total cost of €462,000.

### Housing Maintenance

Month	Work Orders Raised	Work Orders Closed	Work Orders Open
January 22	424	397	27
February 22	517	483	34
March 22	404	373	31
April	392	354	38
May 22	352	248	104
June 22	363	259	104
<b>TOTAL (YTD)</b>	<b>2,452</b>	<b>2114</b>	<b>338</b>



Midlands Retrofit Programme:

Address	Properties	Units Commenced	Units Completed	Update
Mountain View Sq., Portlaoise	24	24	24 houses M&E complete	M&E Works complete on 24 houses, DCV Ventilation system, pipe surround boards/insulation to be fully complete by Q3 2022.
Hillview Drive, Portlaoise	18	18	17 houses M&E complete	M&E Works complete on 17 houses, DCV Ventilation system, pipe surround boards/insulation to be fully complete by Q3 2022
Quigley Pk, Rathdowney	20	20	18 houses M&E complete	M&E Works complete on 18 houses, DCV Ventilation system, pipe surround boards/insulation to be fully complete by Q3 2022
Radharc Alainn, Arles	18	18	18 Houses M&E complete.	M&E Works complete on 18 houses, DCV Ventilation system, pipe surround boards/insulation to be fully complete by Q3 2022
Derrymore, Portarlinton	26	26	26 houses M&E complete	M&E Works complete on 26 houses, DCV Ventilation system, pipe surround boards/insulation to be fully complete by Q3 2022
Kirwan Park, Mountmellick	51	51	18 houses M&E complete	Insulation and DCV unit to be installed. Windows and Doors complete on 42 houses. All works including, DCV Ventilation system, pipe surround boards and insulation to be fully complete by Q3 2022.
<b>Total Properties</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>121 Units (M&amp;E complete)</b>	

### Energy Efficiency/Retrofitting Programme:

Address	Properties	Units Commenced	Units Completed	Update
O'Moore Place, Portlaoise	14	0	0	Tender valuation complete; works due to commence Q3 2022
<b>Total Properties</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	

**NOTE:** Laois County Council have been approved Department Retrofitting funding for 47 units at a total cost of €1,299,987. Surveys of these properties – below – will commence in Q3 2022.

- 1) Thornberry, Abbeyleix – 16 units.
- 2) Church Avenue, Stradbally – 9 units.
- 3) Slieve Bloom Park, Clonaslee – 8 units.
- 4) St. John's Square, Portlaoise – 7 units.
- 5) Old School Road, Ballylynan – 7 units.

There will be a match funding requirement from the Council in the above regard, which will be determined when tender prices are returned.

### HOUSING NEED

#### Homeless Presentations

Time Period	Homeless Presentations	Emergency Homeless
18 <sup>th</sup> June – 14 <sup>th</sup> July 2022	22	6
<b>Year to Date</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>46</b>

#### Homeless Accommodation

Individuals Accessing.....	Emergency Accommodation as of 14 <sup>th</sup> July 2022	Transition Accommodation as of 14 <sup>th</sup> July 2022
Adults	18	0
Children	16	0

#### Social Housing List at 15<sup>th</sup> July 2022

<b>TOTAL No of Social Housing Applicants</b>	1,797
<b>Applicants in receipt of HAP</b>	918

#### Housing Allocations

Method of Delivery	Allocations to 15 <sup>th</sup> July 2022	Numbers allocated Year-to-date 2022
First allocation of New Build/Acquired unit	3	10
Relet / Refurbished Stock Allocation	9	36
Nomination to AHB housing	13	50
<b>TOTAL Y-T-D</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>96</b>

## Housing Assistance Payment

No of Active HAP Tenancies at 15 <sup>th</sup> July 2022	918
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## LOANS & GRANTS

### Loans

Local Authority Home Loan: 4 <sup>th</sup> January 2022 – 15 <sup>th</sup> July 2022	
No of Loan Approvals	11
No of Applications refused	11

### Housing Adaptation Grants at 13<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Allocation €1,389,375.00

Grant Type	No. of grants approved at 13 <sup>th</sup> July 2022*	Value
Housing Aids for Older People Grant	93	€422,120
Mobility Aids Grant	41	€185,150
Housing Adaptation Grant	43	€523,250
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>€1,130,520</b>

\*Grants approved can relate to previous years also, if applicant has not advised that works are carried out or sought a recoupment.

Allocation 2022 (including LA funded portion)	No of Applications Received in 2022	No of Approved Applications at works stage	Comment
€1,389,375	129	161 (€1,035,920)	All applicants with grants approved can proceed to carry out works and recoup down grant monies from LCC upon satisfactory completion of works.

