

LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL
COMHAIRLE CHONTAE LAOISE



MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT
JUNE 2023
TUARASCÁIL BHAINISTÍOCHTA
MEITHEAMH 2023

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 June 2023 is as follows:

FINANCE & ALLOCATIONS NOTIFIED

Expenditure and income to the 31/05/2023 is summarised below:

Service Division	Budget Allocation	Expenditure to 31/05/2023
Housing and Building	€21,247,400	€6,700,487
Road Transportation and Safety	€26,291,600	€5,412,638
Water Services	€3,404,500	€1,384,958
Development Management	€9,586,000	€3,698,899
Environmental Services	€8,677,500	€2,651,663
Recreation and Amenity	€4,990,000	€1,259,462
Agriculture, Education, Health and Welfare	€900,000	€194,026
Miscellaneous Services	€9,498,700	€3,042,210
Central Management Charge	€11,213,300	€3,684,659
Total	€95,809,000	€28,029,002

Service Division	Budget Allocation	Income to 31/05/2023
Housing and Building	€22,725,300	€7,465,392
Road Transportation and Safety	€21,583,000	€1,630,724
Water Services	€4,502,000	€1,864,738
Development Management	€6,495,500	€2,430,609
Environmental Services	€2,231,000	€800,030
Recreation and Amenity	€1,049,000	€363,163
Agriculture, Education, Health and Welfare	€436,000	€61,151
Miscellaneous Services	€11,954,262	€3,230,608
Superannuation	€720,000	€278,712
Local Property Tax	€9,033,703	€3,011,234
Rates	€14,578,963	€5,508,579
Capital transfer	500,272	
Total	€95,809,000	€26,644,940

The Miscellaneous Services Expenditure is broken down as follows:

Service Division	Budget Allocation	Expenditure to 31/05/2023
Machinery Account	€220,000	€92,628
Administration of Rates	€2,211,000	€217,955
Franchise Costs	€104,000	€64,437
Op of Morgue and Coroner Expenses	€130,000	
Op of Markets and Casual Trading	€3,000	€1,617
Local Representation/Civic Leadership	€987,000	€315,557
Motor Taxation	€226,000	€74,727
Agency & Recoupable Services	€5,617,700	€2,275,289
Total	€9,498,700	€3,042,210

The Central Management Charge Expenditure is broken down as follows:

Corporate Building Costs	€2,038,300	€171,835
General Corporate Services	€1,281,000	€535,425
Information and Communications Tech	€1,738,000	€706,312
Human Resources Function	€1,083,000	€380,534
Finance Function	€761,000	€257,427
Pensions and Lump Sum Costs	€4,312,000	€1,633,126
Total	€11,213,300	€3,684,659

Allocations Notified:

Building Acquisition Measure – 2023 TVRS Ballyroan	€175,000
OPW Minor Flood Mitigation Works funding – Phase 3 of the River Nore between Abbeylisk and Durrow	€63,000
OPW Minor Flood Mitigation Works funding – Whitehorse River Mountrath	€58,500

HOUSING AND REGENERATION

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
Social Housing completions to date	229	85	-	-	-	314

Social Housing Schemes completed in 2023

Location	Total No. of Houses	House Types	Constructed by	Comment
Market Square, Portarlinton (Vignoles Gardens)	15	15 No. 2 Bed 1 Storey	LCC (Turnkey)	15 units completed and remaining 3 units expected in June 2023
Ballymorris Green, Portarlinton (Ph 1)	34	34 no. 3 bed 2 storey houses	Cluid Housing	Phase 2 (12 units) to be completed in early 2024
South Dublin Road, Kilminchy (Dunamaise View)	36	13 no. 2 bed houses 23 no 3 bed houses	Cooperative Housing	Tenanting to commence by end of June.
TOTAL	85			

Social Housing Schemes Under Construction in 2023

Location	Total No. of Houses	House Types	Constructed by	Comment
Harbour Court, Mountmellick	6	6 No. 2 Bed bungalows	LCC (Construction)	On Site - expected delivery Q2 2023
Moore St, Rathdowney	6	6 No. 2 Bed 2 Storey	LCC (Construction)	On site - expected delivery Q4 2023
Mooreville, Rathdowney	7	3 No. 2 Bed bungalow 4 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey	LCC (Construction)	On site - expected delivery Q1 2024
St. Kieran's Errill	14	6 No. 2 Bed 2 Storey 8 No. 2 Bed 1 Storey	LCC (Construction)	On site - expected delivery Q4 2023
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 - phased delivery starting Q3 2023
Market Square, Portarlinton	3	2 No. 2 Bed Apts 1 No. 3 Bed Apt	LCC (Turnkey)	15 units completed and remaining 3 units expected in June 2023
Bruach Na Habhainn, Killeen	1	1 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey	LCC (Turnkey)	On Site - Phase 1 (1 unit) delivery Q2 2024
The Orchard, Ballylynan (Phase 3)	1	1 No. 3-Bed 2 Storey	LCC (Turnkey)	On Site - Phase 3 (1 unit) delivery Q4 2023
Oak Park Halting Site	4	4 no. serviced bays	LCC	Contractor on site - Estimated delivery date Q4 2023.
Oldcourt, Ballylinan	1	1 No. 4 bed 1 storey	LCC (Renewal)	On site - expected delivery Q4 2023
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
Harpurs Lane, Portlaoise	44	20 no. 2 bed houses 16 no. 3 bed houses	Respond	On site - expected delivery July 2023

		4 no. 1 bed apt 4 no. 2 bed apt		
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 in early 2024.
Clonrooske Abbey, Portlaoise	18	18 no. 3 bed 2 storey	Cluid Housing	Advised delivery in Q3 2023.
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. Revised CALF application currently under review. Advised that Phases 1 and 2 will be delivered together in Q3 2023 (37 units) Phase 3 to be delivered by Q4 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
Ard Branagh, Portlaoise	6	6 no. 3 bed houses	Circle Housing	Currently on site – expected delivery
Ashewood Walk, Portlaoise	4	4 no. 3 bed houses	LA Part V	Contracts signed - expected delivery Q3 2023
TOTAL	299			

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

Location/Scheme	No of Houses	House Types	To be constructed by	Comment
Carraig Glas, Stradbally	26	15 no. 2 bed houses 9 no. 3 bed houses 2 no 4 bed houses	LCC (Construction)	Tender evaluation on-going and construction due to start in Q3 2023
Clonrooske (Knockmay), Portlaoise	12	8 No. 2 Bed 2 Storey 3 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey 1 No. 3 Bed 1 Storey	LCC (Construction)	Part VIII approved. Stage 3 to be submitted in Q3 2023.
Iona, Portlaoise	7	2 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey 1 No. 2 Bed 2 Storey 4 No. 1 Bed Apt	LCC (Construction)	Part VIII approved. Stage 3 to be submitted Q3 2023.
Doonane	12	12 no. 3 bed 2 storey	LCC (Construction)	Stage 2 approved. Part VIII exemption. In-committee consultation with MD members will take place in Q2 2023.
Shannon Street, Mountrath	20	13 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey 4 No. 2 Bed 2 Storey	LCC Turnkey	Turnkey approved and construction to commence in Q3 2023.
Derry Road, Durrow	24	10 No. 1 Bed 1 Storey 5 No. 2 Bed 2 Storey 5 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey 4 No.2 Bed Apart	LCC (Construction)	24 dwellings and 4 serviced sites. Stage 2 to be submitted in Q3 2023

