



Comhairle Contae **Lú**
Louth County Council

ANNUAL REPORT **2021**

Your Council for **Your** Community





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Introduction

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2021 at a glance

Elected Members



Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council





Foreword



Pio Smith
Cathaoirleach

I was delighted to be elected to the role of Cathaoirleach for Louth County Council in June 2021.

2021 was a challenging year for the smallest county and indeed the world. Following on from 2020, COVID 19 was still prevalent and foremost in our thoughts, affecting every aspect of our lives, and many more lives were lost to the pandemic. Those who went before us will continue to live on in our hearts.

During 2021, COVID 19 was not the only consideration for Councillors; the County Development Plan also occupied a lot of Members thoughts and time. I would like to give special mention and thanks to my predecessor Councillor Dolores Minogue for her expertise in chairing 18 meetings on the County Development Plan which led to the Draft Plan being adopted at my second meeting as Cathaoirleach in July. Three further meetings held in September lead to the adoption of the full County Development Plan. The Plan sets out a solid blueprint for Louth to 2027 and it would be remiss not to acknowledge and applaud all the hard work of my elected colleagues, the executive and staff in getting the Plan over the line.

Sadly, we lost an esteemed colleague and friend, serving councillor, Hugh Conlon during the year. Hugh was passionate in his love for the County particularly the Dunleer area and represented his constituents

with vigour and energy right up to the end. He is missed by all RIP.

While there is no denying the challenges posed during the year, 2021 was also one that encouraged resilience, promoted innovation, and sparked community spirit. In the face of sometimes seemingly never ending gloom, the people of Louth continued to display a fantastic sense of community and support for each other and I am hugely proud to represent them in my role of Cathaoirleach.

COVID 19 also continued to present challenges both to the provision of services and to individual staff in Louth County Council, many of whom provide front line essential & emergency services to the people of Louth and I commend staff for working through this and for working well.

I welcome the Annual Report which is evidence of the great work done by Louth County Council. I thank the Chief Executive, Joan Martin, the executive team and all of the staff of Louth County Council for their work and commitment to the people of Louth.

I look forward to continuing to play my part in working for the county into the future. It is an honour to serve the citizens of Louth as Cathaoirleach of Louth County Council.

Pio Smith.

Overview



Joan Martin
Chief Executive

The year 2021 proved challenging on both a personal and professional level for the people of Louth, and it was no different for Management, Members and Staff of Louth County Council. As a public service body the requirement to assist people and maintain services has possibly never been more evident or indeed challenging than over the past two years.

From an organisational perspective the safety of staff was paramount both from a caring employer approach and to ensure provision of services. The social distancing measures and intensive cleaning regimes put in place in 2020 were maintained in 2021 and added to where possible. Where social distancing measures were not possible between staff, mitigations were considered and employed and I am satisfied that as an organisation every effort was expended to protect those who work here and who are so valued for their contribution.

Equally, it was imperative that visitors to our offices could attend safely, and a huge level of consideration was given to keeping visitors to our offices safe while ensuring continuity of service to them, with sanitisation of premises, infection control measures and distancing markings throughout our public

offices. Despite having to close to visitors for 6 months of 2021, our Customer Service team saw and assisted 15,602 customers at the public counters when offices were allowed open, and throughout the year answered 82,455 phone calls and replied to 19,490 emails. The Community Call helpline was available throughout the year to coordinate efforts of the wonderful volunteers in our community assisting those isolating.

Behind the scenes there was constant communication between the management team and staff in all sections with various Government and Sectoral bodies, both local and national. We were proud to assist the North-Eastern Public Health team in their efforts on encouraging and promoting the public health safety and vaccination message during the pandemic and still attend regular meetings on initiatives to promote public health.

With regards to the normal business of the council, despite Covid's best efforts, services were maintained. After much consideration by Elected Members and 21 hybrid meetings the draft Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027 was finally adopted on the 30th September 2021 and came into effect 6 weeks later.

It would be remiss of me not to remember Cllr. Hugh Conlon who sadly died during the consideration of the Plan, and who worked with a passion for his constituents right through to the end - RIP.

The Local Enterprise Office (LEO) continued its annual engagement with 1500 local businesses, providing workshops, training and support on a myriad of items, with 1,527 participants attending training programmes hosted by LEO; an increase of 258 participants from 2020.

Homeless and Housing service provision continued in 2021 and 514 units were allocated during the year.

The pandemic caused much loss and sadness, but it did strengthen the bond that communities have together. The people of Louth are fantastic and

community engagement was to the fore in 2021 and the Public Participation Network in Louth saw a 22% increase in Membership from 401 members in 2020 to 513 in 2021.

I would like to thank all the staff of Louth County Council for their work during 2021. I would also like to thank the residents of Louth for their forbearance and understanding when not all services could be delivered, and for demonstrating true community spirit. Finally, I thank all of the Councillors for their dedication and commitment, and I warmly welcome our new members who commenced.

I invite you all to read our Annual Report 2021 which gives a snapshot of the many more services and initiatives provided by Louth County Council during the year.



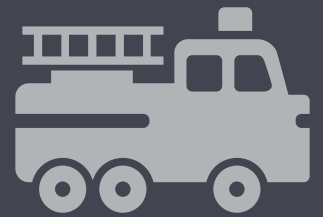


117,547 INTERACTIONS
WITH CUSTOMERS



ENERGY
EFFICIENCY
IMPROVED BY
46.8%

**1,147 FIRE &
EMERGENCY SERVICES
INCIDENTS**



3,276
HAP
TENANCIES



235 WARNING
LETTERS ISSUED
ON UNAUTHORISED
DEVELOPMENT



CIRCA
38 MILLION
LITRES OF WATER
DISTRIBUTED
DAILY



4,152
COUNCIL-OWNED SOCIAL
HOUSING STOCK

158,301 LIBRARY
ITEMS ISSUED





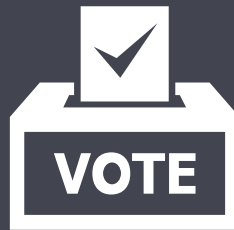
REACCREDITED WITH 3YR
ISO 50001.2018
NSAI CERTIFICATION
FOR OUR ENERGY
MANAGEMENT SYSTEM



1,549 PLANNING
APPLICATIONS **RECEIVED**



796,164 KW
OF ELECTRICITY
GENERATED FROM
LANDFILL GAS



96,102
REGISTERED
ELECTORS IN
LOUTH



49 DANGEROUS
STRUCTURE FILES
OPENED

€12 MILLION
SPENT ON ROADS



94% OF DOGS
RECLAIMED OR
RE-HOMED



75 BUSINESS
TRAINING AND
DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMMES WITH
1,527 PARTICIPANTS



3,531
BUSINESSES
SUPPLIED WITH WATER



119 RIVER WATER
QUALITY SAMPLES
TAKEN

Electoral Areas of County Louth

County Louth is divided into the three municipal districts of Drogheda, Ardee and Dundalk. For electoral purposes the county is made up of 5 electoral areas: Ardee, Drogheda Rural, Drogheda Urban, Dundalk – Carlingford and Dundalk South.

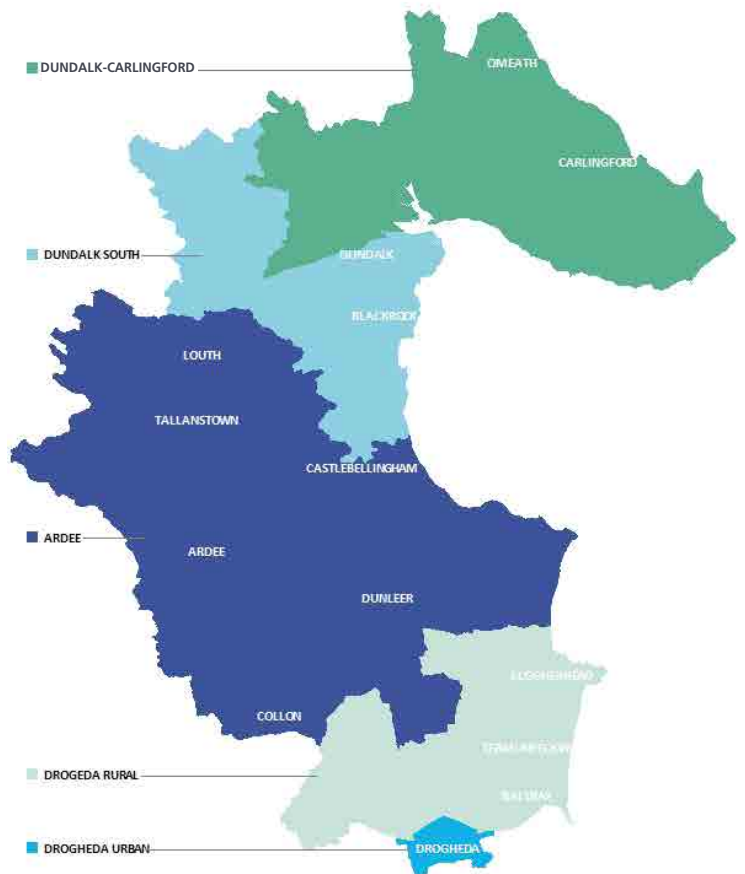
REGISTER OF ELECTORS

Louth County Council is responsible for compiling an annual register of citizens entitled to vote. The Register of Electors, effective from 15th February 2021, showed a total voting population of **96,102** for Co. Louth.

Presidential Electors	90,239
Dáil Electors	91,195
European Electors	91,015
Potential European Electors	2,186
Local Electors	96,102

In preparation for the **Modernisation of the Electoral Register**, which is a national project, Louth County Council began a 'data cleanse' of the Register of Electors in 2020 which continued in 2021. This focused primarily on the collation and verification of eircodes against dwellings. A number of duplicate and 'gone away' electors were also deleted as part of the tidy up. 13,837 letters issued to electors in relation to their eircode and 3,798 letters issued to electors to validate dates of birth.

Voters are urged to check the register at www.checktheregister.ie to ensure they are registered and their details are correct.



Percentage of Electors, in Eircode recorded addresses	92%
Percentage of Electors, with a date of birth	97%

ELECTED MEMBERS: COMHAIRLE CONTAE LÚ / LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL

Ardee Electoral Area - 6 Members



JOHN SHERIDAN
Fianna Fáil

Dromeen, Dublin Road, Dundalk,
Co. Louth

e: john.sheridan@louthcoco.ie



PEARSE McGEOUGH
Sinn Féin

St. Mary's Villas, Kilsaran
Castlebellingham, Co. Louth

e: pearse.mcgeough@louthcoco.ie



PAULA BUTTERLY
Fine Gael

Port Cottage, Port, Togher
Drogheda, Co. Louth

e: paula.butterly@louthcoco.ie



DOLORES MINOGUE
Fine Gael

Whitefield, Jervis Street
Ardee, Co. Louth

e: dolores.minogue@louthcoco.ie



JIM TENANTY
Non Party

Riverbank, Jervis Street
Ardee, Co. Louth

e: jim.tenanty@louthcoco.ie



BERNIE CONLON
Non Party

St. Jude's, Main Street
Dunleer, Co. Louth

e: bernie.conlon@louthcoco.ie



HUGH CONLON RIP
Non Party

Ceased to be a Member in 2021.
In September 2021, Bernie
Conlon filled the casual vacancy
arising from the death of
Cllr. Hugh Conlon.



COLM MARKEY
Fine Gael

Ceased to be a Member in 2021.
In February 2021, Paula Butterly
filled the casual vacancy arising
from the resignation of
Cllr. Colm Markey.

Drogheda Rural Electoral Area - 4 Members



EILEEN TULLY
Fine Gael

Baltray, Drogheda
Co. Louth

e: eileen.tully@louthcoco.ie



MICHELLE HALL
Labour

The Paddocks, Duffs Farm
Termonfeekin, Co. Louth

e: michelle.hall@louthcoco.ie



TOM CUNNINGHAM
Sinn Féin

Oriel Cove, Clogherhead
Drogheda, Co. Louth

e: tom.cunningham@louthcoco.ie



DECLAN POWER
Non Party

Barrackfield, Clogherhead
Co. Louth

e: declan.power@louthcoco.ie

Drogheda Urban Electoral Area - 6 Members



JOANNA BYRNE
Sinn Féin

Pearse Park, Drogheda,
Co. Louth

e: joanna.byrne@louthcoco.ie



PIO SMITH
The Labour Party

Waterunder
Drogheda, Co. Louth

e: pio.smith@louthcoco.ie



FIACHRA MAC RAGHNAILL
The Labour Party

Oulsters Lane
Drogheda, Co. Louth

e: fiachra.macraghnaill@louthcoco.ie



KEVIN CALLAN
Non Party

Ard na Gréine, Lawlesstown
Co. Louth

e: kevin.callan@louthcoco.ie



JAMES BYRNE
Fianna Fáil

Park Lane, Grange Rath
Drogheda, Co. Louth

e: james.byrne@louthcoco.ie



PADDY McQUILLAN
Non Party

Boyne Valley Cottages, Mell
Drogheda, Co. Louth

e: paddy.mcquillan@louthcoco.ie

Dundalk - Carlingford Electoral Area - 6 Members



EDEL CORRIGAN
Sinn Féin

Aghaboys, Mountpleasant
Dundalk, Co. Louth

e: edel.corrigan@louthcoco.ie



SEÁN KELLY
Fianna Fáil

Ard Easmuinn, Dundalk,
Co Louth

e: sean.kelly@louthcoco.ie



CONOR KEELAN
Fianna Fáil

Oak Lodge, Newry Road
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JOHN REILLY
Fine Gael

Carrickedmond, Kilcurry
Dundalk, Co. Louth

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ANDREA McKEVITT
Fianna Fáil

Maddoxland, Riverstown
Dundalk, Co. Louth

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ANTÓIN WATTERS
Sinn Féin

Ballinamara, Riverstown
Dundalk, Co. Louth

e: antoin.watters@louthcoco.ie

Dundalk South Electoral Area - 7 Members



MARIANNE BUTLER
Green Party/Comhaontas Glas

Cophorn, Lower Avenue Road
Dundalk, Co. Louth

e: marianne.butler@louthcoco.ie



EMMA COFFEY
Fianna Fáil

Riverside Drive, Red Barns Road
Dundalk, Co. Louth

e: emma.coffey@louthcoco.ie



MARIA DOYLE
Fine Gael

Bóthar na Dara, Lis Na Dara
Carrick Road, Dundalk, Co. Louth

e: maria.doyle@louthcoco.ie



KEVIN MEENAN
Sinn Féin

Cottage View, Farm Road
Annagassan,
Dunleer, Co. Louth

e: kevin.meenan@louthcoco.ie



LIAM REILLY
Fianna Fáil

Milltown, Grange, Dromiskin
Dundalk, Co. Louth

e: liam.reilly@louthcoco.ie



TOMÁS SHARKEY
Sinn Féin

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Dundalk, Co. Louth

e: tomas.sharkey@louthcoco.ie



MAEVE YORE
Non Party

Blakely Close, Avenue Road
Dundalk, Co. Louth

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CORPORATE & EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Corporate Services Department of Louth County Council provides an effective and efficient support service to councillors and senior management, along with general services to members of the public. As well as monitoring and reviewing the Council's policies and procedures on an ongoing basis, it is also responsible for the administration of council meetings, the compilation of the Register of Electors, preparing the Council's corporate plan and annual report, corporate property management, health and safety, accessibility oversight, and handling Freedom of Information requests.



Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council



The Fire and Emergency Services come under this Department, providing vital and lifesaving services to the public. The Energy Section promotes Sustainable Energy and other initiatives to reduce the Council's carbon footprint internally and shares energy saving measures with the wider community.

The Council's Information Technology systems are administered by Corporate Services.

The Human Resources Section in Corporate Services strives to ensure Louth County Council is an equal opportunity and accessible employer, promoting staff welfare and safe work practices throughout.

Council Meetings 2021

A total of 13 meetings of Louth County Council were held in 2021, a scheduled monthly meeting on the third Monday of each month, an annual meeting in June and a statutory Budget meeting. There is no meeting held in August.

Members also met to consider the Chief Executive's Report on Submissions Received on the Draft County Development Plan 2021-2027 over 18 nights between 12th April to the 9th June 2021. Following adoption of the Draft County Development Plan, this went out for public consultation to allow for submissions on proposed material alterations. The Chief Executive Report on submissions received on the adopted Draft Plan was brought to the main September Council Meeting for adoption, and following subsequent adjournments over three evenings in September, Members voted to adopt the County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 on the 30th September 2021. Total time spent on consideration of the Draft Plan was 65 hrs and 55 mins over 21 meetings.

Each of the Municipal Districts held 11 statutory monthly meetings, plus 1 annual meeting and 1 budget meeting.

Louth County Council Chairperson/Cathaoirleach – **Cllr. Pio Smith**

Municipal District of Dundalk Chairperson/Cathaoirleach – **Cllr. Maria Doyle**

Mayor of Drogheda and Borough District of Drogheda Chairperson/ Cathaoirleach – **Cllr. James Byrne**

Municipal District of Ardee Chairperson/Cathaoirleach – **Cllr. Jim Tenanty**



Ardee MD meeting Sept 2021

Meetings of Louth County Council in 2021	
Monthly Meetings	11
Annual Meetings	1
Budget Meetings	1
Corporate Policy Group (CPG)	11
County Development Plan Meetings	21
Municipal District Meetings	
Borough District of Drogheda	11
Municipal District of Ardee	11
Municipal District of Dundalk	11
Municipal District Budget Meetings	3
Municipal District Annual Meetings	3
Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs)	
SPC - Housing	4
SPC - Economic Development & Enterprise	3
SPC - Planning & Support Infrastructure	3
SPC - Climate Action & Energy	4
SPC - Community, Quality of Life, & Creativity	4
Joint Policing Committees/Local Policing Forum (LPF)	
JPC Steering Group	2
LPF - Dundalk	4
LPF - Drogheda	4
LPF - Ardee	4
Audit Committee	5

The meetings listed are official meetings attended. There were various other meetings held and attended throughout the year in 2021.

Council Meetings 2021

SPC ACTIVITIES 2021

There were 4 meetings of the Housing SPC held in 2021. Agenda items included the Homeless Regional Action Plan, Disability Strategy, Control of Dogs, Energy Retrofit Scheme, Transfer Policy, and the Housing assistance payment scheme.

There were 3 meetings of the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC held in 2021. Agenda items included Tourism, Peace Plus, Casual Trading Bye-Laws, and the Regional Enterprise Plan.

There were 3 meetings of the Planning & Support Infrastructure SPC held in 2021. Agenda Items included Casual Trading Bye-Laws, Camper Van Bye Laws, updates on the County Development Plan.

There were 4 meetings of the Community, Quality of Life & Creativity SPC held in 2021. Agenda items included Louths Sports Partnership and Sports Unit, Policy on Works by Community Groups, the Library Development Plan.

There were 4 meetings of the Climate Action SPC held in 2021. Agenda items included Sustainable Energy Communities for Louth, Climate action training for councillors and staff, joint presentations on Sustainability/ Climate Change with Newry Mourne and Down District Council, Litter Management Plan, and Louth County Council's Energy Policy.



SEEK Urban Art Mural – Railway Heritage



**CUSTOMER
SERVICES
2021
AT A GLANCE**



**117,547 INTERACTIONS
WITH CUSTOMERS INCLUDING
EMAILS, CALLS AND PUBLIC
COUNTER QUERIES**

OUR PUBLIC COUNTERS WERE
CLOSED FOR 6 MONTHS DUE
TO COVID -19 WHICH LED TO AN
INCREASE IN THE NUMBER
OF **PHONE CALLS** AND
E-MAIL QUERIES

ASSISTED **15,602
CUSTOMERS**
AT THE PUBLIC COUNTER



ANSWERED **19,490 EMAILS,**
AN AVERAGE OF
79 PER DAY



82,455 PHONE CALLS WERE ANSWERED BY
CUSTOMER SERVICES – AN AVERAGE OF
334 CALLS PER DAY

Light Ups For Various Charities

Corporate Services organised many awareness-raising 'light ups' for various charities and causes throughout 2021.



Millmount orange



Town Hall green



County Hall purple and orange

Civic Awards and Events

The Ardee Civic Awards, Dundalk Civic Awards and Drogheda Mayoral Awards are awarded annually in recognition of excellent contributions of individuals and organisations to the community in County Louth. Award recipients are nominated by a local representative for their dedication, achievements and contributions to community and sporting life at local, national and international levels. The Global Covid 19 pandemic led to the postponement of the 2020 Ardee and Dundalk awards, and unfortunately 2021 Covid levels again curtailed plans.

Nevertheless, two Annual Civic Award ceremonies took place in 2021, one held outdoors during an ease in restrictions while the other was held remotely with a link being sent to recipients thereafter. The Borough District of Drogheda, Mayoral Awards 2021, were presented, by Cllr. Kevin Callan, Mayor during an outdoor ceremony earlier in the year. Luckily the weather held up and it was a great success; while Cllr. Jim Tenanty, Cathaoirleach of the Municipal District of Ardee presented the Ardee Civic Awards remotely at end of 2021. The Ardee ceremony was a double event, as it included nominees for 2020 and 2021. Both award ceremonies though different were very well received by recipients.

It is hoped to be able to hold Dundalk Civic Awards early in 2022.

The awards are available to view at

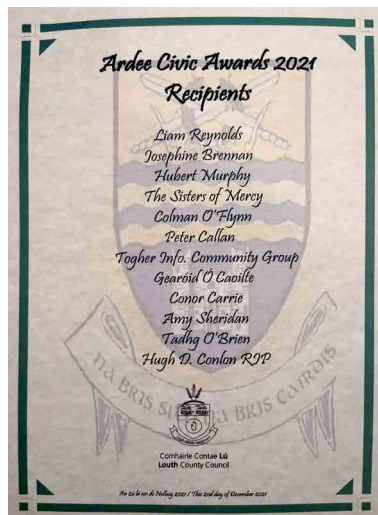
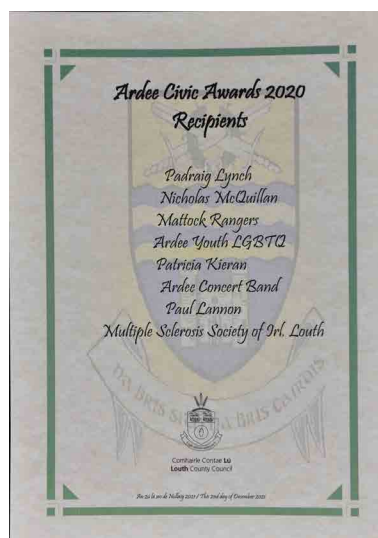
[Ardee Civic Awards](#)

[Drogheda Mayoral Awards](#)

The Corporate Services Section also supports various annual memorial events and funded the following events in 2021:

The Annual War Memorial Remembrance Service at the Cenotaph at Mary Street, Drogheda, Co. Louth on Saturday 6th November, 2021.

EVENT 2021	COST
Mayoral Awards	€760.84
Ardee Civic Awards	€1,321.05
Cenotaph Memorial	€757.45





Group staff Drogheda Mayoral Awards 2021



Ardee Civic Awards



Sustainable Energy

ENERGY AT A GLANCE

Louth County Council has reduced its energy use by 46.8% in 2021 against its baseline year of 2009, according to preliminary results for energy use by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI). This was achieved by training our staff, upgrading our building stock and facilities to be more efficient, better monitoring and targeting of energy waste and using renewable energy technologies.

BETTER ENERGY COMMUNITIES GRANT 2021

The Council partnered with Dunleer Sustainable Energy Community for their grant application for funding for energy projects in 2021. That application resulted in an offer of funding for Council energy projects of €78,282, for a total maximum expenditure cost of €260,939. All works are now completed, and grant claims submitted. We look forward to expanding our links with Community Groups in 2022 to encourage and advance better energy communities.

The Council through its Climate Change and Energy Strategic Policy committee agreed to develop a Policy to support Sustainable Energy Committees. It is hoped to expand on previous work done with SECs, such as the established partnership with Dunleer Sustainable Energy Community to seek to develop a more co-ordinated approach to promotion and participation in SEAI's Community Energy Grant Programme.

ENERGY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Following a lot of work and a three-day audit Louth County Council was granted a three-year Certification of Registration for our Energy Management System (EnMS) by the NSAI under ISO50001.2018 in March 2021 for 'the management of the electrical energy, thermal energy and other fuels usage within public buildings, public lighting and transportation under the direct control of the authority'.

ISO50001.2018 is an international standard which specifies requirements for establishing, implementing, maintaining and improving an energy management system (EnMS). The intended outcome is to enable an organisation to follow a systematic approach in achieving continual improvement of energy performance and the EnMS.

As part of the accreditation process a surveillance audit is carried out within 12 months from the date of certification to check that continual improvement is indeed happening.

Louth County Council was delighted to get positive feedback following the surveillance audit by the NSAI on the 15th December on our ISO50001.2018 Energy Management System Accreditation. The Energy Team in Louth County Council worked hard despite challenges presented by COVID to not only maintain the energy work done in previous years but to improve on it.

When issuing the report on the surveillance audit, NSAI Auditor Donal Harlow complimenting Staff and Management of Louth County Council commented: "The result is positive with no findings, and evidence of a lot of positive work done by the energy team, a lot of positive planning and action by the council management team".

A copy of the report can be found on our press release page [here](#).

RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS

At Louth County Hall, our solar PV (photovoltaic) array generated 4.6% of the total electricity consumed by the building. We also installed a heat pump system that serves the foyer area. In Dundalk Town Hall, we installed a new photovoltaic array to generate net zero carbon electricity. At both sites, we continually improve the operation of the Building Management System to keep staff comfortable while also reducing energy consumption. We are introducing a new system to monitor faults and complaints and ensure that they are dealt with appropriately, while also keeping energy efficiency in mind.

Energy works completed in 2021 under our Energy Action Plan 2021 were as follows:

- County Hall – Air Sourced heat Pump and new energy loggers to monitor gas and electricity use and a new Electric Vehicle for caretakers.
- Dundalk Town Hall and Civil Defence Building Dundalk –new Solar Photo Voltaic Units and new energy loggers to monitor gas and electricity use.
- Archives Building – new Air Sourced Heat Pump and low energy lighting and energy improvements to windows.
- New energy loggers to monitor gas and electricity use have already been installed at Dundalk and Drogheda Fire Stations.

GENCOMM INTERREG ENERGY STORAGE PROJECT

Project GenComm - **GENerating energy secure COMMunities**, comprises 10 Strategic Partners across the UK, Germany, France, Belgium and Ireland, with Belfast Met being the Lead Partner and 23 Associate Partners. Louth County Council is an associate partner in this project. Gencomm aims to answer the energy sustainability challenges facing remote communities across NE Europe through production and storage of renewable hydrogen.

The [project website](#) gives up-date on progress on the potential for hydrogen use as a Sustainable Energy source. The project partners consider how hydrogen offers the opportunity to make energy production a primary driver of the economy rather than responding to the needs of the economy as at present.

The Gencomm Project Team presented on the project at the December meeting of the Climate Change and Energy SPC which was very well received.

OPTIMISING POWER AT WORK – SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

The Office of Public Works (OPW) has devised and implemented a successful energy conservation campaign (Optimising Power @ Work) in its own portfolio of large buildings. Louth County Council is a long-standing participant in the campaign having signed a Service Level Agreement in 2014. The energy conservation campaign is predominately a behavioural change programme and we have continued to make significant progress over the course of 2021.

	Town Hall	County Hall	Combined Total
Benchmark year	2014	2016	
2021 Energy Saving	320,630 kWh	68,689 kWh	389,319 kWh
2021 Financial Saving	€22,943	€9,731	€32,674
2021 CO2 Reduction	84 tonnes	32 tonnes	116 tonnes

Table 1 shows the Savings in Dundalk Town Hall and Co. Hall during 2021

COUNCIL FACILITIES

2021 again saw a necessary deployment of Energy Staff to assisting with COVID staff and customer safety measures. Some of the measures included deployment of sanitisers, implementation and constant review of distancing measures in offices and buildings, advising the COVID Safety Committee and Management Team, distribution and monitoring of CO2 monitors, and installation of air purifiers. The efforts expanded by the energy, facilities and caretaking staff went in no small measure to ensuring that Louth County Council had no workplace outbreaks of COVID where individual staff contracted the virus.

ENERGY AWARENESS EVENTS

In addition to concerted and ongoing efforts to optimise building systems, the Council has participated in and rolled out a number of staff engagement activities designed to encourage behavioural change.

Energy Efficiency Week took place from the 4th to 8th of October 2021. The theme was Clever Climate Actions. Each day staff received an email focusing on specific actions that could deliver meaningful results (eg pulling blinds to keep the heat in, wrapping up to stay warm, how to use thermostatic radiator valves). There were also quizzes, prize draws and a children's colouring competition.

Staff also participated in one-to-one energy clinics with energy experts to get tailored advice on saving energy at home and at work thereby reducing their carbon footprint, energy consumption and associated costs.

To share knowledge and encourage staff engagement in energy saving, the Council maintains an Energy Email Account. This was very active in 2021. Emails sent to staff include relevant podcast recommendations, bank holiday weekend and Christmas energy shutdown campaign, monthly energy tips and information on electric vehicles. Staff engagement is high as displayed in a very successful Energy Quiz was held over 3 days in July 2021, with questions based on energy tip emails that had been sent in the preceding months. The account is also used to receive suggestions from staff on actions that they think Louth County Council can take in buildings to save energy.

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Number of Entries	88	116	62
Correct Answers	86%	97%	98%

Table 2 shows staff engagement in a 3 day Energy Quiz Event



By following the energy tips and powering down reminders that are sent out on a regular basis, along with other measures, both Town Hall and the County Hall achieved great results. Over the Christmas period we saved 12% in County Hall and 27% in Town Hall and by encouraging staff to 'switch off' and by using our BMS (Building Management System) to control the heating appropriately during unoccupied times. This helps reinforce the message that small changes can make a big difference.

Over the course of 2022 we will continue to improve the way we operate our buildings and work with our partners to enhance our behavioural change efforts, some elements of which were a challenge to carry out during the peak of the pandemic. Our intention is to resume face to face awareness days and other events dedicated to helping staff save energy both at work and at home. We are also taking steps to roll these initiatives out in some of our other sites in the County.





VARCITIES

VARCITIES

VARCITIES stands for 'Visionary Nature-based Actions for Health, Well-being and Resilience in Cities'. The Varcities project is a European Commission Horizon 2020 funded research project, and is led by a group made up of 25 Partners, largely academia throughout Europe.

The Courtyard of Dundalk Library / Museum Quarter was chosen as one of 9 pilot sites for the project. It is the only Irish site chosen and the project is being led by Louth County Council Energy Team.

The focus is on Urban Regeneration; Impacts on Quality of Life plus Health and Well Being. Funding has been approved for €10million, with €422,500 allocated to Louth County Council. The project officially commenced on September 1st 2020. The project duration is the 54 months from that starting date.

The objectives of VARCITIES are to work with local stakeholders to identify and implement integrated nature-based solutions to future proof urban living, and develop new Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for health and well-being. The implemented solutions in all projects will be studied to create a model or blueprint for future urban settings to increase the health and well-being of citizens exposed to different climatic conditions and challenges.

On 29 June, Dundalk hosted our first co-creation workshop with local stakeholders. The goal of the first series of workshops was to introduce the visionary solutions to the local stakeholders in order to validate and refine them collectively, before starting the co-design process. The Dundalk event took place online and it was attended by more than 20 participants. The stakeholders provided excellent ideas and feedback to the team on Visionary Solutions for the project.