### Disabled Persons Grant for Social Housing at 15<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Allocation 2022 (including LA funded portion)	€681,535
No. of Applications currently on site or completed	23
Value	€355,630.20
No. of Applications on works list awarded to contractor and to be carried out in 2022	16
Value	€300,233.49*

\*includes one extension awaiting Dept approval €129,786

Queries in relation to Housing Grants should be emailed to [housinggrants@laoiscoco.ie](mailto:housinggrants@laoiscoco.ie)

## LEASING

### RAS/Leasing Statistics at 13<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Active RAS tenancies	83
Active short-term leasing tenancies (Social Housing Leasing Scheme)	31
Active Repair & Leasing Scheme tenancies	1
Active long-term leasing tenancies with private landlords/investors	10
Active long-term Mortgage to Rent leasing tenancies with a private company	21

### PRIVATE RENTED INSPECTIONS

All private rented dwellings must comply with the Housing (Standards for Rented Houses) Regulations 2019 and the local authority has no discretion in this regard.

This also includes those properties whose landlords are availing of the HAP scheme, who agree to an inspection of the property when they sign up for the scheme. Property owners not availing of the HAP scheme are also subject to inspection if they rent the property in a private arrangement.

At 30<sup>th</sup> June, the Council had issued 614 Notices of Works in 2022 to property owners in the form of a letter detailing the works that need to be carried out to bring the property up to the required standard. The Notice of Works also gives the property owner a timeframe in which the works must be carried out as recommended in the guidelines for private rental inspections issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage.

Queries from landlords relate mostly to technical aspects of the works required, with an understanding of the need to comply with the Regulations.

If a property owner is anxious about aspects of an improvement letter issued, they can contact the local authority and be assured that a reasonable practical approach will be taken to give them the opportunity to address the issues raised.

The Housing Inspections team can be contacted via email at [propertyinspections@laoiscoco.ie](mailto:propertyinspections@laoiscoco.ie). Notwithstanding the above and recognising the health and safety of the tenant as priority, should urgent works be required, the property owner is made aware of the consequences of non-compliance within a safe timeframe, i.e., fines and/or prosecution under the Regulations.

### Private Rental Standards - Housing Inspections

Target for private rented inspections in 2022	1,181
No of private rented inspections carried out 01/01/2022 – 30/06/2022	473

**DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE**

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMPARATIVE FIGURES FROM 2021 TO 2022**

Year	Valid applications from 01/01/2022 – 14/7/2022	Valid applications from 01/01/2021 – 17/07/2021
	340	397

2022 PERFORMANCE	
Number of valid applications received:	340
Number of decisions made	350
Number of applications granted:	319 (Decisions to Grant)
Number of applications refused:	31 (Decisions to Refuse)
Invalid applications returned to applicant:	102 (2022 Invalid Applications)
Files scanned up to -	13 <sup>th</sup> July 2022
Referrals to Area Offices (working days):	within 14 days achieved
Pre planning	
No of requests to date	202
No of meetings held to date Up to and including the 20 <sup>th</sup> June 2022	188
Wait time	2 weeks

**ENFORCEMENT UPDATE**

Current year	2022		2021	
	June	Jan - June	June	Jan - June
<b>Service Review</b>				
Total number of new cases subject to complaints that were investigated	10	67	14	73
Number of Warning Letters served	63	219	17	133
Number of Enforcement Notices served	8	26	6	53
No Of cases referred for legal proceedings	3	6	0	3

Number of cases in Court(incl adjournments)	5	32	11	34
Number of cases Resolved in Court	2	7	2	3
Number of Files Closed	11	109	9	68
Number of cases on system	136	136	177	177
Enforcement Costs recouped	€ 3,808.30	€ 7,520.26	€ 1,897.00	€7,633.24
Number of Valid Retention Applications Received relating to Enforcement Action	2	24	7	26
Fees received through Valid Retention Applications Received relating to Enforcement Action	€454.50	€21,071.80	€13,080.50	€18,486.00
Legal fees paid	€128.80	€19,324.76	€541.20	€14,681.24

## **BROADBAND**

### **WIFI 4 EU.**

Laois County Council recently launched Free Public WIFI in Portarlinton and Stradbally. The free public WIFI in Portarlinton and Stradbally towns will provide free access to Wi-Fi connectivity for citizens in the County Town in public spaces amongst others in the town centre.

In Portarlinton the Free Public WIFI is available in the Peoples Park and Link Road between the Fire Station and the Swimming Pool, Main Street and at The Library , there is also free internal access in the Library .

In Stradbally the Free Public WIFI is available in the Market Square and in The Art House both externally and internally.

This is provided as part of an European Initiative WIFI4EU which promotes free WIFI within public spaces across the municipalities of the European Union.