Ballyadams	1	1 no. 6 bed bungalow	LCC (Construction)	Stage 2 Approved. Part VIII exemption. In-committee consultation with MD members held and site notice erected.
Stradbally Road, Portlaoise	67	Tenure mix to be confirmed	LCC Social and Affordable	Design Team appointed. Site investigation and topographical surveys are currently being carried out on site. Upon completion of same (Q3 2023), a detailed design for a scheme will be produced and will include proposed mixed tenure of the scheme. Following this a meeting of the MD members will be arranged to discuss design.
Bracklone St, Portarlinton	15	15 no. 2 bed houses	LCC (Construction)	Stage 2 to be progressed in Q3 2023
Rushall Mountrath	2	2 no. 3 bed 2 storey	LCC (Construction)	Stage 1 approved
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 To Be Submitted in Q3 2023
Main St, Ballinakill	3	2 No. 2 Bed 2 Storey 1 No. 1 Bed Apt	LCC (Construction)	Stage 1 approved
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 progressed in Q3 2023
1 New Road, Portlaoise	1	1 No. 4 Bed 1 Storey	LCC (Renewal)	Stage 2 approved
6 Emmett Terrace, Mountmellick	1	1 No. 4 Bed 1 Storey	LCC (Renewal)	Stage 2 approved
13 and 14 Lakeglen, Portlaoise	2	1 No. 3 Bed 2 Storey 1 No. 4 Bed 2 Storey	LCC (Renewal)	Design Team Appointed and 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	Tender evaluation ongoing. AHB to advise of construction commencement date.
County Hotel, Portlaoise (CAS)	10	8 no. 1 bed apts 2 no. 2 bed apts	Cluid Housing	Stage 1 approved under CAS. Site investigation and building condition surveys currently being carried out on site. On completion of surveys Cluid can confirm their revised cost plan and detailed design. Surveys carried out so far have outlined significant challenges re the protected front façade

				which will be taken into account for the finalisation of the cost plan. A section 57 planning report for the site has also been finalised and an agreement has been reached on which buildings on site can be demolished. Revised cost plan and detailed design to be completed in Q3 2023.
"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	Site transfer being concluded. Local residents will be informed by Cluid in relation to phasing of the build and any potential effect of this.
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 st floor apts 4 x 3 bed 2 storey. 6 x 2 bed 1 st floor apts	Respond Housing	Revised CALF application currently under review by Dept. Planned construction to commence mid -August 2023.
TOTAL	374			

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	AHF Application submitted to DHLGH – Potential no of unit yield	Advance Turnkey Purchase arrangement – EOI's received Potential No of unit yield	Part V– Potential No of Unit Yield	LCC Construction Potential No of Unit Yield
Affordable	13	48*	8	30 minimum
Cost Rental		27		

*Expressions of Interest received for 48 proposed units across 4 potential schemes, under consideration from the perspective of demand, affordability of price and feasibility of subsidy funding from DHLGH. Not all units may be realised.

**Design Team procured for the design of social and affordable housing on Council owned landbank on the Stradbally Road, Portlaoise. No of affordable units to be determined.

Feasibility of constructing social/affordable units on site at Beladd currently being examined.

Call remains open for Expressions of Interest in respect of:

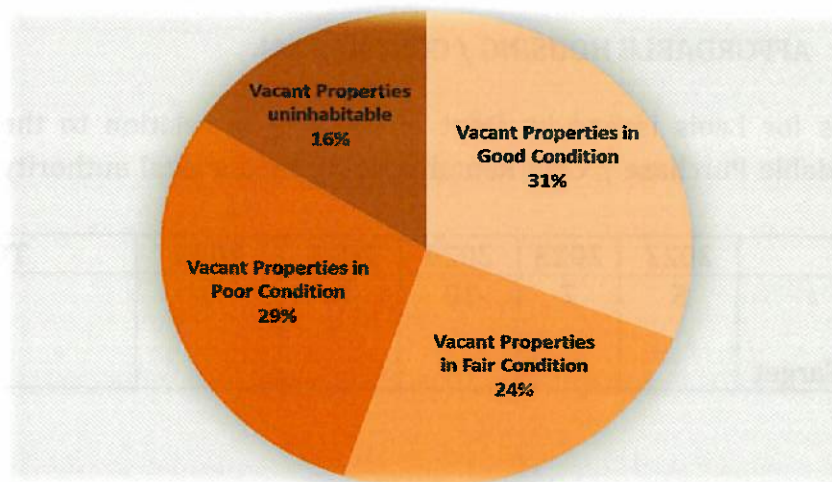
- Appropriately zoned land for housing development
- Advanced Turnkey Purchase arrangements for un-commenced residential developments in respect of social/affordable housing.

REGENERATION / VACANT HOMES

Vacancy Surveys

The Vacant Homes Team has commenced surveying properties identified as being vacant in data supplied by GeoDirectory (via a Dept of Housing initiative). The initial survey will involve assessment of approx. 650 properties located within 1km of a town/village centre. A further 634 properties located more that 1km from a town/village centre will also be surveyed at a later date. Properties will be assessed, and their status updated on a mobile App provided by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The app has shown the following data so far:

Of the 309 properties surveyed to date, 167 properties were confirmed to be vacant.



Next step in this process will be to endeavour to make contact the owners of the above vacant residential properties and outline the schemes available to return the properties to use for housing purposes. Where ownership cannot be established, local enquiries will continue in relation to ownership, vacancy history, etc. Where all other means of returning the properties to use have been exhausted, use of the CPO process to acquire properties deemed to be suitable for social housing will be considered.

Vacancy / Regeneration Funding Schemes

• Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant - Croí Conaithe (Towns) Fund

Grant available up to a maximum of €50,000, including VAT, for refurbishment of vacant properties for use as a principle private residence or to be made available for rent, including the conversion of a property which has not been used as residential heretofore. A top-up grant of up to €20,000 is also available for properties which are derelict.

Croí Conaithe (Towns) Applications at 31st May, 2023

No. of Applications received	62
No. Approved	23
No. Approved in Principle	12
Applicants under consideration	23
No. Refused	2
No. Withdrawn by Applicant	2

• Buy and Renew Scheme

- This scheme enables the local authority to recoup costs where we acquire a property that is need of major refurbishment, beyond the limits of our acquisition cost ceilings.
- 2 properties received B&R Construct Stage 2 approval in 2022 – 1 New Road, Portlaoise and 6 Emmett Terrace, Mountmellick.

• Repair and Leasing Scheme

Applications received to date	45
Applications approved to proceed	10
Applications under consideration	4
No. of Leases commenced	1
Applications Refused	30*

**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.*

CPO Activation Programme

Circular 14/2023 provides details on the launch of the CPO Activation Programme. Laois target has been set for properties to enter the Compulsory

Acquisition process, where engagement with the owner has not resulted in the vacant or derelict property being brought back into use, to be subsequently used for social housing or made available for sale on the open market.

A target of 60 vacant and derelict properties to enter the Programme and 16 CPOs / Compulsory Acquisitions to commence in 2023 has been set for Laois County Council.

These targets can include vacant and derelict properties where engagement has already taken place / commenced in 2023 and compulsory acquisitions commenced.

Laois County Council has established a multi-disciplinary Regeneration Team, comprising staff from Housing, Planning and the Town Regeneration Officer, aimed at addressing vacancy and dereliction in the county.



This team aims to achieve targets set, by gathering data via:

- Geodirectory exercise (above)
- Continued engagement with property owners,
- Engagement via derelict sites legislation where appropriate
- Action objectives of the Town Centre First Plan for Rathdowney and other town/village plans.

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.

Target for number of inspections in 2023 is 874.

	Jan - May 2023
No of properties inspected	496
No of notices of works issued	461

The Housing Inspections team can be contacted via email at propertyinspections@laoiscoco.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	Sites currently on the market and application forms submitted to LCC. Evaluation of applications is on-going.
Gleann na Glaise	4	Sites currently on the market and application forms submitted to LCC. Evaluation of applications is on-going.
Doonane	2	Stage 1 approved as part of larger housing scheme Part VIII to be progressed in Q3 2023
Derry Road Durrow	4	Stage 1 approved as part of larger housing scheme Part VIII to be progressed in Q3 2023
Castletown	9	Proposal. Detailed design currently on-going
TOTAL SITES UNDER CONSIDERATION	23	

HOUSING STOCK

Housing Re-Lets

Month	LA Keys Surrendered	Properties Acquired	Works Completed
January 2023	7	2	6
February 2023	2	2	1
March 2023	6	6	13
April 2023	6	4	9
May 2023	7	2	14
TOTAL (YTD)	28	16	43

NOTE: There are currently 20 vacant units from our existing stock and a further 16 units that the Council acquired. Works are either ongoing on these properties or specifications are being prepared for works to be carried out.

