

**LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**COMHAIRLE CHONTAE LAOISE**



**MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT**  
**MAY 2024**  
**TUARASCÁIL BHAINISTÍOCHTA**  
**BEALTAINÉ 2024**

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 May 2024 is as follows:

**FINANCE & ALLOCATIONS NOTIFIED**

Expenditure and income to the 30/04/2024 is summarised below:

Service Division	Budget Allocation	Expenditure to 30/04/2024
Housing and Building	€30,641,800	€7,702,359
Road Transportation and Safety	€29,636,000	€3,381,299
Water Services	€3,349,000	€1,010,865
Development Management	€10,390,000	€2,413,332
Environmental Services	€11,871,700	€2,545,506
Recreation and Amenity	€5,494,000	€1,285,744
Agriculture, Education, Health and Welfare	€955,000	€185,417
Miscellaneous Services	€10,109,500	€2,810,283
Central Management Charge	€11,434,000	€3,464,233
<b>Total</b>	<b>€113,881,000</b>	<b>€24,799,038</b>

Service Division	Budget Allocation	Income to 30/04/2024
Housing and Building	€31,776,000	€9,235,489
Road Transportation and Safety	€24,788,000	€1,478,758
Water Services	€4,410,000	€970,084
Development Management	€7,195,000	€2,547,119
Environmental Services	€4,733,400	€629,226
Recreation and Amenity	€1,069,000	€44,790
Agriculture, Education, Health and Welfare	€454,000	€65,034
Miscellaneous Services	€11,424,500	€2,260,430
Superannuation	€735,000	€246,525
Local Property Tax	€12,144,172	€4,048,237
Rates	€14,584,066	€5,883,405
Capital transfer	€567,862	
<b>Total</b>	<b>€113,881,000</b>	<b>€27,409,097</b>

The Miscellaneous Services Expenditure is broken down as follows:

Service Division	Budget Allocation	Expenditure to 30/04/2024
Machinery Account	€220,000	€52,002
Administration of Rates	€1,953,000	€149,966
Franchise Costs	€318,000	€126,673
Op of Morgue and Coroner Expenses	€135,000	-€41,740
Op of Markets and Casual Trading	€1,000	€18
Local Representation/Civic Leadership	€1,056,000	€286,700
Motor Taxation	€17,000	€70,066
Agency & Recoupable Services	€6,209,500	€2,166,599
<b>Total</b>	<b>€10,109,500</b>	<b>€2,810,283</b>

The Central Management Charge Expenditure is broken down as follows:

Corporate Building Costs	€1,530,000	€50,001
General Corporate Services	€1,335,000	€527,505
Information and Communications Tech	€1,915,000	€722,027
Human Resources Function	€1,257,000	€513,135
Finance Function	€825,000	€248,626
Pensions and Lump Sum Costs	€4,572,000	€1,402,939
<b>Total</b>	<b>€11,434,000</b>	<b>€3,464,233</b>

#### Allocations Notified

DHLGH - Biodiversity Awareness on the Portlaoise Orbital Route	€13,976
DHLGH - IAS Treatment at Abbeyleix Bog	€11,766
DHLGH - In Your Nature Podcast 2024 Series	€3,967
DRCD - Town Team Support Fund - Mountrath	€10,000
DRCD - Town Team Support Fund - Ballylinan	€10,000

## HOUSING

#### SOCIAL HOUSING DELIVERY

##### *Annual Social Housing Delivery Targets under Housing for All*

Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
Units	200	79	80	87	88	534

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
<b>Social Housing completions to date</b>	229	286	24	-	-	539

#### Social Housing Schemes completed in 2024

Location	Total No. of Houses	House Types	Constructed by	Comment
Clonroosk Abbey, Portlaoise	18	18 no. 3 bed 2 storey	Cluid Housing	18 units delivered
Church Avenue, Stradbally (Phase 2)	6	4 No. 4 Bed 2 Storey 2 No. 2 Bed 1 Storey	LCC (Turnkey)	Tenanting to commence June 2024
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24</b>			

#### Social Housing Schemes Under Construction in 2024

Location	Total No.	House Types	Constructed by	Comment
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Moore St, Rathdowney	6	6 No. 2 Bed 2 Storey	LCC (Construction)	On site – expected delivery Q2 2024
Mooreville, Rathdowney	7	3 No. 2 Bed bungalow 4 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey	LCC (Construction)	On site – expected delivery Q3 2024
Church Avenue, Stradbally (Phase 2)	5	5 No. 4 Bed 2 Storey	LCC (Turnkey)	On site – phased delivery to be delivered by Q2 2024
Bruach Na hAbhainn, Killeen	1	1 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey	LCC (Turnkey)	On Site – Phase 1 (1 unit) delivery Q3 2024
Carraig Glas, Stradbally	26	15 no. 2 bed houses 9 no. 3 bed houses 2 no 4 bed houses	LCC (Construction)	On site – expected delivery Q2 2025
The Orchard, Ballylynan (Phase 3)	1	1 No. 3-Bed 2 Storey	LCC (Turnkey)	On Site – Phase 3 (1 unit) delivery Q3 2024
Sruth na Gleanna, Killeshin	1	1 no. 3 bed house	LA Part V	Delivery Q2 2024
Oldcourt, Ballylinan	1	1 No. 4 bed 1 storey	LCC (Renewal)	On site – expected delivery Q2 2025
Townparks, Rathdowney Rd, Borris-in-Ossory	26	4 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey 12 No. 2 Bed 2 Storey 10 No. 2 Bed 1 Storey	LCC Turnkey	On site – expected delivery Q4 2024
Shannon Street, Mountrath	20	13 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey 7 No. 2 Bed 2 Storey	LCC Turnkey	On site – expected delivery Q4 2024
Townspark, Mountmellick	49	28 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey 11 No. 2 Bed 2 Storey 8 No. 1 Bed 2 Storey 2 No. 2 Bed 1 Storey	LCC Turnkey	On site – expected delivery Q4 2025
Ballymorris Green, Portarlinton (Ph 2)	12	12 no. 3 bed houses	Cluid Housing	Currently on site – Last phase of scheme – advised that these units will be delivered Q3 2024.
Ard Branagh, Portlaoise	6	6 no. 3 bed houses	Circle Housing	Currently on site – expected delivery in Q2 2024
Wallis Street, Mountrath	11	9 no. 2 bed Bungalows 2 no. 2 bed Apts.	Co-Operative Housing	Currently on Site – Expected delivery Q2 2024
An Lochán, Summerhill, Portlaoise	32	20 no. 1 bed maisonettes 8 no 3 Bed duplexes 4 no 2-3Bed apts	Respond	Currently on site. Phased delivery – social housing is across Phases 3 and 4 of overall scheme. Likely total delivery by mid 2025.
Rockview, Portlaoise	47	9 no. 2 bed houses 35 no. 3 bed houses 4 no. 4 bed houses	Oaklee Housing	Currently on site - 3 phases of social housing delivery commencing Q2 2024
Foxburrow, Portlaoise	9	1 and 2 bed apts	Part V - Cluid Housing	On site – Part V agreement to be finalised
Oakvale Way, Stradbally	19	13 No. 1Bed Bungalows	North and East Housing	On site. Delivery Q4 2025