Our second Workshop was also hugely successful on the 18th November, offering stakeholders the opportunity to find out how LCC incorporated their proposals into the co-design phase of the project, and again excellent suggestions on amendments to design were received.

We look forward to completion of the conceptual design for the project which is due by end of February 2022 before this goes out for Public Consultation in line with Part 8 planning legislation.

Fire & Emergency Services

The Covid restrictions which had curtailed Louth Fire Service activities during 2020 continued throughout 2021.

Covid precautions in stations, at incidents and at training continued in force. During the most serious Covid phase, in January and February 2021, two fulltime crews were taken off the run due to Covid, to be replaced by off-duty personnel.

Dundalk Regional Training centre was closed during January, February and December 2021. This and the Training Centre closure during 2020 have created a large backlog of training which must be completed in 2022.

There was an 11.2% decrease in emergency incidents attended by Fire Brigades in Louth in 2021 compared to 2020.

Year	Emergency Incidents	% Difference
2017	1257	
2018	1271	+1.1%
2019	1141	-10.2%
2020	1291	+13.2%
2021	1147	-11.2%

- There was a reduction in forest fires, gorse fires and grass fires from a total of 144 in 2020 to 79 in 2021.
- There was a reduction in house fires from 95 in 2020 to 76 in 2021.
- The number of incidents in Drogheda Fire Brigade's area increased by 7.7% to 477, making it the busiest station area.
- The number of incidents attended in Meath increased from 131 in 2020 to 145 in 2021. These incidents would have been attended by Drogheda Fire Brigade.
- The number of road traffic accidents attended in 2021 was practically unchanged at 136. This is still lower than normal due to lower traffic volumes in 2021 resulting from Covid.

Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) approval was received to go to tender for the design of a new fire station in Dunleer. DHLGH approval was also received for a €1.15 million extension and upgrade of Dundalk Regional Fire Service Training Centre.

Work on both of these projects is underway with a view to major progress in 2022.

The Fire Prevention Section continued its enforcement activity in relation to high-risk residential buildings and institutional buildings in 2021.

The number of Fire Safety Certificate applications received by the Fire and Building Control Section reduced from 124 in 2020 to 119 in 2021, possibly due to continuing Covid effects. The number of Disabled Access Certificate applications increased from 75 in 2020 to 96 in 2021.

The Building Control Section inspected new developments for compliance with the Building Regulations and issued notices to developers to show compliance where defects were noted. The Building Control Officer also attended inspections of quarries in Louth to assess compliance with Construction Products Regulations.

The Fire Service arranged an exercise in September 2021 to test the emergency response plan for Flogas in Drogheda which is a Seveso Top Tier Site. This involved all senior staff in Louth County Council.

Preparations are underway for the Fire Service health and safety management system to be upgraded with a view to achieving OHSAS 45001 accreditation.





**FIRE
SERVICES
2021
AT A GLANCE**

136 ROAD TRAFFIC
ACCIDENTS ATTENDED



RESPONDED TO
1,147
INCIDENTS



DROGHEDA
FIRE STATION WAS THE
BUSIEST STATION UP 7.7%
FROM 2020



96 DISABLED
ACCESS
CERTIFICATE
ISSUED



79 GORSE FIRE
INCIDENTS ATTENDED

145 INCIDENTS
ATTENDED IN COUNTY
MEATH



119 FIRE SAFETY
CERTIFICATE
APPLICATIONS
RECEIVED

Civil Defence

In 2021, volunteers provided 300 hours towards Covid 19 related duties.

They also provided 440 hours towards community duties as well as 30 hours towards weather related events.

No gifts were received in relation to Civil Defence duties, however, a payment of €850 was received from the GAA in relation to assistance for the 2021 Poc Fada. This was lodged to the local authority.

Grants totalling €132,795.54 were received from the Department of Defence.

Information Technology

The IT Department continued to support all IT systems that facilitate business processes during 2021. IT staff continued to enable and support hybrid working for Council staff during Covid-19 restrictions. This included the rollout of circa 200 laptops. Hybrid Council meetings were also facilitated.

There was a strong focus on security in 2021 and we implemented new firewalls, upgraded our end point security system and our web access control system. IT also implemented multifactor authentication to circa 400 staff to ensure protection of the LCC IT Network. IT Helpdesk dealt with an above average number of support requests due to the rollout of new technologies to support secure remote working.

The council's server and network infrastructure were managed, and upgraded where necessary, to ensure reliability. A new SAN was installed. The Domain Migration Project was completed, this was a requirement for Louth County Council to move its Windows Management (Active Directory) from the national structure (A/D forest) which is hosted by the LGMA to a new standalone structure. IT also facilitated the installation of a new UPS and Generator in County Hall.

Human Resources

2021 was a particularly busy year for Human Resources. 37 recruitment competitions were held during the year, moving between remote and in-person interviews as the public health environment allowed.

In total, 78 new staff members joined the organisation, with a further 63 existing members of staff being appointed to new positions in the Council.

Louth County Council is continuing to grow its training function. A total of 153 training courses were provided in 2021, equating to almost three courses each week on average. In total, 737 staff were able to avail of some form of training. An additional 27 staff have joined the Training and Assistance Programme and have commenced new formal education courses across a range of providers.

The other work of HR such as Workforce Planning, payroll and employee support has also continued.

Section		2021
Recruitment	Competitions	37
	New staff appointments (joiners)	78
	Total staff appointments	143
	Retirements/Resignations	58
Training	No. of Training Courses Held	153
	No. of Staff Trained	737
	No. of Training Days	1326
	No. of Training & Assistance Applications Received	27

3

HOUSING AND QUALITY OF LIFE

Louth County Council Housing and Quality of Life Department facilitates sustainable communities through the provision of accommodation and supports that respond to the needs of all. The Local Community Development Committee's economic and community plan assists the development of safe communities through support for community networks, projects and initiatives and the provision of services covering sport and recreation amenities, libraries and support for the arts.



Comhairle Contae **Lú**
Louth County Council





**HOUSING
SERVICES
AT A GLANCE**



3,276
HAP TENANCIES



€13,188,698
MILLION
IN RENTAL INCOME



4,152
COUNCIL-OWNED SOCIAL
HOUSING
STOCK



514 HOMES
ALLOCATED
IN 2021



4,848 ON COUNCIL WAITING
LIST, A DECREASE FROM 2020



4,837 LETTERS
ISSUED IN RELATION
TO OVERDUE RENT

Housing

HOMELESS SERVICES 2021

Louth County Council's Homeless Service provides assistance to both individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless in County Louth. In 2021 36 homeless individuals were allocated a social/voluntary property and 144 availed of assistance from Homeless Services in accessing private rented accommodation under the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) scheme.

The total number of adults in emergency accommodation in December 2021 stood at 76, down from 77 in December 2020.

By the end of 2021, the North East Region (Louth, Monaghan & Cavan) had 10 families (12 adults & 27 children) in emergency accommodation.

HOUSING FIRST

Louth County Council continues to lead the implementation of the Housing First Model in the North East Region (Louth, Monaghan & Cavan) as part of the National Implementation Plan. Peter McVerry Trust are contracted to provide the service and in 2021, 30 individuals were successfully placed in supported tenancies under this model. 23 in Louth, 5 in Cavan and 2 in Monaghan.

HOUSING ALLOCATIONS

A total of 514 allocations were made in 2021, of which 315 were local authority units and 199 units were provided by Approved Housing Bodies. In total, 109 homes were allocated to those with a priority need. In addition, 32 transfer requests were facilitated in 2021.

PRIVATE RENTAL INSPECTION (PRI) SUMMARY

The Private Rental Inspection team continued its work inspecting privately rented properties and enforcing Housing (Standards for Rented Houses) Regulations 2019 across County Louth. Although the Covid-19 restrictions resulted in a number of prolonged periods

where inspections were suspended, this time was utilised in following up and escalating enforcements. In total, 301 dwellings were inspected. A total of 88 Advisory Notices, 94 Improvement Notices and 8 Prohibition Notices were issued in 2021.

HOUSING CAPITAL

In 2021, under the Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan, the Housing Section of Louth County Council delivered 440 new housing units throughout the county. These new housing units were delivered through a range of measures including direct Local Authority construction, turnkeys, acquisitions, long term leasing, Part V's and partnerships with AHBs.

Louth County Council welcomed the completion of a number of major schemes in 2021 such as Fr. Finn Park, Clonmore, Gort Buí and Halliday Mills.

In 2021 the Housing Section also continued construction works on the Local Authority scheme Cox's Demesne Phase 2B, Dundalk (22 units).

The Housing Section in conjunction with their appointed Architect Design Teams continue progress the designs of new residential schemes such as Mount Avenue, Dundalk, Boice Court, Drogheda and Muirhevnamore, Dundalk.

Fr. Finn Park Phase 2, Louth Village

In early April 2021 Louth County Council welcomed the completion of 17 new homes in Fr. Finn Park, Phase 2.

This new residential development of 17 homes was delivered and project managed by the Louth County Council Housing Capital Team. The development comprises a mix of 2 and 3 bedroomed A-rated energy efficient homes.

The appointed Architect Led Design Team for this project was Walsh Associates Architects & Project Managers and the Contractor was HollDev Ltd.



Fr. Finn Park Phase 2



Halliday Mills



Cox's Demesne Phase 2B, Dundalk (22 units)

Halliday Mills, Quay St, Dundalk

Q4 2021 saw the completion of 85 units at the apartment complex on Quay St Dundalk, in partnership with Co-Operative Housing. The delivery of these units offer a huge boost to the area, as they had been derelict and vacant for quite a number of years. They comprise of 1, 2 and 3 bed units.

Cox's Demesne Phase 2B, Dundalk (22 units)

Under construction in 2021 and due to complete in Q2 2022.

Clonmore Close, Ardee

A total of 55 new homes were delivered in 2021 in Clonmore Close, Ardee. In conjunction with Cluid Housing, a mix of 1, 2, 3 and 4 bed houses and apartments were completed here.

Gort Buí, Ballymakenny Road, Drogheda - Phases 4 & 5

Gort Buí Phases 4 & 5 (total of 18 units) completed in April & May 2021. These Phases comprise a mix of new 2, 3 & 4 bedroomed houses. All houses in these Phases are A-Rated energy efficient homes. These Phases concluded the house construction in this development.

Cathedral View, Dundalk

In 2021 Louth County Council were delighted to have had the opportunity to collaborate with Tuath Housing and the developer Urban Life, in bringing delivery of this quality housing project on a key brownfield site close to the town centre in Dundalk. There are 65 units in total in this development, with delivery across 5 Phases – with Phases 1-4 delivering in 2021. A total of 53 units in 2021, the final phase due to deliver in Q4 2022.

The development offers the new occupants town-centre living in well-appointed modern energy efficient housing units, that are lifelong homes close to all amenities including schools both primary and secondary, shopping and leisure facilities and ready access to public transport routes.

LCC look forward to continuing our relationship with Tuath Housing and Urban Life in delivering on many more such projects across the County going forward.

ESTATE MANAGEMENT 2021

Tenancy Training sessions provided for new tenants
- 281

Post Tenancy Allocation Inspections of Units - 44*
**Covid 19 Restrictions in place resulted in a decrease in tenancy inspections in 2021.*

ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR 2021

142 Cases of Anti Social Behaviour were investigated.
28 Verbal Warnings were Issued.
5 Written Warnings Issued.

PRIVATE HOUSE GRANTS 2021

An initial allocation of €1,889,980 for 2021 was advised by the Department, of which €377,996 was provided from the authority's own revenue resource. Additional funding of €962,500 was later allocated from the Department of which €192,500 was provided from the authority's own revenue resource.

HOP - Housing Aid for Older People
- 174 grants allocated.

HAG - Housing Adaptation Grant
- 119 grants allocated.

MAG - Mobility Aid Grant
- 39 grants awarded.

DISABILITY ADAPTATION WORKS TO COUNCIL HOUSES

Adaptations - 29 carried out.
Extensions - 1 extension completed.

Membership of the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) in 2021

Public Sector	
Louth County Council	Cllr. Liam Reilly
Louth County Council	Cllr. Kevin Meenan
Louth County Council	Cllr. Eileen Tully
Louth County Council	Cllr. Dolores Minogue
Louth County Council Official	Joan Martin
Louth County Council Official	Thomas Mc Evoy
Louth Meath ETB	Sadie Ward McDermott
DSP	Anne Keeley
HSE	Martina Ralph replaced by Bridie Pepper ratified by LCC October 2021
Private Sector	
Louth Leader Partnership	Ciarán Reid
Community & Voluntary Interests	Alison Quail
Community & Voluntary Interests	Joanne Finnegan
Social Inclusion	Kevin Moran replaced by Bernardine Quinn ratified by LCC July 2021
Social Inclusion	Geordie McAteer replaced by Carol Murphy ratified by LCC July 2021
Environment	Elizabeth O'Reilly
Farming	John Carroll
Chamber of Commerce Dundalk	Sean Farrell
Chamber of Commerce Drogheda	Breannán Casey replaced by Steven Rice ratified by LCC June 2021
Louth Volunteer Centre	Gráinne Berrill

Louth Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

Louth Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) prepared a six-year local, economic and community plan (LECP) in 2016 which includes actions to tackle poverty and disadvantage, support enterprise, employment and training, develop community infrastructure and the promotion of economic development. Louth LCDC held their monthly meetings throughout 2021 via Zoom platform and oversaw the following body of work administrated and facilitated through the Social and Community Office Louth County Council.

Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP)

The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme 2018-2022 is operated by Louth LEADER Partnership Company. In 2021, SICAP supported 71 community groups and registered 909 individuals. Other notable achievements during 2021 included:

- 71 community groups received developmental supports
- 13 Local Community Groups received small grants
- 909 individuals engaged in lifelong learning labour market supports
- 61 individuals were supported into employment
- 114 individuals referred by the Department of Social Protection were supported to establish their own businesses though the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance
- 54 individuals received education grants
- 32 individuals received enterprise grants
- 7 Social Enterprise received a social enterprise grant.



Strengthening Families Programme Prizegiving – Ardee

LEADER Programme 2014-2020

Public Sector	
High Level Priority 1	Work closely with communities, particularly new applicants building their capacity in preparation for the next programme period
High Level Priority 2	Promote projects which support communities in a post-COVID environment
High Level Priority 3	Support job creation, entrepreneurship, enterprise development and innovation in a post-COVID and/or post Brexit environment
High Level Priority 4	Explore and develop projects for funding in thematic areas which are likely to feature strongly in the next EU – funded programme

Louth County Council is the lead financial partner for the LEADER Programme in Co. Louth. The Programme is concerned with three measures: Economic and Enterprise Development and Job Creation; Social Inclusion and Rural Environment. In 2020, 141 expressions of interest for funding were received by the implementing partner, Louth Leader Partnership. In 2021, Minister Heather Humphries announced a Transitional LEADER Programme, which resulted in an allocation of €1.8m for County Louth. This funding was to deliver support for rural development projects, initiated at a local level, in order to re-vitalise rural areas and create jobs. A particular focus was on the above high-level priorities:

The Local Action Group (LAG) approved funding of €342,448.89 in 2021. Grant aid awarded ranged in size from €5,074.15 to €99,750.00.

- In addition, Grant aid of €23,561.25 was secured for County Louth under the LEADER Food initiative.
- 9 contracts were issued to project promoters throughout the County.
- A number of training programmes were rolled out in 2021 including Introduction to Composting, Appreciation of the Hills, River Invasive Species Training with approximately 40 participants taking part in training.
- Drummond House Garlic Limited was awarded grant aid of €18,712.50 towards the purchase of processing equipment for the garlic growing business at Baltray in County Louth.
- Funding of €197,887.50 was granted to two businesses in County Louth to purchase specialised equipment to assist their business expansion plans.
- The LAG awarded, under the Activity/Adventure Tourism measure, a grant of €5,074.16 to Dundalk Chamber of Commerce which will enable them to host the Cross Border Tourism Conference in 2022.
- Grant aid was awarded to a number of wide-ranging community projects including the upgrading of a community centre/facility and a training programme which the DeeHub in Ardee will deliver.
- 88 Expressions of Interest for Funding were received in 2021 by the implementing partner, Louth LEADER Partnership. Louth County Council is the lead financial partner for the LEADER Programme in Co. Louth.
- The Local Authority, in their role as lead financial partner, continued to carry out Article 48 checks on all project application and claims.

LOUTH PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK (PPN) IN 2021

Highlights of Public Participation Network (PPN) in 2021:

- Increased PPN Membership from 401 Members in 2020 to 513 Members in 2021.
- Secretariat meetings changed from bi-monthly to monthly to accommodate additional requirements due to Covid-19.
- Online Training and Capacity Building courses delivered to Members including Graphic Design Skills, PPN Representatives training, Mental Health Workshops, Successful Funding applications using E-Tenders, How To: Online Surveys and Louth River Invasive Species Training to name a few.
- Collaboration Social Inclusion week in September with Louth Leader Partnership and Development Perspectives on an online workshop 'Breaking Down Barriers in Your Community'.
- Facilitating Energy Presentation for Louth County Council at Municipal District Meetings of our PPN Members.
- Delivery of First Aid training to Transition Year/5th Year students in Louth under the PPN First Aid Programme.
- The PPN prepared our Representatives Booklet and shared with our elected PPN Representatives on the various committees and boards along with shared the booklet on our website www.LouthPPN.ie
- Hosting both our All-County Plenaries of the Louth Public Participation Network online.
- Louth PPN produced online virtual Community Awards 2021 Ceremony following the postponement of our Bellingham Castle noting the importance, hardwork, commitment and dedication of our members and the nominated finalists. The Awards ceremony can be viewed on the PPN YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z2aTfe8Nms8>

For further information on Louth PPN please go to our website www.louthppn.ie or to sign up for the weekly newsletter the Friday Communiqué, email ppn@louthcoco.ie.



PPN Plenary July 2021



First Aid St. Vincents

COVID-19 COMMUNITY CALL FORUM

The Louth Community Call Forum, a cross sectoral group was established in March 2020 to respond to the COVID 19 pandemic. The Forum set up a Call Centre Helpline and a working group to manage the day-to-day joint agency and community response to the helpline. The helpline was stepped down in November 2021, after a very positive response from both the Community Sectors and State Agencies.

AGE FRIENDLY COUNTY PROGRAMME

The Age Friendly County Programme continued to work with older people's groups and state agencies to reach out to older people in Louth building resilience and self-reliance during COVID. Projects include:

1. Super Connectors -LAMA awards April
2. SHAFE
3. Step up + Step Down facility in Cottage Hospital Drogheda
4. SICAP - LCDC recommended older people as the emerging group again for 2021 (SICAP Smart Start & Smart Network)
5. Library Programmes
6. Sports Programmes
7. Sports Benches
8. Mid Louth Security Programme
9. mPower collaboration with HSE and grant allocation (distributed by LCDC)
10. Combining HI and Age Friendly in the HIF-ALONE remote health monitoring and IT engagement
11. Supporting ISSAC in development of Personal Alarm
12. Development of CPD programme on UD design innovation in AF & HI strategies
13. Submissions made to CDP (AF well embedded in Louth CDP Nov 2021), EMRA RSES, Pre-budget submission re cost of wifi
14. Supported Treadagh Lodge Drogheda Alzheimer's Day Care Centre to access €200k from LEADER for the new build
15. Embedded AF into T&V grants, CEP, HIF, COVID Emergency Grants
16. Embedded Age Friendly into Migrant Strategy and Louth Migrant Network
17. Louth now has 4 community buses in the county at the disposal of the community and older people.

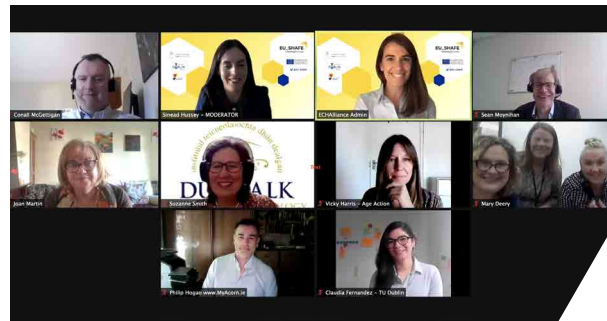
EU_SHAFE PROJECT

2021 was a busy year for the EU_SHAFE Project with five Inter-Regional meetings, monthly project teleconferences, stakeholders meetings, a project submission to the EU Green Paper on Ageing and presentations at external events.

Three of the year's Inter-Regional meetings were held online, due to Covid restrictions, however, the project partners finally got to meet face to face in the last two meetings of the year. The Inter-Regional meetings are a forum to discuss and share the Good Practices nominated by the Project partners across the four domains, Housing, Social Participation, Communications and Information, Health and Community. The Louth meeting covered the topic of Social Participation and included presentations from a number of Good Practices in County Louth along with our European partner's nominations. The meeting also had a panel discussion on Social Participation and technology which was really lively and interesting. Overall the Louth meeting was very well received with over 100 participants.

After a long Covid delay in meeting up, the meetings in Aarhus, Denmark and Coimbra, Portugal generated a lot of interest. Being able to visit Good Practices in person made a huge difference to the participants and generated a lot of ideas. Being able to take stakeholders to the meetings has proved to be a very valuable experience which helped to generate renewed interest in SHAFE issues. The Aarhus meeting also held an extremely useful workshop on our upcoming Action Plans which will be delivered in Phase II of the project.

Other highlights during the year included the project submission to the EU Green Paper on Ageing and the showcasing of the project at other external events.. The EU_SHAFE Project has been showcased at many different events during the year including the EURECO Conference 2021, where our Hamburg Partner highlighted the high level knowledge exchange and



Stakeholders on visit to the House of Generations Aarhus, Denmark



Participants at the EU-SHAFE Inter-regional meeting, Coimbra, Portugal

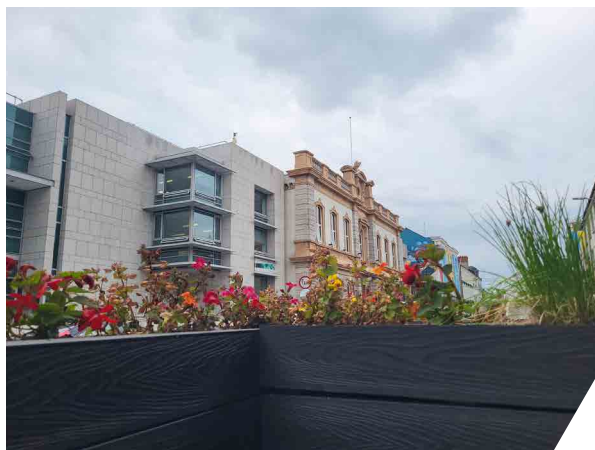
EU collaboration promoted by the project. Claudia Rivera Fernandez of TU Dublin showcased the achievements and outcomes of the project at the 3rd Digital Health Society Summit and the Internet Governance Forum, while Grainne Cumiskey, Louth EU_SHAFE Project Co-ordinator presented the project at the Irish Regions European Office and East and Midlands Regional Assembly's Communicating Europe event.

Overall 2021 was a successful year for the project and we are looking forward to the next phase of the project in 2022, which involves the creation and implementation of our Action Plans.

HEALTHY IRELAND

The primary aim of the Healthy Ireland fund is to support innovative, cross sectoral, evidence based projects and initiatives that support the implementation of key national policies in areas such as smoking, obesity, alcohol, physical activity and sexual health. Funding granted under the Healthy Ireland Fund R3: CMHF Small Grants Scheme was allocated as listed below:

Name Of Group	Grant Amount Approved
Autism Support Louth and Meath	€4,680.00
Cooley Connect Well	€4,000.00
New Leaf	€5,000.00
Omeath District Development	€4,000.00
Youth Work Ireland- Louth- Craobh Rua	€2,121.00
Roche Emmets All-Star Inclusion Group	€2,326.00
SNAIL- Special Needs Assistants	€2,873.00
Turas	€5,000.00
TOTAL	€30,000.00



Picture of Dundalk Town Hall taken from a Parklet which Louth County Council installed

Community Support

NATIONAL TIDY TOWNS

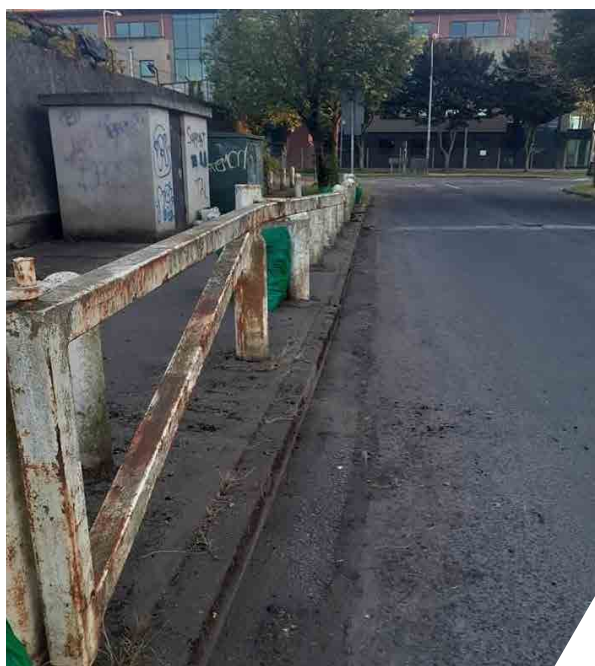
The National Tidy Towns competition recommenced in 2021, despite the Covid-19 restrictions. Louth has a long record of participation and achievement in the competition and that continued during 2021.

A total of 22 towns and villages from Louth entered the competition in 2021, with Ardee, Blackrock and Dundalk retaining their Gold Medals. Bronze medals were also awarded to Carlingford, Dromiskin, Knockbridge and Tallanstown.

Dundalk Tidy Towns took home the All Ireland Pollinator Plan/ Local Authority Award in the Large Town Category for the Midlands & East region and the Sustainable Development Goals Award. Monsterboice won the County Louth Endeavour award, with Blackrock also claiming the title of the county Award which rounded off a great year for Louth.

TIDY TOWNS PROJECT SCHEME 2021

The scheme is designed to allow groups to carry out small scale capital improvement works in the towns and villages in Louth and was announced in April 2021. Louth County Council provided funding of €72,377 in 2021 to fifteen Tidy Towns groups for projects that were focused on improving marks awarded in both the National Tidy Towns and local competitions. Projects completed in 2021 included a Rainwater harvesting project in Ardee, provision of a Biodiversity Garden, in Lordship, Mountbagnal, & Gyles Quay area and a clean-up and new planting to improve the public realm along the Inner Relief Road, in Dundalk.



Before and after photos of works carried out on the inner relief road, by Dundalk Tidy Towns

#LOUTH IN BLOOM 2021



LOUTH IN BLOOM 2021

In the yet another difficult year, more people sought refuge in their gardens and Louth looked like it was blooming. The second year of the all-county “Louth In Bloom” competition was launched in May 2021. It sought to acknowledge, celebrate and reward the dedication and community spirit which is demonstrated by individuals, residents’ associations, volunteers and the business community in Louth. Entrants were encouraged and invited to nominate in the seven different categories through a newly developed on line portal through our website.

The 2021 awards ceremony was a virtual ceremony held in October and winners were announced on line, by the Cathaoirleach of each Municipal District area, with the overall county winners announced by Cathaoirleach of Louth County Council. Prizes were awarded in many categories including best housing estates, best gardens, hospitality and business premises, best biodiversity award and a lifetime achievement award.

The awards were then presented by the Cathaoirleach of each Municipal District, to the winners in each of the categories, as their selfless contributions make a significant difference to how attractive our county looks. This year a special Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Gerry Mc Ardle, Tullyallen, Borough District of Drogheda.

GREEN SCHOOLS PROGRAMME 2021

Green Schools is Ireland’s leading environmental management and education programme for schools. COVID-19 interrupted the usual plans for our involvement with schools during 2021; however, online content and resources to use at home were developed, by Green Schools, to overcome the obstacles presented by school closures.

A total of 10 schools in Louth were awarded Green Flags in 2021. New online resources for Local Authorities to carry out inspections during 2021



Gerry McArdle being presented with award by Cathaoirleach of Louth County Council Pío Smyth

were put in place to allow virtually assessment to take place.

PRIDE OF PLACE 2021

“Blackrock Village” and the “Cox’s Demesne Youth & Community project” were nominated in 2021 to represent County Louth at the Co-Operation Ireland Pride of Place Awards competition. This all Ireland competition acknowledges the invaluable work undertaken by local communities to create civic pride in their area. It focuses on people within the community coming together to shape, improve and enjoy all that is good about their area.

The format of the competition changed this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic with both nominees submitting a video presentation showcasing all they had to offer and highlighted the positive contribution made by all groups and volunteers in both areas. With the ease of Covid-19 restrictions, Dundalk Sports Centre hosted the Adjudicator’s visit in October. This was welcomed by the nominees who had an opportunity to meet the judges and make their presentations, in person.



Joan Martin, Chief Executive & Paddy Donnelly Louth County Council, Peter Hynes. Katrina Murphy, adjudicators with members of the Blackrock Village community



Joan Martin, Chief Executive & Paddy Donnelly, Louth County Council, Peter Hynes. Katrina Murphy, adjudicators with Youth workers from the Cox's Demesne Youth & Community project

The winners were to be announced at an awards ceremony in February, but this has now been rescheduled to 16th May 2022, where it is been held in the INEC Arena in Killarney.

We wish both our nominees the very best of luck in the competition.

AMENITY GRANT SCHEME 2021

Louth County Council's annual Amenity Grant Scheme recognises the level of voluntary works being carried out by residents/community/environmental associations/groups on an annual basis to better their environment.

These activities mean that Louth continues to be a better place in which to live, work and visit. It also ensures that Louth continues to feature prominently in various national competitions. In 2021, 224 applications were received from groups throughout the county, wishing to undertake small scale amenity projects in their areas.



Wheaton Hall, Drogheda

BLUE FLAG AND GREEN COAST AWARDS

Louth retained the Blue Flag in 2021 for its beaches at Clogherhead, Port and Templetown. The Blue Flag is one of the world's most recognised eco-labels. The beaches complied with a specific set of criteria relating to water quality, information provision, environmental education, safety and beach management. Local community groups continue to assist by undertaking regular litter picks, which ensure that the beaches are attractive places to visit over the summer months. The beaches remained opened and the lifeguards continued to patrol the Blue Flag beaches during the Covid restrictions in 2021.

The Green Coast Award is to recognise beaches of high environmental quality. Seapoint Beach was the recipient of the 'Green Coast Award' for the third time in 2021. The award recognised beaches that have excellent water quality, but which are also prized for their natural unspoiled environment. The award encourages community involvement and has led to a number of groups in the Termonfeckin area contributing to the management of the beach. The installation of a new Footpath from Termonfeckin village to Seapoint which greatly enhanced safety and a more accessible walking route to the beach during 2021, using funds from the Town and Village Renewal Scheme.

TOWN & VILLAGE RENEWAL SCHEME 2021

The Town & Village Renewal Scheme was set up to provide funding to rejuvenate towns and villages throughout Ireland and to improve the living and working environment of rural communities. Six projects in Louth were submitted for consideration under the 2021 scheme, to the Department of Rural & Community Development from Louth County Council. All project owners are eagerly awaiting the announcement which is due in 2022.

CLÁR 2021

The Clár 2021 programme is a targeted investment programme for rural areas that aims to provide funding for small infrastructural projects in rural areas that have experienced significant levels of de-population. It supports interventions that make the school/community environs healthier and safer for children attending schools, and for children and adults using outdoor community recreation facilities. In 2021 a community wellbeing measure promoting community gardens/allotments and Mobility and Cancer Care Transport. It is delivered by local authorities in conjunction with community groups in the local area.