Month	Work Orders Raised	Work Orders Closed	Work Orders Open
January 2023	504	504	0
February 2023	378	378	0
March 2023	464	453	11
April 2023	357	311	46
May 2023	440	281	159
TOTAL (YTD)	2,143	1,927	216

Energy Efficiency/Retrofitting Programme:

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

A summary of the 2 programmes is outlined in table below.

PROGRAMME	COMMENTS
MRP – 159 Units	159 units completed.
EERP (2021) – 28 Units – (O'Moore Place)	13 units completed. Remaining 15 units due to be completed in Q3 2023.
EERP (2022) – Phase 1&2 – 41 Units (Thornberry, Church Ave, Slieve Bloom Park)	Tender evaluation for the 2022 Retrofit Programme comprising 62 houses has been completed. However, because of funding constraints, it is now proposed to commence works in phase's set out below.
EERP (2022) – Phase 3 – 21 Units (St. Fintan's Ter, Old School Road, St Johns Sq.)	<p><u>Phase 1</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Thornberry, Abbeylax – 20 units. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 units surveyed and tender awarded to contractor with works to commence in Q3 2023. <p><u>Phase 2</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Church Avenue, Stradbally – 12 units. 2) Slieve Bloom Park, Clonaslee – 9 units. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21 units surveyed and tender awarded to contractor with works to commence in Q3 2023. <p><u>Phase 3</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) St Fintans Terrace – 6 units 2) Old School Road, Ballylinan – 8 units 3) St. John's Square, Portlaoise – 7 units. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21 units surveyed and tender evaluation complete. Funding currently under consideration.
EERP (2023) – 53 Units (St. Bridgid's Pl, Fr.O'Connor Cres., Erkindale Dr, Rossmore View)	Surveys of the 53 units is under way and tender for retrofitting works to be advertised in Q3 2023 for completion in 2024.

HOUSING NEED

Social Housing Acquisitions

To date there have been 73 Notices to Quit reported to Laois County Council, of which 60 are valid. All NTQ's are examined on a case-by-case basis and tenants are being dealt with using all social and other housing options available.

From 1st January – 31st May 2023:

Acquisitions completed	12
Acquisitions currently in progress	5
Acquisitions under consideration	18
No of above that have tenants in situ	16

The above figures change with every case examined and regular cross referencing between NTQ's presented and Expressions of Interest for acquisition of properties.

Homeless Presentations

Time Period	Homeless Presentations	Breakdown of Household
1 st May – 31 st May 2023	23	16 singles, 2 couples 5 families

Homeless Accommodation

	Emergency Accommodation Households booked at 31 st May 2023	Social Housing allocated from homelessness in May 2023
Families	6	1
Single Persons	13	1
TOTAL	19	2

Social Housing List at 31st May 2023

TOTAL No of Social Housing Applicants on waiting list	1,765
Proportion of SH applicants availing of HAP supports	47%
Proportion of HAP tenants transferred from Rent Supplement	15%

RAS/Leasing Statistics at 30th April 2023

Active RAS tenancies	70
Active short-term leasing tenancies (Social Housing Leasing Scheme)	28
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	27

Applicants housed during the period 1st January – 31st May 2023

Method of Delivery	No. housed 1 st January – 31 st May 2023
First allocation of New Build/Acquired unit	24
Relet / Refurbished Stock Allocation	33
Nominations to AHB housing which created a tenancy	102
Housed via leasing	0
TOTAL	159

LOANS AND GRANTS

Loans

Local Authority Home Loan (LAHL) at 30th April 2023

No of Loan Applications received since scheme commenced in January 2022	85
No of Applications approved since scheme commenced in January 2022	32
No of Applications refused since scheme commenced in January 2022	24*

*Predominant reasons for refusal are “*Repayment Capacity not demonstrated*” and “*Insufficient Savings Record/Source of Equity*”, i.e., applicant not showing that they can afford to meet the monthly repayments on the prospective mortgage, and/or they have not proven that they have consistent, regular savings, and/or the deposit is made up of lump sums lodged that cannot be verified.

Private Grants

Housing Adaptation Grants at 31st May 2023

Allocation €1,421,438 (€1,137,150 Exchequer + €284,288 LA Own Resources)

	No. of applications received to 31/05/2023	No. of applications paid by 31/05/2023	Value of applications paid by 31/05/2023	No. of applications currently at work stage	Value of applications currently at work stage
HOP	91	48	€209,935	54	€253,670
MAG	11	8	€24,189	5	€24,200
HGD	70	11	€82,220	46	€407,348
TOTAL	172	67	€316,344	105	€685,218

Disabled Persons Grant for Social Housing

DPG works at 31st May 2023:

Allocation 2023 (including LA funded portion)	€641,100
No of new applications received to 31/05/2023	15
No of Works approved to date (incl 3 extensions)	33
Value of approved works to date	€524,816

Upon assessment, it is noted that completion of the full programme in 2023 will require additional Dept funding; this will be sought in Q3 2023.

Queries in relation to Housing Grants should be emailed to housinggrants@laoiscoco.ie

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE TO REFUGEES FLEEING CONFLICT

Laois County Council continues to lead and coordinate the Laois Ukrainian Community Response Forum. The Forum, consisting of 23 statutory and voluntary groups/agencies, meets regularly, with 16 meetings held to date, ensuring consistency and efficiency in service delivery and supports to new arrivals to our county from Ukraine. The most recent data indicates there are approximately 1011 displaced Ukrainian citizens in the County. Approximately 300 of these are in accommodation centres such as hotels, guesthouses, hostels, and refurbished properties, with the remainder in privately sourced or pledged accommodation.

The Council continues to assist the International Protection Accommodation Service (IPAS - under the auspices of Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, DCEDIY) with the temporary accommodation of Ukrainian arrivals to our county, as well as providing liaison locally in relation to vacant buildings and sites suitable for medium to long term accommodation solutions.

The Council continues to allocate privately pledged/offered accommodation to Ukrainian families, with 47 households having been provided with accommodation through these mechanisms to date.

Site works are continuing at the 42 Modular Homes project in Rathdowney. DCEDIY have indicated a revised date of October 2023 for handover of the site to them from OPW.

PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT, ARTS & HERITAGE

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTION SCHEME

A draft Scheme for the period 2023-2029 has been prepared and is on display from May 22nd to July 4th 2023 during which time submissions can be made. The scheme can be viewed on www.consult.laois.ie Notification to this effect has been sent to the Minister, the Elected Members, Local TD's and other relevant bodies.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE

E-Planning Project	• E-Planning has been live since 11 th November 2022			
Planning Applications		Year	Valid applications from 01/01/2023 to 16/06/2023	Valid applications from 01/01/2022-16/06/2022
			250	280
Total Number of valid applications received:	250			
Number of decisions made	259			
Invalid applications returned to applicant	120 (2023 invalid applications)			
Number of applications granted:	249 (Decisions to Grant)			
Number of applications refused:	10(Decisions to Refuse) 3.86% refusal rate			
PRE PLANNING				
No of requests to date	141			
No of meetings held to date	113			
Wait time	2 weeks			

ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

Current year	2023		2022	
Service Review	May	Jan - May	May	Jan - May
Total number of new cases subject to complaints that were investigated	15	64	15	58
Number of Warning Letters served	50	187	16	161
Number of Enforcement Notices served	5	57	1	19
No Of cases referred for legal proceedings	0	8	1	3
Number of cases in Court(incl adjournments)	10	31	4	27
Number of cases Resolved in Court	0	5	1	5
Number of Files Closed	6	47	9	102
Number of cases on system	160	160	138	138
Enforcement Costs recouped	€ 1,258.92	€3,463.92	554.98	3711.96
Number of Valid Retention Applications Received relating to Enforcement Action	3	17	8	23
Fees received through Valid Retention Applications Received relating to Enforcement Action	€935.00	€6,594.63	5239.8	20729.8
Legal fees paid	€469.86	€3,801.11	12555.64	19195.96

BROADBAND – DIGITAL PROJECTS

Vex Robotics.