		6 No. 2 Bed Bungalows	Association	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>279</b>			

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

Location/Scheme	No of units	House Types	To be constructed by	Comment
Clonroosk (Knockmay), Portlaoise	12	8 No. 2 Bed 2 Storey 3 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey 1 No. 3 Bed 1 Storey	LCC (Construction)	Stage 3 approval received on 16 <sup>th</sup> May, will now proceed to tender and Stage 4 application.
Iona, Portlaoise	7	2 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey 1 No. 2 Bed 2 Storey 4 No. 1 Bed Apt	LCC (Construction)	Stage 3 approved in Q2 2024 and tender to be advertised in Q2 2024.
Doonane	12	12 no. 3 bed 2 storey	LCC (Construction)	Stage 3 approved in Q2 2024 and tender to be advertised in Q2 2024.
Derry Road, Durrow	24	9 No. 1 Bed 1 Storey 4 No.1 Bed Apts 1 No. 2 Bed 1 Storey 7 No. 2 Bed 2 Storey 3 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey	LCC (Construction)	Stage 2 approved, and Stage 3 currently being progressed.
Ballyadams	1	1 no. 6 bed bungalow	LCC (Construction)	Stage 4 approved and works to commence in Q2 2024.
Stradbally Road, Portlaoise	21	Tenure mix - numbers and house types - to be confirmed in detailed design	LCC Social and Affordable	Stage 2 approved. Part VIII due in Q2 2024.
Bracklone St, Portarlinton	15	15 no. 2 bed houses	LCC (Construction)	Stage 2 to be submitted in Q2 2024
Rushall, Mountrath	3	3 no. 3 bed 2 storey	LCC (Construction)	Stage 2 to be progressed in Q2 2024
Maryborough School, Stradbally Road, Portlaoise	11	2 No. 2 Bed 1 Storey 7 No. 2 Bed 1 Storey 2 No. 1 Bed 1 Storey	LCC (Construction)	Stage 1 submitted in Q1 2024.
Main St, Ballinakill	3	2 No. 2 Bed 2 Storey 1 No. 1 Bed Apt	LCC (Construction)	Stage 2 to be submitted in Q2 2024
Moanbaun, Mountrath	15	4 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey 7 No. 2 Bed 2 Storey 4 No. 2 Bed 1 Storey	LCC (Construction)	Stage 2 to be submitted in Q2 2024
1 New Road, Portlaoise	1	1 No. 4 Bed 1 Storey	LCC (Renewal)	Tender evaluation complete and works to commence on site in Q2 2024.
6 Emmett Terrace, Mountmellick	1	1 No. 4 Bed 1 Storey	LCC (Renewal)	Tender evaluation complete and works to commence on site in Q2 2024.
13 and 14 Lakeglen, Portlaoise	2	1 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey 1 No. 4 Bed 2 Storey	LCC (Renewal)	Demolition works completed on site. Stage 1 approved. Stage 2 to be submitted in Q2 2024.
Beladd, Portlaoise	5	1 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey 3 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey 1 No. 4 Bed 2 Storey	LCC (Construction)	Stage 1 Approval received in Q2 2024.

French Church St, Portarlington	2	2 no. 2 bed apts	LCC (Renewal)	Stage 1 approved in Q1 2024. Stage 2 to be progressed in Q2 2024.
Maltings Site, Mountmellick	30	TBC	LCC (Construction)	Design Team to be Appointed and Stage 1 to be submitted in Q2 2024.
Convent Lands, Portlaoise (CAS)	52	33 no 2 bed apts 15 no 1 bed apts 4 no. 2 bed houses	Sophia Housing	Construction preparation of ground commenced on 19th February. Sod turning at the end of April
County Hotel, Portlaoise (CALF)	10	8 no. 1 bed apts 2 no. 2 bed apts	Cluid Housing	Stage 1 approved. Part VIII currently being prepared. In- committee meeting with MD members took place on 5 <sup>th</sup> March 2024. This scheme will be progressed with a CALF application for funding.
"Radharc Darach", Hepburn Court, Portlaoise	54	8 no. 2 bed bungalow 12 no. 2 bed 2 storey 34 no. 2 bed 2 storey	Cluid Housing	Tender for design/build contract closed on 4 <sup>th</sup> March. Appointment of contractor by Cluid imminent. They are also progressing enabling works for demolition of the remaining structures and ESB cable diversion works on site.
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	Revised CALF application currently under review by Dept; notification is imminent.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>320</b>			

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING / COST RENTAL

Minimum targets for Laois 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

Discussions ongoing to progress potential affordable units as follows:

Affordable	<i>AHF approved in principle by DHLGH</i>	<i>AHF Application submitted to DHLGH – Potential no of unit yield</i>	<i>Advance Turnkey Purchase EOI's under consideration Potential No of unit yield</i>	<i>Part V – Potential No of Unit Yield</i>	<i>LCC Construction Potential No of Unit Yield</i>
Affordable	40	0	*60	8	40 minimum
Cost Rental			28		

*\*Expressions of Interest received for proposed units across potential schemes, under consideration from the perspective of demand, price affordability and feasibility of subsidy funding from DHLGH. Not all units may be realised.*