On 30th August by Minister Heather Humphreys announced that two projects received funding totaling €80,000 in 2021, which was provided by the Department of Rural and Community Development. The following projects were funded in 2021:

- Omeath Tidy Towns/Louth County Council – upgrading of the public toilets at Omeath (€50,000)
- Jenkinstown project committee - further construction of public footpaths at Jenkinstown (€30,000).

Grants CEP and COVID-19

COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT FUND ROUND 2 CEF-R2 (COVID-19 EMERGENCY FUND ROUND-2)

Funding was awarded under the CEF-R2, in the amount of €55,193.00. Funding was allocated across each Municipal District Area. The Dundalk District received €27,426.00, Drogheda District received funding of €21,097.00 and Ardee District receiving €6,670.00. In total 25 different projects were awarded funding from a total of 32 applications.

The table below sets out a summary of how the total CEF-R2 of €55,193.00 was allocated throughout the county:

Area	No of Applications	Allocation
Ardee	3	€6,670.00
Dundalk	15	€27,426.00
Drogheda	14	€21,097.00
Total	32	€55,193.00

COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME (CEP) 2021

Funding totalling €145,542.00 was allocated across each Municipal District Area. The Dundalk District received €74,664.00, Drogheda District received funding of €57,480.00 and Ardee District receiving €13,398.00. In total 47 different projects were awarded funding from a total of 61 applications.

Area	No of Applications	Allocation
Ardee	7	€13,398.00
Dundalk	37	€74,664.00
Drogheda	17	€57,480.00
Total	61	€145,542.00

MPOWER COMMUNITY GRANT

mPower Community Grant programme, awarded grants of €5,000 to Siel Bleu, Drogheda & District Support 4 Older People, Connect Family Resource Centre and Haggardstown & Blackrock Community Centre. The Community Grants were advertised through the Louth and Monaghan Public Participation Networks and also a targeted call to older people's services in both counties.

SESCGS (SOCIAL ENTERPRISE SMALL CAPITAL GRANTS SCHEME) 2021:

In 2021 a total of €32,631.25 was awarded to 7 different projects under the Social Enterprise Small Capital Grants Scheme. The scheme provided funding for the purchase of equipment, the carrying out of repairs and refurbishment to enable social enterprises to improve their service delivery.

The scheme supports one of the key commitments in the National Social Enterprise Policy for Ireland 2019-2022 – "Growing and Strengthening Social Enterprises".

LOUTH COMHAIRLE NA nÓG ACTIVITY 2021

Louth Comhairle na nÓg had a very busy year and have been meeting weekly, mostly on zoom, to keep connected and engage in training and events.

The group assisted the Louth Youth Services Network in preparing 800 "Action Packs" for young people all over the county. These packs contained personal fitness equipment and will encourage young people to get out and get active as they try and rebuild connections after the lockdowns.

Comhairle members also took part in regional networking events organised by DCYA.

All three municipal groups in Dundalk, Ardee and Drogheda have met up in outdoor settings when the pandemic was at its worst. Later in the year more meetings happened and the Annual Meeting was

held via zoom with small groups in youth facilities around the county.

CIVIC LEADERSHIP PROJECT

The young people completed training and discussions on the Civic Leadership project which had 25 members undergoing training and dialogue events every two weeks. The topics covered include Leadership, Team Building, Social Inclusion, Cultural Diversity while looking at issues facing young people in the county. The project was funded by Peace 4 and concluded in December.

CROSS BORDER NETWORK

Louth Comhairle also lead out on the Youth Council Network project that include youth councils in Louth, Monaghan, Cavan, Armagh, Banbridge and Newry and Mourne. Every month the young people come together for a Dialogue event on a topic chosen by themselves that affects the lives of young people in the region.

In April the topic was COVID and the many ways young people's lives have been affected by lockdowns and restrictions. The young people created a list of what they would like to see happen to support their peers as we start to physically meet up again.

In May the topic was education and our guest speaker was Prof. Tony Gallagher from Queens University Belfast. The event focused on education systems both north and south and included the pressures young people are under particularly due to new teaching conditions in schools and the uncertainty over exams and college.

In July the topic was sports and the guest speakers were Carl Frampton and Oisín McConville. The speakers highlighted how important it is to use sport as a tool for building Peace.

The project was funded by the Peace 4 Partnership and concluded in December.



Comhairle na nÓg Belfast study trip August 2021



Engagement Training September 2021



Peace Day Event September 2021



Comhairle na nÓg Team Building December 2021



Comhairle na nÓg Social Distance Meetings June 2021

Sports Unit Operated Sports Facilities (Dundalk Sports Centre & Lourdes Stadium)

SPORTS FACILITIES ATTENDANCE FIGURES 2021

Dundalk Sports Centre	
Children Participated in Soccer Activities (visits)	>9000 visits
Adults Participated in Soccer Activities (visits)	>3000 visits
Children Participated in Athletics Sessions	>1000 visits
Children Participated in Multi Sports Activities	>2750 visits
Individuals with a disability Participated in Multi Sports Activities	>1200 visits
Participants in Fitness Classes	>900 visits
Adults Participated in Multi Sports	>500 visits
Outdoor activity classes	> 500 visits
Lourdes Stadium	
Casual Users (individuals)	>1700 visits
Bowling green users(individuals)	>1200 visits
Clubs and groups facilitated	>500 hours



Lourdes Stadium and Bowling Green, Drogheda

DUNDALK SPORTS CENTRE ACHIEVE NQS AWARD

Dundalk Sports Centre has achieved an Outstanding (Gold) NQS Award for the Third Year running and fourth Award in Four years. The National Quality Standard Award is given to facilities that meet the operational standards for leisure and fitness facilities across 250 quality-based criteria. The standard is designed to encourage continuous improvement within the sector and recognises facilities for their remarkable standards in the areas of safety, hygiene, customer service and human resources. The NQSA are the only industry specific award for the leisure, health and fitness sector in Ireland.

UPGRADE WORKS AT LOURDES ATHLETIC STADIUM

Lourdes Athletic Stadium has undergone phased stages of track relining in 2021.

DUNDALK SPORTS CENTRE ACTIVITIES

Throughout the year we ran many activities in Dundalk Sports Centre in line with government guidelines and restrictions.

After schools programme

After schools basketball returned towards the end of 2021 and with the demand we managed to facilitate a second group of children on a different day.



After schools programme

**After Schools
Basketball
Boys & Girls
3.30pm-4.45pm
Wednesday
€4
6-10 years old**

OUTDOOR SUMMER CAMPS

Dundalk Sports Centre staff ran two weeks of summer camps in 2021 for children aged 6 to 13 years old. These multi sport camps had around 80 participants throughout the two weeks, even the rain didn't dampen their spirits.

Sports Nights

Sports Nights returned for Volleyball and Ladies and Mens Basketball.

OLDER ADULTS CLASSES

In association with Ireland Active, Dundalk Sports Centre ran a free 10 week programme for older adults. This programme was that successful that we have since created an ongoing class and it's participant numbers are increasing week on week.

OUTDOOR PROGRAMMES

Throughout 2021 our fitness instructors ran programmes such as Zumba and Love to Dance on the Tennis Courts at Dundalk Sports Centre.



Inclusive camp July 2021



dsc
DUNDALK SPORTS CENTRE
DUNDALK SPORTS CENTRE
DUNDALK SPORTS CENTRE

Outdoor Love To Dance
Tues & Thurs
4.30-5.30pm
€3
8-14yrs
Contact Iyra to book your place 087 167 7088

Outdoor Zumba
Weather permitting
Tuesdays & Thursdays 6-7pm
Dundalk Sports Centre
€5 pay as you go
Contact Our instructor Iyra on 087 167 7088

**Government of Ireland
SPORT**

dsc
DUNDALK SPORTS CENTRE
DUNDALK SPORTS CENTRE
DUNDALK SPORTS CENTRE

Man's Basketball Sports Night
Wednesdays
8-10pm
€5

dsc
DUNDALK SPORTS CENTRE
DUNDALK SPORTS CENTRE
DUNDALK SPORTS CENTRE

Volleyball Sports Night Returns
Nov 9th
Tuesday
8-10pm
€5

Outdoor Zumba
Weather permitting
Tuesdays & Thursdays 6-7pm
Dundalk Sports Centre
€5 pay as you go
Contact Our instructor Iyra on 087 167 7088

**Government of Ireland
SPORT**


Louth Local Sports Partnership

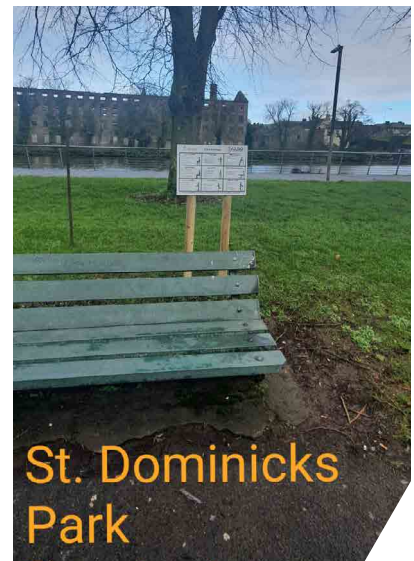
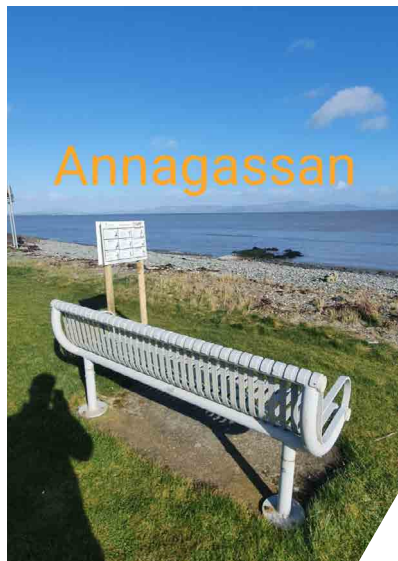
LOUTH LOCAL SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

2021 was another challenging year for Louth Local Sports Partnership. A total of 213 programmes and training courses were delivered with 6507 participants taking part, 2914 males, 3575 females and a total of 644 were people with disabilities taking part.

PARK BENCH EXERCISES

Louth Sports Partnership installed Park Bench Exercise posters beside benches across the county that Tidy Town Committees and Community Groups have allowed us to. We also installed them at a number of Nursing Homes across the County.

		
<p>SIT TO STAND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is easy. If you only have time for one exercise do this one! From a sitting position stand up as tall as you can. Sit back down and repeat. This is great to keep our hips stay in good working order! 	<p>ARM RAISE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stand tall and raise both arms until they are level with shoulders then return to side. When the feet start carrying bottles of water in each hand. Great for helping on the everyday tasks like picking things up. 	<p>BENCH PRESS UP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lean against the railing with straight arms. Allow your arms to bend and let your chin get closer to the railing. Push back to straight back position. Great for helping our arms stay strong. 
<p>BICEP CURLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sit comfortably on the bench. Lift each arm in turn until fist touches shoulder. If this is too easy, carry a bottle of water. Great for helping us lift everyday things like shopping or suitcases. 	<p>CALF RAISE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the railing for balance. Lift your weight from both feet onto your toes and control the return to solid ground. Great for helping our balance. 	<p>FRONT KNEE EXTENSION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sit comfortably on the bench. Lift one leg until leg is horizontal with ground. Repeat with other leg. 
<p>HEEL TO TOE WALK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stand at back of bench. Hold on for balance. Walk heel to toe with each step. If too easy do this without holding on for balance. Great for helping our balance. 	<p>LEG FLEXION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the railing for balance. Bend at the knee and bring your heel towards your bottom. Repeat with other leg. Great for helping our legs stay strong. 	<p>ONE LEG STAND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the railing for balance. Lift one heel up behind you and try to balance for a count of 10. If that is easy try to balance without holding on. Repeat with the other leg. Great for helping balance. 
<p>For more exercises visit https://www.louthcoco.ie/en/services/sports_recreation/</p>		



RTE'S OPERATION TRANSFORMATION

The filming of the 2021 series of RTE's Operation Transformation took place at Dundalk Sports Centre between November 2020 and February 2021. Louth LSP received acknowledgment at the end of every episode in the credits and the MD of Vision Independent Productions wrote personally to Ms Joan Martin, Chief Executive of Louth County Council, commending the LSP and the Louth Sports Unit.

SOCCERCISE

Louth Sports Partnership worked with Louth Schools Girls League on a virtual programme for 8 weeks to keep the Louth School Girls League physically active. Sophie Waters did a series of videos on zoom for all age groups in the girl's leagues, a beginner, intermediate and advanced programme. This was sent out to all the girls' soccer clubs through the schools girls' league which has over 600 members in total.

ONLINE ACTIVITIES

The Sports unit staff and fitness instructors developed a series of free online videos as part of the councils Wellbeing during Covid-19.

These include:

- Family fun activities
- Mindful movement activities
- Beginners Pilates classes
- Pilates classes
- Beginners fitness classes
- Inclusive fitness classes
- Older adults balance class.
- Older adults exercise classes
- Chairobics classes.

All are available free of charge across Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

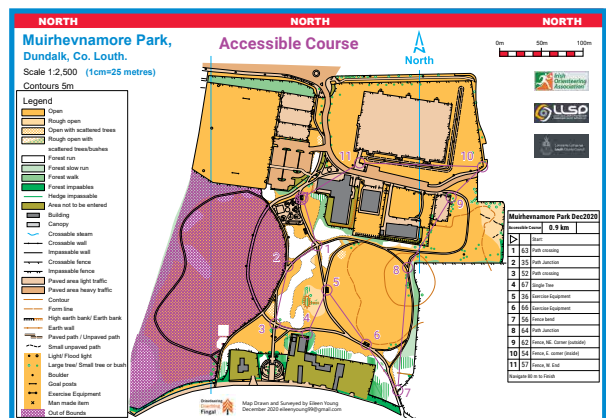


LOUTH LOCAL ADVENTURES - ORIENTEERING

Louth LSP in collaboration with Louth County Council and Irish Orienteering has mapped out four orienteering locations within Louth. These courses will have permanent posts and will offer the traditional use of a map and your map reading skills. We also have our courses mapped with the latest MapRun6 app. This is suitable for everyone as we have accessible courses and adventure courses in each of the 4 parks.

SMALL CLUB GRANT 2021

60 clubs applied to our annual Small Club Grant Scheme for 2021, 44 applications were approved by the LSP Committee, 10 clubs were diverted elsewhere for funding, 3 applications were duplicates and 3 had already received funding from Louth LSP. A total of €30,589.25 was approved through this grant, taking the total amount of funding support allocated to clubs across Co Louth in the last year to €133,059.25.



LOUTH ALL STARS

Louth All Stars – GAAforall, we currently have six clubs fully up and running with two more clubs running taster days to see if there is interest in the community. All coaches and volunteers were trained as appropriate in Safeguarding, First Aid, Disability Awareness etc. All clubs were provided with sport equipment, information booklets and training bibs.



Cooley Kickhams All Stars Leaders



**COMMUNITY
SERVICES
AT A GLANCE**

**€1.8 MILLION IN
LEADER FUNDING
APPROVED**



**PPN MEMBERSHIP
ROSE BY 26%
TO 513 REGISTERED
GROUPS**



**3 BLUE FLAG
BEACHES AND
1 GREEN COAST
AWARD BEACH**



**10
GREEN FLAG
SCHOOLS**



**ADDICTION
REHABILITATION
SUPPORTED**



**FUNDING OF
€72,377 PROVIDED
TO FIFTEEN
TIDY TOWNS
GROUPS
IN 2021**



**909
INDIVIDUALS
ENGAGED IN LIFELONG
LEARNING LABOUR
MARKET SUPPORTS**



**LIBRARY
SERVICES
AT A GLANCE**



**6,909 REGISTERED
MEMBERS**

(REGISTERED MEMBERS FIGURE IS A
SNAPSHOT TAKEN ON 31ST DECEMBER
2021)

9,214 ACTIVE MEMBERS
(ACTIVE MEMBERS FIGURE COVERS
THE ENTIRE YEAR)

**54,116 VISITS
TO LIBRARY
BRANCHES**



**210,135
ITEMS ISSUED**

Quality of Life

LOUTH LIBRARY SERVICE

2021 began with library services in Level 5 of Covid restrictions, on foot of government guidance. Thanks to staff enthusiasm and flexibility, Louth Library Service adapted to a new way of working very rapidly and successfully transitioned to virtual and online services. We continued to broaden our community audience base with a broad range of cultural and educational programming.

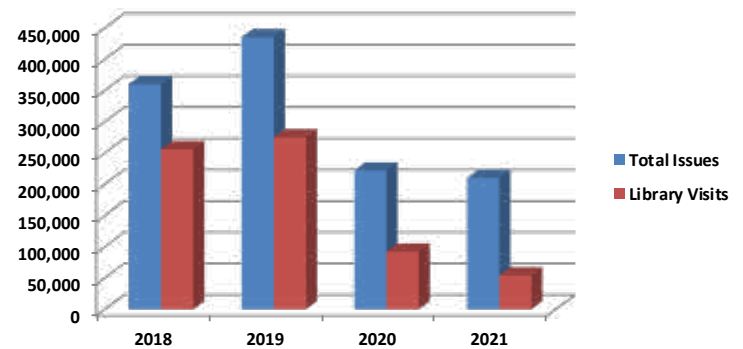
A national library workforce training programme enabled the library team to build on their continuous professional development and improve their skills across all the many services we offer.

Libraries reopened on a phased basis from May 5th, 2021. We operated a cautious, controlled and gradual re-opening of non virtual library services as guided by DOH and HSE. Health and safety directives were enforced at all stages during the planning and delivery of incrementally enhanced services linked to the government roadmap and local resources.

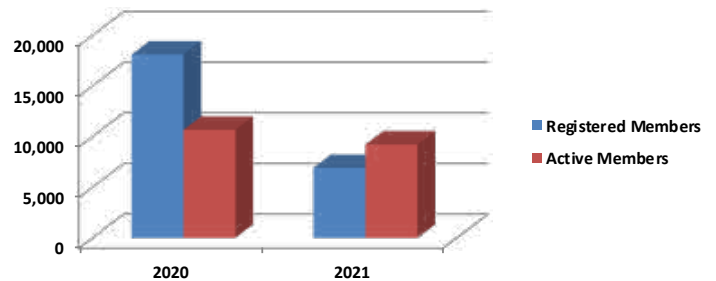
Louth Library service reached an important milestone in mid May and extended opening hours to a 6 day opening, Monday-Saturday, along with 4 late nights until 8pm, Monday-Thursday. This was underpinned by investment in and the implementation of the library workforce plan and allows for better social distancing and more opportunity for the public to avail of library services.

From September 20th Louth Library Service resumed study space services, research and newspaper reading facilities all the while complying strictly with public health rules and relevant SOGs.

As expected library issues and visitors were down compared to previous years due to the Covid pandemic.

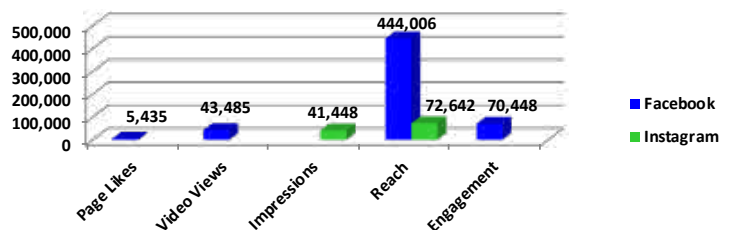


Library Membership



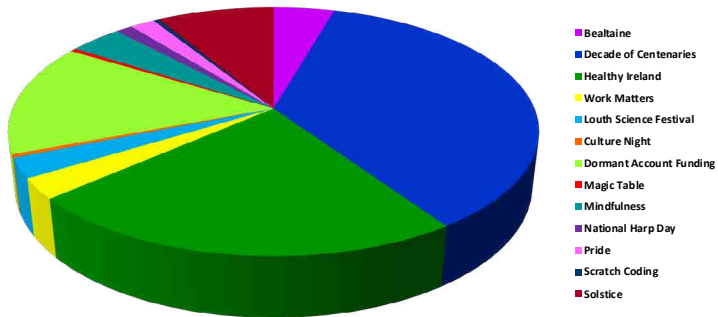
Social Media Engagement

Social Media Use in 2021

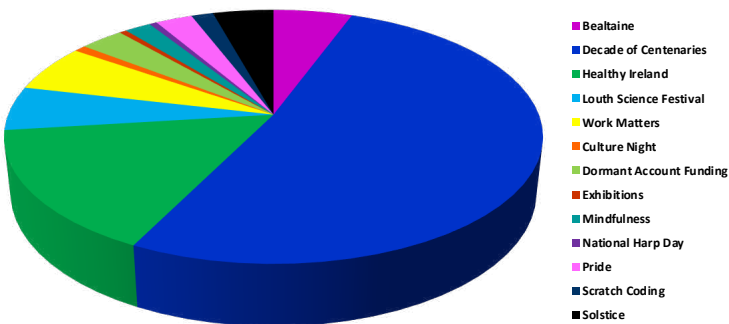


Events and activities online

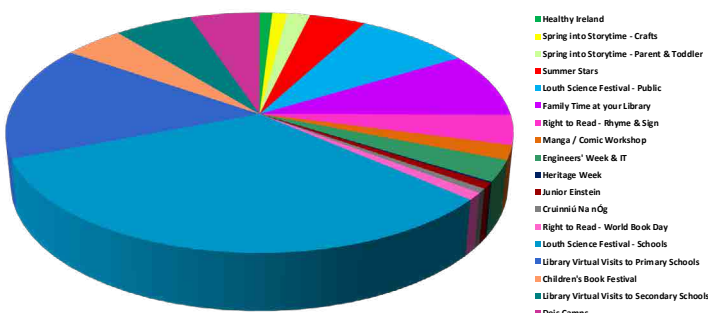
Attendance



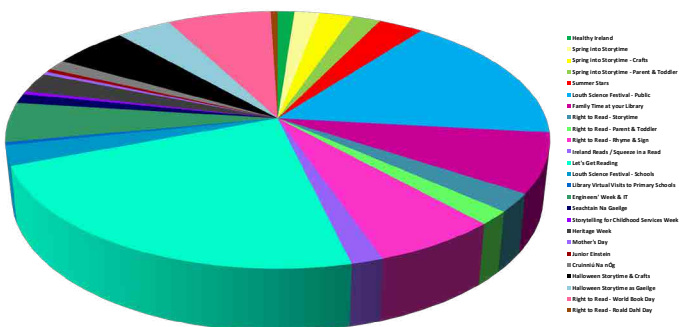
Facebook People Reached



Attendance



Facebook People Reached



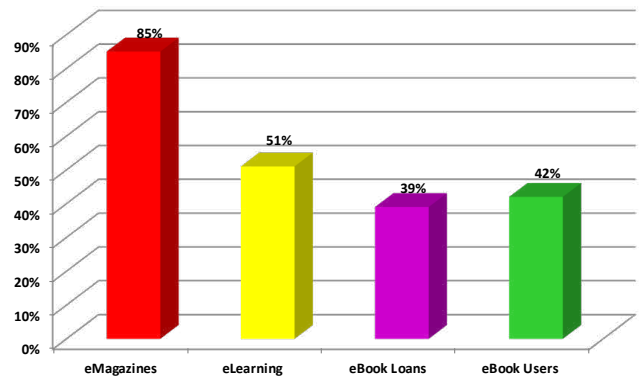
HOUSEBOUND SERVICE

A book lending service for those housebound or cocooning, which began in June 2020 continued to be a great success in 2021. The library service made 1024 deliveries to members and non-members who contacted the Council via Customer Service or directly through the libraries to end of December 2021.

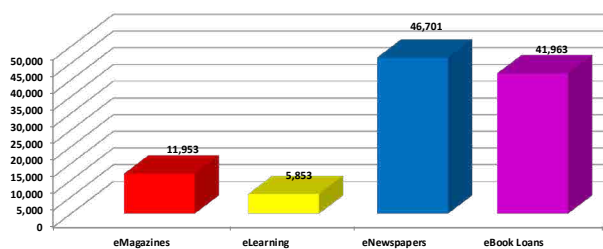
ESERVICES

The use of online library services continued to increase on previous years during 2021. Library staff engaged with the community through a social media marketing campaign that encouraged non library members to register online for library membership and avail of an enhanced suite of eServices, including eBooks, audio Books, eNewspapers, eMagazines, eComics, language and online courses. The importance and value of our eServices has come to the fore during the pandemic. The online library service proved pivotal in providing entertainment and educational resources to adults and children.

% Increases in 2021



eResource Use



Library Marketing & PR

LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

A new monthly Library newsletter for the public was launched in 2021 containing the latest news, events, services, and recommendations from our libraries. In order to increase accessibility and engagement, the newsletter contains hyperlinks to relevant sites and documents, a full list of the month's events, and even a píosa beag Gaeilge.

LIBRARY 'HOW TO' VIDEOS:

These short videos created by staff aim to provide a comprehensive, easy-to-follow guide on how to access the library and its services. Starting off with 'Joining the Library' and 'Signing up for our monthly newsletter', these include instructions on how to access eBooks, eAudiobooks, magazines, and courses.

Shelf Life, the blog from Louth Library Service continued with its regular features, linking in with #KeepWell campaign with features on exercise, self care, and healthy eating. There are also interviews with authors and council staff on their 'life in books' books' <https://shelflifethelouthlibraryserviceblog.wordpress.com/>

#KEEPWELL CAMPAIGN KEEP WELL COMMUNITY RESILIENCE FUND

Under the Government's plan for Living with Covid 19: Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021 the Keep Well campaign highlighted the important role that individual and community resilience applied in contributing to the ongoing response to Covid-19. The Keep Well campaign was aimed at showing people of all ages how we can mind our own physical and mental health and wellbeing by adding healthy and helpful habits to our daily and weekly routines.

Under the Community Resilience Fund, the Quality of Life team fed into the campaign theme Switching Off and Being Creative. Louth Library Service Keepwell programme included:

- Creative writing mentoring workshops – Ten new and emerging local writers were given one to one mentoring by an established author. The programme which included novelists, poets and short story writers, saw the participants being advised and guided by **Declan Burke**. To date, Declan has published seven novels, three of which have been nominated for Best Crime Novel in the Irish book of the year awards. Declan has extensive experience in supporting writers and has carried out similar roles with other library authorities and was ideally placed to support the participants.
- Manga comic workshops for teenagers - A highly interactive series of zoom workshops on Manga Art/Comic Design with illustrator Alan Nolan for teenagers between the ages of 13 to 16/17 years old.
- Walk-through video recordings capturing the essence of our cultural buildings, libraries, museum and archives.

LIBRARY STRATEGIC INITIATIVES HEALTHY IRELAND AT YOUR LIBRARY

The *Healthy Ireland at your Library* programme aims to complement, support and expand existing programmes in the community under the Healthy Ireland national framework and to be fully consistent with Healthy Ireland's whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to improving health and wellbeing and the quality of people's lives.

Healthy Ireland at your Library 2021 funding supported

- Infrastructure, including new outdoor garden furniture for Ardee Library, made from 100% recyclable material
- Health Information Resources – hard copy and online
- Expertise – staff knowledge of health information resources
- Events and Programming – partnering with local stakeholder agencies and groups and health experts to provide reputable events of relevance.

Popular events included talks on Stress during the Pandemic; Exercise while working from home; Children transitioning to secondary school; and Feeding a family on a budget.

GROW IT FORWARD

The Grow it Forward campaign was launched nationally in late March 2021. It is part of the Eating Well Pillar of the National Keep Well campaign and was run in collaboration with, among others, Karen O' Donoghue from the programme GROW COOK EAT.

GIY, in partnership with Healthy Ireland and public libraries distributed 50,000 free food growing kits to the public. The kits contained seeds to grow tomatoes, green peas, carrots, beets and mixed oriental greens. The project was primarily being aimed at novice growers. People were encouraged to use containers, buckets, cracked cups to grow their seeds in and be creative. The idea was to share your seedlings, growing ideas and produce with 9 other people hence, grow it forward!

Louth Library Service posted approximately 800 seed packs to customers and was delighted to note that approximately 30% of all those taking part were new members to the service-joining up specifically because of the GIF initiative.

A dedicated piece of ground was prepared and a raised bed built at the front of Dundalk Library. This area was utilised over the summer months for gardening master classes with our council colleague Benedicta McArdle.

RIGHT TO READ

Right to Read supports literacy development for families, individuals and children as part of a locally coordinated, sustainable and standardised approach across County Louth. Programming of events for 2021 was exclusively online due to the ongoing Covid 19 pandemic.

These literacy supports include:

- **Ireland Reads Campaign**

Funded by the Department of Health as part of the national 'Keep Well' programme Ireland Reads was a new national campaign to encourage people to get reading. <http://www.irelandreads.ie/>. The Ireland Reads campaign ran throughout February 2021, leading up to Ireland's first ever national reading day on February 25th with people pledging to read in excess of 855,681 minutes on the day. That's a whopping 14,264 hours or almost 600 days of reading all squeezed into 1 day!

The campaign aimed to promote the power of reading for enjoyment and wellbeing, by encouraging everyone, young and old, to combat lockdown and get back into the habit of reading and regularly setting aside time to sit and read a book, a poem, a comic or a newspaper.

The campaign was backed up by an additional €150,000 spend on eBooks and audio books nationally.

Louth Library Service ran a focused, local campaign - Louth Reads. A very busy campaign was organised both nationally and locally with numerous reading ambassadors from Louth sharing their love of books and reading through inspirational video posts.

Some of our own colleagues in LCC also became involved including Alan Wall, Pat O'Rourke, Joanne Ryan, Stephen McQuillan, councillors Michelle Hall and Emma Coffey. Local reading ambassadors included Kevin Branigan, Emer Conlon, Rita Hynes,

Marion Clarke & Drogheda Creative Writers, Jamie Staudt, Nicola Pierce, Anthony Murphy, Ruth Campbell. All of these contributors shared their own personal views on the importance of reading, their lifelong love of books, reading to get through hard times.

The campaign was supported by partners including: Children's Books Ireland, Publishers Association, Bookselling Ireland, NALA, SOLAS, JCSP Libraries, DRCD, Department of Health, Department of Education, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Inclusion and Youth.

- **Spring into Storytime**, 18 events scheduled, 11 of which were virtual visits with primary school children (322 children attended).
- **Summer Stars Reading Programme** designed to help children maintain their literacy levels over the course of school holidays. We experienced a quieter year than normal due to Covid 19 restrictions. However, a very successful online programme in Louth, which included storytimes, quizzes, scavenger hunts, colouring and crafts, allowed children to remain engaged with the programme and maintain their link with the Library and our many services. 20 different videos, including 6 bookable events for the public (163 attended) were posted online.
- **Children's Book Festival** in October programmed 12 events, 5 of which were for invited schools (137 children attended) and 7 storytime sessions for public.
- **Family Time at Your Library** in December programmed 14 events including 8 bookable sessions for the public (108 attended).
- 7 virtual **DEIS Schools Literacy & Numeracy Summer Camps** were held for local schools in Dundalk library over June and July, 107 attended.
- Louth Libraries supported our partners in the **Genesis Programme** with a range of tailored reading and craft events for over 100 of their families. These events were held during Spring



Summer Stars Joshua & Aaron

into Storytime, Summer Stars and Family Time at Your Library.