The Vex Robotics Program has been secured and rolled out in 4 schools to date - Scoil Eoin Phóil II Naofa Ballyroan, Shanganamore Barrowhouse, Camross and Emo NS.

3 of the 4 schools: - Scoil Eoin Phóil II Naofa Ballyroan, Shanganamore Barrowhouse and Camross competed in the All-Ireland finals in Castlebar on Thursday 1st of June. This was a huge undertaking for all schools considering they have only been involved in the program a few months.

All teams played a hectic 14 games and excelled on the day. In order to play the game each school had to build and program a Robot using coding along with building the board game and the obstacles.

Shanganamore were the Judges most impressive newcomer to the program.

Scoil Eoin Pol Naofa were pipped in their final game by 3 points by the current All Ireland champions from Donegal on a score line of 91 to 88 .

Camross were also narrowly beaten in the qualifier by the current Connaught Regional champions from Mayo.

This program has been supplied by funding secured from DRCD. The 4 existing schools will be given their Game for next year on Wednesday 21st of June and it is proposed to roll out to more schools in September pending funding.

WIFI 4 EU.

WiFi4EU is a project developed by the European Union that intends to bring free WiFi to local communities.

The aim of WiFi4EU initiative is to bring high-quality WiFi access to places where it is not yet available but would provide value for the community and visitors to the County.

It is proposed to rollout in 2 locations in Rathdowney in the next few weeks.

LAOIS ARTS OFFICE

Looking/Seeing/Making BOGLANDS Exhibition and Summer Arts Workshop

Artist Bridget Flannery was selected for the annual Adult Summer Arts Programme. The programme commenced with a four-day workshop from Tuesday 13th June to Friday 16th June at the Malthouse, Stradbally. The week concluded with an exhibition opening of Bridget Flannery's new work entitled Looking/Seeing/Making BOGLANDS and selected work by the participants at the Laois Arthouse, Stradbally on Friday evening, 16th June starting at 5pm. Cllr Thomasina Connell, Cathaoirleach of Laois County Council officially opened the exhibition. The exhibition will remain open until Friday 28th July.

Creative Ireland Laois

Short Film Bursary Award 2023

There are three shortlisted films for the Creative Ireland Laois Short Film Bursary Award 2023. Interviews are scheduled for the shortlisted Short Film Bursary Award and an announcement before the end of June 2023. A grant of €10,000 will be awarded to a filmmaker towards the cost of production of a short drama or documentary film of 10-12 minutes duration to be shot in Laois.

Cruinniú na nÓg at Laois Arthouse, Stradbally

Cruinniú na nÓg is Ireland's national day of free creative activity for children and young people taking place on Saturday 10th June. The Arts Office organised several events at the Laois Arthouse & Library in Stradbally. A Print Making workshop by Adelle Hickey; The City of the Dreams, a workshop creating a model city using geometric shapes by Evgeny Chubatyy and Sustainable Textile Art by Niamh Bakker. In Stradbally Library, there was engaging and entertaining storytelling with Laois author John Whelan from his book 'The Last Beekeeper'



Pictured at Laois Arthouse, Stradbally; Catherine Guideria, Arts Office, Bernie Foran, County Librarian, Cllr Thomasina Connell, Cathaoirleach of Laois County Council, Muireann Ni Chonaill, Arts Officer, Diane Seale, Arts Office

HERITAGE:

- Laois Heritage Plan Projects
"In Your Nature" Podcasts by BirdWatch Ireland:
New series has started which the Heritage Officer is promoting on social media.
- Timahoe Heritage Festival 3rd and 4th June:
Laois Heritage Office supported The School of Irish Archaeology to bring the 'Big Dig' to the festival.



1. Other Projects/ Updates:

- **Old St Peters Church and Graveyard:**
Old St Peters was officially re- opened by Cathaoirleach Thomasina Connell on the 13th June. The event was attended by the many of the individuals, and also representatives of organisations that supported and funded the project.
- **Gordon Bennett Event:**
Minister Noonan launched the Gordon Bennett Films which were a collaboration between Laois, Carlow, and Kildare Heritage Officers on the 16th June at 7:30p.m. in the Visual, Carlow.

LOCAL ENTERPRISE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

LEO Update – June 2023

- 2 trading online voucher applications approved
- 11 businesses set up to avail of 1-1 mentoring.
- 8 training courses were delivered to a total of 107 participants.
- 2 additional companies signed up for the Green for Micro programme
- 1 new Laois businesses was assisted to access Micro Finance Ireland (MFI) loan funding.

Business Support Unit (BSU) Update – May 2023

- **Business Incentive Scheme:** maps are currently being prepared to extend the scheme in Killenard.
- **Abbeyleix Streetscape** - 51 applications were received, 32 have been approved with works commencing, 2 in progress awaiting further documentation, 6 are not proceeding and 11 applicants did not meet the criteria.
- **Killeshin Hub:** Works are to commence 19th June 2023.

ROADS, TRANSPORTATION, DRAINAGE & PUBLIC REALM

Community Involvement Schemes (CIS) 2023

Laois County Council were allocated the sum of €319,050 from the Department of Transport under CIS funding for 2023.

Based on the costed works and the overall allocation available there was a requirement to phase some of the individual scheme works over this and subsequent years on a number of the schemes. Offers will now be made to the applicants on the listed schemes below.

Project Number	Road Name and/or Townland Name	Engineering Area	2023 allocation
CIS008/2021	Spa Quarter, Bunlacken, Cullohill	Western	27,540.00
CIS003/2022	Ballaghmore Borris-in-Ossory (Phase 1)	Western	50,000.00
CIS001/2023	Acragar, Mountmellick	Western	50,000.00
CIS002/2022	Ross Vicarstown	Eastern	21,527.10
CIS015/2022	Ashfield Ballickmoyler	Eastern	60,984.90
CIS004/2022	St Brigids Place Portlaoise (Phase 1)	PMD	75,704.24
CIS005/2022	Hillview Drive, Knockmay, Portlaoise	PMD	33,293.75

Total Allocation

319,049.99

Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

Laois County Council entered into an agreement with Eir/EasyGo for the installation of 14 No. EV chargers of various types throughout the County as follows:

Location	Charger Type	Location	Status
Portlaoise	1 No. 75KW	53.0363385,-	ESB Application made and
Railway Street Car Park	DC & 5 No	7.3008401	connection paid for
	22KW INCH		
	Duo		
Mountmellick,	75 KW DC	53.1173004,-	ESB application made
O'Connell Square		7.3273929	
Abbeyleix	DC 50	52.91418910706	ESB application made
		137, -	
		7.349046361617	
		235	
Durrow	DC 50	52.84635352497	ESB application made
		817, -	
		7.394966079056	
		237	
Graigucullen	DC 50	To be Confirmed	TBC
Mountrath	DC 50	53.00103433928	ESB Application made and
		0174, -	connection paid for.
		7.474047734432	
		863	
Portarlinton	DC 50	53.15851387892	ESB application made
		2896, -	
		7.185978404638	
		211	
Stradbally	DC 50	53.01741109865	ESB application made
		309, -	
		7.151831775085	
		489	
Rathdowney,	DC 50	The Square	ESB application made
The Square			

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

1. **Kyletalesha Landfill, Transfer Station & Civic Amenity Site, Portlaoise:**
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.
2. **Bring Banks:**
Tonnages of 2023 collected recyclable material is in Table 1 below.

Month	Tonnage	Month	Tonnage	Month	Tonnage
Jan	164.24	May	156.04	Sept	0
Feb	129.06	June	0	Oct	0
Mar	140.63	July	0	Nov	0
Apr	119.26	Aug	0	Dec	0
Annual Total			709.23 Tonnes		

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 4 below details the number and types of complaints received to the end of April 2023.

Nature	Number	Nature	Number
Waste Management/Enforcement	275	Air	18
Litter	181	Noise	14
Water	23	Waste Infrastructure	5
Total	516		

Table 2 – Environmental Complaint Register

- b) **Litter Fines**

Month	Number	Month	Number	Month	Number
Jan	11	May	5	Sept	0
Feb	9	June	0	Oct	0
Mar	4	July	0	Nov	0
Apr	3	Aug	0	Dec	0
Annual Total			32		

Table 3 – 2023 Litter Fines

- c) **Illegal Dumping**

Tonnes of material collected to the end of May 2023 is 152 tonnes.