- 16 units approved for Affordable Purchase Scheme at Kilminchy, Portlaoise. Application portal for units comprising 2- and 3-bedroom houses closed on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2024. Applications being assessed. To date, 12 valid, eligible applicants have been passed to the agent for sale. We have issued formal offer letters to 8 of these 12 applicants.
- 11 units approved for Affordable Purchase Scheme at An Lochan, Summerhill, Portlaoise. Application portal for units of 3-bedroom houses closed on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024. Applications being assessed, and to date, 3 valid eligible applicants have been issued with and accepted formal offer letters. 1 additional applicant is at an advanced stage of the process. Application portal reopened on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2024 as the current list of eligible applicants has been exhausted.
- 13 units approved for Affordable Purchase in Stradbally. Currently working with developer regarding their Local Authority Subsidy Agreement with LCC. Construction of units not yet commenced.
- Design has been finalised for social (21) and affordable (46) housing on Council owned landbank on the Stradbally Road, Portlaoise. Funding mechanism for this developing this site as a mixed tenure scheme is still to be determined.

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 in respect of social/affordable housing.

Queries regarding affordable housing should be emailed to [affordablepurchase@laoiscoco.ie](mailto:affordablepurchase@laoiscoco.ie)

## PRIVATE RENTED INSPECTIONS

Laois County Council is responsible, through inspection, for determining if a property meets the standards for rental accommodation in accordance with the Housing (Standards for Rented Houses) Regulations 2019.

The Council has been advised that the target number of Private Rented Inspections for 2024 is 892.

	<b>1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 – 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024</b>
No of Private Rented Inspections	347
No of notices of works issued	269

The Housing Inspections team can be contacted via email at [propertyinspections@laoscoco.ie](mailto:propertyinspections@laoscoco.ie).

### SERVICED SITES FOR SELF BUILDERS

Laois County Council is actively considering the development of **serviced sites** over the coming years at a number of locations in the county.

In the first instance, eligibility will be determined by criteria as set out under the **Croí Conaithe (Towns) Fund – Ready to Build Scheme (Serviced Sites for New Homes) Scheme**. Under the scheme, local authorities are supported to make serviced sites in towns and villages available to potential individual purchasers. These sites will be available at a discount on the market value of the site for the building of a property for occupation as the principal private residence of the purchaser. The level of discount to the individual will depend on the level of servicing cost incurred by the local authority before the sale of the site with discounts up to a maximum of €30,000. The amount of such discount will be reflected in the sale price of the site to the purchaser.

The following locations are currently under consideration for serviced sites and/or have advertised sites for sale. Sites to be a minimum of 0.25 acres in size.

Location	No. of Sites	Comment
Ballacolla Road, Durrow	4	3 offers accepted and conveyancing ongoing; 1 contract signed.
Gleann na Glaise, Ballyroan	4	2 offers accepted and conveyancing ongoing; 2 contracts signed.
Doonane	2	Stage 3 submitted in Q1 2024
Derry Road Durrow	4	Stage 2 approved and Stage 3 currently being progressed.
Castletown	9	Proposal. Detailed design currently on-going
<b>TOTAL SITES UNDER CONSIDERATION</b>	<b>23</b>	

Queries regarding serviced sites should be emailed to [servicedsites@laoscoco.ie](mailto:servicedsites@laoscoco.ie)

### HOUSING STOCK

#### Housing Re-Lets

Month	LA Keys Surrendered	Properties Acquired	Works Completed
January 2024	8	1	4
February 2024	10	0	5
March 2024	5	0	6
April 2024	4	2	11
<b>TOTAL (YTD)</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>26</b>



**NOTE:** There are currently 30 vacant units from our existing stock and a further 8 units that the Council acquired. Works are either ongoing on these properties or specifications are being prepared for works to be carried out.

### Housing Maintenance

Month	Work Orders Raised	Work Orders Closed	Work Orders Open
January 2024	612	612	0
February 2024	453	453	0
March 2024	374	299	75
April 2024	442	258	184
<b>TOTAL (YTD)</b>	<b>1,881</b>	<b>1,622</b>	<b>259</b>

### Energy Efficiency/Retrofitting Programme:

The Midlands Retrofit Programme (MRP) was rolled into the Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme (EERP) in 2022/2023/2024/2025.

A summary of both programmes is outlined in table below.

PROGRAMME	COMMENTS
MRP – 159 Units	159 units completed.
EERP (2021) – 29 Units – O'Moore Place	27 units completed. Remaining 2 to be completed in Q2 2024.
<p><b>EERP (2022/2023) – Phase 1&amp;2 – 33 Units</b> Thornberry, Church Ave, Slieve Bloom Park, Quigley Park &amp; Other Locations</p> <p><b>EERP (2022/2023) – Phase 3 – 26 Units</b> St. Fintan's Tce, Old School Road, St Johns Sq &amp; Other Locations</p>	<p>Tender evaluation for the 2022 Retrofit Programme comprising 59 houses has been completed. It is now proposed to commence works in phase's set out below.</p> <p><b><u>Phase 1</u></b></p> <p>1) Thornberry, Abbeyleix – 16 units.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works completed in Q4 2023.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Phase 2</u></b></p> <p>1) Church Avenue, Stradbally – 7 units.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works completed in Q1 2024.</li> </ul> <p>2) Slieve Bloom Park, Clonaslee – 4 units.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works completed in Q1 on two units and remaining 2 units to be completed in Q2 2024.</li> </ul> <p>3) Quigley Park, Rathdowney – 2 units</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works completed in Q1 2024</li> </ul> <p>4) Other Locations – 4 units</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works to be completed in Q2/Q3 2024.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Phase 3</u></b></p> <p>1) St Fintans Terrace – 4 units</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works completed in Q1 2024.</li> </ul> <p>2) Old School Road, Ballylinan – 9 units</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works to be completed in Q2 2024.</li> </ul> <p>3) St. John's Square, Portlaoise – 7 units.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works to be completed in Q2 2024.</li> </ul> <p>Other Locations – 6 units</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works to be completed in Q2/Q3 2024.</li> </ul>

<b>EERP (2024) – 55 Units</b> St. Brigid’s Place(Phase 1), Meadowbrook, Imleach, Triogue Court & Other Locations	<b>Phase 1</b> 1) St Brigid’s Place, Meadowbrook, Imleach, Triogue Court & Other Locations. – 55 units. • Survey works to commence in Q1 2024 and retrofit works to commence in Q3 2024.
<b>EERP (2025) – 50 Units</b> St. Brigid’s Place (Phase 2), Arderin, Fr. O’Connor Cres., Erkindale Dr, Rossmore View & Various Locations	<b>Phase 1</b> 1) St. Brigid’s Place (Phase 2), Arderin, Fr. O’Connor Cres., Erkindale Dr, Rossmore View & Various Locations. – 50 units. • Survey works to commence in Q4 2024.