- The service also developed its services to young adult and teenage readers with the DAF funded **Right Book, Right Child, Right Time** project with St. Oliver's Community College 1st Year JCSP students. This entailed Librarian-led visits to the school and project specific reading resources provided. Separately tailored social media posts and blog posts, detailing new YA stock and content, were created with this audience in mind.
- We developed our **adult literacy services** during 2021. With the guidance of the Adult Literacy organiser from LMETB library staff delivered virtual information sessions to groups of adult literacy participants. These virtual events are the first step in welcoming the participants to the library with the hope of welcoming these participants in and giving them the guidance and confidence to use the library.
- As part of our **adult literacy developments** a new partnership was developed between Drogheda Library, Droichead Arts and Drogheda Book Collective. The Droichead Arts sponsored collaboration welcomed authors Sara Baume in April and Sinead Gleeson in May.
- **Little Library Book Bag Initiative, Spring and Autumn 2021**, funded by Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Inclusion and

Youth (DECDIY) and DRCD. The initiative aimed to build on the relationships between the Early Learning and Care Centres (ELC), POBAL registered child minders and libraries as part of the First 5 Government Strategy for babies and children and the Right to Read Programme.

It provided an ideal opportunity for the ELCs and POBAL registered child minders to connect with their local library from where they collected specially curated book bags for their ELC/child minding service. In total we welcomed 110 ELCs to our branches as part of the initiative.



Little Library Book Bag

WORK MATTERS

The Work Matters service to support job seekers and budding entrepreneurs continued online in 2021 with workshops delivered by our partners in LMETB and Louth Volunteer Centre:

- Stephanie Bourke, LMETB, hosted 5 online information workshops on the services LMETB provides and opportunities for training and upskilling for job seekers and those looking to progress their careers.
- VTOS students were given a tour of the facilities Dundalk Library has to offer for job seekers and students.

- Louth Volunteer Centre hosted 3 online information workshops about all the many volunteering options & benefits to work experience.
- Work Matters resources featured regularly in online promotion of eResources and Borrowbox titles.

LIBRARY FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Dormant Accounts Funding - Funding for Library Supports for Marginalised, Socially Excluded & Disadvantaged Communities.

- **Small Scale Capital Works** – Thanks to DAF DRCD 2020 funding the new outdoor garden in Dundalk library was officially launched in September 2021 by Cathaoirleach Cllr. Pio Smith. This outdoor library space provides safe, external seating areas for activities, meetings and project work, as well as reading and contemplation. It mitigates against the risk posed in any type of group work due to Covid 19 Pandemic.
- **Dormant Accounts Fund**
The Minister for Rural and Community Development, through the Dormant Accounts Fund, made €650,000 available to local authorities to provide support to marginalised, socially excluded and disadvantaged communities in 2021. In recognition of the financial position of Library Authorities grant aid was increased to 90% of the total eligible cost incurred. In light of Covid 19 restrictions, funding was tailored to focus on:
 - Online programming,
 - Small group engagement and provision of a Digital Equity and Social inclusion Programme. This measure supports the provision of modern equipment in public libraries that improves accessibility for people with a disability and those with sensory needs, autism or older members of the community.

Louth Library Service submitted 6 proposals for funding under the DRCD's Dormant Accounts Funding initiative. Funding of €19,600 was approved for all 6 projects and allowed libraries to continue to engage with marginalised sections of our community. Projects included:

- Summer Strum – ukulele workshops for older people and adults with additional needs
- 3 r's, Right Book, Right Child, Right Time – working with St Oliver's Community School, Drogheda
- Virtual English Classes – aimed at new Irish and residents of direct provision
- Community Coding Clubs – with Youthreach Drogheda and St John's NS in Dundalk
- Young Entrepreneurs Club – Youthreach students in Ardee
- The Shona Project – a survival kit for young people delivered to 5 DEIS secondary schools in Louth.
- **Public Libraries Digital Equity & Social Inclusion Programme** - Louth Library Service received almost €6,600 from this funding stream to continue the re-configuration of the children's area in Dundalk Library to include padded radiator covers and more accessible furniture to enhance the experience of children with sensory issues and disabilities.

LOUTH SCIENCE FESTIVAL

Louth Library Service was successful in securing funding of €8000 from SFI (Science Foundation Ireland) towards the 2021 Louth Science Festival. This year's festival ran from November 7th-20th.

The Louth Science Festival's programme plays a key role in 'bringing science to life', and through its core objectives, the Science Festival contributes to improving diversity and inclusion in science, through its aims to broaden participation both geographically and amongst less represented voices in science.

One of the most important aspects of the Louth Science Festival is collaboration. Louth Science Festival 2021 featured many points of entry for scientists and engineers to get involved directly in public outreach. This year's programme targeted primary and secondary schools across the county; family events; events for nursing home residents and older people.

Due to ongoing restrictions due to the pandemic, the festival was mainly virtual with events online across a number of different platforms, but allowing for interaction between facilitators and audiences. Two events were offered to every primary school in the county, with 37 Primary School events besides.

DECADE OF CENTENARIES 2021 PROGRAMME

Catherine Martin T.D., Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, approved a funding allocation of €50,000 for every local authority in 2021 under the Community Strand of the Decade of Centenaries programme.

In programming for 'Local Legacies 1921/2021', Louth County Council were very mindful of the broad themes set out by the Expert Advisory Group as well as being cognisant of the sensitive phase of the Centenary period we are currently in. We also wanted to continue to build on the success of commemorative events programmed over the last number of years, ensuring a consistency of respectful and non-partisan commemoration.

Themes and initiatives highlighted in our programme included:

- Local connections with significant events that occurred in 1921
- The partitioning of Ireland – its impact on communities living alongside the border of Louth
- The social and economic consequences of the Struggle for Independence within the border region

- The experiences of women during the revolutionary period and their changing role in society.
- An exploration of the Labour movement and associated issues of class and gender.
- Archival projects including a definitive account of the Dundalk Gaol and conservation and digitisation of archival material.
- Creative thinking and the arts.

Library initiatives for the DoC programme included:

Historian-in-Residence

Dr Thomas Tormey was chosen as the council Historian in Residence. The outputs from his role can best be grouped under two headings: events and research. A relatively large number of events were held to mark Decade of Centenaries related anniversaries which fell in 2021. These involved panel discussions and lectures and were themselves divided into two groups: the Louth Decade of Centenaries programme which focused on events within the county as well as general topics; and the 'Border 100: histories and reflections symposium' which focused on the causes and consequences of Partition.

The list of research outputs by Dr Tormey during 2021 include:

- A number of blogs which give a lot of detail about a certain event in the county and relate it to the national situation (e.g. the 'Conscription Crisis' is discussed with reference to mass meetings in Ardee and Drogheda, as well as the national campaign and the British Army on the Western Front in WWI).
- A 'Document Pack' containing primary sources and reading for use by older Primary School children.
- A study guide to help primary and post-primary school students to enter the Department of Education's Decade of Centenaries essay competition.
- A brief research guide to help and Leaving Cert or undergraduate university students who wish to study a local topic from the revolutionary period.

We anticipate that much of the research will become an invaluable resource for Louth Library Service and can be sustained beyond 2021.

PRIMARY SCHOOL'S READING PROJECT AND AUTHOR VISIT

Two primary schools (St. Buite's National School, Tenure & Ballapousta National School, Ardee) were chosen and presented with a selected novel relating to the War of Independence. It was intended that the chosen novel would aim to cover some of the themes of this period of commemoration as well as demonstrate how complex issues and a review of historical events can be accessed via fiction. The chosen book was 'Spies' by Brian Gallagher.

The author facilitated visits to both schools and discussed the book and its relevance to the War of Independence. The students and teachers were most appreciative of the initiative.

Cross border reading groups

The project sought to engage with six reading groups (Louth based and connected to Libraries NI). They read the same novel, one title, relating to the period of history covered by the Decade of Centenaries. The chosen novel was 'A Star Called Henry', by Roddy Doyle.

Dr. Geradine Meaney, Professor of Cultural Theory and Director of the UCD Centre for Cultural Analytics facilitated 'An Evening with Roddy Doyle' online event on November 3rd. Members of Bessbrook, Crossmaglen, Keady, Newry and Warrenpoint bookclubs all took part along with bookclubs from Louth, as well as regular library users.

Roddy began the event with a short reading from his novel. He discussed the sources for his historical interpretation of the period. The audience were able to interact with Roddy and ask questions throughout the event.

Both Roddy and Gerardine challenged readers' pre-conceived ideas of the time, introduced new themes to established treatments of the history and provided a spotlight on events, and increased the readers' knowledge, understanding of historical events and sources.

EDUROAM

Covid 19 has resulted in remote learning off campus with a digital divide existing for a large number of students who may not have access to good quality broadband. Louth Library Service partnered with HEAnet, Ireland's National Education and Research Network, to enable Eduroam in Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee Libraries. Eduroam stands for 'Education Roaming' and provides secure and easy to use Wi-Fi access in thousands of locations across more than 100 countries. This initiative aims to create extended virtual campuses and offer students multiple options to go online and connect to their Further and Higher Education institutions.

PRIMARY SCHOOL LIBRARY SERVICE

Despite not being able to visit the schools in person, the Primary School Service enjoyed a busy year in 2021, with the introduction of virtual class visits. In total, 21 visits were made to classrooms, including Summer Camps, for Spring into Storytime and Summer Stars. These visits were carried out in English and Irish, and each school was provided with library-themed activities ahead of the visit, also available in both languages. The visits allowed us to promote library facilities and services to both teachers and students, before enjoying a fun craft or story with the children.

In 2021, we also invested in our class sets, adding 14 new sets to the collection, and replenishing two of our most popular titles. This has enabled us to support the creation of book clubs within primary schools.

LIBRARY IRELAND WEEK 2021

An annual initiative of the Library Association of Ireland, *Library Ireland Week* ran from Sunday 28th of November to Sunday the 4th of December.

The 2021 theme was *Our Future Story: Recharge, Reconnect & Re-emerge*, in recognition of how libraries and library staff are looking towards a future beyond COVID-19.

DROP IN CAMPAIGN

The new national *Drop In* Campaign launched on November 15th. The campaign highlights current library services available to the public. The campaign theme, 'Drop in' is intended to invite the public to do just that and to highlight that libraries are open and available to visit casually or as part of a regular routine.

CLIMATE ACTION

Louth Library Service's continued promotion and uptake of eServices and the recycling of book stock to schools and community facilities contributes to lowering our carbon footprint. Library staff completed a Climate Action Building Capacity training course in October. This training will form part of the national climate action training programme for Local Authorities. A library staff representative is a member of the recently established Cross-Directorate Group to help drive delivery of climate action targets and goals across the organisation.

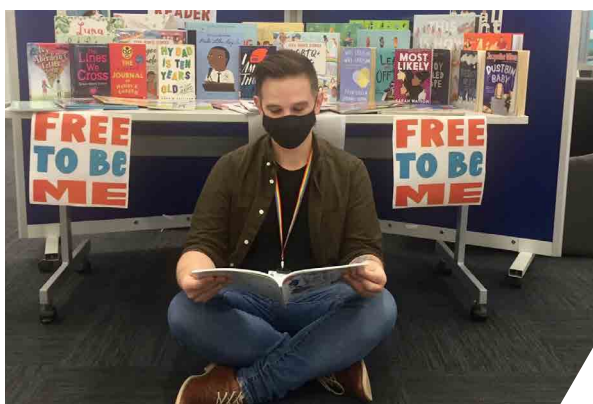
OTHER EVENTS

- **STEPS Engineers Week** - Took place from February 27th- March 5th. Library events included Lego Brickx workshop & Creative Minecraft Workshop.
- **International Women's Day**, Monday 8th of March. Louth Library Service showcased amazing local women with videos posted on social media. Speakers included Clodagh Carthy (Brickx Club), Denise Wogan, (Foodee Nutrition) and Niamh Shaw (Scientist).

- **Seachtain na Gaeilge March 1st-17th** - bilingual stories on Facebook with storyteller Roisin Murphy.
- **Pride Month June 2021** - Louth Library Service helped celebrate Pride Month 2021 in June. The June edition of our library newsletter was dedicated to the celebration. An audit was carried out of our LGBTQIA+ stock titles throughout Louth Library Services and we invited input from LGBTQIA+ groups. Library staff created information leaflets outlining the great range of fiction and non-fiction titles available for children, young adults, and adults. The Library facilitated a panel discussion over Zoom with Cllr. John Sheridan, Bernadette Quinn (Outcomers) and Dr Sandra Collins (National Library of Ireland) for Pride.
- **Bealtaine At Home Festival** - An Age and Opportunity initiative, celebrating the arts and creativity in our later years. This year the theme was In(ter)dependence. Bealtaine In(ter)dependence celebrates the fortitude, endurance, as well as stoicism of older people in surviving Covid-19, as well as marking the lives of those who weren't so lucky. Library events during the festival included Summer Cookery Class with Tara Walker; Furniture Upcycling Workshop with the Rediscovery Centre; Chair Yoga; Holistic Gardening with Bumblebee Farm.
- **Heritage Week, August 14-22** - As part of the promotion and preparation for heritage week 2021, Louth Library Service searched through our newspaper archives, and revisited times in the past when the current American President Joe Biden reflected on his Irish roots and his heritage. Library staff were delighted to have an opportunity to film a chapter reading in Drogheda's Millmount Museum for Heritage week. The recording of the chapter reading taken from Nicola Pierce's book "Kings of the Boyne" was streamed on our Facebook page. Staff also compiled a recording entitled "Exploring the Landmarks & Heritage of Drogheda" which was also be streamed on our Facebook page during Heritage Week. This short

video brought children on a historical journey exploring some of Drogheda's most famous landmarks.

- **Culture Night, September 17th** - Dundalk Library hosted a bilingual story-telling session with Seosamh Ó Maolalaí. In collaboration with Droichead Arts Centre, Drogheda Library featured an exhibition with visual artist Conor McMahon. His work, short quirky film pieces were exhibited in the window of Drogheda Library.
- **World Harp Day** - Dundalk Library's outdoor garden was the perfect venue for Musician Educators and Young Harpists from Music Generation Louth's Harp Ensemble programme on Saturday 16th of October, World Harp Day.



Free to Be Me Reading initiative



Brothers at the Sensory Library, Dundalk

Louth County Archives Service

KEEP WELL' RESILIENCE CAMPAIGN

A *Caring for Your Family Archives* booklet was produced under the Healthy Ireland/Sláintecare Community Resilience Fund as part of the KeepWell campaign. It gives advice on how to care for and store family or personal archives as well as advice on preparing community archives for donation. The booklets were distributed with the Community section's Older Persons Packs, the Library's Housebound Service, and to community groups via Louth Leader Partnership. It has been made available on the Archives web-pages. Furthermore, a short introduction video to the service was commissioned and made available on YouTube.

HISTORY IRELAND FEATURE

The *Louth 1920* online archives exhibition featured in the Jan/Feb 2021 issue of History Ireland magazine.

BEYOND 2022

Louth County Archives joined the Beyond 2022 framework as a participating institution. An all-island and international collaboration project, funded by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht under Project Ireland 2040, its aim is to launch a Virtual Record Treasury for Irish history with a virtual reconstruction of the Public Record Office of Ireland (PROI) that was destroyed on 30th June 1922. The ethos of the project is to facilitate open access to documents and historical source material (originals or copies) which may have been located in the PROI in 1922. The Beyond 2022 project will be invaluable in highlighting extant collections in county archive services which can serve as para-replacements for many other records destroyed in 1922.

CONSERVATION AND DIGITISATION OF LOUTH VALUATION BOOKS

With the assistance of funding from the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, the County Archives arranged for the digitization of a set of valuation books containing the 1920-23 period, under the Decade of Centenaries 2012-2023 initiative and a quantity of the books that were in poor condition received conservation treatment in advance of digitization.

The valuation books are arranged as per electoral division and contain the names of occupiers, immediate lessors, and details on property and valuation. They support many themes indirectly such as the social and economic history of the centenary period, land ownership, the movement of people and family history. Free online access to the digitised volumes was made available on the Archives web-pages and this will support local research and scholarship.

Also under the Decade of Centenaries programme, a Research Guide for Archival Sources 1912-23 was made available, and a short-film and accompanying booklet on Dundalk Gaol during the Civil War period was produced. The short-film is a definitive account of the events in the gaol and local area at the time and will be made available in 2022.

HERITAGE COUNCIL COMMUNITY HERITAGE GRANT SCHEME 2021

The Archivist was the Project Manager on County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society's *Drogheda Merchant Ledgers Conservation Project* which received a grant for conservation treatment on three 18th - 19th century ledgers owned by the Society, and which are now available for access in Louth County Archives. The archives give an insight into Drogheda's economic and trade history in the early 18th – early 19th centuries. The oldest ledger details cargoes of ships that berthed in Drogheda along-with information on the equipping of a ship for

a voyage to the Leeward Island (Barbados) in 1726. The other ledgers detail transactions in a grocery business that belonged to the Brodigans, major Drogheda merchants from medieval times to the 19th century. The conserved volumes were put on display during Heritage Week 2021.

CREATIVE IRELAND 2021

A grant was received for a small number of rural district council minute books from the 1900s – 1920 period to receive conservation treatment prior to a quantity being digitised for online access.

DONATED ARCHIVES

The Service welcomes donations of archives and records from the public that relate to all aspects of the development of County Louth including material from community groups, clubs and societies, national schools, local organisations and local businesses. Archives received during 2021 included a digital copy of the 1st Dundalk St Nicholas Boy Scout Troop Log Book; survey maps of land dating to the 18th – 19th centuries; material relating to the May Time Festival; and reports of the Co Louth Committee of Agriculture. These donations enhance the research sources available for the study of Louth's heritage.

HISTORIC STRUCTURES FUND

A grant was received from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for conservation repair works to the south gable wall of the Co Archives building to address damp issues on the wall.

NATIONAL RETENTION POLICY RECORDS MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP

The Co Archivist is a member of the LGMA-led Records Management Working Group and continued to work on the revision of the National Retention Policy for local authority records during 2021. The retention policy is important in identifying that the appropriate records become archives and that correct retention recommendations are determined. To date, Health & Safety, Planning & Development, Housing, Procurement, Finance, HR, Water, Transport and Infrastructure, Corporate, and Enterprise & Economic Development have been completed, approved and issued out to local authorities. The Archivist also advises staff on the preparation of records both for destruction and for transfer to the Records Centre and the Co Archives.

Louth County Council Heritage Office

Despite a subdued Heritage Week in August 2021 and Biodiversity Week in May due to the Pandemic, 2021 was the most successful year for the Heritage Office of Louth County Council in several years, due to the availability of more funding from external sources.

LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

Approved in January 2021 the plan underpinned several successful funding applications to the National Biodiversity Action Plan fund Projects that proceeded with the requisite 15% match funding included

- The Little Tern wardening project at Baltray, run by the Louth Nature Trust
- The demonstration laying of a hedge at Blackrock Park, organised jointly with Blackrock Tidy Towns.

The in-house Biodiversity Plan Implementation Committee was formed. The Heritage Officer chaired five meetings from which the following biodiversity actions were carried out:

- Louth County Council became a Council Partner of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan. The committee reported back on related actions
- The Heritage Officer continued reporting sightings of wildlife in the county to the National Biodiversity Data Centre and undertook training on surveying wildlife in streams and rivers.

COMMUNITY MONUMENTS FUND

Three out of nine applications submitted by the Heritage Office to the Community Monuments Fund were successful. The grants covered

- Conservation studies of two privately-owned towerhouses (Glaspistol and Taaffe's in Carlingford)
- Conservation works on a section of Drogheda's town wall at Featherbed Lane, close to Laurence's Gate.

HERITAGE PLAN FUNDING

Conservation assessments of several monuments that are in the care of Louth were undertaken including

- Drogheda's Millmount Complex (match funded by Louth County Council)

- The section of Ardee's town defences at Cappocksgate
- The boundary wall of the graveyard at Darver
- Louth Priory (St Mary's Abbey).

HERITAGE OFFICE PROJECTS

- **CoastWatch** - The Heritage Officer is regional co-ordinator.
- **MarPAMM INTERREG project** - participating in steering group working to develop a Management Plan for Carlingford Lough.
- **Cross County Tourism** - the Heritage Officer is working with the Development Officers of Cavan and Monaghan County Councils on the implementation of a tourism signage and interpretation project at Castletown Motte and the Hill of Faughart, funded by LEADER.

HERITAGE OFFICE EXPERT ADVICE PROVIDED INCLUDED

- 63 Planning referrals received (5.35 per month). Reports were written for 55 of these
- Planning development naming proposals
- Proposals for new flood defences for Dundalk/Blackrock and Ardee
- Infrastructure referrals relating to a new N52 road at Ardee and upgrade works on the N53 road to Castleblaney
- TII referrals regarding proposals for two different sections of the N2
- ORIS funding proposals
- Ardee Castle heritage advice
- proposals for a 'Decarbonisation Zone'.
- The Heritage Office supported successful applications by An Táin Arts Centre to the Arts Council including Culture Quest
- NMDDC's Ring of Gullion office to the Co-operation with Northern Ireland fund of the Department of Foreign Affairs
- Liaison with Councillors and a wide range of people and other organisations
- Letters for support were written for various community applications for Heritage Council funding.

County Museum, Dundalk

“Thank you for all the effort you go to. To show how to do your lovely activities - they have certainly helped me during lockdown.”

With the announcement that the country was to re-enter lockdown in December 2020 one thing was certain – the environment in which the Museum was to operate was to change significantly. Over the following months the significance of the Museum and its collection began to become apparent. In the preceding year the Museum had established an online following through the development of various videos and activities designed to highlight the nature and diversity of the Collection. In 2021 this project reached new heights and audiences both at home and abroad.

In the first five months of the year craft and art projects mirroring either display items or elements of local or national significance proved to be popular. Project highlights included step-by-step guides to make your own St. Brigid’s Cross, Valentine’s Day roses, St. Patrick’s Day cards as well as features on display items. Central to all of these projects was the importance of a focus on local events and figures – hence the various projects on St. Brigid (in January) and the ongoing blossoming of the Coulter Poppy (early to mid-summer) located in the Museum courtyard. In both instances thousands of visitors were drawn to the Museum’s Facebook page to discover more about the history of the county. Indeed in the build-up to the Tokyo Olympics the Irish Embassy in Warsaw contacted the Museum when developing an online countdown clock for the Games. The Embassy had come across the Museum’s Beatrice Hill-Lowe collection (the first woman to be awarded a medal at the Olympics (London 1908)) and approached us with a view to incorporating this collection as part of this project. Thus, the medal was the first item to be included in its countdown. Similarly the development of the Museum’s online exhibition during Heritage Week linked the SEEK Festival to artefacts already on display in our permanent exhibition. *Motion Marks* was a series of dance-inspired banners created by artist Orlaith Cullinane which decorated the Museum front early in the year.

The development of the collection was, obviously, affected by the inability to confine one’s mobility.

Whilst the volume of items added to the collection was understandably down on previous years the quality remained undiminished. Items pertaining to the pandemic – information brochures about public health, vaccines and attendant ephemera – will be of huge significance to future generations. Similarly other items were also added including a collection of paintings displaying scenes from Dundalk and its environs; a Gunther’s chain (a device for measuring tracts of land); an engagement ring linked to Annie Maguire as well as a collection of memorabilia owned by international athlete, Maeve Kyle.

The continued development of the Museum collection was a mainstay of the year. ‘Cherishing the Legacy – The Collection at the County Museum, Dundalk’ was the title for a paper presented to both the Carlingford Heritage Trust and the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society during 2021. Given by Curator Brian Walsh, the paper provided an overview of the collection and its development since the Museum opened in 1994 focussing a spotlight on some of the more interesting artefacts to be found there. Indeed one of the items featured in this talk was the subject of a documentary broadcast on RTE over the Christmas. The All-Stars at 50 marked the golden anniversary of the GAA awards scheme sponsored by PJ Carroll’s in 1972 and featured not only a poster from the first set of awards but a number of other items showcasing the company’s sponsorship portfolio at the time.

As mentioned previously 2021 was a difficult year but one which re-affirmed and highlighted the primacy of the collection. The Museum found new ways of linking it to the public imagination – be it through craft activity, online papers, television documentary or simply as a Facebook feature. As we emerge from the pandemic the Museum mission remains the same:

The purpose of the County Museum, Dundalk is to inspire a familiarity with the past through the collection, conservation and communication of the cultural heritage of County Louth and its wider community.



Coulter poppy in full (Museum Courtyard)



Motion Marks by Orlaith Cullinane (Museum front, early 2021)



Kyle kimono
(presented to Maeve Kyle at the Tokyo Olympics, 1960)

Louth Arts Service

LOUTH ARTS SERVICE

CreateLouth, the Arts Service for County Louth, delivered a wide range of actions in 2021, all aligned to the service's five major work areas - Developmental & Community Arts; Grants & Awards; Information & Advice; Artistic Programming; Representation & Planning.

DEVELOPMENT & COMMUNITY

The Arts Service continues to support a wide range of programmes and residencies in Creative Spark, An Táin Arts Centre and Droichead Arts Centre. In addition, direct programming by the Arts Service, liaising with strategic partners culminated in activities including the following:

MUSIC IN HEALTHCARE SETTINGS

Our Bealtaine programme in May, saw visits to six healthcare settings around Louth. A combination of both indoor and outdoor performances brought uplifting live music and song to nursing home staff and residents. During our winter schedule 8 nursing homes availed of our weekly online concerts for 4 Fridays between November and December.

FESTIVAL IN A VAN

Supported by the Community Resilience Fund, three nursing homes in the county had the wonderful music of Opera brought to them thanks to Festival in a Van. Residents and staff of the nursing homes enjoyed the wonderful voice of renowned opera singer Gavan Ring, bringing much needed joy and reprieve during the restrictions.

LOCAL LIVE PERFORMANCE SCHEME

Funded by the Dept of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, CreateLouth coordinated a series of live concerts during August and September. Taking place in Drogheda, Ardee, Dundalk and Carlingford the 7 live events featured a host of local artists and performers, tech crew and event managers. All concerts were free of charge and provided a much-needed boost to local professionals from the art and entertainment sectors.

GRANTS & AWARDS

In 2021, CreateLouth made a range of bursaries and awards available to individuals and organisations in Louth, including: Grants under the Arts Act & School Musical Instrument Purchase Scheme. A total of 26 grants were awarded during 2021. CreateLouth supported festivals including Ardee Baroque, Drogheda Traditional Music Weekend, Thomas D'Arcy McGee Summer School & Drogheda International Classical Music Series.

INFORMATION & ADVICE

The www.createlouth.ie website is the hub for information on funding, events, opportunities, projects and resources for the Arts in Louth. We continued to provide information and support to local artists on what resources are available to them and what supports we provide.

The Arts officer began the process for the development of a new County Arts Development Plan which will launch in 2022 giving us a roadmap and framework to guide Louth County Council and CreateLouth on delivering an impactful and resourceful arts and culture plan in the coming years to benefit the community.

ARTISTIC PROGRAMMING

Taisce Lú, A Curator's Choice:

The county arts collection, Taisce Lú went on tour to Droichead Arts Centre in September. Launching on Culture night some of the artists including Adrian + Shane and Breda Marron were in attendance to discuss the pieces. The exhibition then ran for 2 weeks in the center with many calling in to visit some of our unique collection. We also have been cataloguing and photographing some of our newer pieces acquired in recent years and the details of each piece will be posted on our website in 2022.

Culture Night 2021:

Culture Night took place on 17th September with almost all events in person, live and socially distanced throughout the county. Over 840 attended the live events, and almost 3,000 viewed the online events on the night. There was a huge range of activities for all age groups from art workshops to traditional music to culture trails.



The County Collections, Taisce Lú, was exhibited at Droichead Arts Centre in September 2021, launching on Culture Night

CREATIVE IRELAND

Creative Ireland is a five-year collaborative programme connecting people, creativity and wellbeing in Louth. In 2021 the Creative Ireland culture team continued to manage Creative Ireland funding streams to span the fields of history and heritage, visual arts, crafts and drama, literature and music, and the environment.

The Creative Ireland Community Grant fund supported 12 groups in researching, planning and delivering projects. This included funding to groups such as Ablevision, Turas Counselling, Youthwork Ireland Louth and Drumshallon Forge Heritage Centre.

The Excellence Grant funded 3 projects in collaboration with strategic partners, including the SEEK Festival in Dundalk, Borrowed Ground Artist Studio space in Drogheda and the Fighting Words Projects with Louth Libraries.

Cruinniú na nÓg, the national day of youthful creativity in June, took place online again in 2021. The programme supported a range of online craft workshops, art tutorials, music workshops and Q & A sessions with industry experts. Over 550 young people engaged with Criunniú Louth 2021.



Fionulla Donlon Oriel Centre_jpg Award winning Harpist Fionula Donlon playing in the Oriel Centre on Culture Night 2021. Photo Padhraig Donlon

A large white number '4' is centered on a yellow background. To the right, a photograph shows a building with a dark roof and a spire, set against a sunset sky with orange and blue tones. The yellow background is a large triangle that points towards the top right corner of the page.

4

PLANNING, INFRASTRUCTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

Louth Economic Development Unit supports the coordinated economic development of the county by planning for, initiating and managing projects that contribute positively to its ongoing economic development. The unit encompasses the Local Enterprise Office (LEO), tourist service, planning, infrastructure and conservation works and European Affairs. It is involved in the marketing and promotion of the Council as a business-friendly location and engages in strategic economic planning, which informs Louth County Council's policy decisions.



Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council





**PLANNING
SERVICES
AT A GLANCE**



OPENED **316 FILES**
ON UNAUTHORISED
DEVELOPMENT

**235 WARNING
LETTERS ISSUED**



**1,549 PLANNING
APPLICATIONS RECEIVED**



**358 PRE-PLANNING
APPLICATIONS RECEIVED**



**49 DANGEROUS
STRUCTURES
REGISTERED**



**67 DERELICT SITES FILES
OPENED**

**15 ENFORCEMENT
NOTICES ISSUED**

Planning

LOUTH COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021-2027

Following an extensive period of research, public consultation and engagement between the Executive and the Elected Members, the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027 was adopted by the Elected Members on the 30th September 2021 and came into effect 6 weeks later on the 11th November 2021.

Notwithstanding the Covid-19 restrictions there was a high level of public interest and engagement in the process, particularly following the publication of the Draft Development Plan, when in excess of 800 submissions were received.

For the first time the County Development Plan has incorporated the functional areas of Drogheda and Dundalk, with zoning maps and an associated growth strategy set out for these settlements and all other towns and villages in the County.

The Development Plan provides a framework for the growth and development of the County during its lifetime with an underlying and cross cutting themes promoting the creation of sustainable, healthy communities where people can access jobs, housing, and services, and enjoy a high quality of life. This framework and growth strategy will inform the Local Area Plans for Drogheda, Dundalk, Ardee, and Dunleer that will be prepared during the life of the Development Plan.

RESPONSE(S) ISSUED TO SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED

The Forward Planning Team engaged and liaised with government agencies, neighbouring local authorities, various stakeholders and community groups on a range of planning related issues. The table below sets out submission responses made to formal public consultations during 2021.

SUBMISSIONS MADE BY FORWARD PLANNING IN 2021

- Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028
- Material Alterations to the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027
- Draft Ministerial Direction to the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027
- SEA Screening of Variations 3 and 4 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025
- Draft Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DHLGH)
- Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment Guidelines for Regional Assemblies and Planning Authorities (DHLGH)
- Draft Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area (NTA).