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. **Anti-Dumping Initiatives:**

The procurement for the Bulk Waste Amnesties is completed. It is proposed to carry out the 2 No. Bulky Waste Amnesties – Portlaoise & Portarlington in July 2023. Exact dates not yet confirmed.

6. **Environmental Protection**

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

On site investigations of complaints in relation to water quality/water pollution are being carried out by Environmental staff.

- On-site investigations of complaints in relation to water pollution.
- On-going assessment of planning applications with regards to water quality protection.

b) **Air & Noise:**

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

WATER SERVICES AND RURAL WATER

Water Services Laboratory

Laois County Council Water Laboratory is accredited to international ISO 17025:2017 standard accreditation. The Laboratory is inspected at least annually by INAB to ensure all sampling and testing undertaken by the Laboratory is being conducted competently in compliance with specifications in ISO 17025. The most recent INAB inspection occurred on 18th and 19th April 2023 and the Laboratory has retained its existing accreditation and also gained an additional accreditation for Enterococci, which is an important microbiological test for drinking water safety.

Portlaoise Water Supply

Laois County Council in conjunction with Uisce Eireann, recently contracted Briody Well Drillers to carry out maintenance/remediation works at the Portlaoise Derrygarron Wellfield. The rehabilitation resulted in a significant improvement in the quality of source water, reduced reliance on the filtration treatment process and a substantial increase in water supply yield. To facilitate this work, the Derrygarron Wellfield was taken out of commission for three weeks, whereby new wells, in the Coolbanagher Wellfield, brought into service. The works undertaken at the two Wellfields has significantly enhanced the resilience of the Portlaoise Public Water Supply to summer droughts etc. The works also support capacity issues to support a growing population and expanding local economy.

Disinfection/PH Control Programme

Civil works progressing in Fermoy, Meelick, Derryguile, Kyle, Five Wells, Derrymoyle and Lough WTPs. Mechanical, Electrical, Instrumentation, Control and Automation works progressed at the Strand, Knocks, Derryguile, Lough, Kyle, Five Wells, Clonin Hill, Derrymoyle, Ballyroan and Meelick Water Treatment Plant (WTP).

ESB supply upgrade currently being progressed for Five Wells. Design for Kilminchy, Castle Durrow, Drim, Donaghmore, Cloghogue and Camross Water Treatment Plants currently being progressed by CWL/Uisce Éireann (UE). An automated run to waste system recently installed at the Knocks WTP to address periodic raw water turbidity issue.

Uisce Éireann Small Towns & Villages Growth Programme

Uisce Éireann is currently considering the options and pricing report for Ballyroan. Planning and design works are ongoing for Ballinakill and Borris in Ossory.

Mountmellick and Portarlinton DAP

Survey works to be progressed throughout 2023.

Inlet Works Storm and Sludge Programme

Ballyroan WWTP Upgrade – Workshop 4 with UE/LCC/Conway Engineering has been completed and works are expected to progress in Q3 of 2023/Q1 of 2024.

Networks and Water Conservation

First fix, find and fix and lead replacement work is continuing in 2023.

Mains rehabilitation works currently ongoing in Mountrath and also back yard services works in Mountmellick which will provide a safer, more secure water supply by minimising the frequency of bursts and improving the resilience of the network.

National WWPS Programme

Pump Station (Bob's Bar) A preferred option has been identified with Uisce Éireann. This project shall not be progressing to detailed Design Stage at this juncture.

Taking in Charge

Uisce Éireann have advised that the Moyadd Group Water Scheme, connected to the Swan Public Water Supply Scheme was taken in charge by Uisce Éireann on 3rd May 2023.

Multi Annual Rural Water Programme

Projects under the current programme, 2019 – 2021, are being completed. It is expected that the Department will issue details of the next Rural Water Programme in mid 2023.

Application and feasibility studies for Vicarstown and Cullohill, submitted to the Department on the 15th of September for funding under Measure, A8 (Wastewater Collection and Treatment Needs for Villages and Settlements without access to Public Wastewater Services) are being reviewed and adjudicated upon. No response received as of yet from the Department.

Construction is continuing in Rosenallis on the Goodwin Estate Group Sewerage Scheme.

Well Grants

There has been 25 well grant applications received to date in 2023 for grant aid assistance to improve private water supplies to domestic households.

The Domestic Lead Remediation Grant Scheme

The grant for the Domestic Lead Remediation Grant Scheme is no longer means tested and is available for both public and private water supplies. This grant provides 100% financial assistance (max of €5,000) to eligible applicants to replace lead piping and fittings in a house, that is occupied as the applicant's normal place of residence.

Emergency Planning, Fire Services & Flood Relief

To date (14th June 2023), Laois County Fire & Rescue Service attended 278 emergency incidents, consisting of 103 fires, 127 special service incidents and 48 false alarms.

Turnout by Station*:

Portlaoise – 143	Portarlinton - 53	Stradbally – 47	Mountmellick – 36
Abbeyleix - 26	Mountrath – 38	Durrow – 18	Rathdowney – 24

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

New Fire Station in Stradbally

Laois County Council has prepared a design brief for the project with a view to the appointment of a design team to oversee the detailed design, tendering and construction of the new Fire Station. A two stage tender competition is underway, to appoint the design team with a closing date for submissions (restricted process to pre-qualify architect led design teams) of 10th July 2023.

Mountmellick Fire Station upgrade

Approval to go to tender for the upgrade has been sought from the NDFEM but no approval provided to date. Part VIII proposals are currently being developed by Tobin Consulting Engineers and will be brought forward both to the MD & Laois County Council in the coming months.

Civil Defence

Internal and external layout options are under development, following recent agreement on the purchase of premises at Kew Lew.

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

CORPORATE

- Civic Reception for Mary Mulhare, Bronze Medal Winner at the 2022 European Championships in Turin was held on Thursday 1st June 2023 at 7.30.

COMMUNITY

Laois Public Participation Network

Laois PPN in collaboration with Laois Tourism hosted a Regenerative Tourism Funding Workshop on Tuesday 23rd May. Fáilte Ireland will deliver the Regenerative Tourism Scheme as part of the EU Just Transition Fund. Through this scheme, tourism projects will be funded across Laois and the Midlands – sustaining jobs, businesses and communities. €68 million of EU Just Transition Regenerative Tourism funding is available.

Community

Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP)

Stakeholder engagement on the development of LECP Objectives and Actions has commenced and is ongoing.

Laois Comhairle na nÓg

Comhairle meetings continue weekly and the Steering Committee meeting was held on the 7th June in the Youth Cafe. The group are currently working on their Podcast and will be undertaking media training to assist with creating their podcast. They are also recruiting new members with the main focus on young people from small and larger towns and villages across Laois. Recently, members of Comhairle visited Dáil Eireann.

Joint Policing Committee

The June meeting of the Laois JPC was held on the 12th June, 2023. The Superintendent presented the quarterly Crime statistical Report and the updated JPC Strategy – Implementation Plan Update was noted by all members.

Climate Action & Community SPC

The June meeting of the Climate Action & Community SPC was held on the 12th June, 2023. Updates were presented on Community Grants , LECP 2023-2028, Climate Action and Biodiversity funding.

Laois Africa Day 2023

Laois Africa Day 2023 took place on the grounds of Laois Leisure, Portlaoise on Saturday, 3rd June, 2023. Laois County Council together with Laois African

Support Group was among a number of organisations from around the country, that have been supported by Irish Aid, the Government's overseas aid programme, and which is managed by the Department of Foreign Affairs to host Africa Day events this year. Africa's rich culture was showcased and celebrated through family-friendly activities, along with music, craft, performances, and educational elements. There was traditional African drumming and dance displays, African fashion, arts and crafts and much more throughout the day. A Laois Africa v Laois Gardai soccer match took place on the astroturf pitch as part of the celebrations, in which the Gardai prevailed this year. Cathaoirleach Thomasina Connell, Minister Sean Fleming, T.D. and Laois Africa Support Group Chair Mr Bolaji Adeyanju also addressed the crowd, on what was a beautiful day for such a colourful celebration.