### HOUSING NEED

Circular 06/2024 sets out arrangements for social housing acquisitions for 2024 and notifies local authorities that Government have agreed to an increased provision of 1,500 social housing acquisitions. Similar to 2023 the additional acquisitions will focus on properties where a tenant in receipt of social housing supports, including Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) and Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS), and has received a Notice of Termination (NOT) due to the landlord’s intention to sell the property

Laois County Council has been given an allocation of 15 for 2024 - This is not a target, but rather to support planning and to allow local authorities to prioritise the acquisitions to be targeted. The Dept has advised they will keep this under review throughout 2024

**From 1<sup>st</sup> January – 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024:**

Acquisitions completed	3
Acquisitions currently in progress	5
No. of above that have Tenants in Situ	4

Queries regarding acquisitions should be emailed to [housingdelivery@laoiscoco.ie](mailto:housingdelivery@laoiscoco.ie)

### Homeless Presentations

Time Periodss	Homeless Presentations Households	Breakdown of Household
1 <sup>st</sup> April 2024 – 30 <sup>th</sup> April 2024	18	16 singles (1 couple) 2 families

### Homeless Accommodation

	Emergency Accommodation Households booked at 30 <sup>th</sup> April 2024	Social Housing allocated from homelessness in April 2024
Families	6 (1 hostel)	1
Single Persons	16 (3 hostel)	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1</b>

Homeless related queries should be emailed to [homeless@laoiscoco.ie](mailto:homeless@laoiscoco.ie) or [housinglcc@laoiscoco.ie](mailto:housinglcc@laoiscoco.ie)

### Social Housing List at 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024

TOTAL No of Social Housing Applicants on waiting list	1,593
Proportion of SH applicants availing of HAP supports	(706) = 44.3%

### RAS/Leasing Statistics at 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024

Active RAS tenancies	63
Active short-term leasing tenancies (Social Housing Leasing Scheme)	23
Active Repair & Leasing Scheme tenancies	1
Active long-term leasing tenancies with private landlords/investors	11
Active long-term Mortgage to Rent leasing tenancies with a private company	34

### Tenancies Created during the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 - 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024

Method of Delivery	No. housed
First allocation of New Build/Acquired unit	5
Relet / Refurbished Stock Allocation	13
Housed via leasing	1
AHB Tenancies created (via new build and relet)	59
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>78</b>

Queries regarding Housing Allocations should be emailed to [housingallocations@laoiscoco.ie](mailto:housingallocations@laoiscoco.ie)

### LOANS AND GRANTS

#### Local Authority Home Loan (LAHL)

No of new Loan Applications received since 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2024	24
No of 'Live' Applications approved at 30 <sup>th</sup> April 2024	11
No of Applications refused since 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2024	3

#### PRIVATE GRANTS

#### Housing Adaptation Grants at 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024

Allocation €TBA

	No. of applications received	No. of applications paid	Value of applications paid	No. of applications currently at work stage	Value of applications currently at work stage
HOP	85	37	€180,369.00	80	€398,702
MAG	1	2	€8,720.00	2	€8,950
HGD	48	37	€268,647.50	64	€531,024
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>€457,736.50</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>€938,676</b>

#### Disabled Persons Grant for Social Housing

DPG works at 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024

<b>Allocation 2024 (including LA funded portion €58,133)</b>	<b>€581,329</b>
No of applications included on 2024 funding submission to Dept of Housing on 29 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2024	30
Value of the above proposal	€776,135

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

## HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE TO REFUGEES FLEEING CONFLICT

Laois County Council leads and coordinates the **Laois Community Integration Forum (CIF)**. The Forum, consisting of 23 statutory and voluntary groups/agencies, meets regularly, with 25 meetings held to date, ensuring consistency and efficiency in service delivery and integration supports to new arrivals to our county. The overall numbers resident in the various accommodation centres around Laois remains largely static, with no significant variations.

The Council's Integration Support Office continues to develop its programmes for the coordination of service delivery and integration supports to all those in need of such services. Onsite one to one clinics are underway, assistance is provided with accessing grant funding streams which support integration, and liaison with DCEDIY is ongoing. The Integration Team are planning a number of events to mark 'Refugee Week' which takes place from 17<sup>th</sup>- 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2024.

The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth (DCEDIY), Designated Accommodation Centre at Stradbally (90-day centre) is being discontinued, as the contract term expires shortly, and the site will no longer be operational by the end of May. In the interim CIF member groups and organisations continue to provide additional supports to those resident at the site. There were 173 persons accommodated there as at 21/05/2024, and Council has assisted residents in their efforts to source alternative accommodation. A total of 115 persons have left the site to date. Those who have not found suitable accommodation before the closure of the Stradbally site are being relocated by DCEDIY to a new DAC at Newhall, Naas, Co. Kildare, for the remainder of their 90 day stay duration.

The Council continues to assist DCEDIY in the sourcing of temporary accommodation for Ukrainian displaced persons, providing liaison locally in relation to vacant buildings and sites suitable for medium to long term accommodation solutions. The Council also continues to allocate privately offered/pledged accommodation (e.g Offer A Home Scheme) to Ukrainian families, with 66 Ukrainian households having been assisted with accommodation locally through this mechanism to date.

## PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT, ARTS & HERITAGE

### LOCAL AREA PLANS

- 1. Carlow-Graigucullen Draft Joint Urban Local Area Plan 2024-2030**  
Material amendments to the draft were made at the Laois and Carlow Council meetings held on 24<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2024 respectively.  
Those amendments are on public display for a 4-week period from 14<sup>th</sup> May through to 12<sup>th</sup> June 2024. Details are available on [www.consult.laois.ie](http://www.consult.laois.ie)
- 2. Draft Portlaoise Local Area Plan 2024-2030**  
The Draft Plan is on public display for a 6-week period from 15<sup>th</sup> May through to 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024.  
Two public information sessions have been arranged for 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> June 2024 respectively.  
Details are available on [www.consult.laois.ie](http://www.consult.laois.ie)

## DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT REPORT

<b>E-Planning Project</b>	80% of the applications received for the period from the 1/1/2024 to the 14/5/2024 have been made online – 264 applications out of a total of 329 applications received during this period		
Planning Applications	<b>Year</b>	<b>Valid applications from 01/01/2024 - 14/05/2024</b>	<b>Valid applications from 01/01/2023- 14/05/2023</b>
		<b>198</b>	<b>187</b>
Total Number of valid applications received:	198		
Number of decisions made	168		
Invalid applications returned to applicant	134		
Number of applications granted:	<b>163 (Decisions to Grant)</b>		
Number of applications refused:	<b>5 (Decisions to Refuse) 3% refusal rate</b>		
Files scanned up to	<b>Up to date</b>		
Referrals to Area Offices (working days):	<b>within 14 days achieved</b>		
No of appeals to ABP	<b>7</b>		
<b>PRE PLANNING</b>			
No of requests to date	<b>127</b>		
No of meetings held to date	<b>116</b>		
Wait time	<b>2 Weeks</b>		

## ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

Current year	2024		2023	
Service Review	Mar	Jan - Apr	Mar	Jan - Apr
Total number of new cases subject to complaints that were investigated	16	41	8	49
Number of Warning Letters served	34	116	30	137
Number of Enforcement Notices served	0	28	10	52
No Of cases referred for legal proceedings	0	1	1	8
Number of cases in Court(incl adjournments)	7	21	6	21
Number of cases Resolved in Court	4	6	4	5
Number of Files Closed	6	23	10	41
Number of cases on system	159	150	152	152
Enforcement Costs recouped	€ 2,511.24	€ 3,531.24	€ 915.00	€2,205.00
Number of Valid Retention Applications Received relating to Enforcement Action	1	7	3	14
Fees received through Valid Retention Applications Received relating to Enforcement Action	€ 320.00	€ 4,452.00	€ 954.50	€5,659.63
Legal fees paid	€ 1,221.27	€ 1,842.51	€ 790.90	€3,331.25

## BROADBAND – DIGITAL PROJECTS

### NBI UPDATE

The total number of Premises in Laois = 12874 with 8426 Residential, 2234 Commercial & Residential, 1776 Farm and 438 Commercial.

- 26% of Premises (3312) - have HSB connected to date.
- 54% of Premises (7013) - now available to pre order connection.
- 10.5 % of Premises (1342) – Network build in progress.
  - 1.5% of Premises (185) – Survey completed.
  - 8% of Premises ( 1022) – Survey pending.

### STEAM SHOWCASE EVENT



Laois schools pulled off some big wins at the inaugural LOETB S.T.E.A.M. Showcase event, held in Portlaoise College on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> of April. In November 2023, Laois County Council, in partnership with Offaly County Council and LOETB (Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board) rolled out a STEAM programme to all nine ETB schools throughout Laois (4) and Offaly (5) which culminated in a showcase event in Portlaoise College in April 2024. The STEAM programme provided training and equipment for teachers and students across all LOETB schools to run lunchtime and after-school clubs that help develop skills around STEAM.

In each case the overall winning school won €1000 of S.T.E.A.M. equipment for their school and €500 of vouchers for the team themselves, through sponsorship from Laois and Offaly County Councils.

The Minecraft winners (Portlaoise College) also won a trip for their whole S.T.E.A.M. Club to Microsoft Dream Space in Dublin, thanks to the partnership with Microsoft in the Minecraft strand of the programme.



### COMPUTER SCIENCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Computer Science training for Secondary School teachers has continued with 4 modules been offered in this school year to May 24. This will allow schools to offer Computer Science to Leaving Cert students in the future. The 4 schools in Laois are taken part this year. Portlaoise Community College, Dunamase Collage Portlaoise, St. Fergal's Rathdowney and Colaiste Iosagain Portarlinton. This is an initiative been piloted by Laois Co.Co., Offaly Co.Co., LOETB and ATU Donegal. The awards ceremony for the students who have completed their modules will take place in the LOETB offices on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> of May.

### Arts

#### LAOIS ARTHOUSE

Cllr Paschal McEvoy, Cathaoirleach of Laois County Council launched the "Quercu" exhibition by Alan Meredith, recently in the Laois Arthouse.



Quercu brings together a new body of work by Alan Meredith, on the occasion, of his first solo exhibition in Co Laois. Oak is the dominant material that Alan has used for this exhibition, called Quercu, which is the scientific name for Oak.

Alan began working with wood from an early age. His work to date straddles the boundaries of craft, sculpture and architecture and has been exhibited nationally and internationally. Alan has created once off pieces for clients, furniture, public art pieces and wood turned vessels.

Tours can be arranged on request with the Arts Office and is open to children, students, and adults alike.

The exhibition opens until 21 June, Tuesday – Friday 1pm (or by arrangement)

## CRUINNIÚ NA NÓG

The Cruinniú na nÓg programme was launched recently. The Laois Arthouse has arranged three workshops for children. It takes place on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> June.

## BEALTAINE FESTIVAL



As part of the Bealtaine Festival, Arthur Broomfield started a four-week poetry course for older people at the Laois Arthouse. Dr Arthur Broomfield is a poet, essayist, and short story writer. He has published nine books including six poetry collections. He holds workshops for poets and mentor's writers on-line.

We have eight people participating in this workshop which runs every Monday 13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> May 2024.

On May 30<sup>th</sup>, there will be a Poetry reading with Arthur and all the participants, along with family and friends.



## ROADS, TRANSPORTATION, DRAINAGE & PUBLIC REALM

### Roads repairs & maintenance

General road repairs and maintenance works are ongoing throughout the county.

### Annual Road Works Scheme 2024

The annual roads programme has commenced with a number of schemes complete and others currently ongoing in the respective Municipal Districts.



Road Strengthening & Bridge rehabilitation works in Brittas, Clonaslee



Preparation works in advance of road strengthening at Ballycarroll

**Climate Change Adaption and Resilience Works**

Drainage & resilience improvement works have commenced at a number of locations across the respective Municipal District's to increase and improve surface water management at vulnerable locations.