STRATEGIC HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS (SHDS), 2021

Stage	Location	No. of Units	Status (2021)
Application	Hallscotch Venture Ltd.	75 apt. units	Granted 29.06.21 (subsequent JR Case)
Application	Old Slane Road, Drogheda	242 units	CE Report issued to ABP 09.12.21
S247 Pre-Application	Lands at Muirhevnamor Dundalk	115 units	Tripartite meeting held 22/09/21
S247 Pre-Application	Marlbog Road, Haynestown	318 units	PA Opinion issued to ABP 05.03.21

BUILT HERITAGE INVESTMENT SCHEME AND HISTORIC STRUCTURES FUND 2021

Louth County Council received 27 applications under the Built Heritage Investment Scheme, with a further 13 applications under the Historic Structures Fund in 2021.

Funding of €91,933.20 was shared between nine applicants under the BHIS and comprised of; Bellews Castle (essential turret repairs); Tudor Lodge (canted bay & timber casement window repairs); dwelling at St. Laurence St., Drogheda (repairs to chimney stack and timber sash windows); Mooremount Thatch (re-building of chimney stacks, lime rendering and window repairs); dwelling at St. Mary's Tce., Drogheda (roof and drainage repairs), St. Mary's Cottages, Drogheda (reinstatement of timber sash windows); dwelling at Albany Tce., Drogheda (refurbishment of sash windows); dwelling at Ardee Tce., Dundalk (treatment and repair of existing sash windows); The Blue School, Drogheda (conservation works to sash windows).

Funding of €145,400 was secured under the Historic Structures Fund 2021, for a further four projects: Louth County Archives (remedial works to gable wall); St. Malachy's Church, Dundalk (urgent conservation repairs to Harry Clarke).

Planning – Enforcement

PLANNING – ENFORCEMENT

The Planning indicators are given below in relation to Enforcement complaints regarding unauthorised developments received during the month.

Description	Enforcement in relation to unauthorised development		December 2020	Total Date
	December 2021	Total Date		
Number of Planning Enforcement Complaints Investigated	21	316	12	268
Number of Planning Enforcement cases received which didn't require follow up	0	0	0	0
Number of cases closed/resolved through negotiation	12	326	18	235
Number of Warning letters issued	5	235	13	165
Number of Enforcement Notices issued.	1	15	1	13
Number of cases referred for legal proceedings	0	5	1	7
Number of injunctions	0	4	1	1
Number of prosecutions	0	0	0	1

PLANNING – ENFORCEMENT DERELICT SITES

The Planning indicators listed below are in relation to Notices Issued under the Derelict Sites Act, 1964 for the period 2021.

Description	Enforcement in relation to Derelict Sites
Number of Derelict Sites Files opened	67
Number of Section 11 Notices issued	21
Number of Section 8 Notices (Intention to Enter on DS Register)	39
Number of Section 8 Notices – (Entry on DS Register)	5
Number of cases referred for legal proceedings	1
Number of sites removed from the Derelict Sites Register	0
Number of Derelict Site Levies Raised	1
Number of Prosecutions	0
Number of cases closed	14

PLANNING – ENFORCEMENT – DANGEROUS BUILDINGS

The Planning indicators listed below are in relation to Notices Issued under the Local Government (Sanitary Services) Act, 1964 for the period 2021.

Description	Enforcement in relation to Dangerous Structures
Number of Dangerous Structures Files opened	49
Number of Section 3 (1)(a) Notices – Directing Owner to carry out work	42
Number of Section 3(2)(b) Notices – LCC carry out works	0
Number of Section 2 Notices – Dangerous Place	2
Number of cases closed	31
Number of cases referred for legal proceedings	7
Number of Prosecutions	0

Infrastructure

M1 JUNCTION 16 PARK AND SHARE SCHEME

Louth County Council and Transport Infrastructure Ireland were delighted to announce the opening of Ireland's first purpose-built Park and Share Facility on the Motorway Network. The new facility west of junction 16 on the M1 was opened in early October 2021.

The opening of the scheme means that vehicles currently parking adjacent to high-speed national roads will now be able to park safely in a purpose-built parking facility. The facility will have the added benefit of also incentivising more vehicle sharing and access to private bus operators, which in turn will reduce the environmental impact of commuting in individual cars.

The 226 Parking Bay Facility represents an investment in the order of €1.2 million that has significantly improved safety at the existing junctions off the M1 Motorway, in particular the N33, N53 and R215.

The project incorporates:

- 226 Parking Bays (incl. facilities for 22 Disabled parking bays)
- Wired for Electric Vehicles (EV) – all parking bays have been prepared for future electric vehicle charging.
- Flood Lighting
- CCTV Cameras
- a turnaround area to facilitate pick up and drop offs
- pedestrian footpaths & safe vehicular access off the R215,
- Parking prevention measure on hard-shoulders on the N33, N53 and R215 to prevent future on-road parking
- Cycle parking facility
- Landscaping

The site was originally identified by LCC through the TII Road Safety Inspection process, which found that there was hazardous parking taking place in the verge and hardshoulders of the National Routes adjacent to the M1. The scheme was progressed by Louth County Council as well as technical advisors for the scheme, Bruton Consulting Engineers and PMCE Consulting Engineers. Construction works were undertaken by ACS Civils Ltd.

The set down area and turning area have been designed to allow for future upgrade to facilitate a bus based Park and Ride facility.



Aerial view of new Park and Share



Aerial view of new Park and Share

DUNDALK MUNICIPAL ATHLETICS GRASS TRACK

With local funding and the aid of a Sports Capital grant from the government department in charge of sport, works were completed in 2021 on the development of a Municipal athletics grass track adjacent to the Dundalk Sports Centre at Muirhevnamore.

The works to IAAF standard for this type of facility included:

- Cut and fill of 7.000 cu.m of earthworks to create a level track base
- Strip and replacement of topsoil, level, destoning, grass seeding
- Provision of 12,800 metres of surface slit drains
- 1,500 metres of subsurface drainage
- Perimeter fencing
- Diversion of existing footpaths and public lighting

The works were completed in Q3 2021 and a period of growth and development of the grass track is required prior to opening in 2022. The scheme facilitates future conversion to a synthetic track if funding becomes available.

TOWNPARK FLOOD RELIEF SCHEME

LCC secured OPW Funding to progress Flood Relief Works in Townparks, Dundalk and appointed Tobin's Consulting Engineers to design, procure and supervise the Project. The pipeline extension will reduce the surplus water stored in Balmer's Bog thereby increasing the storage capacity available and will also contribute to removing floodwater from the area during a Flood Event. The Works involved extending an existing 1350mm diameter Surface Water Pipeline which was laid from the abandoned railway line under Hill Street Bridge to outfall at the Navy Bank adjacent to the Sean O'Mahony's GAA Grounds.

Gibson Bros. Ltd were appointed in July 2021 to carry out the Works and laid approximately 380m of 1350mm diameter Surface Water Pipeline from its existing terminus under Hill Street Bridge to a newly constructed Inlet Flow Chamber located at the edge of Balmer's Bog. Mechanical & Electrical installation works are continuing to fit the required flow control infrastructure and it is anticipated that the Project will be completed in March 2022.



Recently completed flood alleviation works



Recently completed flood alleviation works

NARROW WATER BRIDGE

On the 29th June 2021 An Taoiseach Micheál Martin announced €3m euro in funding from the Shared Island Fund to progress work on the Narrow Water Bridge. The allocation of funds is for progressing the Narrow Water Bridge project to tender stage, based on a due diligence of the current design/building standards and live planning permission.

The bridge will provide access to a range of cross border active travel and recreational activities including greenways, mountain bike trails, walking routes and beaches.

Planning permission is in place for a distinctive 280m cable stayed bridge, anchored by two towers at either end, for car, pedestrian and cycle traffic. It will connect the A2 Newry to Warrenpoint dual carriageway with the R173 Omeath and will have the ability to open to allow for passage of ships through and on to the Newry Canal.

The completion of the due diligence process commenced in 2021 with a view of updating the existing design/building standards and completion of tender to determine the final costs arising will progress through 2022.

ACTIVE TRAVEL

Louth Council County was allocated €4.6 million from The National Transport Authority (NTA) Active Travel Investment Programme 2021 to invest in sustainable travel, walking and cycling projects.

This is a five year funding programme that will be allocated to a number of projects primarily in Drogheda and Dundalk. The NTA Active Travel Investment Program aims to develop high quality walking and cycling facilities to encourage more people to switch to active travel and will contribute to tackling climate change. High quality designs are needed to connect communities, work places, schools and make walking and cycling attractive, safe and accessible to everyone. There were fourteen projects within the 2021 allocation and these projects were brought forward through 2021 for procurement of consultants or construction with them progressing into 2022. Further projects and funding and continuation of these projects will be applied for each year of the program on a rolling basis through the NTA.

ST. DOMINIC'S BRIDGE (ACTIVE TRAVEL)

In 2021 Louth County Council signed a significant contract to refurbish St. Dominic's Bridge in Drogheda and to upgrade the cycling lanes and facilities on the bridge. The construction works are being undertaken by Jons Civil Engineering Co. Ltd. and the contract is valued at €2.2 million. The works are being funded by the National Transport Authority through its Active Travel Investment Programme.

Works commenced on the refurbishment of the bridge in November 2021 and will continue into 2022. Additional aspects of the project include: the installation of a new surfacing and landscaping system to the bridge; strengthening of pier columns; the provision of a positive drainage system; as well as a host of additional infrastructural refurbishments and improvements.

Louth Flood Relief Schemes

DROGHEDA AND BALTRAY FLOOD RELIEF SCHEME

In September 2021 Louth County Council, in partnership with the Office of Public Works, appointed RPS Consulting Engineers Ltd as Engineering Consultants to carry out the design of the Drogheda and Baltray Flood Relief Scheme.

The Drogheda and Baltray Flood Relief Scheme is being delivered under Project Ireland 2040, where the Government is providing an investment of €1 Billion on flood relief over the next decade. When completed, these Schemes will afford protection to 249 residential and 205 non-residential properties during flood event. Commencement of design works in 2021 consisted of scoping works for environmental surveys and hydrological /hydraulic analysis. These works will continue through 2022 with commencement of scheme optioneering towards the end of 2022.

DUNDALK AND ARDEE FLOOD RELIEF SCHEME

Environmental Assessment: Work is continuing on the scoping and procuring of environmental surveys. In parallel an environmental impact scoping assessment, environmental constraints survey and Invasive Species Management Plan are being progressed. Hydrological Analysis: Modelling is being progressed to understand how the river systems respond to weather events. These design assessments will continue into 2022 and the commencement of design options.

Infrastructure

URBAN REGENERATION AND RURAL REGENERATION PROJECTS

Louth County Council's regeneration team have been put in place to plan and develop regeneration projects that will improve the experience of residents and visitors in our large towns by making them more compact and sustainable.

The team is also responsible for making funding applications to the Urban Regeneration Development Fund (URDF) when submissions are sought by the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage and to the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) managed by the Department of Rural and Community Development.

All projects are match funded by Louth County Council and are in line with the national planning framework and the aims of project Ireland 2040, as well as the Governments policy for rural development, Our Rural Future 2021 - 2025.

ARDEE CASTLE, ARDEE

Funding is in place for a regeneration scheme to this historic Castle which sits in the heart of Ardee town centre. The proposal is to provide better access for all and save egress to and from the main castle building. Alastair Coey Architects have been appointed as Lead Consultant and Grade 1 Conservation Architect to oversee the design and works to this national monument.

An enabling works package has taken place in order to complete a large number of surveys as well as to weather tight the building before the main works package begins.

Further assessment of the detailed design options are ongoing with a view to works commencing in 2022.

ARDEE 2040, ARDEE

Louth County Council has plans for an ambitious project in Ardee that will result in a holistic design proposal, setting a new benchmark for public realm

and town centre infrastructure that will transform the town. This project will develop a plan to transform the town from a traditional manufacturing centre to a prosperous and thriving local development, multi-functional, innovative centre in an integrated and sustainable way. This project is funded through the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund.

Turley's have been appointed to develop exciting plans to improve the streetscape and amenity of Ardee with a focus on four key opportunity sites: Main Street; Ash Walk; The Old Railway; and amenity lands to the east of the Town to allow planning consent to be received. In 2021, desktop and baseline studies were carried out in conjunction with an early public engagement campaign in which record numbers of citizens have taken part. In 2022 the design proposals shaped by this work will be progressed and go out for public consultation and will be submitted for planning consent.

PUBLIC REALM WORKS AROUND ST. LAURENCE'S GATE, DROGHEDA

In 2021 the preliminary design for the public realm around St. Laurence's Gate has been developed to create an outdoor space for gatherings and performances. Surveys are ongoing to allow a Part 8 planning application to be made in late 2021 / early 2022.

WESTGATE VISION PUBLIC REALM WORKS, DROGHEDA

Funding was received under the Urban Regeneration Development Fund to appoint Turley to carry out a feasibility and preliminary design of the public realm within this area and to get planning permission for these works.

In 2021, desktop and baseline studies were carried out in conjunction with an early public engagement campaign in which record numbers of citizens have taken part. More than 700 people completed the online survey, contributing their ideas and detailing their aspirations for Westgate and this will help shape

the design proposals which will be out for public consultation later in the project.

ST. NICHOLAS'S QUARTER, DUNDALK

The main aim of the St. Nicholas Quarter & Backlands Regeneration Project is to reinvigorate and transform St Nicholas Quarter. In doing so it will establish a new living and working quarter in the heart of Dundalk town centre. Louth County Council is implementing the vision conceived in the Dundalk Urban Design Framework Plan and building on the benefits of the inaugural projects, the Market Square (completed in 2011), and Clanbrassil Street (completed in 2020).

The Vision seeks to radically transform the perception of the area by enabling the release of back-lands for development and creating new streets that promote increased connectivity and permeability within the area. The creation of a new look St Nicholas Quarter builds upon its rich history, heritage and natural quality of the environment which will be more attractive to the public, businesses, residents, investors and tourists.

The project is funded the Louth County Council and the Urban Regeneration Development Fund and is part of Project Ireland 2040.

LIVING IN CARLINGFORD / VISITING IN CARLINGFORD

Funding has been received under the Rural Regeneration Development Fund for a design team to develop a strategy for sustainable tourism together with a strategy for enhancing the quality of the village for residents and promoting economic and employment opportunities. This will be achieved with focus on 5 main objectives; Improving the key area of arrival in Carlingford; Public realm improvements to streets and spaces within the historic wall townscape; the development of a traffic management plan; development of a cohesive signage and orientation plan; and the development of a plan for accommodation and management of casual traders in the medieval town.

In 2021 the design team, RPS, have carried out early engagement with the residents and interested stakeholders in Carlingford as well as desktop and baseline studies. These will be progressed into more detailed design for further public engagement in 2022.

LONG WALK, DUNDALK

The Council has been granted URDF funding to develop a masterplan for the Long Walk area of Dundalk that will seek to create a blueprint for the creation of a thriving hub with extensive residential and commercial development. This work is being carried out in partnership with a strategic partner that owns a significant portion of the land and property in the area. A consultant will be appointed to develop the design.

OMEATH PLACEMAKING SCHEME

The Omeath Placemaking Scheme involves the regeneration of the heart of the village with improvements to the public realm and road improvements. This will be achieved by economic and social regeneration, increased footfall and maximising the tourism potential of the Great Eastern Greenway runs through the heart of the village.

In 2022 an integrated design team will be appointed to develop and carry out public realm works to increase the amount of pedestrian space, the creation of shared spaces, renewed traffic systems in the heart of the village, realignment of junctions in favour of the pedestrian, measures to decrease vehicular speed and improved lighting to the village core.

The works are funded by Louth County Council and the Department of Rural Regeneration via the Rural Regeneration Development fund and are part of Project Ireland 2040.

Economic Development - The Local Enterprise Office

THE LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE (LEO LOUTH)

The Local Enterprise Office acts as a First Stop Shop for anyone seeking information and support on starting or growing a business in County Louth. LEO Louth promotes entrepreneurship, fosters start-ups, and develops existing micro and small businesses to drive job creation, and provide a wide range of accessible high quality supports for business ideas. Funding for LEO Louth was provided by Enterprise Ireland under a Service Level Agreement, and was included in the 2021 Budget.

LEO Louth provides local business with information advice, training, mentoring, seminars and selective financial supports. It engages with over 1500 no. local businesses annually and has a portfolio of 232 no. clients to which it has provided direct grant assistance in recent years. In turn these 232 no. businesses increased their employment levels by a gross 174 no. and net 50 no. jobs in the past year.

2021 was another unprecedented year for businesses, and the key priorities for LEO Louth continued to shift rapidly to help local businesses react to the economic challenges of the Covid pandemic, challenges caused by the impact of Brexit and promoting the range of services and supports available to assist businesses.

COVID-19 MICROFINANCE IRELAND (MFI) BUSINESS LOAN

Under this Government backed scheme unsecured loan finance was provided through LEO Louth. Local business owners were provided with expert assistance to complete their Application, Business Plan and Cashflow Projections. In 2021, 15 no. loan applications were prepared and submitted to MFI via LEO Louth.

BREXIT SUPPORTS

The LEO continued to offer a wide suite of Brexit specific support to local small businesses in 2021. It was vital that Brexit and its impact on business was highlighted. The assistance provided included the following:

Brexit Seminars/Webinars

The LEO hosted a series of 8 no. Brexit Seminars/Webinars during 2021, in conjunction with Dundalk and Drogheda Chambers of Commerce, InterTrade Ireland and Enterprise Ireland which attracted over 620 no. businesses online.

Brexit Conference

The LEO organised a cross-border conference on Brexit with InterTrade Ireland and the Chambers of Commerce in Dundalk and Newry, in March with over 260 no. in attendance.

Brexit Advisory Clinics

29no. business people availed of support through the Brexit Advisory Clinic. The clinics helped diagnose the impact of Brexit on local businesses and provided a pathway to mitigate impact and access additional supports.

Brexit Mentoring

5 no. businesses availed of Brexit Mentoring in 2021.

Brexit Consultancy

22 no. businesses availed of specialist one to one Brexit consultancy provided by LEO Louth.

Brexit – Prepare Your Business for Customs Training

LEO Louth delivered 3 no. (free to attend) customs workshops to 46 no. registered businesses, helping businesses prepare for new customs documentation requirements post-Brexit.

BORDER STIMULUS PROGRAMMES - TO MEET BREXIT AND COVID CHALLENGE

Under the Border Stimulus Programme, LEO Louth continued to deliver a range of support programmes in 2021.

A suite of 5 management development programmes managing the challenges of Brexit and Covid were delivered on in 2021 with a total of 89 no. businesses took part.

- Superior Retailing Programme (36 no. Businesses);
- Export Development Programme (8 no. Businesses)
- Financial Management Programme for owner managers (17 no. Businesses)
- Green for Microenterprise (20 no. Businesses)
- Innovation Programme for small businesses (8 no. Businesses).

FINANCIAL SUPPORTS

Financial Supports provided to businesses included Trading Online Vouchers, Microfinance Ireland's Loan products and mainstream Grant Aid to manufacturing and traded service businesses with potential to trade internationally.

- 108 no. Trading Online Vouchers were approved with a total value of €226,781
- 15 no. loan applications were advanced to Microfinance Ireland
- 24 no. Feasibility Study, Priming, Business Expansion and Technical Assistance Export Grants were approved with a total value of €496,000. The 16 no. Priming and Business Expansion grants approved have a job potential of 59 no.

In addition, LEO sign-posted small businesses to other financial supports including Innovation Vouchers, InterTrade Ireland's Brexit Vouchers, Elevate and Acumen trade development grant supports and Revenue's EWSS.

BUSINESS TRAINING

The training schedule for 2021 continued albeit virtually.

- LEO hosted a total of 75 no. business training and development programmes with 1,527 participants.
- Given the focus on supporting businesses to continue to trade while meeting Covid restrictions, 3 no. trading online workshops were delivered to 195 no. participants.
- Despite the lockdown, demand to start a small business continued. LEO hosted 13 no. Start Your Own Business programmes which were delivered to 195 no. people looking to establish a new business.

BUSINESS MENTORING

In total, 680 no. mentor assignments were completed during the year, whereby small business owners were matched with a business expert on a one-to-one basis. This was against an annual target of 300 no. Most of this increase in expected volume was a result of businesses seeking specialist advice to help them respond to the challenges of Covid and Brexit.

This was made up of:

488 no. Clinics

- **384 no.** General Business
- **75 no.** Financial Clinics
- **29 no.** Brexit Clinics

192 no. Mentor

- **172 no.** LEO Mentor Programme
- **15 no.** MFI approved mentor
- **5 no.** Brexit Mentor

SUPPORTS FOR RETAIL

Look for Local /Shop Local Campaign

2 no. Shop Local campaigns were launched in 2021.

LEO continued to promote #ShopLocal #LookforLocal throughout 2021, and launched a shop local Christmas Campaign, 'Look For Local - Look For Louth' which generated extensive coverage in local press, radio and social media in the weeks leading to Christmas. A video was created for the county featuring business owners and images of the major shopping areas which was very well received. Across the main social media channels of the LEO, the video was viewed in excess of 12,500 times.

LEO launched a Louth online shopping directory with 254 no. local businesses and their eCommerce websites listed. This continues to be available at: www.louthcoco.ie/ShopLouth or at www.localenterprise.ie/Louth/Enterprise-Development/Shop-Local-Look-for-Louth/

RETAIL POWERHOUSE FORUM

LEO Louth continued to support local retailers on the Retail Powerhouse forum, with an additional 12 no. local retailers receiving support in 2021. This is a commercial retail forum that focuses on building trade with expert tips specifically for retailers.

SUPPORTING FOOD BUSINESSES

LEO continued to support food businesses under the joint Louth-Meath Food Strategy through its work with the **Boyne Valley Flavours** initiative.

FOOD ACADEMY

Successful applicants for the Bord Bia/Supervalu Food Academy Programme were informed in July 2021 and Loughinmore Farms were accepted on to the programme.

FOOD STARTER PROGRAMME 2021

5 no. Louth Businesses took part in the Regional Food Starter Programme in 2021. The event offered

participants a unique opportunity to engage in virtual sales meetings with senior food buyers from throughout Ireland and the EU.

GROW WITH ALDI

In January 2021, LEO with Aldi held a 'Grow with Aldi' seminar for food producers in the North East region. This seminar advised the attendees about an opportunity to take part in the 'Grow with Aldi' programme to support Irish Food/retail products in Aldi stores nationwide.

3 no. Co. Louth companies McEntee's Tea, KooKee and Stameen Farm were successfully chosen for the Grow with Aldi Programme. Their products were available in all Aldi stores during June 2021.

LIDL FOOD KICK-STARTER PROGRAMME

LEO Louth & LEO Meath with Boyne Valley Flavours ran a Lidl Food Kick-Starter information session in August 2021. 12 no. producers from the region attended the information session.

CRAFT SECTOR

LEO Louth worked with the national LEO/Design and Craft Council Ireland Committee in the development and roll out of sectoral training and opportunities for the design and craft community.

Louth companies were able to engage in three training programmes, an eCommerce bootcamp, a 'Get Set' (a start-up/ early stage programme) and the 'Building a Craft and Design Enterprise (BCDE) programme - a management development programme for established craft businesses.

9no. Louth businesses participated on the eCommerce Bootcamp, **3no.** on the 'Get Set' and **1 no.** on the BCDE programme.

ENTERPRISE EUROPE NETWORK

Enterprise Europe Network, in conjunction with the LEOs, hosted a Food eirEEN, a virtual food “Meet the Buyer” event in June. This event offered Louth businesses a unique opportunity to engage in face-to-face virtual sales meetings with senior food buyers from throughout Ireland and the EU.

Other Management Development programmes

- **eCommerce Cluster** supported **15 no.** Louth businesses in 2021, providing them support to greatly enhance their e-Commerce capability providing digital consultancy support to help build their online businesses and sell into international markets.
- **LEAN for Micro** programme with **19 no.** LEO approved projects, and additional support provided through the NE LEAN Network.
- **PLATO** Management Development programme concluded in June 2021 with 9 no. local businesses participating.
- **Innovate Accelerate Europe:** LEO Louth partnered with LEO Meath and Newry Mourne & Down District Council in an online International Trade Readiness Programme focused on supporting small Food and Drink Businesses, with 7 no. businesses from Louth participating.
- **Client Portfolio Review and Consultancy:** The programme reviewed 137 no. LEO portfolio clients of which 89 no. were successfully contacted for an update on their business. Of those successfully contacted 22 no. received ongoing consultancy support. The aim was to help them assess and develop their growth potential in export markets and working with client businesses to ensure maximum uptake of LEO supports.
- **Co-innovate:** 73 no. clients engaged in 2021 receiving assistance to embed innovation in their business.

ENTERPRISE SUPPORT NETWORKS

Assistance and funding towards a number of local enterprise networks was provided by LEO during 2021, including:

- **Female Entrepreneurship:** LEO sponsored Network Louth, the county’s women in business network. LEO also actively promoted the ACORN Female Entrepreneurship Development Programme in the county.
- **Craft sector:** Delivery of Design & Crafts Council (DCCI) business programmes to local craftmakers and support towards Louth Craftmark, the craftmakers network.
- **North East Business Academy** – a best practice network
- **Programme funding and support to the Louth Meath Food Strategy** through the Boyne Valley Flavours network.
- **Engineering sector** – funding and programme support to the North East Focused Engineering Cluster, bringing together over 200 engineering businesses in the region.

NATIONAL ENTERPRISE PROGRAMMES

LEO delivered a range of National Enterprise Programmes at local level, including:

STUDENT ENTERPRISE PROGRAMME

960 no. students from **19 no.** 2nd level schools in Co Louth took part in the Student Enterprise Programme. Over 40 student businesses made it to the county final, competing for the chance to represent Co. Louth at the National Finals.

4 no. winners were chosen by the judging panel to go to the National finals.

Senior Category and Overall winner was “SZE Stories” from St Louis, Secondary School, Dundalk SZE Stories specialises in books for children facing everyday issues and their first book is for children who are being bullied and who are unsure what

to do about it. The young entrepreneurs set up a website, sold their books online and in book stores in Louth, Meath and Monaghan. They were even included in the Late Late Toy Show last Christmas and are donating half of their net profit to SOSAD and Women's Aid."

Intermediate Category Winner was James Spain of De La Salle, His business, Seasonal Crafts, sells unique hand-carved seasonal decorations and crafts from recycled wood.

Junior Category Winner was Lucy Fowley from Scoil Ui Mhuire, Dunleer. Her enterprise, Sweet designs, offers hand-made jewellery with beautiful pendants designed like gummy bears, butterfly's incorporating birth stones and initials to give them their customised element.

The **"My Entrepreneurial Journey"** category was won by Mia McDermott with Reflex Design from St Louis Secondary School, Dundalk.

Additional Category winners included:

- **Innovation Award:** Blue Inc. Games, St Olivers Community College, Drogheda.
- **Social Media Award:** Bake Me Happy, Ardee Community School.
- **Adapting to Covid Award:** Online Violin Lessons, Colaiste Ris, Dundalk.
- **Sustainability Awards:** Keep it Reel, Colaiste Ris, Dundalk.
- **Social Entrepreneur:** Bag Some Boots, St Marys College, Drogheda.
- **Best Creative Business:** Pebble Effect, St Marys College, Dundalk.
- **Best Creative Video:** Candy Cards, St Brigid's, Dundalk.

Ms Martina Farrell from Scoil Ui Mhuiri was the winner of the **Teachers Innovator Award** with entries in all three categories from the Dunleer based school.

LOCAL ENTERPRISE WEEK 2021

2021 saw the first ever virtual Local Enterprise Week with a series of online seminars and events held throughout the country. There were 10 no. national spotlight events which covered a wide range of topics including Innovation, the Green Economy and Sustainability, and Financial Capability that all businesses had access to.

LEO Louth ran a number of regional events in conjunction with the Local Enterprise Offices in Cavan, Monaghan and Meath including:

- an information session with Dundalk Institute of Technology on resources available to businesses in the Region.
- a webinar for retailers in the North East on 'Retailing in a Pandemic- How to Thrive' delivered by Miriam Simon.

At a local level, reflecting the increasing importance of the digital economy, LEO Louth delivered 2 no. workshops on digital business strategy and 2 no. seminars on cyber-security and building a safe online presence, the latter two in conjunction with Dundalk and Drogheda Chambers of Commerce.

NATIONAL ENTERPRISE AWARDS 2021

The National Enterprise Awards 2021 took place virtually in February. Spoonful Botanical was the 2021 overall winner for Co. Louth. Conor Grimes and Jayne Gavin represented Louth in the prestigious business competition.

BLÁS NA HÉIREANN AWARDS 2021

The Blas na hÉireann awards are the all-island food awards that recognise the very best Irish food and drink products, and the passionate people behind them. Products from every county in Ireland were entered into this year's competition to win Gold, Silver or Bronze Blas na hÉireann awards in over 150 food and drink categories. The awards are supported by LEO Louth.

6 no. businesses from Louth won a total of **13 no.** awards.

- Carlingford Oyster Company Ltd. – Silver
- Hilton Foods - Silver & Bronze
- MacNamee's Tea – Bronze
- Morgans Fine Fish - Seafood Innovation Award
- Natures Best - Gold, Bronze & Best in Louth,
- Pearse Lyons Brewing & Distilling - Gold, Silver & Bronze

In addition, Carlingford Oyster Company won 'The Great Taste Awards – 2021 Golden Fork Award for Ireland' sponsored by Bord Bia. Kian & Mary Louet Feisser travelled to Harrogate, north Yorkshire to attend the awards ceremony where they were announced as the winners and were presented with their award.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S ENTERPRISE DAY

National Women's Enterprise Day took place on October 7th. LEO Louth engaged with the organisers of the national virtual event in relation to planning and potential themes for this inspirational event. Dundalk based ceramicist Sarah McKenna represented Louth as the Leading Light for the County.

EXTERNALLY FUNDED ENTERPRISE PROJECTS

LEO continued to support a number of enterprise projects in County Louth which previously secured external funding.

- Co-Innovate Programme continued into 2021 with a total of 73 no. Louth participants, working through LEO Louth, seeking to embed innovation in their business.
- DKIT Connect DAC (dConnect) is a Connected Health and Wellbeing Innovation & Learning Hub for Business based out of the Regional Development Centre, DkIT. This project is at tender stage.
- A new FabLab at Creative Spark commenced construction in 2021
- Louth County Council's Drogheda Digital Innovation Hub which is at design stage. The aim of the project is to encourage high-potential future oriented tech projects seeking to start and grow, to locate in the greater Drogheda area. The project will provide affordable co-working space in Drogheda town centre complemented with tailored management and mentoring support to facilitate their growth and export potential.
- ATHENA – a female STEM Entrepreneurship Programme with LEO and DkIT commenced in 2021.
- Creative Spark's Dundalk Town Centre Co-working proposal commenced fit out stage in 2021 and is due to open in Q2 2022. This will allow for remote working and help position Dundalk as a Regional Growth Centre to develop cross-border linkages and provide an attractive urban location from which to drive enterprise.

OTHER ENTERPRISE SUPPORT INITIATIVES

LEO contributed and supported the following enterprise initiatives during 2021:

- Regional Enterprise Plan (North East) and its Steering Committee;
- Louth Economic Forum, Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) and Local Action Group (LAG), Regional Skills Forum, BIDs companies in Dundalk and Drogheda, North East LEAN Network, Evaluation Committee of the LEADER programme, Enterprise Europe Network (EEN), InterTrade Ireland's Acumen Committee, the New Frontiers Entrepreneur Programme and both M1/ Drogheda and Dundalk Chamber Skillnet groups. In addition LEO inputted at board level to Microfinance Ireland, The Mill, Drogheda, Ardee Business Park, Oriel Hub, Creative Spark and Louth County Enterprise Fund.

VISITORS TO CO. LOUTH

Minister of State at the Dept of Enterprise, Trade & Employment, Damien English, TD.