Community Support Fund 2022

Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, and Minister of State with responsibility for Community Development and Charities, Joe O'Brien TD, announced the successful projects in Co. Laois under the 2022 Community Support Fund on Wednesday 21st June, 2023.

LCDC	Group / Organisation	Name of Town/ Village area	Amount awarded LCDC
Laois	2nd Laois(Rathdowney) Scout Group	Rathdowney	€1,000.00
Laois	3rd Laois Durrow Scouts	Durrow	€1,000.00
Laois	4th Laois Scout Group	Portarlinton	€1,200.00
Laois	Abbeyelix Bog Project	Abbeyelix	€475.00
Laois	Abbeyelix AFC Juvenile Soccer Club	Abbeyelix	€5,000.00
Laois	Abbeyelix Community Garden	Abbeyelix	€500.00
Laois	Abbeyelix Heritage Company	Abbeyelix	€3,435.00
Laois	Abbeyelix Parish Hall Committee	Abbeyelix	€950.00
Laois	Abbeyelix Tidy Towns	Abbeyelix	€1,000.00
Laois	Acquired Brian Injury Ireland	Portlaoise	€1,368.00
Laois	Arles Killeen GAA	Arles	€6,995.00
Laois	Ballacolla Tidy Towns	Ballacolla	€2,453.00
Laois	Ballybrittas Tidy Towns	Ballybrittas	€376.00
Laois	Ballyfin Community Alert	Ballyfin	€300.00
Laois	Ballyfin Community Development Association	Ballyfin	€600.00
Laois	Ballylinan Community Council	Ballylinan	€449.00
Laois	Ballypickas Grounds Amenity for All (GAA)	Ballypickas	€1,500.00
Laois	Ballyroan Bluestars Basketball Club	Ballyroan	€3,920.00
Laois	Ballyroan Community Hall	Ballyroan	€2,305.00
Laois	Barrowhouse Community Association	Barrowhouse	€1,000.00

Laois	Barrowhouse GAA	Barrowhouse	€1,000.00
Laois	Borris Innovation Centre CLG	Borris	€2,845.00
Laois	Borris-in-Ossory Community Development	Borris-in-Ossory	€995.00
Laois	Borris-in-Ossory Men's Shed	Borris-in-Ossory	€950.00
Laois	Borris-in-Ossory Tidy Towns	Borris-in-Ossory	€633.00
Laois	Camross GAA Club	Camross	€1,500.00
Laois	Camross Tidy Towns Group	Camross	€995.00
Laois	Castletown Community Centre	Castletown	€1,013.00
Laois	Castletown Community Field Development Committee	Castletown	€1,049.00
Laois	Clonad Juvenile Club	Clonad	€2,006.00
Laois	Clonanny Development Association	Portarlinton	€424.00
Laois	Clough Tidy Towns	Ballacolla	€1,377.00
Laois	Clough/Ballacolla Camogie Club	Ballacolla	€2,282.00
Laois	Clover United FC	Rathdowney	€4,000.00
Laois	CoderDojo	Portarlinton	€878.00
Laois	Colt GAA	Raheen	€743.00
Laois	Community Hall Vicarstown	Vicarstown	€2,185.00
Laois	Corrán Na Nóir Residents Association	Abbeyleix	€300.00
Laois	Crettyard Ladies Gaelic Football Club	Crettyard	€2,530.00
Laois	Cullohill Community Centre	Cullohill	€4,000.00
Laois	Cullohill Handball Club	Cullohill	€964.00
Laois	Derrywood Residents Association	Durrow	€928.00

Laois	Donaghmore Workhouse & Agricultural Museum	Donaghmore	€2,000.00
Laois	Down Syndrome Ireland -Laois Branch	Abbeyleix	€2,512.00
Laois	Durrow Development Forum	Durrow	€1,000.00
Laois	Durrow Hall	Durrow	€1,049.00
Laois	Durrow Meals on Wheels	Durrow	€2,850.00
Laois	Durrow Tidy Towns	Durrow	€867.00
Laois	Emo Celtic Soccer Club	Emo	€4,020.00
Laois	Emo GAA Club	Emo	€9,500.00
Laois	Emo Gun Club	Emo	€1,000.00
Laois	Emo Rangers	Emo	€2,101.00
Laois	Emo Sports Field	Emo	€1,000.00
Laois	Errill Christmas Lights	Errill	€960.00

Laois	Errill Snooker Hall	Errill	€1,000.00
Laois	Errill Tidy Towns Group	Errill	€714.00
Laois	Esker Hills Residents Association	Portlaoise	€698.00
Laois	Foróige Old Bank Youth Centre	Portlaoise	€2,804.00
Laois	Fourth Wall Laois Theatre Group	Portlaoise	€999.00
Laois	Golden Years Club	Mountrath	€1,000.00
Laois	Graigavern Lodge Residents Association	Ballybrittas	€929.00
Laois	Graigue Cemetery Committee	Graiguecullen	€1,325.00
Laois	Happy Hearts Club Portarlinton	Portarlinton	€1,000.00
Laois	Harps GAA Club	Durrow	€3,000.00
Laois	Jelly Tots Community Crèche & Playground	Abbeyleix	€1,000.00
Laois	Killeen Community Group	Killeen	€664.00
Laois	Killeshin Community First Responders	Killeshin	€2,957.00
Laois	Kilminchy Retirement Village Management Company	Portlaoise	€698.00
Laois	Kyle GAA	Ballaghmore	€2,000.00
Laois	Labras - Laois Brazilian Support Association	Portlaoise	€525.00
Laois	Laois Arch Club	Portlaoise	€1,615.00
Laois	Laois Cricket Club	Stradbally	€799.00
Laois	Laois Friends (Laois Friends, Special Needs, Social & Recreational Committee)	Portlaoise	€856.00
Laois	Laois PPN	Portlaoise	€7,318.00
Laois	Laois Traveller Action Group	Portlaoise	€2,850.00
Laois	Lions AFC	Durrow	€1,095.00
Laois	Makeport Makerspace	Portarlinton	€660.00
Laois	Mountmellick Christmas Tree Committee	Mountmellick	€904.00
Laois	Mountmellick Community Arts Centre	Mountmellick	€3,836.00
Laois	Mountmellick Community Sport Complex	Mountmellick	€3,000.00
Laois	Mountmellick Men's Shed	Mountmellick	€1,599.00
Laois	Mountmellick Yarn Bombing	Mountmellick	€834.00
Laois	Mountrath Scout Group	Mountrath	€1,000.00
Laois	Mountrath Tidy Towns	Mountrath	€2,000.00
Laois	Mountrath Youth Theatre	Mountrath	€580.00

Laois	Park/Ratheniska GAA Club	Ratheniska	€5,172.00
Laois	Portarlinton Art Collective	Portarlinton	€754.00
Laois	Portarlinton Community Centre	Portarlinton	€2,954.00
Laois	Portarlinton Concert Band	Portarlinton	€2,373.00
Laois	Portarlinton GAA Club	Portarlinton	€4,000.00