## **Local Enterprise & Economic Development**

Local Enterprise Office (LEO):

- €227,666 approved in grant aid to 10 Laois businesses up to 30<sup>th</sup> June.
- 635 owners/managers/employees participated in LEO training programmes
- 85 potential entrepreneurs participated in Start Your Own Business Courses
- 136 Laois businesses availed of mentoring in finance, marketing, exporting, HR and health & safety
- 20 Trading Online Voucher approvals to the value of €42,740
- 25 Laois companies currently taking part in a Green for Micro programme
- 6 Laois companies currently taking part in LEAN programmes
- 7 Laois companies have submitted applications Micro Finance Ireland, with 5 approvals to date.

**Roadworks Programme 2022**

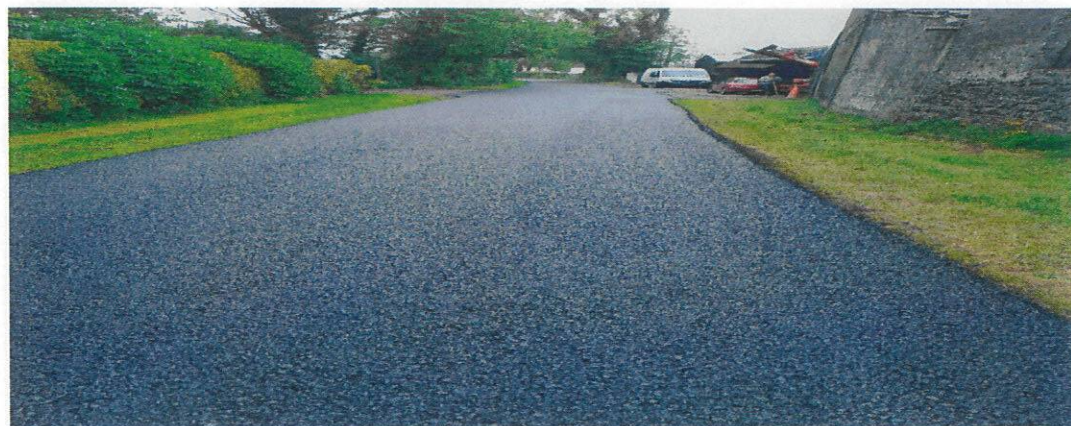
The Annual Road Works Scheme 2022 was adopted by the Members at the March 2022 Monthly Meeting. Work has commenced to deliver the Road Works Scheme across the three Municipal Districts.

**Restoration Improvement / Restoration Maintenance updates**

The MD offices have made substantial progress in the delivery of their Restoration Improvement (strengthening/overlay) and Restoration Maintenance (surface dressing) work programmes as agreed as part of the Schedules of MD works and the 2022 Annual Roadworks Programme.

	RI Status	RM status
Eastern MD	Substantially complete – finished by w/e 29 <sup>th</sup> July	Substantially complete – finished by end July
Central MD	Planned for completion - September	Complete – finished by w/e 22 <sup>nd</sup> July
Western MD	Substantially complete – finished by end July	Finished by end of 2 <sup>nd</sup> week in Aug

Photographs below illustrate some of the Regional/Local Roads that have benefitted from the 2022 Restoration Improvement and Maintenance Funding Programmes.



### **Local Improvement Scheme Funding:**

LIS funding has been confirmed by the DRCD in the amount of €351,880.00. A second call for project funding under LIS has been submitted to DRCD for consideration and we are awaiting a positive notification regarding this. The MD offices are progressing with the delivery of their LIS work programmes.

	LIS complete	outstanding
Eastern MD	0 – preparation works complete	4 – planned for completion by end Sept
Central MD	1	1 - planned for completion by end Sept
Western MD	3 complete	0

### **Community Improvement Scheme Funding:**

CIS funding has been confirmed by the DTTaS in the amount of €389,950.00. The MD offices are progressing with the delivery of their CIS work programmes.

	CIS complete	outstanding
Eastern MD	0	0
Central MD	0	2 - awaiting local contributions. Planned for completion by end of Sept
Western MD	0	3 – planned for completion by end of August

### **Urban Regeneration and Development Fund**

The Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) aims to deliver more compact and sustainable development, as provided in Project Ireland 2040. It does this by part-funding regeneration and rejuvenation projects in Ireland’s five cities and other large towns. Portlaoise Town is the only urban centre in County Laois that qualifies for funding under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund.

More compact and sustainable development involves a greater proportion of residential and mixed-use development within the existing built-up footprints of our cities and towns. This will ensure more parts of our urban areas become attractive and vibrant places in which to live, work, visit and invest.

The fund supports the objectives of the National Planning Framework (NPF) and National Development Plan (NDP) 2018-2027.