In September, Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail, Damien English TD visited Co. Louth. The visit to Louth is one of a series of nationwide visits by Minister English who is keen to meet the Local Authorities and Local Enterprise Office teams and engage with some of their client companies.

Swiss Ambassador His Excellency Louis-Jose Touron

The Swiss Ambassador to Ireland, His Excellency Louis-Jose Touron visited Louth in November. He was accompanied by his wife Ms. Touron and the Swiss Honorary Consul, Valerie Swann. A presentation on the local economy and the potential impact of Brexit in the event of Article 16 being triggered was discussed.

Norwegian Ambassador Her Excellency Mari Skåre

In December, The Norwegian Ambassador to Ireland, Her Excellency Mari Skåre visited Co. Louth.

LOUTH ECONOMIC FORUM

In 2021, the award winning Louth Economic Forum (LEF), chaired by Martin Cronin, continued to build partnerships and foster a culture of joined-up thinking to proactively facilitate further economic development and job creation in Louth focusing on key areas including Tourism & Heritage, Foreign Direct Investment, Indigenous Industry and Education and Training.

A number of key plans/topics were discussed at these meetings including Drogheda/Dundalk/Newry Economic Corridor, COVID-19 grants/incentives/supports, , Louth County Council Development Plan, Brexit, rollout of National Broadband plan, Regional Enterprise Plan, IDA Strategy 2021-2024 and Review of the LEF Action Plans.

SHOPFRONT IMPROVEMENT GRANT SCHEME

Louth County Council invited applications for grant assistance under its 'Shopfront Improvement Grant Scheme' again in 2021. There was a great interest in the scheme with 33 applications received.

STREETSCAPE ENHANCEMENT MEASURE

The Streetscape enhancement scheme was promoted and administered by the Community Section under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme. 14 business' in Ardee, Blackrock, Carlingford and Dunleer received funding.

LEO Events 2021



Caoimhe O'Hare-Siret & Julian Siret of Louth English with Minister English in Creative Spark.



Alan Hoey of Archidraft and Minister English in Creative Spark.



Joe Walls of Pearse Lyons Brewery and Distillery, Gillian Morgan and Brian McCullagh of Morgan's Fine Fish, Kian and Mary Louet Feisser of Carlingford Oyster Company, Paul and Patricia MacNamee of MacNamee's Tea Room and Store, Dunleer and Adrian Regan and Alan Uzell of Hilton Foods, Drogheda award winners at this year's Blas na hÉireann, the Irish Food Awards 2021 pictured after receiving their awards from Thomas McEvoy, Head of Enterprise, LEO Louth.

LEO Events 2021



LEO Louth Client Conor Kerley of Phytaphix meets Minister English at Creative Spark with Deirdre Craven, Sarah Daly, Thomas McEvoy.



Sarah Daly & Minister English viewing the FabLab building works at Creative Spark.



Thomas McEvoy, LEO, Swiss Ambassador Touron, Colette Moss (Acting Director of Service), Ms. Touron and Honorary Consel Valerie Swann during the Ambassador's Visit to Dundalk.



Representing Louth at the National Student Enterprise Awards in the Intermediate Category was James Spain of James Spain Seasonal Crafts pictured with his County Final Award with Sarah Mallon LEO and Principal of De La Salle Dundalk, Patricia O'Leary.



Dave and Emma Fallon of Emma's So Naturals were one of the companies representing Louth at Virtual Showcase 2021.



Karen Lavelle of Soilse Candle Company and Minister English in Creative Spark.



Ceramist and LEO Louth Leading Light Sarah McKenna from Bridge Street Studios Dundalk launches National Women's Enterprise Day with Sarah Mallon from LEO Louth.



Minister English meets Fergus O'Dowd TD, Ronan Whitty of The Mill Enterprise Hub Drogheda and HOE Thomas McEvoy.

LEO Events 2021



Representing Louth at the National Student Enterprise Awards in the Junior Enterprise Category was Lucy Foley of Lucy Foley Sweet Desi from Scoil ui Mhuiri Dunleer.



Joan speaks to Minister English and Thomas.



Minister English signs the visitors book at Louth County Council offices.



Shop Local Campaign



Shop Local Campaign



Health food company and LEO Louth clients Spoonful Botanical from Tullyallen Co Louth represented Louth in the National Enterprise Awards 2021.



Thomas McEvoy LEO Louth with Minister of State of the Dept. of Enterprise, Trade & Employment, Damien English, TD and Chief Executive of Louth County Council, Joan Martin.

Tourism

'SEA LOUTH' - SCENIC SEAFOOD TRAIL

The new 'sea louth' scenic seafood trail was launched on Tuesday 29th June, 2021. The response and reaction to this initiative from both media and the tourism and hospitality sector has been tremendous. The collaboration with participating restaurants, seafood producers and tourism providers has been fantastic with some offering special sea louth discounts to visitors via the www.sealouth.ie website.

Interpretative panels have been installed at 14 coastal scenic viewpoints to guide visitors along the trail. A PR and Marketing company has been appointed and the trail has been extensively marketed both nationally and locally, across print, broadcast, web and social media during 2021.

Arising out of the marketing that took place, a number of journalists have visited the County and in 2021, coverage was featured in the Sunday Business Post's Food and Wine Magazine, 'Ireland of the Welcomes' magazine, The Sunday Times, The Irish Times Food File, The Irish Daily Star's Chic Magazine, rsvplive.ie, RTE Radio 1's Country Wide programme and The Today Show on RTE.

Louth County also collaborated with other agencies on the production of a number of videos which were shared on social media in 2021.

BOYNE VALLEY FOOD STRATEGY

The Boyne Valley Food Network started selling food hampers online in 2020 as a response to the pandemic/lockdowns. As they were such a big success, they continued to sell them online in 2021 and a decision was made to purchase Boyne Valley Flavours branded boxes to ship the food & drink products in. Products sold online in 2021 included Mother's Day, Father's Day, Samhain & Christmas Hampers and Cocktail Kits.



Pictured at the launch of Sea Louth are Dr. Sally McKenna - McKenna's Guides, Sinéad Roche - Dundalk Tourist Office, Dr. John McKenna - McKenna's Guides, Rosemary Gallagher - Louth County Council, and Gráinne McKeown - Boyne Valley Food Development Officer



Discover Boyne Valley Flavours hosted a number of training events in 2021 in partnership with both Louth & Meath LEO's including Social Media for Food Businesses, HACCP Training, Food Styling & Photographer, Product Pricing and more.

Culinary Project – a feasibility study on the idea of developing a culinary school in the Boyne Valley region was carried out from November 2020 to May 2021. Plans were subsequently made towards the end of 2021 to progress this further.

BOYNE VALLEY TOURISM

The new website was completed and launched on 4th March 2021 and has increased traffic by 69% due to its new look design and added emphasis on social media in 2021. New itineraries were added during 2021.

A Virtual Journalist Event was held in February with 17 journalists and influencers in attendance. Boyne Valley Tourism did a presentation pitching itineraries on family, food, outdoors and a quiz with information on places to visit and things to do in the Boyne Valley to provide inspiration for new travel articles.

A variety of seasonal marketing campaigns took place and weekly blogs added to the website. 2 ezines were sent each month leading to above blogs and themed on Summer, Autumn, last minute breaks, the great outdoors, midweek breaks, Halloween, Christmas.

Boyne Valley Ambassadors Campaign - Aisling McVeigh was appointed to create the campaign, funded by Failte Ireland and 15 were appointed. Print advertising was taken out mainly in Northern Ireland publications to encourage staycations.

FESTIVAL GRANTS

An Chúirt Chruitreachta, International Festival for Irish Harp and the SEEK Contemporary Urban Arts Festival received funding under the Louth County Council Large Festival & Participative Events Programme 2021.

Louth County Council also provided funding for the following in 2021:

- Sponsorship of the St. Patrick's Day Dundalk Committee's Video for St. Patrick's Day 2021
- Sponsorship of the Cross Border Tourism Conference 2021
- Contribution to the Shop Local Gift Voucher Scheme
- Contribution to 'The Púca Spectacular at the Old Abbey, Drogheda' ran in conjunction with the Fáilte Ireland Púca Festival 2021
- Contributions towards Ardee, Dundalk & Drogheda Christmas Lights 2021



Marketing

PROMOTING LOUTH AS PART OF FÁILTE IRELAND'S #KEEPDISCOVERING CAMPAIGN

Louth County Council liaised with Fáilte Ireland to promote Louth as part of its #keepdiscovering campaign.

With a view to maximizing exposure in this campaign, Louth Tourism Businesses were contacted and asked to update / register their business listings on the Discover Ireland website, to sign up to the Fáilte Ireland Safety Charter at www.failteireland.ie and to join the social campaign online using the #keepdiscovering tag when sharing their posts, events and offers.

Tourism Videos were created and promoted focusing on

- Carlingford
- Newry & Mourne & Louth
- Drogheda BIDs
- Louth Staycation

**COUNTY LOUTH
TAKE IT IN YOUR STRIDE**

Located on Ireland's Ancient East, less than an hour from Dublin and Belfast, visit Louth for outdoor adventures, delicious seafood, historical attractions, blue flag beaches and miles of mountain and coastal walks.

Plan your trip today! Discover more at **SEALOUTH.IE** and **VISITLOUTH.IE**

Keep Discovering

sea louth
see eat admire

VISIT LOUTH

IRELAND'S ANCIENT EAST
Wander Through Time

Business Supports – Hospitality Sector

OUTDOOR SEATING & ACCESSORIES FOR TOURISM & HOSPITALITY BUSINESS' SCHEME

A new funding scheme for outdoor seating and accessories for the tourism and hospitality sector was launched on 31st March 2021. This funding scheme provided for funding of up to €4,000 for individual tourism and hospitality businesses to develop and increase their own outdoor seating capacity. The scheme was extended to pubs (including non-dining) from 14th June 2021. The closing date for the scheme was extended to the 8th October 2021 to accommodate late applications.

Louth County Council received 140 applications under the scheme and all eligible applications were processed for payment.

TOURISM PLANNING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Tourism Masterplan for Carlingford

In conjunction with Fáilte Ireland, work on the development of a tourism masterplan for Carlingford commenced in 2020 and Clem Walsh was appointed Chairperson in November 2021.

Boyne Valley Drive

A review and reimagining of the Boyne Valley Drive commenced with Public Consultation boards being circulated to the trade and public by Fáilte Ireland.

Boyne Valley Recovery Taskforce

A taskforce between Fáilte Ireland, Louth County Council, Meath County Council and a number of Stakeholders was set up in 2020 on the tourism recovery programme with a number of initiatives being progressed.

Destination Towns Capital Investment Programme

The bespoke new signage for visitor information and orientation is part of the Fáilte Ireland Destination Towns Capital Investment Programme. The proposed signage will be focused on streets from Magdalene Tower to Millmount and from Westgate to St. Laurence's Gate in Drogheda town centre.

Work is ongoing on the project which is due to be completed in 2022.

Drogheda Attraction of Scale

In conjunction with Fáilte Ireland, Louth County Council contracted CHL Consulting Ltd. to identify a "destination attractor" for Drogheda and undertake a feasibility study to determine the business case and financial sustainability of the concept. Work on this project took place in 2021 and is expected to be finalised early in 2022.

Urban Animation Capital Investment Scheme

Louth County Council were thrilled to be successful in its application Fáilte Ireland under the Urban Animation Capital Investment Scheme with an award of €672,000.

As one of only seven applicants to receive this funding nationwide, this project will see the transformation of Drogheda with a number of new innovation experiences. These include:

- An urban art trail with an audio story attached,
- A new Augmented Reality Trail – the first of its kind in Ireland, and
- An animated lighting show which will run during festivals and other seasonal events.

These projects will enliven the senses through sight, sound and vision at strategic locations in Drogheda's Town Centre and will capture and portray a sense of place, linking Drogheda with its ancient past through audio and visual experiences that can be enjoyed both in day and evening time.

Local newspaper coverage

13 **NEWS**

More reasons to look for Louth this Christmas

CHRISTMAS IS COMING. Now is the time to find the perfect gifts for the special people in your life. And you can make that gift extra special by shopping local.

So said Cathaoirleach of Louth County Council, Cllr. Pío Smith, as he this week invited everybody to Look for Louth this Christmas.

"We've got so many incredible small businesses across the county creating and producing wonderful gifts. Just take a look around your local town or village to see what's in store. You'll be delighted by the amazing selection."

"And you'll feel good when you Look for Louth, knowing that you're keeping small businesses trading and local people employed. Think about it: local businesses employ your friends, your neighbours, your cousins, your partners, sisters, parents, and when necessary, it really makes a difference when you choose to shop local," explains Thomas McEvoy, Louth County Council's Head of Enterprise.

"Look For Louth encourages everyone to add the word 'Louth' or the name of your local town or village to your online search. That helps you to find out whether the gift or product you're looking for is available locally before ordering from abroad. Once you've found the gift you're looking for, you can shop in person or order it online."

It's hoped people will benefit from online shopping options and support local economy as much as possible.

One role as the Local Enterprise Office Louth is to support the development of small businesses across the county," Rhona McCoy of Local Enterprise Office Louth continued. "And that's why we're encouraging everyone to visit local enterprises in Louth for their Christmas shopping. Find a huge selection of shops, gifts, crafts, home decor, food, fashion and so many, all of whom are trying to keep your shops the way county this year. There's a top prize on the best social media post."

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Shop Local, Search Local, Support Local. Cathaoirleach of Louth County Council Cllr. Pío Smith, accompanied by Rhona McCoy and Thomas McEvoy of Louth's Local Enterprise Office, are encouraging everyone to Look for Louth this Christmas. Shop in your local town or village and visit www.localenterprise.louth for loads of great ideas.

Garda operation in Meath leads to drugs seizures

€11,800 worth of cannabis and €14,505 worth of cocaine was seized during Operation Duet as part of a two-day plan of action executed by An Garda Síochána, in the Meath Division. The project began at 7pm on Friday last, November 21, ending at 6am on Sunday, November 22.

Supported by the Eastern Region Armed Support Unit, along with external agencies, several actions were taken. Six planned drug searches were conducted by the Distinctive Drug Unit, resulting in 5 Seizure 14 offences.

Excursions of warrants, high-visibility crime patrols, checkpoints and targeted drug trafficking offences were just some of the initiatives put in place during the weekend.

Seizures of cannabis, high-visibility crime patrols, checkpoints and targeted drug trafficking offences were just some of the initiatives put in place during the weekend.

Operation Duet is activated yearly in an effort to challenge the reported increase in burglary and associated criminal activity that usually occurs during the winter months. In recent years, the project has effectively reduced crime-related activity during this time of the year.

2021 statistics show there is a downward trend in crime, with a reduction in burglary and related offences, compared to 2020.

€50,000 assigned to Louth Beaches under Accessibility Project

Louth County Council announced the allocation of €50,000 for three beaches under the Accessibility Project.

The project, Louth Blue Flag Beach Accessibility Project, aims to promote making beaches accessible to those with disabilities.

Speaking on the announcement for Port Beach, Templemore Beach and Coghreah Beach, Senator McGabon said: "The project will explore how accessibility can be incorporated into the design and management of beach landscapes and surroundings."

16 **DROGHEDA INDEPENDENT | Tuesday, November 30, 2021**

Louth at heart of Dublin-Belfast economic corridor

BY OLIVIA RYAN

A new cross-border partnership established to foster economic growth along the key strategic route between Dublin and Belfast announced its inaugural political leadership team who will help drive employment opportunities, address barriers impacting trade and encourage the delivery of better transport infrastructure.

Cllr. Peter Byrne from Newry, Moynagh and Down District Council in Northern Ireland was elected as Chair of the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor (DBEC) Oversight Board, a body made up of councillors from the eight local authorities along the corridor.

Dundalk Councillor, Sean Kelly is a member of the board representing Louth, alongside local representatives Cllr. Bernice Condon and Cllr. Fiachra Mac Raghailé.

Addressing the Oversight Board's meeting, new Chair Cllr. Peter Byrne said: "We have a real opportunity through the work of DBEC to deliver jobs and sustainable growth along what is a major economic pipeline for the whole of the island. There is a rich and diverse range of sectors and a large number of businesses which we can help to grow. Be it in Agri-Food, IT, medical services, tourism, high tech manufacturing or construction."

He added: "Importantly, as a joint partnership this will go beyond focusing on the big cities which boomed the corridor and allow us to tackle regional disparities based on leveraging the existing local government network and resources of the participating partners, as well as encouraging buy-in and engagement from the private sector."

Deputy Chair of DBEC Cllr. Seán Ó Ríadaigh said: "Alongside the obvious social and economic benefits of closer cross-border collaboration in order to develop the corridor, what we are looking to help drive is greater inward investment, the boosting of trade opportunities for local businesses, increased production in key sectors and higher employment. This will be increasing investment in the population along the corridor corridor to grow."

As part of their efforts to develop a regional proposition for economic growth, DBEC has engaged leading consultants KPMG to undertake work which will help deliver a development plan to identify priority areas of cooperation between the corridor.

Launched earlier this year, the DBEC partnership has members coming from four councils on either side of the border. There are 24 councillors who sit on the Oversight Board, three coming from each of the eight councils involved, Armagh City, Banbridge and Crossmaglen Borough Council, Belfast City Council, Dublin City Council,

Flintshire County Council, Llanelli and Cardiff, Louth County Council, Meath County Council, Newry, Moynagh and Down District Council.

The partnership also includes Dublin City University and Ulster University who volunteered to produce the report that led to the formation of the group in March of this year. Currently there are some two million people living in the eight council areas that the economic corridor passes through, however its population is expected to grow faster than elsewhere across the island of Ireland.

Predictions are that the total population will reach 2.5 million by 2040, bringing with it a younger and more diverse concentration of people.

Announcing the new body, Chairman, Cllr. Peter Byrne,



Louth County Councillors in back row. Seán Kelly (second from left), Fiachra Mac Raghailé (third from right) Bernice Condon (second from right), Sean Ó Ríadaigh (Chair) in Louth has been nominated member, the newest being Cllr. Bernice Condon whose nomination to DBEC Oversight Board was endorsed at the November council meeting.



Announcing the new body, Chairman, Cllr. Peter Byrne,

"Christmas is coming. Now is the time to find the perfect gifts for the special people in your life. And you can make that gift extra special by shopping local."

So said Cathaoirleach of Louth County Council, Cllr. Pío Smith, as he invited everybody to Look for Louth this Christmas.

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CHRISTMAS IN DUNDALK

People urged to 'Shop Local. Search Local'



Cathaoirleach Cllr. Pío Smith, Rhona McCoy and Thomas McEvoy, Local Enterprise Office Louth

is to support the development of small businesses across the county. And that's why we're urging everyone to visit local enterprises in Louth for their Christmas shopping. You'll find a huge selection of local shops, gifts, crafts, home, garden, food, fashion and so much more, all of whom are local!" Rhona concludes: "And don't miss the chance to win a €250 Shop Local voucher in our Look for Louth competition, launching on 30th December. Follow Local Enterprise Office Louth on social media for more information!"

**LOCAL
ENTERPRISE
OFFICE
AT A GLANCE**



RECEIVED **140**
APPLICATIONS UNDER
A NEW OUTDOOR SEATING
AND ACCESSORIES FUNDING
SCHEME

HELP 15 BUSINESSES APPLY
FOR COVID-19 MICROFINANCE
IRELAND (MFI)

BUSINESS LOANS IN 2021



6 BUSINESSES FROM LOUTH
WON A TOTAL OF 13
BLAS NA HÉIREANN
AWARDS, SUPPORTED BY
LEO LOUTH

HOSTED A SERIES OF 8 BREXIT
SEMINARS/WEBINARS DURING 2021
ATTENDED BY OVER 620 BUSINESSES ONLINE



ENGAGES WITH OVER **1500**
LOCAL BUSINESSES ANNUALLY



108 **TRADING ONLINE VOUCHERS**
WERE APPROVED WITH A TOTAL VALUE OF
€226,781

LEO LAUNCHED A **LOUTH
ONLINE SHOPPING
DIRECTORY** WITH 254
LOCAL BUSINESSES



960 STUDENTS
FROM 19 NO. 2ND
LEVEL SCHOOLS
IN CO. LOUTH
TOOK PART IN
THE **STUDENT
ENTERPRISE
PROGRAMME**

5

OPERATIONS AND WASTE MANAGEMENT / ENVIRONMENT

Louth County Council Operations and Waste Management / Environment section manages many of the most visible services provided by the Council, including road maintenance and improvements, maintenance of our award-winning public parks and playgrounds, harbours and piers and the upkeep of a number of cemeteries across the county. Other services delivered by the section are the veterinary services, litter warden service, bottle bank and recycling services, traffic management, pay parking services, casual trading in the county, street sweeping and public litter bin services.





Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council





**OPERATIONS
AT A GLANCE**



**LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL MAINTAINS
1,565 KM
OF PUBLIC ROADS**

**€340,000
SPENT ON
WINTER MAINTENANCE**



**€12 MILLION
SPENT ON ROAD
UPKEEP IN 2021**

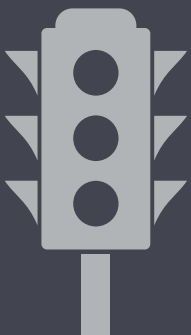
**200
TREES PLANTED**



**15,166
PUBLIC LIGHTS**



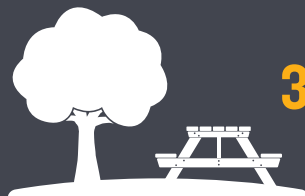
**112 SETS OF
TRAFFIC LIGHTS
MAINTAINED**



**9 PARKS AND 25
PLAYGROUNDS MAINTAINED**



**35 PARKLETS
ALLOCATED**



Roads

Louth County Council Operations Department is responsible for the operation, maintenance, and repair of 1,565 km of public roads and streets throughout the county, together with the associated public realm, footways, circa 600 bridges, other structures and masonry walls. The network excludes the M1 Motorway Network, which is maintained directly by our partners Transport Infrastructure Ireland (Tii) under a Motorway Maintenance and Renewals Contract.

ROAD MAINTENANCE ETC

The Operations section undertakes the following work:

1. Road upkeep, including routine and winter maintenance, surface dressing and public lighting;
2. Road improvements, which includes discretionary improvement, restoration improvement, specific improvement schemes, bridge works, footpath improvements and other improvement schemes; 90km of roads were resurfaced in 2021 which accounts for approximately 6% of our network renewed.
3. Road traffic, which includes traffic management and safety.
4. Active travel transport Initiatives.
5. A formal registration and inspection regime for all road opening licences (ROL) is also in place with our partners in the Road Management Office (RMO) and all utilities companies must obtain a ROL.

Operations also plan and construct footway reconstruction and resurfacing; dropped kerbing with levelling of pathways; carriageway repairs and reinstatement; Abnormal loads, providing and maintaining street skip-licences; the management and licensing of street furniture (Section 254 of Planning Act); responding to requests from the emergency services and responding to notified hazards, maintaining over 45km of Greenways and cycle lanes. This maintenance work is carried out by direct labour units operating from two areas (North Louth & South Louth) and also by private contractors.

LICENCES – PERMITS – PARKING

In 2021 the Operations section issued 309 abnormal load permits which was the highest ever yearly total. This included one for the new wind turbine project for Intel which saw parts coming in through Greenore Port.

There were 51 skip permits issued and 18 hoarding/scaffolding licences.

To support businesses through the COVID-19 pandemic 55no. Section 254 licences for outdoor furniture were issued to businesses in Ardee, Carlingford, Clogherhead, Dunleer, Drogheda, Dundalk and Omeath. The section also purchased outdoor furniture through the NTA COVID Relief Scheme and worked in tandem with LOVE Drogheda and Dundalk BIDS to provide parklets, parasols, picnic benches and planters to businesses throughout the county.

Operations also laid down six new disabled parking bays for members of the public in Drogheda and Dundalk.

BLUE FLAG / GREEN COAST / GREEN FLAG

The work of Operation staff keeping our coastal areas litter free ensured that Blue Flag status for all 3 beaches awarded in 2020 was retained in 2021. The three beaches awarded in Louth have all held a Blue Flag every year since 2009. Shelling Hill/Templetown and Clogherhead have both been awarded a Blue Flag on more than 20 occasions since 1988.

Seapoint Beach, Termonfeckin has retained Green Coast Award status for 2021.

The Council also retained their Green Flag status at the following parks:

- St. Dominic's Park, Drogheda
- St. Helena's Park, Dundalk
- Ice House Hill Park, Dundalk
- Blackrock Community Park.

TRAFFIC LIGHT UPGRADE WORKS

In 2021 Louth County Council carried out the upgrade of traffic light junctions and pedestrian crossings in Drogheda and Termonfeckin. These upgrades included Low Voltage LED Lamps, contactless push button units, countdown timers, tactile paving and an additional crossing at Kieran's Corner. Upgrades took place at the following locations:

1. Traffic Light junction at Crosslanes / Windmill Road.
2. Pedestrian crossing at Rathmullen Road.
3. Pedestrian crossing at Platin Road.
4. Traffic Light junction at the Dublin Road / Byranstown Crossroute.
5. Traffic Light junction at Kieran's Corner.
6. Termonfeckin Bridge Junction.

LCC engineers installed their first non-contact traffic light buttons at pedestrian traffic lights in Drogheda. These work with radar technology, which means that road users no longer have to press the button to request green: As soon as they approach the black traffic light buttons, for example by hand, within approx. 20cm (8 inches), they react automatically and request the signal. The contactless buttons are therefore not only a way of curbing the spread of viruses and germs in the current Corona pandemic.

These highly innovative systems use contactless triggering of the pedestrian signal made possible by infrared cameras. Also installed at same lights is automatic pedestrian detection which offers additional functions, for example if the pedestrian walks away from the crossing it automatically cancels the crossing phase.

A total of 112 sets of traffic lights were operated, maintained and repaired where necessary in 2021.

DREDGING OF ANNAGASSAN HARBOUR

1500 tonnes of sand that had banked up alongside the harbour wall at Annagassan was removed and disposed of in order to facilitate the safe berthing of fishing boats. This build-up of sand was preventing fishing boats from safely berthing along-side the harbour wall. This meant that the aim of clearing the harbour for additional boats to berth was achieved.



Dredging works in Annagassan – in 2021 dredging works were carried out at the harbour in Annagassan

BULBS AND WILDFLOWERS LANDSCAPING SCHEME

In 2021 Operations arranged for the planting of a total of 2500m² of a mixture of wildflowers and spring bulbs in various locations throughout the county. Species planted include Allium, Grape Hyacinth, Camassia and many more. These mixtures consist of c.14 different species of plants and will provide food needed for wildlife and also enhance the appearance of our landscape. 'No mow' areas were increased around the county enhancing diverse species rich grasslands in places and lowering emissions from mowing engines.

ROUNABOUT SPONSORSHIP

The roundabout sponsorship scheme was fully rolled out in 2021. There was a great response to this scheme with 10 roundabouts in Dundalk sponsored and plans now to extend the scheme to Drogheda. The funds raised from this scheme will enable an extension of the successful planting scheme as piloted on the Ballymascanlon roundabout with seeding and planting having already begun.

BRING BANK CLEAN UP

Under the Anti-Dumping Initiative 2021 a pilot scheme was undertaken to freshen and liven up the Bring Banks at four locations in Dundalk, this was carried out in association with Dundalk BIDS and the services of local artist Michael Stafford were engaged to paint the Bins. Louth County Council's outdoor workers power hosed the sites and got the bins ready for painting.

STREET CLEANING, LITTER, PARKING

There were 410 litter fines issued throughout the County during 2021.

Total Litter collected in Dundalk and Drogheda

- Civic amenities: 8517 tons
- Street bins: 1320.69 tons
- Sweeping: 651.66 tons
- Bulky waste: 864.46 tons

Louth County Council Operations Department also manages traffic and road safety in the county. Activities in 2021 included:

- Continued enforcement of parking regulations,
- There were 6,837 parking tickets issued by the wardens in Drogheda and Dundalk which generated a total income of €290,640,
- Operate 52 off street carparks across county; &
- Continued development of Greenways and cycleways and facilities for the mobility impaired/ disabled.



Bring Banks after painting AD121 – a living up of the bring banks in Boyd's Car Park, Dundalk

ROAD SAFETY OFFICER

- The **Road Safety Officer** assists with implementing the actions of the Co Louth Road Safety Plan. The new National Road Safety strategy covering the period 2021 to 2030 was launched in December 2021 and will be delivered in three phases. Phase 1 of the plan runs from 2021 to 2024 and consists of 50 high-impact actions and 136 support actions.
- A new Co Louth Road Safety Plan, which uses the National Plan as its template was compiled and is due for publication in Quarter two of 2022.
- **Collision Prevention Programme Committee**
The committee last met with the Gardaí via Teams on 15th December 2021.
- The **School Warden Service** is currently provided at 25 locations throughout the county to ensure that unaccompanied children can travel to and from school.

Operations also oversee the administration of the Community Improvement Scheme (CIS) and Local Improvement Scheme (LIS). Last year saw the completion of six CIS schemes (majority of funding from DTT&S) and nine LIS schemes (grant funding from DR&CD). These schemes showcase how partnership between the Council and communities can deliver meaningful improvements on roads, which otherwise would not receive maintenance/improvement funding. A list of potential schemes for participation in the Community Involvement Scheme (CIS) 2022/23 and the LIS was submitted to the Government Departments' for further funding under these initiatives.

Work continued on the delivery of other services:

- Ordinary Maintenance, Winter Maintenance Service and Maintenance of Plant and Machinery,
- Capital Programme of Footpath Improvement Works,
- Public Lighting Services,
- Provision of Transport Planning Advice,

- Road Safety Improvement Schemes, Promotion and Education,
- Road Opening Licences, Abnormal Load Applications, Roads and Services in Charge queries; &
- Review of bus licences and Bus Stop locations.

WINTER MAINTENANCE

The Council's Winter Service Plan, which is published on the County Council website, includes a schedule of priority routes which are treated with salt each time it is deemed necessary to do so. The Winter Maintenance period lasts from mid-October to the end of April each year. The aim is to keep priority routes safe and as free as possible from wintry hazards. The TII manages the national procurement of road salt for National and Non-National Roads and also maintains a national reserve of salt for distribution to local authorities in the event of a forecast of a severe weather event, i.e., a prolonged cold snap, or blizzard conditions.

The County has a roster of three Duty Engineers, six supervisors, sixteen drivers, six loaders, who are responsible for making the decision as to whether to salt our priority routes or not. Data received from Met Éireann and Road Side Weather Stations assist the Duty Engineer in the decision-making process. In respect of the 2020/21 season, the winter gritting crews completed over fifty nights as part of the Winter Maintenance Service which was managed and operated by the Council's Machinery Yard and cost over €300,000 to provide the service.

Climate Action, Waste Management & Environment

Responsibilities of Louth County Council's Waste Management & Environment section include - Waste regulation; landfill aftercare; litter enforcement; air quality, noise & water regulation and climate change action co-ordination.

Louth's Climate Action, Waste & Environment activities are carried out in co-ordination with national and regional organisations including: WERLA, WMPR, NWCPO, CARO & LAWPRO to ensure regional consistency in the implementation of national priorities.