Laois	Portarlinton Lawn Tennis Group	Portarlinton	€1,000.00
Laois	Portarlinton Social Services	Portarlinton	€3,135.00
Laois	Portarlinton Women's Shed	Portarlinton	€2,915.00
Laois	Portlaoise AFC (Soccer Club)	Portlaoise	€3,000.00
Laois	Portlaoise Men's Shed	Portlaoise	€914.00
Laois	Portlaoise Sports Hall	Portlaoise	€10,000.00
Laois	Rath Ballybrittas Development Association	Ballybrittas	€1,154.00
Laois	Rathdowney Community Centre CLG	Rathdowney	€7,180.00
Laois	Rathdowney Men's Shed	Rathdowney	€1,650.00
Laois	Rathdowney Vision Group	Rathdowney	€1,619.00
Laois	Ratheniska Community Hall, St. Aongus Club	Ratheniska	€2,744.00
Laois	Rosenallis Community Centre	Rosenallis	€2,000.00
Laois	Shanahoe Community Hall	Shanahoe	€2,382.00
Laois	Shanahoe National School Parents Association	Shanahoe	€3,950.00
Laois	SOSAD Ireland Laois Branch	Portlaoise	€4,115.00
Laois	South Laois Beekeepers' Association	Abbeyleix	€900.00
Laois	Spink Community Development Association	Spink	€1,013.00
Laois	St. Abban's AC	Crettyard	€2,000.00
Laois	St. Aengus FC	Mountrath	€3,000.00
Laois	St. Brigid's Place Residents Association	Portlaoise	€900.00
Laois	St. Fintan's Parish Hall	Mountrath	€1,820.00
Laois	Stradbally Community Allotments	Stradbally	€900.00
Laois	Stradbally GAA Club	Stradbally	€6,915.00
Laois	Stradbally Social Services Council	Stradbally	€5,000.00
Laois	Stradbally St.Vincent de Paul	Stradbally	€4,000.00
Laois	SVT Activity & Wellness Hub	Stradbally	€450.00
Laois	The Fairways Estate Abbeyleix Residents Committee	Abbeyleix	€947.00
Laois	The Heath GAA Club	The Heath	€850.00
Laois	The Hermitage Residents Association	Portlaoise	€368.00
Laois	The Port Project	Portarlinton	€2,219.00
Laois	The Rock GAA	Mountmellick	€796.00
Laois	The Swan Development Committee	The Swan	€979.00
Laois	The Swan Ladies Club	The Swan	€858.00
Laois	The Swan National School Parents Association	The Swan	€999.00
Laois	The Thomas Hayes Trust CLG	Stradbally	€7,980.00
Laois	Tigh Mochua Le Chéile	Timahoe	€4,000.00

Laois	Timahoe National School Parents Association	Timahoe	€5,467.00
Laois	Treo Nua Resource Centre	Portlaoise	€1,595.00
Laois	Triogue Hub-Rehab Care	Portlaoise	€1,715.00
Laois	Trumera Community Hall	Trumera	€1,652.00
Laois	Vicarstown Old Community Centre	Vicarstown	€3,037.00
Laois	White Horse Indoor Bowls Club	Mountrath	€5,000.00

CLIMATE ACTION

SEAI pathfinder

Laois County Council signed up as lead authority to SEAI pathfinder and SLAs have been signed by the other 4 Local Authorities in the Midlands Energy Agency. This 3 year agreement provides for up to 50% funding for deep retrofit of Council buildings.

Positive Energy internal LCC energy campaign

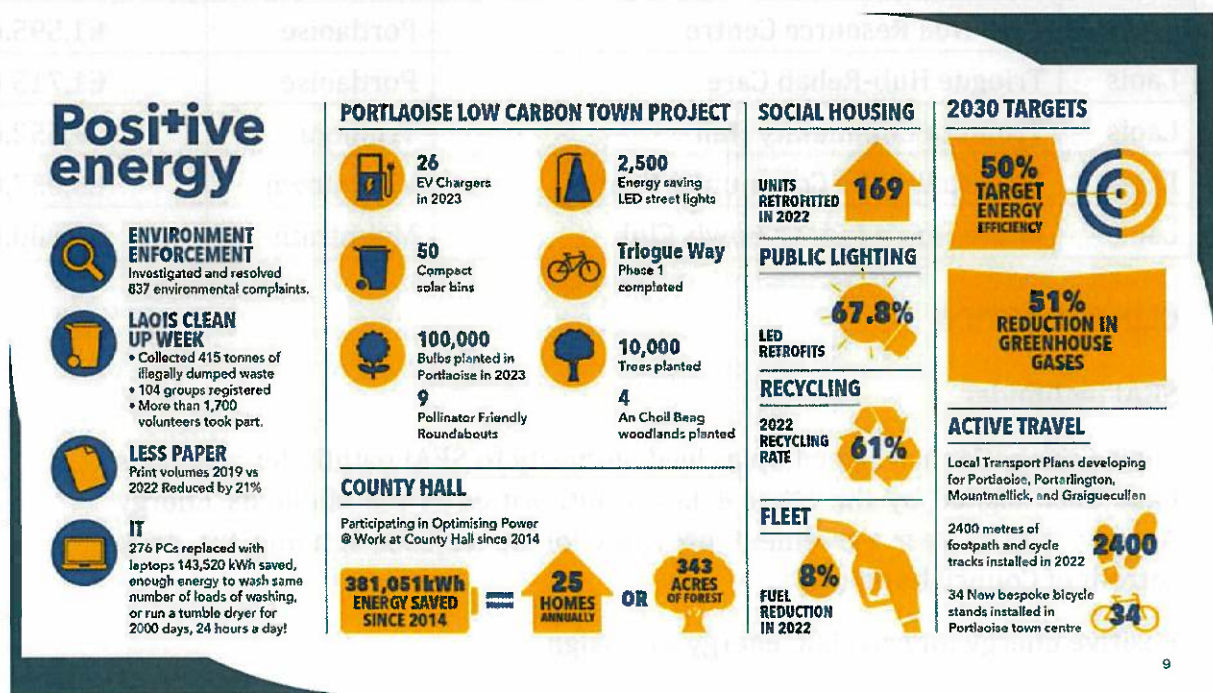
The Positive Energy campaign is to celebrate LCC achievements in energy conservation and climate action and to encourage further successes. An internal staff online survey was sent out to all employees via email. Moreover, the Positive Energy campaign was launched with informational material on how we can make small changes to cut down on energy use served alongside refreshments at tea break for staff in the canteen.

Through simple, everyday actions, Laois County Council is planning to address the energy and water use and the waste generated in our workplaces, along with trying to improve our local environment. The aim of this programme will be to:

- Reduce our environmental impact from energy and water use, and waste generation.
- Improve the environment around us, by actively encouraging measures such as powering down devices, switching off lights when not in use, and adopting energy-saving practices.
- Divert valuable funding currently spent on avoidable energy and resource waste and spend it where it should be spent, on delivering our services.
- Strive to work smarter, finding innovative ways to optimize resources and minimize waste.



"It's the right thing, the smarter thing. It's what we call Positive Energy".
Example of poster from campaign



Infographic from campaign celebrating achievements

Community Climate Action Fund outreach

Two information evenings were held on the new Community Climate Action Fund attended by 33 people representing 24 groups. Individual meetings between the Community Climate Action Officer and groups are also taking place. Project ideas are being developed for application stage which is yet to open.

Community Climate Action Officer Karen Moore at an info evening with PPN at the Cube

Food waste cookery demonstrations

Laois County Council, in collaboration with chef Yvonne Carty (Hey Pesto) hosted a series of innovative food waste cookery demonstrations across Laois libraries this week. The events were to celebrate National Food Waste Recycling Week from 6th to 11th of June, aimed at raising awareness about the importance of reducing food waste and its connection to climate action. Creative recipes showcased using often discarded food items such as banana skins, potato skins, and carrot tops.



8 Food Waste cookery demos took place, 7 in libraries and 1 in County Hall. All attendees received a kitchen caddy, a valuable tool for separating food waste and contributing to the brown bin system.

Climate Change Resource Kit for Primary School Teachers

A new Primary school resource linked to the Abbeyleix Climate Action Walk Animated Series was launched. There are 4 Lesson plans for 2nd-6th classes, each linked to one of the walk videos, with information and activities on a different aspect of climate change.



New resource for Primary schools, Climate Action Laois.

June 2023, Launch of Climate Action Laois primary school resource with (back row, l-r) Dr Niamh Shaw (Dream Big), Suzanne Dempsey (Laois County

Council) and Susan Adams (Education for Sustainability), and in front row, pupils from Abbeyleix.

An EV van was delivered for a 3 month trial period from SEAI. This will be trialled by the Housing Maintenance Department

Community Environmental Grants awarded were:

Cemetery grants - €14,500 was awarded to burial grounds under the ownership of Laois County Council.