Under Round 1, Laois County Council was allocated a URDF grant of €9,055,014 subject to local, match funding of €3,018,335. The funds were allocated across two development themes namely;

- The Cultural Quarter (overall fund €9,371,519)
- Low Carbon Town (overall fund €2,701,830)

The paragraphs below give an update on the status of various projects funded from the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund.



## The Cultural Quarter

### Project 1. - Tower Hill, Church Street & Railway Street Public Realm Refurbishment

Works substantially complete aside from snagging and introduction of landscape elements.

**Total cost €490,000**



### Project 2 - 97 Space Car (including eCars) and Bicycle Park at Railway Street

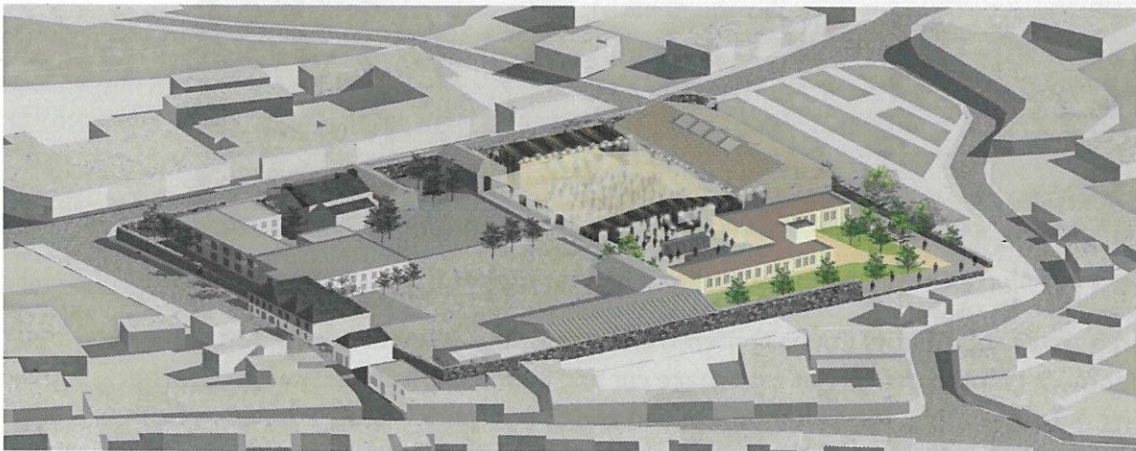
In March 2022 Laois County Council entered into a Building Agreement with Ardain Developments for the delivery of a 97-space car and bicycle park at Railway Street. The Building Agreement is in the sum of €1,491,000 and the car park is programmed to be in public use by mid-2023.



### Project 3 – Outdoor Performance and Event Space at Scoil Mhuire

Part 8 approval in April 2022 and tender process for delivery to commence in Q3 2022.

Total estimated project cost € 750,000.



### Project 4. – Scoil Mhuire Refurbishment and Energy Rating Upgrade

In June 2022 Laois County Council entered into a contract with Braemar Construction Ltd. T/A Terry Higgins Builders, in the sum of €1,042,205.55 for the refurbishment of Scoil Mhuire, modernising energy rating standards, heating, mechanical and electrical provisions, accessibility etc. Scoil Mhuire is the home of Music Generation Laois and the Laois School of Music.



### Project 5 – Old St. Peter’s Graveyard Restoration and Conservation

Restoration and Conservation works have been completed at the Old St. Peter’s Graveyard to the point that the area will be open to the public though and beyond Summer 2022. The value of the works completed is in the order of €200,000.



### Project 6. Public Realm at Convent Site , connection to Triogue walkway and work on Halfpenny School

A sum of €725,000 is allocated to this project but remains unspent as the works are to be undertaken at the same time as the Convent Housing scheme via Sophia. Note that the housing scheme has now received approval to proceed to tender and in this regard it is anticipated that a contract will be awarded later this year.