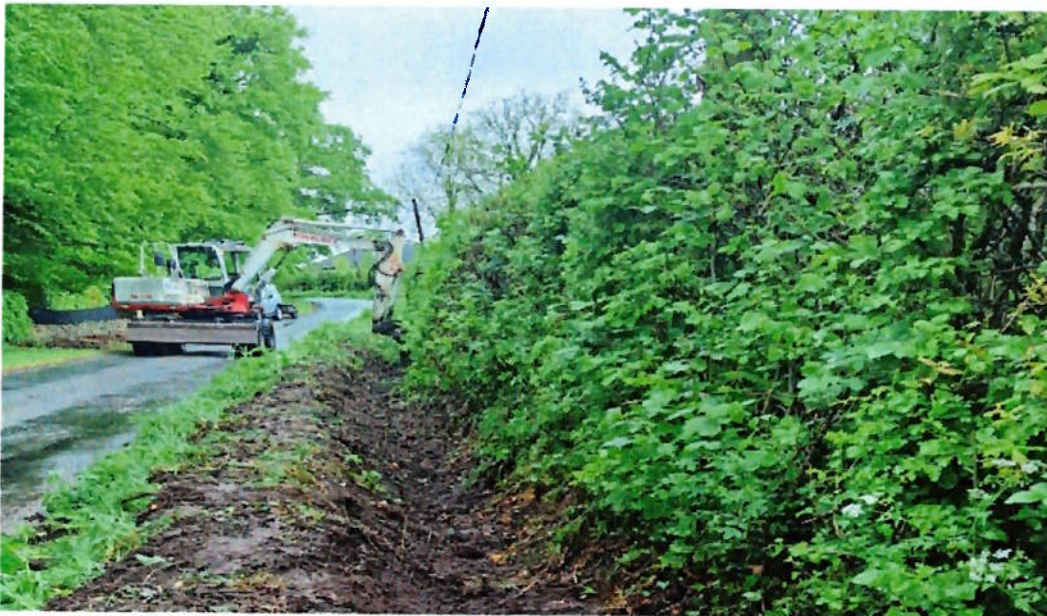


**New outlet pipe under installation Green Roads**



**Drainage improvements works The Pike**

**Road, Pedigree Corner**



**Drain cleaning works Road Safety Works Ballymullen, Abeyleix**



**Safety Improvement Works at R424/R420 Junction, Lea Rd, Portarlinton.**



**Installation of traffic calming ramp adjacent to Emo National School**





**Traffic calming Newtown & Doonane**

**Bridge Rehabilitation/Repair Works**



**Repair works at Shanragh**

### STUDENT ENTERPRISE AWARDS

The National Final of the Student Enterprise Awards was held in Mullingar on Thursday, 9th May. 81 businesses from across the country were shortlisted in three main categories. The Local Enterprise Office initiative, supported by Enterprise Ireland and local authorities, commenced last September in secondary schools nationwide with close to 28,000 students taking part. The initiative, funded by the Government of Ireland through Enterprise Ireland and delivered by the 31 Local Enterprise Offices has seen over 400,000 take part in the programme since it began 22 years ago.

Laois was represented in the Senior Category by David Reddin and John Phelan from St. Mary's CBS with their project Steady Wine (handcrafted, personalised wooden holders for wine bottles and glasses). In the Intermediate Category, we were represented by Amina Adnan from Portlaoise College with her project Eternity Cosmetics (long lasting perfume with natural ingredients) and In the Junior Category Olivia Przepiora, from Portlaoise College represented Laois with her project Via's Jewellery (nickel-free resin earrings).

Finnegan Fabrication's "High Lift" was the winner of the senior category. The business, set up by Séan Finnegan, a student of St. Patrick's Classical School in Navan, creates portable cranes that can be fitted to the interior of commercial vans to help those in construction and similar industries to lift heavy materials in and out. The Intermediate Award went to Esker Timber Creations from Presentation College Athenry in Galway. The business, set up by student Cormac Monaghan, manufactures unique wooden products from repurposed pallet wood. In the Junior category the award went to Carry Caman. The business, set up by Marguerite Herlihy, Seána Walsh, Clodagh Buckley and Lucy Matassa from Presentation Secondary School Castleisland in Kerry, is a high-visibility hurley and sliotar holder.

### NATIONAL ENTERPRISE AWARDS

The final of this year's National Enterprise Awards were held in the Mansion House, Dublin on Thursday 23rd May. Laois were represented by Dunmasc Genetics from Ballycarroll, Portlaoise. They were funded in 2014 by Laois native Stephen Dowling, Dunmasc Genetics has established itself as a leader in the training, sales, and service of bovine genetic products in Ireland and internationally. The company has an ambitious growth plan which will see an expansion of its overseas market which currently includes Holland, Latvia, Spain, Italy, Turkey, Kazakhstan, China, Vietnam, and Malaysia.

### INVEST LAOIS WEBSITE

Currently developing a new Invest Laois website which will be a brochure website in terms of what Laois has to offer as a place to live, work, visit, invest and do business. Potential investors will be able to see the opportunities, infrastructure and supports available for businesses. We are also in the process of designing a new Invest Laois Logo.

## WASTE MANAGEMENT & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

### 1. Kyletalesha Landfill, Transfer Station & Civic Amenity Sites:

Normal services continue at Kyletalesha Landfill Facility and Civic Amenity Site. Landfill monitoring and aftercare maintenance is on-going. All monitoring results are being submitted to the EPA. The facility is being operated in compliance with the facility's EPA waste license.

The Portarlington Civic Amenity Site continues to be managed and operated by Bord na Mona. Laois County Council carries out regular inspections of the facility.

### 2. Bring Banks:

Tonnages of 2024 collected recyclable material is in Table 1 below.

Month	Tonnage	Month	Tonnage	Month	Tonnage
Jan	174.00	May		Sept	
Feb	123.50	June		Oct	
Mar	116.11	July		Nov	
Apr	130.56	Aug		Dec	
<b>Annual Total</b>			<b>544.17 Tonnes</b>		

**Table 1 – 2023 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) Waste Enforcement & Complaints

Table 2 below details the number and types of complaints received to the end of April 2024.