Key developments in 2021

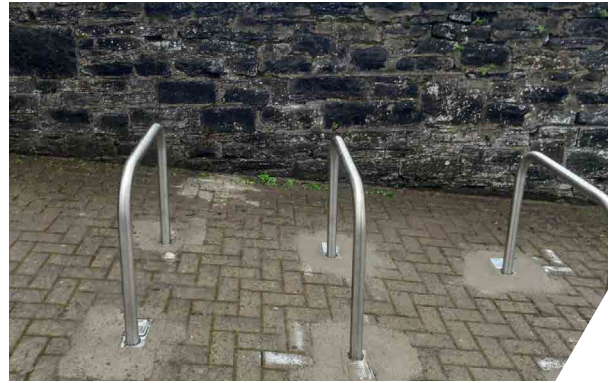
- Established Louth County Council climate action team of 25 members drawn from across the organisation. Recruitment of dedicated Climate Action Staff.
- Nominated Dundalk as Louth's demonstrator decarbonising zone.
- Louth County Council taken on role of lead partner for Republic of Ireland for INTERREG VA FASTER project, to deliver 25 Fast Electric Vehicle Chargers across the border region.
- Deployment of 4 number electric vehicles as part of LCC fleet.
- €100,000 grant received for 8 Anti-Dumping projects.
- Commencement of Carlingford Historic Landfill Remediation.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES

4 Electric vans have been acquired by Louth County Council. They will be assigned to Operations for the Litter warden in Drogheda, to the Dog Warden Veterinary Services, to Corporate for the Caretaker in County Hall and to the Housing Section.

NEW BICYCLE RAILS

New bicycle rails have been installed at Millmount in Drogheda.



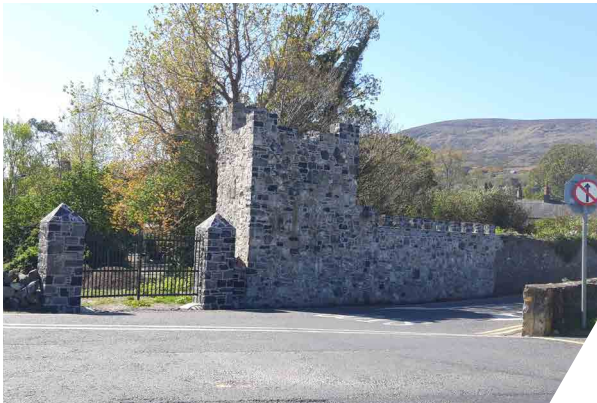
Bicycle Rails Millmount – new rails for bikes which were installed in Millmount in Drogheda



Electric vans reducing carbon footprint

GHAN FOLLY WALLS AND TOWER WORKS

Ghan Folly Walls and Tower works have been completed after a lengthy conservation exercises with specialist architects and masonry master craftsmen. See photos below of completed works.



Ghan Folly Walls and Tower works



Ghan Folly Walls and Tower works



Ghan Folly Walls and Tower works

SOLAR COMPACTOR BINS ROLLED OUT IN DUNDALK AND NORTH LOUTH AREA

Solar Compactor Bins have recently been installed in Dundalk.



Solar Bin in Market square Dundalk

DRINKING WATER STATIONS

Drinking water points installed in Omeath and Carlingford.



Drinking Water Station Carlingford



Drinking Water Station Gyles Quay



**WASTE
MANAGEMENT &
ENVIRONMENT
AT A GLANCE**



2,071 LITTER
INVESTIGATIONS



41 SUPERVISED
**PERCOLATION
TESTS**
CARRIED OUT

ANTI DUMPING
€109,357.42



11 ROADSIDE WASTE
ACTIVITY CHECKPOINTS
WITH 7FPNS ISSUED

184 TONNES OF ILLEGAL
DIESEL SLUDGE COLLECTED

796,164 KWH
ELECTRICITY GENERATED
FROM LANDFILL GAS



€22,090 IN
LITTER FINES RECEIVED



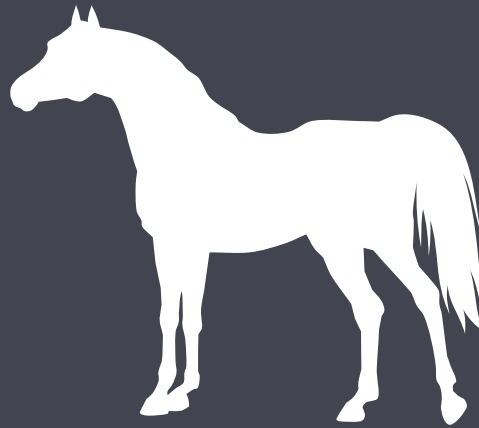
1294
PLANNING
REPORTS
COMPLETED



119 RIVER QUALITY
SAMPLES TAKEN



**VETERINARY SERVICES
AT A GLANCE**



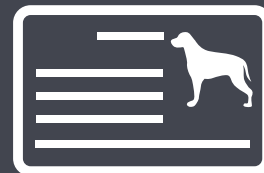
**5 HORSES
IMPOUNDED
UNDER THE
CONTROL OF
HORSES ACT DOWN
FROM 6 IN 2020**



**REPLACEMENT OF
DIESEL VAN WITH EV
RESULTING IN 78% REDUCTION
IN DIESEL**



**25% OF DOGS
RECLAIMED
BY OWNER**



**16 MEAT PROCESSING PREMISES
INCLUDING 2 ABATTOIRS**

**6,526 DOG LICENCES ISSUED, 43%
DOG LICENCES PURCHASED ONLINE
COMPARED TO 40% IN 2020**



**147 DOG CONTROL
RELATED
FIXED PENALTIES
ISSUED**



**163 DOGS TAKEN IN BY
THE POUND IN 2021**



**94% OF DOGS
RECLAIMED
OR REHOMED**

Veterinary Services

FOOD SAFETY

The county provides meat inspection and food safety duties under a service contract with the Food safety Authority of Ireland.

There were 16 meat processing plants under the inspectorate of the veterinary section of Louth County Council, two abattoirs, twelve approved meat cutting/cooking plants, and two registered meat plants.

ANIMAL CONTROL AND WELFARE

The overall numbers of dogs entering the pound in 2021 was 163, indicating an overall reduction in the stray dog population and more responsible dog ownership. The closure of the pound facility due to Covid restrictions was a large factor in the reduced numbers.

Another trend in recent years is the numbers of dogs surrendered to the pound by owners for various reasons, currently accounting for 47% of the dog intake, again indicating responsible dog ownership.

Also encouraging is the reclaim and rehome rate of 94%, with 25% of these dogs being reclaimed by their owners.

Horse numbers continue to decrease, with only 5 horses impounded in 2021 compared to 6 in 2020.

In March, the Dog Warden Service participated in a segment for RTE's Crimecall, which reported on dog attacks on sheep and other livestock in the Cooley Mountains.

ANIMAL CONTROL FLEET AND DIESEL CONSUMPTION

A second electric van was added to the dog warden fleet in Quarter 2, 2021, see photo below. The fleet now consists of two electric vans and one jeep which is required for use with the horsebox on horse control activities. The diesel consumption for four vehicles in 2018 was approx 2,800L per year. Now with only one diesel vehicle in operation the diesel consumption has reduced to less than 700L in 2021 resulting in a 78% reduction in diesel consumption since 2018.



Replacing diesel with electric reduces our carbon footprint



Water Services

Louth County Council manages water supply to 47,886 homes and businesses across the county on behalf of Irish Water. As part of Louth County Council's agreement with Irish Water, the Council is also responsible for waste water treatment. Significant capital investment was made into the county's water and wastewater infrastructure in 2021. This included

- Upgrade works at 2 Water Treatment Plants at Cavan Hill and Staleen substantially complete
 - Water Conservation works ongoing throughout the County
 - Design works progressed for Omeath Wastewater Treatment Plant
 - Ongoing works on schemes/projects under the Multi-Annual Rural Water Programme 2019-2021
 - Detailed design progressed for rationalization of Tallanstown water supply
 - Shared Waters Enhancement and Loughs Legacy (SWELL), Re-lining works commenced
 - Regional Sewer Network Rehabilitation, Programme for 2021 completed
 - Dundalk Drainage Area Plan (DAP), continued to progress
 - Dundalk East Strategy, design work was progressed and site investigation works completed
 - Coe's Road Pumping Station, Operational modifications to the Pumping Station were undertaken
 - Dundalk LNRP, Strategic Review underway for Dundalk WWTP and Blackrock WWTP to facilitate the progressing of the Local Network Reinforcement Programme
 - Drogheda LNRP, Works at SWO were progressed
 - North Drogheda Wastewater Network Strategy, Consultants progressing the Detailed Design
 - Quay St/St.Helena Rising Main, Dundalk, detailed design progressed
 - Greenmount WTW, project to upgrade the Greenmount Water Treatment Works was progressed
- Drogheda WWTP, IW continued to work closely with EPS Limited to carry out works at Drogheda wastewater treatment plant
 - Water Network Rehabilitation Programme, 2 rehabilitation schemes commenced.





**WATER SERVICES
AT A GLANCE**



3,789 CUSTOMER
QUERIES



APPROXIMATELY
44,355 HOMES
AND **3,531**
BUSINESSES
SUPPLIED WITH WATER



302
CONNECTION
APPLICATIONS



APPROXIMATELY **577**
MAINS AND CONNECTION
REPAIRS



AVERAGE
38 MILLION LITRES
OF WATER DISTRIBUTED
DAILY
OVER 1,394KM OF PUBLIC
WATERMAINS

6

APPENDICES

Conference attendance

**Record payment to Members
for meetings Committees and
Representation**

Corporate Plan Progress Report

Financial Statements

Performance Indicators



Contae Lú
Louth County Council



Councillor Attendance Record

Title	Dates	Members Attended	Travel & Subs Cost	Conference Cost	Total Cost
Conferences at Home					
Celtic Conferences Fair Deal Scheme O'Donovans Hotel, Clonakilty	5th-7th November 2021	Liam Reilly	€400.00	€100.00	€500.00
Training					
AILG Module 1 Tower Hotel Waterford	18th September 2021	Pio Smith Jim Tenanty	€325.97 €345.68	€65.00 €65.00	€390.97 €410.68
LAMA Autumn Seminar Clayton Hotel, Sligo	3rd-5th November 2021	Pio Smith Jim Tenanty	€428.00 €292.83	€150.00 €150.00	€578.00 €442.83
AILG Module 2 Clayton Hotel, Galway	5th November 2021	Pio Smith	€250.47	€65.00	€315.47
Attendance Other Meetings					
No claims					
Foreign Travel					
Nil					

Payments to Members for Meetings, Committees & Representation 2021

	Payments to Members of Louth Local Authorities	Louth County Council
1	Number of Council and Committee Meetings	127
2	Annual Expenses Allowance (travel, subsistence & misc exps, eg postage, including vouched exps). Total of expenses paid to members in respect of attendance of meetings of the Council and its committees	€135,317.69
3	Representational Payment	€624,015.10
4	Chairpersons Allowance	€20,000.00
5	Vice Chairpersons Allowance	€4,000
6	Chairpersons of SPCs/MPCs	€30,000.00
7	Chairperson of Municipal Districts	€30,000.00
8	Member of Municipal District Allowance	€14,371.09
9	Mobile/Blackberry Phones & Broadband	€14,564.08
10	Expenses on Conferences & Training etc attended (a) Home (b) Abroad	€2,637.95 nil

LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL

CORPORATE PLAN 2019 - 2024 PROGRESS REPORT

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide leadership and deliver high-quality, citizen-focused, responsive and effective services.



Comhairle Contae **Lú**
Louth County Council

HOUSING

Title	Update
Delivering the Rebuilding Ireland Strategy targets for County Louth	Louth County Council exceeded the target set by Government under the Rebuilding Ireland Programme 2018-2021. Over the period of the programme Louth delivered 1849 housing units through a combination of Own Build/Leasing/AHB and Acquisitions.
Delivering the Homeless Action Plan	A new three-year Regional Homeless Action Plan was developed in 2021 and 36 adults experiencing homelessness were rehoused. This includes 8 individuals who secured accommodation under the Housing First initiative.
Implementing the Traveller Accommodation Programme (TAP)	Preparations continued during 2021 for the construction of two new Group Housing Schemes in Dundalk with delivery expected in 2024.
Working with key stakeholders to achieve a mix of housing options	During 2021, the Approved Housing Body sector greatly assisted with delivery of national housing targets. In addition, NGO's worked collaboratively with the Council in areas such as Homelessness and Disability.
Delivering compact growth in Dundalk & Drogheda, including town centre and multi-storey living	The County Development Plan 2021-2027 prioritises urban regeneration, compact growth and the development of infill and brownfield lands in built up areas. Policy objective CS 2 seeks to deliver at least 30% of new homes in the built-up area of settlements.
Prioritising the role of housing in placemaking	The County Development Plan identifies the key principles of placemaking in creating successful neighbourhoods that are attractive, safe, and easy to navigate.

DROGHEDA & DUNDALK

Title	Update
Delivering new local area plans (LAP) for Drogheda & Dundalk	Background research and data gathering as part of the preparation of the Joint Drogheda Local Area Plan has commenced. It is anticipated a Draft Local Area Plan will be published later in 2022.
Delivering the key objectives for Louth in Ireland 2040 and the Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy	The Council is continuing to engage and work closely with government agencies and the private sector in progressing various plans and projects that will support the National Strategic Outcomes of the National Planning Framework and the Regional Policy Objectives of the RSES. This includes sustainable transport, active travel, climate action, public realm, and urban regeneration projects.
Delivering strong population growth with compact multi-storey development within town footprints	The County Development Plan 2021-2027 sets out the population projections for the County up to 2027. In line with national and regional policy growth is to be concentrated in the Regional Growth Centres of Drogheda and Dundalk which are at the top of the settlement hierarchy. The role of Ardee and Dunleer and the Small Towns and Villages is also recognised in delivering more moderate levels of growth. Policy objective CS 2 of the County Development Plan seeks to deliver at least 30% of new homes in the built up area of settlements.
Progressing urban regeneration projects, such as Westgate Vision, Drogheda; Long Walk, Dundalk	<p>More resources were afforded to the Regeneration Team and projects are progressing well. Louth County Council signed 2 significant contracts in March 2021 with Turley, the multi-disciplinary specialist consultancy service, to develop a Masterplan for public realm works identified in the Westgate Vision Project, and for the Ardee 2040 project.</p> <p>Longwalk, Dundalk</p> <p>The focus in 2021 was on the engagement with the developer who have signed a MOU and have appointed a design team to develop a high level plan for the area.</p> <p>St. Nicholas Quarter, Dundalk</p> <p>LCC are preparing the Preliminary Business Plan to allow the scheme to progress to the procurement of a multi-disciplinary design team to progress this scheme.</p>

DROGHEDA & DUNDALK continued

Title	Update
Enhancing Recreation, Cultural and Sports Facilities	Dundalk Municipal Grass Track works were completed in Oct 2021, and grass growth is being monitored before allowing use.
Maintaining strong levels of job growth in Drogheda & Dundalk	The County Development Plan 2021-2027 recognises the locational advantage of Drogheda and Dundalk along the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor. The Plan supports economic and employment related development in these settlements in addition to the progression of critical transport and water services infrastructure necessary to facilitate economic investment.
Developing our towns as great places to Live, Work and Play	The County Development Plan provides a policy framework around placemaking and sustainable neighbourhoods where people can enjoy an active, healthy, and quality lifestyle in an attractive environment where there are job opportunities, services, and community facilities close to where people live.

CLIMATE ACTION

Title	Update
<p>Delivering Louth's Climate Action Strategy</p>	<p>The Climate Action Charter underpins Louth County Councils commitment to Climate Action.</p> <p>A 25-person Climate Action Team was formed which will embed Climate Action throughout the organisation.</p> <p>In 2021 Louth County Council recruited two specialist Graduates who work exclusively on Climate Action and this core team will be strengthened in 2022.</p> <p>The County Development Plan, which was developed in 2021 had Climate action as a core consideration and this will deliver sustainable growth throughout its lifetime.</p> <p>Louth County Council has further advanced major climate adaptation projects in areas such as flood relief, retrofitting street lighting and electrification of the Council transport fleet. Funding has been received for improvement of the public electric car charging network.</p>
<p>Working to deliver Irelands Climate Action Strategy</p>	<p>Louth County Council continues to work towards delivery of the Climate Action Plan 2021 as set down in Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Bill 2021.</p> <p>The decarbonisation target of 51% reduction by the end of 2030 drives activity in this area.</p> <p>A Louth County Climate Action Plan will be developed to create a roadmap for the county to deliver on our Climate Action responsibilities.</p>
<p>Continuing to develop as exemplars for energy efficiency and awareness</p>	<p>Louth County Council Energy Section was one of the first Local Authorities to obtain the ISO 50001 certification for our Energy Management System, we work with community groups to assist them with energy saving measures. A strong partnership has been formed with Dunleer SEC which was strengthened in 2021.</p>

CLIMATE ACTION continued

Title	Update
<p>Combat the flood threat in Drogheda & Dundalk and other areas in partnership with the Office of Public Works</p>	<p>Dundalk and Ardee Flood Defence Scheme: Scheme is progress through it Preliminary phase of Environmental studies and Hydrological/ hydraulic studies. A number of topographical and CCTV contracts have been completed to inform the designs. First Non-Statutory Public consultation day was held in 2021 Drogheda and Baltray Flood Defence: Consultants were appointed to the scheme in Sept 2021, preliminary phase of works are ongoing with data gathering and environmental scoping studies.</p>
<p>Being part of the Local Authority Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project</p>	<p>Tenders have been submitted, through the Regional Lead, are being assessed and we await the results of the tender process.</p>
<p>Developing and pursuing strong policies on biodiversity</p>	<p>A Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Louth 2021 – 2026 was approved. The Heritage Office continued to work with and support other sections all across the council, including community; economic development; infrastructure; operations and planning.</p>
<p>Working with key stakeholders throughout County Louth to improve sustainable transport options</p>	<p>Active travel project in conjunction with the NTA are underway for the development of cycleways and footpaths in Dundalk and Drogheda. Works on St. Dominic Bridge have commenced in late 2021 with a completion date of Q2 of 2022.</p>
<p>Reducing the carbon emissions by improving it's energy efficiency</p>	<p>Louth County Council was granted a three-year Certification of Registration for our Energy Management System (EnMS) by the NSAI under ISO50001.2018 in March 2021 for 'the management of the electrical energy, thermal energy and other fuels usage within public buildings, public lighting and transportation under the direct control of the authority.' A surveillance audit carried out in December 2021 received very positive feedback.</p>

KEY INFRASTRUCTURAL PROJECTS

Title	Update
Drogheda Civic Centre	Construction Contract for the first phase of the project has been signed and works on the ground are due to commence in April 2022.
Ardee Castle Upgrade	The proposed upgrade works to Ardee Castle have been further developed and a revision to the Part 8 consent is currently in progress. In parallel, detailed design and preparation of the tender documents has commenced.
Port Access Road	Site Clearance Completed from R132 to Ballymakenny Road, in a bid to drum up interest from Potential Developer Consortiums to deliver part of the scheme.
Ardee bypass	Part 8 Planning Consent Process Underway. Potential Judicial Review by Third Parties to An Bord Pleanala directions to LCC that EIAR or NIS is not required.
Sporting & Leisure Facilities	A consultant was appointed to design the works for improvements at the Lourdes Athletic and Bowling Stadium with works due to commence in 2022. The first phase of a new Athletics facility was developed in Muirhevnamor, Dundalk in 2021.
Clanbrassil Street & St. Nicholas Quarter	Works Completed on Clanbrassil Street. Following a request from the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage in late August, when written confirmation of the grant for St. Nicholas Quarter was received, a preliminary business case was submitted for consideration in mid-November and work is ongoing in relation to the preparation of the tender brief for the appointment of a multi-disciplinary design team.
Long Walk	As the Council does not own the majority of the land involved it signed a memorandum of understanding with the landowner in April, 2021 and work focused on consolidating the properties involved. It is anticipated that designs will be developed in 2022.

KEY INFRASTRUCTURAL PROJECTS continued

Title	Update
Westgate Vision	<p>In 2021, desktop and baseline studies were carried out in conjunction with an early public engagement campaign in which record numbers of citizens have taken part. More than 700 people completed the online survey, contributing their ideas and detailing their aspirations for Westgate and this will help shape the design proposals which will be out for public consultation later in the project.</p>
Ardee 2040	<p>Turley's have been appointed to develop exciting plans to improve the streetscape and amenity of Ardee with a focus on four key opportunity sites: Main Street; Ash Walk; The Old Railway; and amenity lands to the east of the Town to allow planning consent to be received.</p> <p>In 2021, desktop and baseline studies were carried out in conjunction with an early public engagement campaign in which record numbers of citizens have taken part. In 2022 the design proposals shaped by this work will be progressed and go out for public consultation and will be submitted for planning consent.</p>

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND JOB CREATION

Title	Update
<p>Delivering quality job opportunities in Louth for the people of the County</p>	<p>Local Enterprise Office Louth (LEO Louth) continued to deliver supports to business in Co. Louth in 2021. The priority for Louth County Council's LEO was to help businesses address the economic challenges that the Covid pandemic had brought, continue to prepare for the impact of Brexit and ensure that businesses understood and accessed the full range of services available to them.</p> <p>During 2021 LEO Louth and Economic Development delivered a wide and varying suite of enterprise supports to start-up business and existing business in County Louth. The aim to these supports was to sustain, grow and improve the performance of a large range of businesses. These were complemented with a series of economic development initiatives. The Council acts as a catalyst to help deliver quality job opportunities for the people of County Louth.</p>
<p>Working with stakeholders to attract investment</p>	<p>LEO works with various stakeholders:</p> <p>Chambers of Commerce Dundalk and Drogheda Skillnet groups Dundalk and Drogheda Steering Committees of the North East Regional Skills Forum and the North East Regional Enterprise Plan Evaluation Committee of the Leader Programme Member of the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), Local Action Group (LAG) and the Louth Economic Forum.</p> <p>LEO participates on the Boards of eight Community Enterprise Companies:</p> <p>Dundalk Bids Company Louth County Enterprise Fund CLG Ardee Community Development Company Creative Spark CLG Dundalk Enterprise Development Co. CLG Drogheda Enterprise Centre CLG. t/a The Mill Microfinance Ireland DAC DKIT Connect DAC</p> <p>LEO is a party to 9 no. Memorandums of Understanding with national protocol partners:</p> <p>Department of Social Protection Education Training Boards Ireland Microfinance Ireland Revenue Commissioners</p>

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND JOB CREATION continued

Title	Update
	<p>National Association of Community Enterprise Centres Skillnet Fáilte Ireland Credit Review Officer Louth Leader Partnership</p> <p>Economic Development, LEO Louth and the Planning Office work together to offer high quality business advice and support to small and medium enterprises. Among other things this support includes up-to-date information on commercial property/office availability and continual support given to the Community Enterprise Centres including The Mill, Ardee Business Park, Oriel Hub and Creative Spark (and its FabLab and Downtown co-working projects).</p> <p>Louth County Council collaborates with neighbouring local authorities promoting the Dublin – Belfast Economic Corridor (www.DBEC.info), and with local economic stakeholders on the promotion of County Louth as an investment location with the M1 Corridor marketing initiative. The Local Authority has also met frequently with IDA and Enterprise Ireland in working towards the attraction of inward investment to the county.</p>
Working with stakeholders to mitigate the impact of Brexit	<p>Brexit and its impact on businesses was highlighted.</p> <p>LEO Louth provided assistance to businesses to prepare for Brexit including:</p> <p>Brexit Seminars/Webinars – LEO hosted a series of 8 no. of Seminars/Webinars during 2021. These events were held in conjunction with Dundalk and Drogheda Chambers of Commerce, InterTrade Ireland and Enterprise Ireland which attracted 620 businesses online.</p> <p>Brexit Conference – Sustaining & Building Cross Border Co-Operation & Trade – With InterTrade Ireland and the Chambers of Commerce in Dundalk and Newry, LEO organised a cross-border conference on Brexit in March with over 260 attendees.</p> <p>Brexit Advisory Clinics – There were 11 Brexit Clinics held during 2021 with 29 businesses attending.</p> <p>Brexit mentoring – There were 5 business who availed of the Brexit Mentoring</p>

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND JOB CREATION continued

Title	Update
	<p>Brexit consultancy – (Export Advisor) 22 no. businesses</p> <p>Brexit Prepare Your Business for Customs Training – LEO Louth delivered 3 no. (free to attend) customs workshops to 46 Louth businesses. These workshops aimed to help businesses prepare for customs documentation requirements.</p> <p>Border Stimulus Programme – to meet Brexit challenges a suite of 5 management development programmes to support local businesses manage the challenges of Brexit were designed and delivered in 2021.</p> <p>Superior Retailing Programme – The Superior Retailing Development Programme was aimed at assisting Irish owned retail businesses cope with the challenges of Covid, Brexit and Online. 75 businesses in the North East were enrolled in the Programme with 34 Louth Businesses completing the programme.</p> <p>Export Development programme – The export programme aimed to work businesses to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select the right markets • Establish an understanding of customer needs in those markets, and how the sales channel works; • Building the market entry approach • Creating a plan to build the business infrastructure needed to sustain that market entry <p>This programme supported 8 number SME's in County Louth to build sustainability and grow export business in export markets.</p> <p>Financial Management Programme - The financial management programme provided practical and relevant training and mentoring which demystifies the financial language around accounting, and helps a business owner/manager to monitor and focus on the critical financial aspects of the business.</p> <p>There were 60 participants from the NE region on the programme, with 17 of these participants from County Louth.</p>

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND JOB CREATION continued

Title	Update
	<p>Green for Microenterprise Programme - This programme was a free programme which aimed to help businesses identify cost savings and improve their green credentials. 20 Louth Businesses received support under this programme in 2021.</p> <p>LEO Louth continues to offer green supports to micro and small enterprises.</p> <p>Innovation Programme - The Innovation Programme was designed for SME business leaders who had ambitions to embed innovation in their businesses. It was delivered to 7 businesses from County Louth.</p>
<p>Continuing to work with Louth Economic Forum as the key collaborative driver of economic development in County Louth</p>	<p>Bi-monthly meetings of the Louth Economic Forum were held in 2021 with secretariat support being provided by the Economic Development Section of Louth County Council. Working Groups have been set up to implement the Action Plans which have been devised and updated by the Forum and these are managed by Louth County Council.</p> <p>LEO Louth as a member of the Louth Economic Forum continues to support and provide input into economic development strategies for County Louth.</p>
<p>Continuing to increase the impact of LEO on small businesses</p>	<p>LEO Louth is well established within the Economic Directorate and delivers Louth County Council's Service Level Agreement to Enterprise Ireland under an enterprise focused Action Plan aimed at supporting entrepreneurship, start-ups and established small businesses. This is reviewed on an annual basis and includes a series of targeted business metrics to be delivered each year.</p> <p>LEO Louth continues to increase its impact on small business by supporting the development of a range of indigenous clusters in Engineering, Craft, Tech, Food and FinTech through initiatives such as the PLATO Network, Focused Engineering Network, Louth Craftmark, Network Louth, Creative Spark, Boyne Valley Flavours and the Fintech Corridor.</p> <p>These networks facilitate best practice and information exchange amongst the small business community.</p>

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND JOB CREATION continued

Title	Update
	<p>In 2021, LEO delivered a series of Covid specific supports which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trading Online Voucher Scheme: 109 microenterprises were approved a Trading Online Voucher - Covid Mentoring was provided to 703 businesses in 2021 - Covid Business Training was provided to 1,527 business participants - Microfinance Ireland (MFI) Business Loan: In 2021, 15 loan applications were submitted to MFI.
<p>Engaging with all cross-border platforms to drive the economic development of the Border Region and the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor</p>	<p>Louth County Council has collaborated with the other 7 no. local authorities located from Dublin City to Belfast City, to promote and highlight the benefits of the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor. The Communications section participated in a joint media campaign and launch of DBEC in March 2021.</p> <p>The Council also continued its cross-border work through East Border Region, the local authority led cross border network.</p> <p>LEO Louth delivered three cross-border business programmes, namely Co-Innovate, PLATO and Innovate Accelerate, involving InterTrade Ireland and other local authorities across the border region. It also supported the Fintech Corridor, a Dublin to Belfast network of fintech businesses that connects EU and UK businesses.</p>
<p>Making Louth a great place to Live, Work and Play</p>	<p>In 2021 the Economic Development and Tourism office continued to ensure Louth is known as a great place to work, live and play. This was done via a number of initiatives: Promotion and administration of the 'Outdoor seating for tourism and hospitality scheme' which resulted in a good uptake on same and encouraged visitors into the Towns and Villages; Visit Louth website kept up to date with all there is to see and do in Co Louth and same promoted through the social media channels; Launch of the 'sea louth' sea food trail in June 2021, encouraged visitors to tour the coastline of Louth and make the most of the amenities on our doorstep.</p>

KEY PLANS & STRATEGY

Title	Update
Louth Economic Community Plan	Guidelines issued jointly from the Department of Rural and Community Development and The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in 2021 regarding the LECP. A new LECP will be developed in 2022.
County Development Plan	The County Development Plan 2021-2027 was adopted by the elected members on the 30th September 2021 and came into effect on the 11th November 2021.
Local Area Plans (LAP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dundalk • Drogheda • Ardee 	Background research and data gathering as part of the preparation of the Joint Drogheda Local Area Plan has commenced. It is anticipated a Draft Local Area Plan will be published later in 2022.
Rebuilding Ireland	
Westgate Vision	Funding was received under the Urban Regeneration Development Fund to carry out a feasibility and preliminary design of the some of the public realm within this area and to get planning permission for these works.
Louth Climate Adaptation Plan	<p>Work continues on delivery of Louth's Climate Adaptation Strategy.</p> <p>This four year strategy will ensure Louth is resilient to the impacts of Climate Change and will ensure the changing needs of communities are considered.</p> <p>This strategy will be incorporated into the Louth County Climate Action Plan which will be developed throughout 2022 & 2023.</p>
Major Emergency Management	<p>Louth County Council continued to monitor all severe weather events and mobilise the Severe Weather Assessment Team when required. The Severe Weather Assessment Team was convened on 7th December 2021 in response to Storm Bara.</p> <p>The Crisis Management Team continued to meet during 2021 to monitor the ongoing pandemic and to ensure business continuity.</p> <p>The Operations Department continued winter maintenance of Louth's road network to remove ice and snow from road and pavement surfaces, as well as deal with storm surges and wind fall trees on public roads/paths.</p>

KEY PLANS & STRATEGY continued

Title	Update
	<p>Louth County Council as the lead agency of the Flogas Terminal in Drogheda, an upper tier Seveso site, organised a triennial exercise which took place on 22nd September 2021. (A Seveso site is one which has an activity linked to handling, manufacturing, using or storing dangerous substances, i.e. refineries, petrochemical sites, oil depots or explosives depots). In addition, the exercise was used to determine the availability of all Senior and relevant Louth County Council Staff during the Major Emergency exercise.</p>
<p>Louth Economic Forum Action Plans</p>	<p>Meetings of the Louth Economic Forum took place bi-monthly with a focus on building on the partnerships and engagement from all members on the relevant action plans.</p> <p>Under the Tourism and Heritage Action Plan funding for the 'sea louth' Scenic Seafood Trail was received from Bord Iscaigh Mhara under the Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG) for the North East Region Development Scheme. This was launched June 2021 together with installation of Interpretive Panels at the 14 scenic viewpoint locations.</p> <p>Under the Education and Training Action Plan there was a presentation from the Manager of the North East Regional Skills Forum (NERSF). This is a single point of contact to help simplify and navigate the wealth of training and education provision in our region. The NERSF and local training and education providers, DkIT and LMETB support industry needs (e.g. Springboard+ and Skills to Advance) and are constantly looking at individual and cluster skill needs.</p>