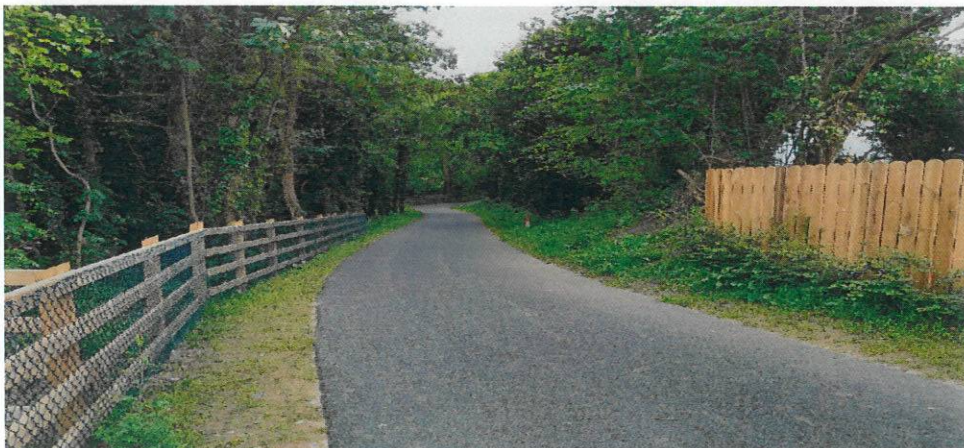
### Project 7. Fort Protector Phase I

Works were completed at Fitzmaurice Place in 2020 costing €474,388

#### Portlaoise Low Carbon Town

### Project 1– Triogue Way Phase 1

Triogue Way Phase 1 was officially opened on the 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2022 and is Phase 1 of a project that will see a 3m wide, fully lit and largely off-road pedestrian/cycle way from the Schools Campuses on Portlaoise Southern Circular to Greenmill Lane. Total costs €350,000.





### **Project 2 – EV Charging Points**

Photo below illustrates the ongoing installation of 6 e-car charging points in the long stay car park adjacent to County Hall. Additionally, URDF will support the provision of 10 to 15 e-charging points at the new Car Park on Railway Street. **Total cost €150,000**



### **Project 3 – Energy Efficient Public Lighting**

The Council public lighting stock in Portlaoise has now been substantially retrofitted with LED luminaires resulting in a 50% reduction in electricity demand.. **Total cost €1,329,230**

### **Project 4 – Extension of Cycling network in Portlaoise**

Part 8 public consultation is planned in the short term to allow for new/improved cycle ways on the Dublin Road/Fr Brown Ave and Abbeyleix Road. **Total cost €450,000**

## Rural Regeneration Development Fund

### Refurbishment of Market House at Portarlinton

A grant of €1,094,880 was awarded by the DRCD in 2020. Currently the design team is preparing design and specifications with a view towards tender in Q3.

### Refurbishment of Courthouse at Borris in Ossory.

An allocation of €212,332 was made from the 2021 RRDF. The appointed design team is currently working up design and specification documents to assist costing proposals for a future application to the RRDF.

Note: Funding through the RRDF was also made available to other projects in Laois that are or have been advanced by other parties (Waterways Ireland..€5.07 million for the Barrow Blueway: Coillte... €4.5million for the SI Bloom MBT: and OPW ..€1.2million for Emo Court)

## Environment & Environmental Protection

### 1. Kyletalesha Landfill, Transfer Station and Civic Amenity Site, Portlaoise:

Normal services continue at the Kyletalesha Landfill Facility and Civic Amenity Site. Landfill monitoring and aftercare maintenance is on-going. All monitoring results are being submitted to the EPA.

### 2. Bring Banks:

Tonnages of collected recyclable material in 2022.

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Total Tonnage
2022	163.77	114.28	162.18	120.57	133.64	149.84	68.47	912.75
2021	196.89	140.31	177.84	173.60	143.65	170.08	153.40	1155.77
2020	138.37	86.81	121.35	205.29	195.24	190.74	177.39	1115.19
2019	138.80	113.96	86.93	108.42	122.60	86.79	129.25	786.75

2022 July figure is to the 16<sup>th</sup> July 2022.

**Table 2 – 2022 Bring Bank Tonnages**

The bring bank facilities in the county are being inspected and maintained by Environment Staff.

### 3. Waste Management, Complaints & Litter Management:

#### a) Illegal Dumping

Tonnes of material collected to date is 642 tonnes. Table 3 below shows the material collected from 2019 to 2022.

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022 (to date)
Tonnage	367	238	530	642

**Table 3 – Illegal Dumping Tonnages**

#### b) Waste Enforcement & Complaints

Table 4 below details the number and types of complaints received in 2022.

Nature	Number
Waste Management/Enforcement	374
Litter	93
Abandoned Vehicles	20
Water	28
Veterinary	23
Air	18
Noise	17
Waste Infrastructure – Bring Banks	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>576</b>

**Table 4 – Environmental Complaint Register**

**c) Litter Fines**

To date 35 litter fines have been issued (33–litter & 2–dog fouling).

**d) 2022 Anti-Dumping Initiatives**

A Mattress Amnesty was organised for the 02<sup>nd</sup> July 2022 at Portlaoise Rugby Club, Togher. This amnesty was well received with over 800 mattresses collected on the day. A further two mattress amnesties are planned for the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> July at Pedigree Corner and Rathdowney respectively.