Nature	Number	Nature	Number
Waste Management/Enforcement	216	Air	16
Litter	221	Noise	9
Water	58	Waste Infrastructure	69
<b>Total</b>	<b>589</b>		

**Table 2 – Environmental Complaint Register**

#### b) Litter Fines

Month	Number	Month	Number	Month	Number
Jan	22	May		Sept	
Feb	3	June		Oct	
Mar	5	July		Nov	
Apr	5	Aug		Dec	
<b>Annual Total</b>			<b>35</b>		

**Table 3 – 2024 Litter Fines**

**c) Illegal Dumping**

Figures in Table 4 below includes for illegal dumping clean-ups by litter wardens and by contractors.

Month	Tonnage	Month	Tonnage	Month	Tonnage
Jan	26.50	May		Sept	
Feb	14.86	June		Oct	
Mar	18.86	July		Nov	
Apr	13.34	Aug		Dec	
<b>Total Tonnage</b>			<b>73.56</b>		

**Table 4 – Illegal Dumping Cleanups**

**4. Waste Management & Enforcement:**

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

**5. Environmental Protection**

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

- On-going farm inspections in at-risk catchments.
- On-site investigations of complaints relating to water quality and/or water pollution.
- On-going assessment of planning applications with regard to water quality protection.

**b) Air & Noise:**

- All noise and air complaints are being investigated.
- On-going assessment of planning applications with regard to air quality and noise pollution protection.

**6. Domestic Wastewater Treatment System Grants (DWWTS)**

- DWWTS inspection requests received and inspections carried out to the 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024:

<b>Number of requests to date</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Number of inspections carried out</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Number of Advisory Notices served</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Number of requests that do not qualify for the grant</b>	<b>6</b>

**Table 5 – DWWTS Data**

**7. Rural Water – Multi Annual Programme 2024 to 2026**

- Funding application under the Rural Water Multi Annual Programme 2024 - 2026 has been submitted to the Department for approval. No grant notification has been received to date. A further update will be provided to the members when our funding applications are approved.

## Emergency Planning, Fire Services & Flood Relief

In 2024, to date, (13<sup>th</sup> May) Laois County Fire & Rescue Service attended 204 emergency incidents, consisting of 47 fires, 119 special service incidents and 38 false alarms.

### Turnout by Station\*:

Portlaoise – 89	Portarlinton - 32	Stradbally – 39	Mountmellick – 35
Abbeyleix - 29	Mountrath – 24	Durrow – 20	Rathdowney – 24

### Retained Fire Services in Ireland – A Review of Recruitment and Retention and the Future Sustainability of Service Delivery

For information, as of 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024, there are 27 permanent vacancies in the Laois retained fire service. This is based on the new compliment of 100 retained firefighters (up from 75) in the 8 fire stations, following the WRC Agreement. Open recruitment is ongoing to recruit more fire-fighters, with 7 applications currently on file. There are 18 persons in the appointments process.

### Civil Defence

#### Volunteers

Civil Defence continues to provide ongoing training and upskilling for volunteers. As of 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024, the unit has 52 active volunteers who all meet the Minium Training Standards of the Department of Defence. 1 volunteer is currently inactive as they were unable to attend an MTS recertification course.

#### Activity Report January 1<sup>st</sup> – May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024

- 44 Deployments & Events
- 43 Training Events

These included 7 missing person operations, 3 supports to the Ukrainian reponse, 27 community events & 6 medical responses.

#### Garda Youth Awards

In April one of the Civil Defence volunteers Rachel Fennelly received an award at the 2024 Garda Youth Awards for her service to Laois Civil Defence and the community. The Garda Youth Awards recognise the outstanding achievement of young people between the ages of 13 and 21, who have undertaken exceptional work in their local communities or who have shown great determination in their own lives.

#### Facilities

Upgrade works are continuing at the new headquarters building including upgrades to the electrical installation, fire alarm and emergency lighting systems.



## Finance

The 2024 grant letters have been issued by the Department of Defence and the required information has been submitted back to them. We are awaiting confirmation of the 2024 grant and subsequent drawdown.

## CORPORATE, COMMUNITY, CLIMATE ACTION, CULTURE, LIBRARIES & TOURISM

### **Local Enhancement Programme 2023-2024**

Laois LCDC received an allocation €153,591.05 under the Local Enhancement Programme 2023/2024. The LCDC CEP subcommittee convened on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March to review all applications with their recommendation being approved by the full LCDC at the March meeting. In line with funding guidelines, all LCDC proposed approvals have been forwarded to the Department of Rural and Community Development, with final Ministerial approval expected the end of May at which point all successful/non successful groups will be notified in writing.

### **Laois PPN**

Laois PPN commenced the rollout of the Property Marker to Community Groups. Mountmellick Men's Shed became the first group in Laois to be supported by Laois PPN with this crime prevention initiative. Laois PPN have continued the rollout by supporting by Portlaoise Men's Shed and Raheen Community Alert to date.

Laois PPN & Offaly PPN held a cross county family friendly event celebrating International Dawn Chorus Day. The Dusk Chorus Walk took place at Derryoune Lake on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> of May. The evening chorus is a wonderful spectacle of bird song without the early morning start.

The walk was led by well known Laois man and local bird expert, Ricky Whelan who is also the Offaly County Council Biodiversity Officer.

### **Age Friendly**

The National Convention of Older Peoples Councils took place in Kilkenny on the 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> May. The theme was "*Aging with Independence*". This theme was evident through the many speakers on the first day and the panel discussion on day two of the event.

Speakers on day one included

- **Philip Hogan** of Cliffmun media on "**Technology supporting independence as we age**"
- **Catherine McGuigan**, Chief Officer with Age Friendly Ireland, who gave a shared service national update
- **Lorna King**, clinical specialist dietician for older people
- Kilkenny Age Friendly ambassador and former president of the GAA **Nickey Brennan** delivered the evening talk

Day 2 saw talks and a panel discussion with Q and A session with the following.

- **Mark Harrington**, National Healthy Age Friendly Homes Manager
- **Aine Flynn**, Director of Decision Support Services
- **Garret Doocey**, Assistant Secretary, Dept of Transport
- **Diarmuid Angland**, Specialist, Department of Finance

The incidences of social isolation, loneliness and the impact of the move to a digital , cashless society featured heavily . Attendees highlighted priority areas for the year ahead following round table discussions. Minister Mary Butler, National OPC chair Ita Healy and Chief Exectutive of Kilkenny County Council rounded off the addresses and closed the event .