Environmental Community grants scheme - €31,000 was awarded to 94 groups.

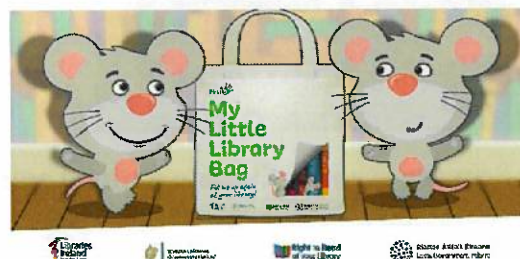
Tidy Towns grants – 22 groups were awarded a total of €35,000.

SPORTS & LEISURE

Tuesday, 20th June 2023 saw the official opening ceremony of ‘An Ríocht Spraoi, Borris in Ossory Community Playground, at Wynne Park, Borris in Ossory by An Cathaoirleach of Laois County Council, Thomasina Connell MCC. This facility is an excellent example of the work of a community, which not only identified a need in their area but also worked tirelessly to be able to address that need in difficult and challenging times. It is an example of what can be done when communities and agencies work together to provide facilities that will benefit not just the children of Borris in Ossory but also the children of the surrounding communities. The playground and multi-use games area, which cost €275,000 to develop is located in a wonderful town centre site was uniquely designed by Sole Sport & Leisure and will be a focal point of activity to bring children to play in a safe environment, where they can have hours of fun.

Library Services

First Five Little Library – Laois Libraries are delighted to announce that once again in 2023 the “My Little Library Bag “ initiative is continuing . Every child starting school in September will receive a free Little Library Book Bag. To help children navigate starting school, libraries have put together a bag of books especially for them that can be collected at any library. The initiative is a collaboration between libraries, the Department of Rural and Community Development, and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth as part of the First 5 Strategy. For more information, click [here](#).



Cruinniú na nÓg was a national day of free creativity for children and young people under 18 and took place on Saturday June 10th. Highlights of Library Events include

Abbeyleix library hosted a Coding and Scratch Workshop on Saturday 10th June at 10.30am-12.30pm. for 8-12yrs. Children got the chance to invent their own multimedia instrument with everyday objects,

Mountmellick Library hosted Makermeet - a non-traditional music workshop from 12.30-1.30 p.m and a Go Fly a Kite workshop for 5-11-year-olds where children designed their own kites and take it home to fly over the summer months.

Portarlinton Library also hosted a STEAM event with MakerMeet and explored different ways to use Lego to build a moving robot. This workshop was an introduction to using Lego, robotics, how they are used and basic coding.

Mountrath Library held an interactive and creative storytelling event with Paul Timoney a children's storyteller.

Stradbally Library hosted an author visit & reading from the creator of 'The Last Beekeeper' Johnny Renko

Rathdowney Library hosted a free puppet show with Julie Rose Mc Cormick Puppeteer

Portlaoise Library Had "Go Fly Your Kite" sessions and interactive storytime with Storyteller Paul Timoney

Summer Stars – our Summer Reading Programme commenced in June 2023 and will run throughout July and August. Laois County Libraries has organised a full range of free activities, storytimes and fun reading events to encourage children to join the library and read over the summer click [here](#) for more details.



National Food Waste Recycling Week 5th -11th June

During this week Laois County Library supported this initiative by hosting Cookery demonstrations in all branch libraries to encourage everyone to recycle food waste by providing practical advice along with hints and tips on how easy it is to recycle and get everyone involved. Yvonne Carthy from Hey Pesto! Hosted the workshops promoting National Food Waste Recycling Week. Food waste facts, menu planning and shopping tips were among the topics under discussion. Each participant received a free Waste Caddy



Library Events -Highlights June 2023

Abbeyleix Library – Call 057 8730020 or email abbeyleixlibrary@laoiscoco.ie

Adult Book Club –Meet on the last Thursday of the month at 6:30pm. Next meeting taking place on Thurs, 29th June.

Chair Yoga Classes – Classes continuing every week on Thursdays at 12noon. Check in branch for further details.

Bridge Club – the club meets every Wednesday at 12noon. New members always welcome.

Art Gallery – the gallery is hosting an exhibition by Kilkenny artist, Catherine Holohan. The exhibition KATE|Art is a display of farmyard animals, including dairy cows, depicting their many different personalities. A colourful collection of mixed media on Canvas.

Durrow Library – Call 057 8736090 or email durrowlibrary@laoiscoco.ie

Fighting Words Workshop-A creative workshops was held in the library on 7th of June, 10am with the 5th Class of Our Lady's Meadow primary school

Irish Circle – the Irish Circle group meets in the library on Tuesdays at 6.10pm. Beidh fáilte róimh cupán tae a ól agus cúpla focail Gaeilge a labhairt nó a canadh.

Mountmellick Library – Call 057 8644572 or email mountmellicklibrary@laoiscoco.ie

The Gallery in Mountmellick Library is delighted to host from 6-30th June, "Time Exhibition" by Laois Quilters. There will also be a raffle draw for a beautiful double bed quilt to benefit Family Carers Ireland.

Art Exhibition: 5th Class St Joseph's Girls National school exhibited portraits in mixed media in Mountmellick Library for the month of June.

Mountrath Library – Call 057 8756378 or email mountrathlibrary@laoiscoco.ie

The Adult Book Club met on Thursday 8th June at 6.15pm. Our book club choice up for discussion is This Tender Land by William Kent Krueger. Tea/Coffee was provided.

A meeting of the Local History group was held on Thursday 1st June at 6.15-7.30pm.

Ciorcal Comhrá - Dé hAoine 9ú agus 23ú Meitheamh ag 10am. Bígí linn le caint agus comhrá as Gaeilge agus cupán tae. Fáilte roimh bhaill nua!

Portlaoise Library – Call 05786 22333 or email portlaoiselibrary@laoiscoco.ie

Genealogy Club at Portlaoise Library was held on June 21st - Ciorcal Comhrá The group meet for a chat and conversation / weekly chat in Irish – Irish conversation every Wednesday at 5.30pm-6.30pm.

Rathdowney Library Library – Call 050546852 or email rathdowneylibrary@laoiscoco.ie

Sewing Club: Monday evenings from 7.00 to 8.30.

Book Club Monday 26th at 8.00. Our book this month is The Nothing Man by Catherine Ryan Howard

Women's Shed please contact library 0505 46852

Lego Free Play during opening hours.

Sensory Toy Resource Collection – a service for parents of children with additional needs who live in Co. Laois. The toys are designed to support the development of gross motor skills, fine motor skills and communication skills. Take a look at the resource booklet [here](#)

Stradbally Library – Call 057 8641673 or email stradballylibrary@laoiscoco.ie

Relaxation and Mindfulness – 1.30-3PM was held on June the 1st and June the 8th 2023

Creative Writing with LOETB was held on the 6th and 8th of June 2023

Laois Local Studies

Terry Dunne (Laois Historian-in-Residence 2021-2022) launched the 3rd episode of his podcast series .In the 3rd Terry discussed agrarian protests and an examination into two court cases from near Mountrath – one in the Dáil system and one in the old U.K. system. Some of these conflicts have a long history — going back as far as the 1870s and we'll get to see how the Dáil Courts related to earlier forms of dispute resolution. Finally, an outline of Lord De Vesci's call for "Dominion Home Rule".

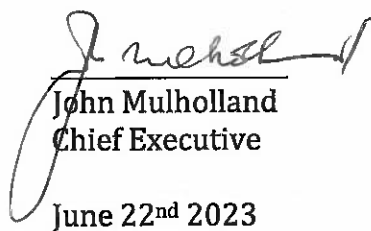


The [Laois Local Studies](#) website for lots more detail on the various collections, materials and photographs available showcasing Laois History and Heritage, including the Colonel James Fitzmaurice Collection, the Helen Roe Collections and many more!

If you wish to unsubscribe from the mailing list, call or email your local library to be removed.

Chief Executive's Orders

- 🇮🇪 A schedule of Chief Executive Orders signed during the month of June 2023 will be circulated.


John Mulholland
Chief Executive
June 22nd 2023