**4. Waste Management & Enforcement:**

The Environment Section continues with its duties and responsibilities regarding facility authorisation, waste management and enforcement, producer responsibility and the national waste priorities.

**5. Environmental Protection**

**a) Protect the Water Quality Status in all Water Bodies**

- Investigation of complaints on a priority basis.
- Investigation and wastewater connection survey on-going into wastewater discharges to Kilminchy lakes.
- On-going assessment of planning applications regarding water quality protection.

**b) Air & Noise:**

- Investigation of complaints on a priority basis.

**Emergency Planning, Fire Services & Flood Relief**

In 2022 (to date) Laois County Fire & Rescue Service attended 391 emergency incidents consisting of 145 fires, 191 special service incidents & 55 false alarms.

**Turnout by Station\*:**

Portlaoise – 155	Portarlinton - 66	Stradbally – 73	Mountmellick – 54
Abbeyleix - 58	Mountrath – 35	Durrow – 57	Rathdowney – 32

\*Note – figures are higher as many incidents are 2 station turnouts as per the PDA.

New Irish/English language signs have been erected at Abbeyleix Fire Station to comply with the Official Languages Act 2003.

## **NDFEM Capital - Water Tanker**

- In 2021 Elected Members were advised of an allocation of €140,000 for the acquisition of a new Water Tanker to support Fire Services operations in County Laois. The tanker has been delivered to Durrow Fire Station where the crew are currently undergoing training on this new vehicle. The Water Tanker will be in operation in the coming weeks.



## **WATER SERVICES AND RURAL WATER**

**Portlaoise Water Supply Improvement Scheme** - Irish Water now progressing with developing well PW07 and well PW08. IW/NOD currently agreeing design with the ESB. William Gorman Plant Hire to install ESB ducts and rising main pipework. M + E works to be carried out by Campions. Telemetry works to be carried out by EMR. A draft planned maintenance programme has been submitted to IW and agreed, with funding available under Capital Maintenance.

**Disinfection/PH control programme** – Civil works progressing in Derryguile, Kyle, Five Wells, Derrymoyle and Lough WTPs. MEICA works progressed at the Strand, Knocks, Derryguile, Lough, Kyle, Five Wells, Clonin Hill, Derrymoyle and Ballyroan WTP. Process proving now complete at the Knocks, Kyle and Ballyroan WTPs. ESB supply upgrade currently being progressed for Five Wells and Lough WTPs. Design for Kilminchy WTP currently being progressed by CWL/IW. Site investigation works at Meelick WTP to commence at the beginning of August 2022.

**Lead Mitigation Strategy** – Derryguile WTP has been identified as a priority plant under the IW Lead Mitigation Strategy for addition of Orthophosphate Treatment.

**Mountrath Sewer Diversion** - diversion of sewer from under Patrick Street Bridge, Mountrath recently completed by Dunne Brothers Ltd.

**Inlet Works Storm and Sludge Programme** – Castletown WwTP - New Storm Tank installation is complete. Remaining civil works and M + E works to be completed over the coming weeks.

Ballyroan WwTP Upgrade – A laser scan survey of the plant and an asbestos survey are being progressed/carried out. Catchment questionnaire completed by LCC for IW.

**Filter Upgrade Programme** – Kilminchy WTP put forward for upgrades, confirmation of scope required post filter assessment report.

**Networks and Water Conservation** - First fix, find and fix and lead replacement work continue throughout the county. Significant progress in Portarlington in the area of leakage management. Replacement of watermain in the Swan network is now complete, works in Emo and Ratheniska ongoing.

**Mountmellick and Portarlington DAP** – Catchment Appreciation Meeting to take place between IW/LCC/Jacobs on the 31/8/2022.

**National WWPS programme** – Bob’s Bar Pump Station has been issued by Irish Water to Ward & Burke Construction / Tobin Consulting Engineers for detailed design.

#### **Taking in Charge**

Continue working with IW to take the 17 no. outstanding legacy estates in charge by IW - already taken in charge by LCC. 10 no. estates have been progressed and referred to the Planning Section and work is ongoing on the remaining 7 no. estates.

#### **Multi Annual Rural Water Programme.**

Projects under the current programme, 2019 – 2021, are being completed and claims paid and recouped. The Department has advised that details of the next Rural Water Programme will be issued during Q3. Measure, A8 (Waste Water Collection and Treatment Needs for Villages and Settlements without access to Public Waste Water Services) – quotations for the provision of services to prepare feasibility studies are due to be received by the 19<sup>th</sup> of July. A comprehensive brief and supporting documentation was issued to 7 consultancy firms on the 5<sup>th</sup> of July.