Midlands Older Peoples Councils at OPC convention- Longford , Westmeath, Offaly, Roscommmon and Laois



### Agism Awareness Campaign

Age Friendly Ireland are launching their agism awareness campaign on Thursday the 23<sup>rd</sup> May which will be supported by each county's Age Friendly ambassador.

### Community Projects (Elected Members) Fund 2024

To date 115 groups have received funding totalling €105,648.

### Pride of Place 2024

This year's Pride of Place entrant has been confirmed as Abbeyleix Bog Project CLG who will enter the new "Climate Action and Biodiversity" category.

### World of Work Educational Partnership Programme 2023/24

2nd year Students from Portlaoise College completed their World of Work Programme in conjunction with Laois County Council and Business in the community. During this programme they were given an introduction to Laois County Council. They also met members of staff who gave them an outline of their work and their pathway to their current job. They had a session with Ms Suzanne Dempsey on Portlaoise Low Carbon town which gave them an insight into what Laois County Council are doing in Portlaoise to counteract climate change. They visited Portlaoise Fire Station where they met members of the Fire Service. They

enjoyed a tour of the fire station and were briefed on the importance of fire safety and shown equipment used by the Fire Service. The Wrap Session for this programme was held in Portlaoise College on 15 May when the students gave their report on their participation in the World of Work programme.

### **Laois Comhairle na nÓg (CNN)**

Members of CNN were involved in the organising of Youth Work Ireland Laois '21 Years in Action' celebration and the launch of 2023- 2028 strategic plan, which took place on the 6 April 2024 at Dunamais Arts Centre. Comhairle na nÓg had a stand on which they showcased the work that has been done and what they are currently working on.



The young people are continuing to process their topic on education and have conducted research interviews in their schools with their peers and teachers on how certain subjects are taught.

### **Climate Action**

#### **Home Energy Presentations**

Thomas O'Connor B. Eng MIEI, Senior Energy Consultant with Optimising Power @ Work attended Laois County Council on 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2024 and gave two presentations to employees, retired staff and councillors on the National Climate Action Plan, the Built Environment, discussed what changes are we looking at in our home's Energy use over the coming years and what grant funding is available to make our homes more energy efficient.



### Laois Federation of Tidy Towns Grants

Laois Federation of Tidy Towns Grants were awarded to 21 Tidy Town Groups in the amount of €37,215. This grant is to support Tidy Towns with environmental and amenity improvement projects.

### **Community Climate Action Fund**

Applications for the Community Climate Action Fund closed on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March. Project applications showcased a holistic approach to climate action from Laois groups including energy conservation, food waste, sustainable travel and circular economy. 27 applications to the Community Climate Action Fund were evaluated by a committee on 22<sup>nd</sup> April. This portfolio report was sent to the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. DECC are expected to revert with confirmation of projects approved by end of July with projects planned to start in Q3 2024.

### **Green-Schools Awards**

This year 11 Laois schools were awarded their Green-School flags. Laois schools were invited to the Green-Schools Award Ceremony held in Kilkenny on 13<sup>th</sup> May to receive their Green Flag Awards. This ceremony celebrates all the hard work students, teachers and the wider school community put into achieving their Green Flag. Laois County Council hired a bus available to all awarded Laois schools so they could travel to Kilkenny in a sustainable way. The day was a great celebration of the enthusiasm of young people and the school community for environmental care and the practical actions we can all take to make our world better.

### Awarded schools

#### *Travel theme -*

Presentation Primary School Portarlington

#### *Biodiversity theme -*

Scoil Mhuire Fatima Timahoe NS

S.N. Fionntan Naofa Shanahoe

Knock NS

*Global Citizenship Energy theme –*  
Scoil Christ Ri  
Clough NS  
Ballyadams NS

*Global Citizenship Litter and Waste theme –*  
St Francis Special School  
Ballyfin NS  
Mountmellick Community School

*Global Citizenship Travel theme –*  
Derrymalogue NS



Getting ready to get on the bus to Kilkenny!

### **Portlaoise Low Carbon Town and Systems Innovation for Sustainable Enterprises and Communities**

On the 8<sup>th</sup> May in the Council Chamber participants from a wide range of Laois organisations and businesses successfully completed a pioneering course aimed at equipping communities with the skills needed to tackle their climate change challenges. The Ireland's Knowledge Centre for Carbon, Climate, and Community Action ([IKC3](#)), in partnership with Laois County Council, conducted this pilot course, Systems Innovation for Sustainable Enterprises and Communities (SISEC) focussing on the [Portlaoise Low Carbon Town Project](#).

The course, delivered over a period of three months, focused on empowering local participants as challenge owners with the skills and knowledge necessary to address sustainability challenges within their communities. Participants engaged actively and collaboratively, applying systems thinking to tackle issues surrounding climate change on a local scale.



Participants on SISEC course representing 32 Laois organisations



Class with their certificates of completion

### **Sport & Leisure**

#### **Sports Capital Equipment Grants**

The Sports Capital Equipment Grants were announced with 19 clubs and organisations in Co Laois receiving a total of €388,415. The Sport & Leisure Section assisted the majority of these organisations to complete their applications.

#### **Local Sports Plan**

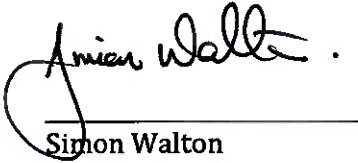
The consultation phase of the local Sports Plan is nearing completion with the survey of residents and stakeholders closing on Friday May, 17th. Public and stakeholder engagement has exceeded expectations.

#### **National Bike Week**

Laois County Council co-ordinated 52 events delivered through our community partners in schools, community groups and organisations from May 11th to 19th across the county to encourage people of all ages and abilities to cycle. Funding of €17,000 has been allocated to groups to assist with the delivery of events.

## Chief Executive's Orders

- ✦ A schedule of Chief Executive Orders signed during the month of May 2024 will be circulated.



Simon Walton

Simon Walton  
Deputy Chief Executive

May 23<sup>rd</sup> 2024