**Well Grants** – 28 no. applications have been received in 2022 and all are being progressed.

### **HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE TO REFUGEES FLEEING CONFLICT**

Laois County Council continues to assist IPAS with the temporary accommodation of a number of persons who have arrived into Ireland over the past number of weeks. Currently there are 345 persons that have been accommodated through LCC and IPAS in hotels, guesthouses and hostel accommodation. Many others have also come into the county by their own means, some residing with families and others accommodated by the various parishes. There are currently an estimated 551 displaced Ukrainian citizens in County Laois.

The Local Authority has also provided, upon request, lists in relation to:-

- Vacant buildings and;
- Site suitable for medium to long term solutions

and is engaging with the Department of Housing with regard to same.

Private accommodation via Red Cross and other pledges has to date accommodated 30 persons (9 households).

#### **Laois Ukrainian Community Response Forum**

Laois County Council established a “Ukrainian Crisis Multi Agency Response Forum” along the lines of and largely similar to the Covid-19 Community Response Forum of the past two years. The forum convened its most recent meeting on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2022 at which a number of tasks and local actions were agreed. All efforts currently are being supported by An Garda Síochána, Dept of Social Protection, the HSE, Civil Defence, the Local Development Company, LOETB, TUSLA and various local voluntary groups, and local communities. To date the forum convened on 7 occasions. At present the forum consists of 44 members representing 23 members groups/agencies.



### **CORPORATE**

A Civic Reception in honour of Mike Dunphy, President Laois Association New York in recognition of his dedication and contribution to the promotion of County Laois in New York and New Jersey will be held in County Hall on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> July 2022 at 4.00 pm.

A Civic Reception in honour of the Portlaoise AFC Girls U-14 Soccer Team on winning the SFAI U-14 National Cup Final will be held on the 18<sup>th</sup> of August 2022

### **COMMUNITY DEPT**

#### **Laois Public Participation Network**

Laois PPN attended the Midlands Regional PPN (MRPPN) Meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> June in Naas, Kildare. The MRPPN consists of Laois, Offaly, Kildare, Westmeath, Longford and Meath. The MRPPN allows an opportunity to share knowledge and work collaboratively on projects that benefits the Midlands.

Laois PPN organised a Foraging Workshop with Mary Bulfin aka “Wild Food Mary” at Ballintubbert House on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> July. Attendees learned about edible plants and natural remedies from one of the leading foraging experts in Ireland.

#### **Laois Comhairle na nÓg**

Laois Comhairle na nÓg met with the Steering Committee on 29 June. The Comhairle AGM will be held in November. They will also be participating in the Ted Talks again this year.

#### **Age Friendly Programme**

A public consultation workshop on the Age Friendly Strategy will take place on the 26<sup>th</sup> July 2022 in Bloom HQ, Mountrath. The consultation will take place in the morning with Registration from 10.30am. followed by activities and entertainment in the afternoon.

Anyone interested in attending should pre register with Tom Curran in Community Dept- [tcurran@laoiscoco.ie](mailto:tcurran@laoiscoco.ie) 05786 64150/ 086 0363426.

Integrated Care Programme for Older People (ICPOP) working group meetings are ongoing and gaps in services are being explored. It is a very effective group for information sharing and there will be a mapping of needs and services conducted in the future to guide the development of the programme.

#### **Laois Community and Voluntary Awards**

The Cathaoirleach of Laois County Council, Cllr. Thomasina Connell, launched the 2022 Laois Community & Voluntary Awards. The purpose of the awards is to acknowledge groups and individuals who, through their commitment to voluntary and community activities, have played a significant role in enhancing the quality of life in their communities. Applications forms are available from the Community Section [awards@laoiscoco.ie](mailto:awards@laoiscoco.ie).

## **Local Authority Outdoor Dining Infrastructure Scheme**

### **Hynd's Square - Portlaoise.**

6 Canopies with tables have been installed in Hynd's Square.



## **CLIMATE ACTION**

### **Tidy Towns Grants**

Allocation of €34,428 have been made to 22 applicants to support Tidy Towns activities projects proposed by tidy towns groups include:

- Painting upgrades
- Environmental Action Day for Kids
- Polytunnel to grow own bedding plants
- Planting of Native Trees
- Local Residential Estate Competition

### **Anti-Litter Campaign Launches**

Launch of Gum Litter Taskforce Campaign and Anti- Dog Fouling “Bag it, Bin it” campaign which comprises of a series of animated videos in The Peoples Park, Portlaoise.



## **SPORT & LEISURE UPDATE**

### **National Play Day/Recreation Week**

Seven events were delivered from July 2<sup>nd</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> in partnership with the Library Service, Laois Partnership SICAP team, residents' groups and youth groups.

### **Borris in Ossory Amenity Area & Slí na Sláinte**

Councillor Conor Bergin formally opened the Amenity Area & Slí na Sláinte on June 17<sup>th</sup>. This project was funded under 2 programmes – TVRS 2019 & ORIS 2020.

## **ARTS & CULTURE**

### **LOCAL LIVE PERFORMANCE PROGRAMME SCHEDULE PHASE 4**

Proposals are invited for Local Live Performance Programming Scheme Phase 4 in respect of live performances in Laois. All events must take place by 31st October 2022. The scheme aims to support employment and wellbeing through the provision of live performances, engaging the services of professional artists, musicians, producers, crew and other staff working in the live commercial arts and culture sectors in Laois. An information session on LLPPS 4 was held in the **Dunamaise Arts Centre on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> July at 7.00pm**. Application forms are available from the Arts office. Closing date for applications is **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> July**.

### **Culture Night: Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> September from 4pm until late**

Artists and communities and venues are invited to help create an evening of open, free access to exhibitions, cultural spaces, performances, workshops, games and other cultural pursuits. Events can range from storytelling, cultural walks, poetry readings, open-mic, exhibitions, concerts, film screenings, dance performances, parades, all of which reflect the vibrancy and diversity of culture in County Laois. Applications can be made with description of event, location, time, and a photo if possible. Grants from €200 to €500 are available. Closing date for receipt of applications is Friday 29th July.

### **Laois Arthouse Studio Award**

Applications sought from Laois based artists who would like to experience a month working in a studio at the **Laois Arthouse, Stradbally**. Artists who have **not** previously had a studio in the Arthouse are invited to avail of a one-month free studio space, in August, September, or October 2022. Send proposal with a brief description of your art practice, the month requested and up to 500 words on what you would like to achieve from this award. **Deadline: Thurs 29<sup>th</sup> July**.

### **Visit to Áras an Uachtaráin**

Laois County Council were honoured to receive an invitation to **Áras an Uachtaráin** to mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Laois Arthouse. Cllr Conor Bergin, John Mulholland CE; Camel Mc Nicholl, A/Director of Services; Muireann Ní Chonaill, Arts Officer and a number of artists associated with the Laois Arthouse enjoyed a great evening of hospitality and entertainment. A copy of the book, In Trust- In Gratitude -In Hope was presented to President Higgins.

### **Summer Arts Programme**

A number of art workshops have taken place in association with Laois Partnership in areas of social need. These include Portlaoise and Mountrath.

## LIBRARY SERVICES

### Laois Cumann na mBan Exhibition



An exhibition on Laois Cumann na mBan was launched in Mountmellick Library on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> July by Cathaoirleach Thomasina Connell. Speakers on the night included historian Regina Dunne, Sinead Holland and Bernadette Dunne. The exhibition was curated by Mountmellick native Bernadette Dunne with the support of Laois County Library as part of its Decade of Centenaries programme. The Cumann na mBan exhibition and related events are part of a long-term and on-going engagement by Laois Local Studies in projects bringing back into the light women's experience of the revolutionary period. It is hoped that the exhibition will encourage the public to share and record for posterity more stories relating to the forgotten women of revolutionary Laois. The exhibition will remain in the Mountmellick Library until the end of August and will be exhibited in other Laois library branches in the coming months.



### National Play Day

Portlaoise Library celebrated National Play Day with two events. The Messy Play event in branch and Circus Skills which was held in Fitzmaurice Place Thursday, 7<sup>th</sup> July were hugely popular.

### Summer Stars Reading

Summer Stars continued in July with primary school children on holidays flocking to their local libraries to read. The accompanying programme saw over **one hundred FREE events** taking place. Events catered for young people 0-15 years, but the focus was primary school children.

### Events included

- Various arts and crafts
- Storytelling
- Treasure hunts and other activities based on books/ book characters
- Outdoor events from scavenger hunts to Teddy Bear Picnics
- Lego Free play and Lego Animation

- Boardgames including Chess
- IT skills
- Circus Skills and magic show
- Pet ownership
- Debating Skills
- Nature Talk and Spelling Bee

Libraries have also offered a new take home craft to families each week in July. Story Stroll visited five locations around the county and six libraries offered a Town Trail as an outdoor family event that the public could undertake in their own locality.

### **One Million Stars Project**

Portlaoise Library in association with Laois Federation ICA were proud to host an exhibition reflecting the One Million Stars to End Violence Project. The project is an inclusive community arts project connecting communities across Ireland in solidarity against domestic abuse and all forms of violence. The exhibition was on display in Portlaoise Library throughout the month of July.

### **Chief Executive's Orders**

- A schedule of Chief Executive Orders signed during the month of July 2022 will be circulated.



**John Mulholland**  
**Chief Executive**

**July 21<sup>st</sup> 2022**