QUALITY OF LIFE

Title	Update
<p>Making our communities great places to live and volunteer – where everyone takes pride in their local area</p>	<p>Louth Volunteer Centre continued their impressive collaborations with Louth County Council and published their Volunteering Framework in 2021. A new Service Level Agreement was enacted between the Council and LVC in 2021.</p>
<p>That all of our citizens avail and enjoy our Arts, Culture & Library Services</p>	<p>Louth Library Service: Louth Library Service adapted to a new way of working very rapidly, and successfully transitioned to virtual and online services throughout 2021. We continued to broaden our community audience base with a broad range of cultural and educational programming.</p> <p>We reached an important milestone in mid May, 2021 and extended opening hours to a 6 day opening, Monday-Saturday, along with 4 late nights until 8pm, Monday-Thursday in Dundalk & Drogheda Libraries.</p> <p>A book lending service for those housebound or cocooning, which began in June 2020 continues to be a great success in 2021. The online library service proved pivotal in providing entertainment and educational resources to adults and children.</p> <p>Louth Arts: Music in Healthcare – we had live music events in nursing home settings in May along with interactive zoom concerts in November and December.</p> <p>Taisce Lú, the county art collection, was exhibited in Droichead Arts Centre throughout the month of September with artist talks on the opening launch night and on Culture night.</p> <p>Local Live Performance Scheme – Supported by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. We held 5 local live events in August and September bringing a much needed economic boost to the local live entertainment industry.</p> <p>Celebrate Harps saw Music Generation Louth and the Harp Ensemble record a video which not only highlighted the beauty of the instrument but showcased the Greenore area with performers taking to the Greenore Ferry to perform with local musicians Zoe Conway and John McIntyre.</p>

QUALITY OF LIFE continued

Title	Update
	<p>Culture night in September saw 16 in person events across the county with live music, exhibitions, cultural trails and art workshops in the park included in the attractions on offer.</p> <p>Support was given to legacy projects through Creative Ireland including the SEEK Urban Arts Festival, Fighting Words Project and the Borrowed Ground Artists Studios.</p> <p>Louth Archives: Under the Historic Structures Fund, conservation repair works were carried out on the south gable wall of the Archives building to safeguard the building's long-term preservation for the benefit of the collections that it holds and the communities who access it.</p> <p>County Museum Dundalk The exhibition on the life and achievement of Peter Rice - 'When an Engineer Imagines'- ran throughout the year.</p> <p>The Museum continued to highlight the extent and diverse nature of its collection through participation in a number of online lectures</p> <p>Contributed to a number of television documentaries.</p> <p>Hosted the exhibition entitled 'Motion Marks'.</p> <p>Marked Pride month through a display of LGBTQIA+ flags.</p> <p>Worked with the Irish Embassy in Poland to promote a greater awareness of the county's greatest Olympian in the run-up to the Tokyo Games.</p> <p>Continued its involvement in the Heritage Council's Museums; Standards Programme for Ireland.</p>
<p>Make Louth a great place to live for:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our older people • Our younger generation • Immigrants and all minority communities • And where those with disabilities can live ordinary lives in ordinary places 	<p>During 2021 Louth County Council continued working collaboratively with groups including the Louth Older Peoples Forum, Comhairle na nOg , disAbility Louth and other stakeholders to assist in the delivery of their goals and objectives. In 2021 a local Louth Migrant Integration Network was established working under the auspices of the Joint Louth Meath Migrant Integration Forum.</p> <p>Under the Government's plan for Living with Covid 19: Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021 the Keep Well campaign highlighted the</p>

QUALITY OF LIFE continued

Title	Update
	<p>important role that individual and community resilience applied in contributing to the ongoing response to Covid-19. The Keep Well campaign was aimed at showing people of all ages how we can mind our own physical and mental health and wellbeing by adding healthy and helpful habits to our daily and weekly routines.</p> <p>Under the Community Resilience Fund, the Quality of Life team fed into the campaign theme <i>Switching Off and Being Creative</i>.</p> <p>Louth County Archives Service produced a <i>Caring for Your Family Archives</i> booklet.</p> <p>Louth Library Service Keepwell programme included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative writing mentoring workshops • Manga comic workshops for teenagers • Walk-through video recordings capturing the essence of our cultural buildings, libraries, museum and archives <p>Louth Library Service <i>Healthy Ireland at your Library</i> 2021 funding supported wellbeing through Events and Programming, and Health Information Resources.</p> <p>Louth Library service facilitated GIY, in partnership with Healthy Ireland to distribute 800 free food growing kits to the public. Under the Right to Read initiative, An online series of literacy and reader events supported families, individuals and children.</p> <p>Louth Library Service actively supported, participated in and promoted Ireland Reads, a new national campaign to encourage people to get reading that culminated in Ireland's first ever national reading day on February 25th. The campaign was backed up by an additional €150,000 spend on eBooks and audio books nationally.</p> <p>The Work Matters service continued to support job seekers and budding entrepreneurs online in 2021 with workshops delivered by our partners in LMETB and Louth Volunteer Centre.</p> <p>Funded by Dormant Accounts Funding DRCD 2020 funding the new outdoor garden in Dundalk library was officially launched in September 2021 by Cathaoirleach Cllr. Pio Smith.</p>

QUALITY OF LIFE continued

Objective	Progress
	<p>Funded by Public Libraries Digital Equity & Social Inclusion Programme - Louth Library Service has delivered a sensory space in Dundalk library, along with a sensory programme of events.</p> <p>Dormant accounts funding also allowed for a programme of events aimed at libraries supporting marginalised, socially excluded and disadvantaged communities in Louth.</p> <p>Louth Science Festival year's festival ran from November 7th-20th 2021.</p> <p>The Quality of Life Team delivered a comprehensive Decade of Centenaries 2021 Programme, including a Historian-in-Residence programme of talks; Primary School's Reading Project and Author Visits; conservation and digitization of valuation books and a short film and booklet on Dundalk Jail during the Civil War.</p> <p>Louth Library Service helped celebrate Pride Month 2021. The June edition of our library newsletter was dedicated to the celebration. An audit was carried out of our LGBTQIA+ stock titles throughout Louth Library Services and we invited input from LGBTQIA+ groups. Library staff created information leaflets outlining the great range of fiction and non-fiction titles available for children, young adults, and adults.</p> <p>The library service celebrated Heritage Week, Culture Night and World Harp Day with open audiences and special events.</p> <p>Louth Arts: Festival in a Van brought music to 3 healthcare facilities in the spring of 2021 as we re-emerged from the second lockdown. The Creativity in Older Persons Scheme from Creative Ireland saw local artist Rozzi Kennedy working with residents of 13 nursing homes in the Louth area to create artistic work which allowed them to express their feelings, relive memories and communicate with residents of other facilities. Their work was then exhibited in the Basement Gallery in An Táin Arts Centre at the end of the year. Through annual Creative Ireland grants we provided much needed funding to groups who use creativity as a way of building resilience and support to our communities including Turas Counselling, Ablevision and Youthwork Ireland Louth.</p>

QUALITY OF LIFE continued

Objective	Progress
	<p>Cruinniú na nÓg also returned in June and we provided workshops from rock painting, storytelling, up cycling clothes and tiktok dance lessons to a wide range of young children in the county from the ages of 0-16.</p> <p>Climate Action in the Library: Louth Library Service's continued promotion and uptake of eServices and the recycling of book stock to schools and community facilities contributes to lowering our carbon footprint.</p> <p>Library staff completed a Climate Action Building Capacity training course in October. This training will form part of the national climate action training programme for Local Authorities.</p> <p>A library staff representative, along with the Heritage Officer are members of the recently established Cross-Directorate Group to help drive delivery of climate action targets and goals across the organisation.</p> <p>Energy upgrades installed at Archives included an air to water heat pump, improvements to doors and several windows and low energy lighting.</p> <p>Under the Heritage Council Community Heritage Grant Scheme, the Archivist managed the Drogheda Merchant Ledgers Conservation Project and participated in Heritage Week. The volumes, which give an insight into Drogheda's economic history, are now available for access</p> <p>Louth Heritage: A Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Louth 2021 – 2026 was approved.</p> <p>The Heritage Office continued to work with and support other sections all across the council, including: community; economic development; infrastructure; operations and planning.</p> <p>County Museum Dundalk: Over the course of 2021 the Museum continued to develop and promote activities for all ages through its social media channels, in particular developing art- and craft-based activities on an all-year round basis for audiences of all ages and abilities.</p>

WATER

Objective	Progress
<p>Work with Irish Water to ensure the continued supply of safe and secure drinking water in adequate quantities to provide for the development needs of County Louth.</p>	<p>Louth County Council work with Irish Water under a Service Level Agreement to ensure safe and secure drinking water in County Louth and with IW Connections and Developer Services team and Asset Strategy team to address the development needs of County Louth.</p>
<p>Implement a water conservation programme to minimise water losses from the distribution network in collaboration with Irish Water.</p>	<p>Louth County Council work with Irish Water to roll out an active leak detection and repair programme across the county to reduce unaccounted for water and to minimise losses across the network.</p>
<p>Provide for adequate waste water treatment and collection systems, in collaboration with Irish Water, to comply with the requirements of the River Basin Management Plans.</p>	<p>Louth County Council work with Irish Water to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and Outfall Discharge licences.</p>



Financial Statements

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME (INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT STATEMENT) FOR YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2021

The Income and Expenditure Account Statement brings together all the revenue related income and expenditure.

It shows the surplus/(deficit) for the year. Transfers to/from reserves are shown separately and not allocated by service division.

Note 16 allocates transfers by service division in the same format as Table A of the adopted Local Authority budget.

Expenditure by Division

Expenditure by Division	Gross Expenditure 2021	Income 2021	Net Expenditure 2021	Net Expenditure 2020
	€	€	€	€
Housing & Building	37,451,752	38,727,560	(1,275,808)	(645,217)
Roads Transportation & Safety	25,896,275	15,076,820	10,819,455	11,659,919
Water Services	6,212,020	6,181,391	30,629	59,410
Development Management	16,787,781	11,228,400	5,559,381	5,404,809
Environmental Services	16,333,954	2,384,709	13,949,245	13,656,328
Recreation & Amenity	8,124,944	1,093,556	7,031,388	6,385,266
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	766,875	506,684	260,191	381,241
Miscellaneous Services	17,307,153	17,345,665	(38,512)	1,510,737
Total Expenditure/Income	128,880,754	92,544,785		
Net cost of Divisions to be funded from Rates & Local Property Tax			36,335,969	38,412,493
Rates			35,233,676	35,437,457
Local Property Tax			9,866,198	9,866,198
Surplus/(Deficit) for Year before Transfers			8,763,905	6,891,161
Transfers from/(to) Reserves			(7,401,088)	(6,834,099)
Overall Surplus/(Deficit) for Year			1,362,817	57,062
General Reserve @ 1st January 2021			1,007,413	950,351
General Reserve @ 31st December 2021			2,370,230	1,007,413

Statement of Financial Position

Statement Of Financial Position (BALANCE SHEET) AT 31st DECEMBER 2021	2021	2020
	€	€
Fixed Assets		
Operational	750,114,528	735,171,991
Infrastructural	1,355,364,519	1,355,364,519
Community	4,380,298	4,392,593
Non-Operational	50,035,497	50,035,497
	2,159,894,843	2,144,964,601
Work in Progress and Preliminary Expenses	29,787,429	28,013,188
Long Term Debtors	160,036,926	128,689,093
Current Assets		
Stocks	-	-
Trade Debtors & Prepayments	31,501,876	32,994,270
Bank Investments	57,320,639	44,573,632
Cash at Bank	5,684,125	8,205,870
Cash in Transit	161,070	211,416
	94,667,709	85,985,188
Current Liabilities (Amounts falling due within one year)		
Bank Overdraft	-	-
Creditors & Accruals	40,074,452	40,722,404
Finance Leases	-	-
	40,074,452	40,722,404
Net Current Assets / (Liabilities)	54,593,257	45,262,784
Creditors (Amounts falling due after more than one year)		
Loans Payable	130,439,621	136,579,875
Finance Leases	-	-
Refundable deposits	16,532,594	16,048,209
Other	91,408,914	58,462,792
	238,381,129	211,090,876
Net Assets	2,165,931,326	2,135,838,790
Represented by		
Capitalisation Account	2,159,894,843	2,144,964,601
Income WIP	27,675,415	27,016,050
General Revenue Reserve	2,370,230	1,007,413
Other Specific Reserves	469,071	469,071
Other Balances	(24,478,233)	(37,618,345)
Total Reserves	2,165,931,326	2,135,838,790

Summary of Major Revenue Collections for 2021

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
Debtor type	Incoming arrears @ 1/1/2021	Accrued - current year debit (Gross)	Vacant property adjustments	Write offs	Waivers and Credits	Total for collection = (B+C-D-E-F)	Amount collected	Closing arrears @ 31/12/2021 = (G-H)	Specific doubtful arrears*	% Collected = (H)/(G-J) **
	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€
Rates	11,030,292	35,233,677	1,580,391	96,787	10,647,926	33,938,865	23,665,140	10,273,725	2,796,082	76%
Rents & Annuities	2,968,564	12,878,525	-	98,761	-	15,748,328	13,231,193	2,517,135	-	84%
Housing Loans	283,360	1,754,210	-	-	-	2,037,569	1,796,566	241,004	-	88%

To alleviate the impact of Covid-19 on eligible businesses during 2021 the Government funded a 12 month rates waiver scheme. The amounts waived are shown in the Waived/Credits column in the table above and results in a corresponding reduction in the total for collection. This also has the effect of reducing the % collected in the final column.

The Council received a grant equal to the amount waived and this is included in the grant income in Appendix 3. For prior year comparison purposes if the income was included in the Amount Collected column rather than the Waived/Credits column the % collected would have been 82%.

Performance Indicators

**Unaudited at date of publication. Not approved by NOAC and subject to missing information being supplied by External stakeholders.*

Topic	Indicator	Value
Housing: H1, H2 & H4 Approved	A. Number of dwellings in the ownership of the local authority at 1/1/2021	3977
	B. Number of dwellings added to the local authority owned stock during 2021 (whether constructed or acquired)	78
	C. Number of local authority owned dwellings sold in 2021	25
	D. Number of local authority owned dwellings demolished in 2021	0
	E. Number of dwellings in the ownership of the local authority at 31/12/2021	4030
	F. Number of local authority owned dwellings planned for demolition under a D/HLGH approved scheme at 31/12/2021	0
	A. The percentage of the total number of local authority owned dwellings that were vacant on 31/12/2021	2.08 %
	The number of dwellings within their overall stock that were not tenanted on 31/12/2021	84
	A. Expenditure during 2021 on the maintenance of local authority housing compiled from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021, divided by the no. of dwellings in the local authority stock at 31/12/2021, i.e. the H1E less H1F indicator figure	€1104.71
	Expenditure on maintenance of local authority stock compiled from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021, including planned maintenance and expenditure that qualified for grants, such as Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) grants for energy efficient retro-fitting works but excluding expenditure on vacant properties and expenditure under approved major refurbishment schemes (i.e. approved Regeneration or under the Remedial Works Schemes).	€4452000

Topic	Indicator	Value
Housing: H3 & H5 Approved	A. The time taken from the date of vacation of a dwelling to the date in 2021 when the dwelling is re-tenanted, averaged across all dwellings re-let during 2021	0.32 wk
	B. The cost expended on getting the dwellings re-tenanted in 2021, averaged across all dwellings re-let in 2021	€17856.06
	The number of dwellings that were re-tenanted on any date in 2021 (but excluding all those that had been vacant due to an estate-wide refurbishment scheme)	132
	The number of weeks from the date of vacation to the date the dwelling is re-tenanted	42 wk
	Total expenditure on works necessary to enable re-letting of the dwellings	€2357000
	A. Total number of registered tenancies in the LA area at the end of June 2021	
	B. Number of rented dwellings inspected in 2021	292
	C. Percentage of inspected dwellings in 2021 not compliant with the Standards Regulations	100.00 %
	D. Number of dwellings deemed compliant in 2021 (including those originally deemed non-compliant)	21
	E. The number of inspections (including reinspections) undertaken by the local authority in 2021	305

Performance Indicators

**Unaudited at date of publication. Not approved by NOAC and subject to missing information being supplied by External stakeholders.*

Topic	Indicator	Value
Housing: H6 Approved	A. Number of adult individuals in emergency accommodation that are long-term (i.e. 6 months or more within the previous year) homeless as a percentage of the total number of homeless adult individuals in emergency accommodation at the end of 2021	68.00 %
	The number of adult individuals classified as homeless and in emergency accommodation on the night of 31 December 2021 as recorded on the PASS system	75
	The number out of those individuals who, on 31/12/2021, had been in emergency accommodation for 6 months continuously, or for 6 months cumulatively within the previous 12 months	51
Roads: R1 & R2 Approved	A. (a) The percentage of Regional road kilometres that received a PSCI rating in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2021	91.00 %
	A. (b) The percentage of Local Primary road kilometres that received a PSCI rating in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2021	94.00 %
	A. (c) The percentage of Local Secondary road kilometres that received a PSCI rating in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2021	94.00 %
	A. (d) The percentage of Local Tertiary road kilometres that received a PSCI rating in the 60 month period prior to 31/12/2021	87.00 %
	B. (a.1) The percentage of total Regional road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 1-4 at 31/12/2021	0.58 %
	B. (a.2) The percentage of total Regional road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 5-6 at 31/12/2021	4.65 %
	B. (a.3) The percentage of total Regional road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 7-8 at 31/12/2021	60.59 %
	B. (a.4) The percentage of total Regional road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 9-10 at 31/12/2021	33.15 %

Topic	Indicator	Value
	B. (b.1) The percentage of total Local Primary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 1-4 at 31/12/2021	10.56 %
	B. (b.2) The percentage of total Local Primary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 5-6 at 31/12/2021	7.74 %
	B. (b.3) The percentage of total Local Primary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 7-8 at 31/12/2021	64.06 %
	B. (b.4) The percentage of total Local Primary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 9-10 at 31/12/2021	17.10 %
	B. (c.1) The percentage of total Local Secondary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 1-4 at 31/12/2021	14.73 %
	B. (c.2) The percentage of total Local Secondary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 5-6 at 31/12/2021	5.91 %
	B. (c.3) The percentage of total Local Secondary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 7-8 at 31/12/2021	63.09 %
	B. (c.4) The percentage of total Local Secondary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 9-10 at 31/12/2021	15.35 %
	B. (d.1) The percentage of total Local Tertiary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 1-4 at 31/12/2021	23.21 %
	B. (d.2) The percentage of total Local Tertiary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 5-6 at 31/12/2021	26.45 %
	B. (d.3) The percentage of total Local Tertiary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 7-8 at 31/12/2021	22.54 %
	B. (d.4) The percentage of total Local Tertiary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 9-10 at 31/12/2021	16.07 %
	A.1 Kilometres of regional road strengthened during 2021	6.2 km
	A.2 The amount expended on regional roads strengthening work during 2021	€1571588.00

Performance Indicators

**Unaudited at date of publication. Not approved by NOAC and subject to missing information being supplied by External stakeholders.*

Topic	Indicator	Value
	A.3 The average unit cost of regional road strengthening works per square metre (€/m ²)	€19.78
	B.1 Kilometres of regional road resealed during 2021	4.8 km
	B.2 The amount expended on regional road resealing work during 2021	€224471.00
	B.3 The average unit cost of regional road resealing works per square metre (€/m ²)	€6.46
	C.1 Kilometres of local road strengthened during 2021	31.7 km
	C2. The amount expended on local road strengthening work during 2021	€3408371.00
	C.3 The average unit cost of local road strengthening works per square metre (€/m ²)	€19.89
	D.1 Kilometres of local road resealed during 2021	38.3 km
	D.2 The amount expended on local road resealing work during 2021	€922669.00
	D.3 The average unit cost of local road resealing works per square metre (€/m ²)	€4.68
Motor Tax: R3 Approved	A. The percentage of motor tax transactions which were dealt with online (i.e. transaction is processed and the tax disc is issued) in 2021	90.06 %

Topic	Indicator	Value
Water: W1 & W2 Approved	Percentage of drinking water in private schemes in compliance with statutory requirements	
	The number of registered schemes monitored by each local authority as a percentage of total schemes registered	0 %
	The number of registered schemes monitored in 2021	0 Due to COVID
	Total number of registered schemes in 2021	77
Waste: E1 Approved	A. The number of households, which are situated in an area covered by a licensed operator providing a 3 bin service at 31/12/2021	23650
	B. The percentage of households within the local authority that the number at A represents (based on agglomerations of more than 500)	78.01 %
Environmental Pollution: E2 Approved	A. Total number of pollution cases in respect of which a complaint was made during 2021	2295
	A. Number of pollution cases closed from 1/1/2021 to 31/12/2021	2294
	A. Total number of pollution cases on hands at 31/12/2021	15
	The opening number of pollution cases carried forward from the year end 2020	14

Performance Indicators

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Topic	Indicator	Value
Litter Pollution: E3 Approved	A1. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2021 was unpolluted or litter free	7 %
	A2. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2021 was slightly polluted	83 %
	A3. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2021 was moderately polluted	10 %
	A4. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2021 was significantly polluted	0 %
	A5. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2021 was grossly polluted	0 %
Green Flag Status: E4 Approved	A. The percentage of schools that have been awarded/ renewed green flag status in the two years to 31 December 2021	36.96 %
	Schools which attained a Green Flag for the first time in 2021	1
	Schools which renewed their Green Flag in 2021	11
	Schools which held a Green Flag from 2020 and therefore do not require renewal until 2022	22
Energy Efficiency: E5 Approved	A. The cumulative percentage of energy savings achieved by 31/12/2021 relative to baseline year (2009)	
Public Lighting: E6 Approved	A. Total billable wattage of the public lighting system	5926.00 MWh
	B. Average billable wattage of the public lighting system	104.18 W
	C. Percentage of the total system that LED lights represent	39.00 %
	Number of LED lights in the public lighting system	5445
	Number of non-LED lights (e.g., SOX-SON) in the public lighting system	8487

Topic	Indicator	Value
Climate Change: E7 Approved	Does the local authority have a designated (FTE) climate action officer?	No
	Does the local authority have a climate action team?	Yes
Planning: P1 Approved	A. Buildings inspected as a percentage of new buildings notified to the local authority	7.93 %
	Total number of new buildings notified to the local authority i.e. buildings where a valid Commencement Notice was served in the period 1/1/2021 to 31/12/2021 by a builder or developer on the local authority	857
	Number of new buildings notified to the local authority in 2021 that were the subject of at least one on-site inspection during 2021 undertaken by the local authority	68
Planning: P2 & P3 Approved	A. Number of local authority planning decisions which were the subject of an appeal to An Bord Pleanála that were determined by the Board on any date in 2021	44
	B. Percentage of the determinations at A which confirmed (either with or without variation of the plan) the decision made by the local authority	75.00 %
	Number of determinations confirming the local authority's decision (either with or without variation)	33
	A. Total number of planning cases referred to or initiated by the local authority in the period 1/1/2021 to 31/12/2021 that were investigated	316
	B. Total number of investigated cases that were closed during 2021	326
	C. Percentage of the cases at B that were dismissed as trivial, minor or without foundation or were closed because statute barred or an exempted development	57.06 %
	D. Percentage of the cases at B that were resolved to the local authority's satisfaction through negotiations	0.61 %

Performance Indicators

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Topic	Indicator	Value
	E. Percentage of the cases at B that were closed due to enforcement proceedings	42.33 %
	F. Total number of planning cases being investigated as at 31/12/2021	241
	Number of cases at B that were dismissed as trivial, minor or without foundation or were closed because statute barred or an exempted development	186
	Number of cases at B that were resolved to the local authority's satisfaction through negotiations	2
	Number of cases at B that were closed due to enforcement proceedings	138
Planning: P4 & P5 Approved Fire Service: F1	A. The 2021 Annual Financial Statement (AFS) Programme D data divided by the population of the local authority area per the 2016 Census	€32.24
	AFS Programme D data consisting of D01 - Forward Planning, D02 - Development Management, D03 - Enforcement (inclusive of the relevant Programme D proportion of the central management charge) for 2021	€4154628
	A. The percentage of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2021 that were decided (granted or refused) within two months of their receipt	48.84 %
	B. The percentage of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2021 that were decided (granted or refused) within an extended period agreed with the applicant	43.02 %
	The total number of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2021 that were not withdrawn by the applicant	86
	The number of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2021 that were decided (granted or refused) within two months of the date of receipt of the application	42
	The number of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2021 that were decided (granted or refused) within an agreed extended time period	37

Topic	Indicator	Value
Approved	A. The Annual Financial Statement (AFS) Programme E expenditure data for 2021 divided by the population of the local authority area per the 2016 Census figures for the population served by the fire authority as per the Risk Based Approach Phase One reports	€59.19
	AFS Programme E expenditure data consisting of E11 - Operation of Fire Service and E12 - Fire Prevention for 2021	€9258234
Fire Service: F2 & F3 Approved	A. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Full-Time Stations in respect of fire	1.62 min
	B. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Part-Time Stations (retained fire service) in respect of fire	4.35 min
	C. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Full-Time Stations in respect of all other (non-fire) emergency incidents	2.45 min
	D. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Part-Time Stations (retained fire service) in respect of all other (non-fire) emergency incidents	4 min
	A. Percentage of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at scene is within 10 minutes	74.46 %
	B. Percentage of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	21.19 %
	C. Percentage of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	4.35 %
	D. Percentage of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is within 10 minutes	51.20 %
	E. Percentage of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	42.11 %

Performance Indicators

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Topic	Indicator	Value
	F. Percentage of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	6.70 %
	Total number of call-outs in respect of fires from 1/1/2021 to 31/12/2021	689
	Number of these fire cases where first fire tender attendance at the scene is within 10 minutes	513
	Number of these fire cases in which first fire tender attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	146
	Number of these fire cases in which first fire tender attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	30
	Total number of call-outs in respect of all other emergency incidents (i.e. not including fire) from 1/1/2021 to 31/12/2021	209
	Number of these non-fire cases in which first fire tender attendance at the scene is within 10 minutes	107
	Number of these non-fire cases in which first fire tender attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	88
	Number of these non-fire cases in which first fire tender attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	14

Topic	Indicator	Value
Library Service: L1 Approved	A. Number of visits to libraries per head of population for the local authority area per the 2016 Census	0.42
	B. Number of items issued to library borrowers in the year	210135
	C. Library active members per head of population	0.07
	D. Number of registered library members in the year	6909
	Number of visits to its libraries from 1/1/2021 to 31/12/2021	54116
Library Service: L2 Approved	A. The Annual Financial Statement (AFS) Programme F data for 2021 divided by the population of the local authority area per the 2016 Census	€25.45
	B. The annual per capita expenditure on collections over the period 1/01/2021 to 31/12/2021	€1.08
	A. AFS Programme F data consisting of F02 - Operation of Library and Archival Service (inclusive of the relevant proportion of the central management charge for Programme F) for 2021	€3280572
	B. The annual expenditure on new stock acquired by the library in the year	€139107.19

Performance Indicators

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Topic	Indicator	Value
Youth and Community: Y1 & Y2 Approved	A. Percentage of local schools involved in the local Youth Council/Comhairle na nÓg scheme	94.44 %
	Total number of second level schools in the local authority area at 31/12/2021	18
	Number of second level schools in the local authority area from which representatives attended the local Comhairle na nÓg AGM held in 2021	17
	A. The number of organisations included in the County Register at 31/12/2021 and the proportion of those organisations that opted to be part of the Social Inclusion College within the PPN	23.59
	Total number of organisations included in the County Register (maintained in accordance with section 128 of the Local Government Act 2001) for the local authority area as at 31/12/2021	513
	Total number of those organisations that registered for the first time in 2021	181
	Number of organisations that opted to join the Social Inclusion Electoral College on whatever date they registered for the PPN	121
Corporate: C1, C2, C4 & C5 Approved	A. The wholetime equivalent staffing number as at 31 December 2021	684.23
	A. Percentage of paid working days lost to sickness absence through medically certified leave in 2021	3.01 %
	B. Percentage of paid working days lost to sickness absence through self-certified leave in 2021	0.30 %
	Total number of working days lost to sickness absence through medically certified leave in 2021	5792.59 day
	Total number of working days lost to sickness absence through self-certified leave in 2021	472 day

Topic	Indicator	Value
	Number of unpaid working days lost to sickness absence included within the total of self-certified sick leave days in 2021	6 day
	Number of unpaid working days lost to sickness absence included within the total of medically certified sick leave days in 2021	1118.09 day
	If any staff are on long-term sick leave (i.e. a continuous period of more than 4 weeks), include a text note of the number of staff on long-term sick leave	63
	A. All ICT expenditure in the period from 1/1/2021 to 31/12/2021, divided by the WTE no.	€4287.35
	Total ICT expenditure in 2021	€2933533.64
	A. All ICT expenditure calculated in C4 as a proportion of Revenue expenditure	2.28
	Total Revenue expenditure from 1/1/2021 to 31/12/2021 before transfers to or from reserves	128880754
Corporate: C3 Approved	A. The per capita total page views of the local authority's websites in 2021	3.29
	B. The per capita total number of followers at end 2021 of the local authority's social media accounts (if any)	0.21
	The cumulative total page views of all websites operated by the local authority for the period from 1/1/2021 to 31/12/2021 obtained from a page tagging on-site web analytics service or equivalent	423707
	This accounts for LCC main account plus LEO accounts	
	The total number of social media users who, at 31/12/2021, were following the local authority on any social media sites	27141
	The number of social media accounts operated by the local authority	8

Performance Indicators

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Topic	Indicator	Value
	Indicate if there was a change to the cookie policies on the local authority sites and the date this came into effect	None
Finance: M1 to M4 Approved	A. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2017 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€395594
	B. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2018 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€545520
	C. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2019 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€950351
	D. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2020 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€1007413
	E. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2021 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€2370230
	F. Cumulative surplus or deficit at 31/12/2021 as a percentage of Total Income in 2021 from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	1.72 %
	G. Revenue expenditure per capita in 2021	€999.97
	H. Revenue expenditure per capita in 2021 excluding significant out of county / shared service expenditure	€999.97
	The 2021 Total Income figure from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€137644659
	The 2021 Total Expenditure figure from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€128880754

Topic	Indicator	Value
	The 2021 Revenue expenditure excluding county / shared service expenditure for the service providers of HAP, MyPay, DRHE and Dublin Fire Services	€128880754
	A. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2017	75.0 %
	A. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2017	69.0 %
	A. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2017	75.0 %
	B. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2018	80.0 %
	B. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2018	76.0 %
	B. c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2018	76.0 %
	C. a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2019	83.0 %
	C. b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2019	80.0 %
	C. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2019	82.0 %
	D. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2020	63.0 %
	D. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2020	81.0 %
	D. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2020	85.0 %

Performance Indicators

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Topic	Indicator	Value
	E. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2021	76 %
	E. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2021	84 %
	E. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2021	88 %
	A. Per capita total cost of settled claims for 2021	€15.97
	IPB Insurance: Number of notified claims for 2021	172
	IPB Insurance: Number of settled claims for 2021	163
	IPB Insurance: Total cost of settled claims for 2021	€2058225.27
	Total cost of claims settled under excess for 2021	€0
	Self-insured: Number of notified claims for 2021	
	Self-insured: Number of settled claims for 2021	
	Self-insured: Total cost of settled claims for 2021	
	A. Overall central management charge as a percentage of total expenditure on revenue account	13.54 %
	B. Total payroll costs as a percentage of revenue expenditure	34.01 %
	Overall central management charge from the Local Authority FMS and defined in the Annual Budget	€17454539
	Total payroll costs from Appendix 1 of the AFS for 2021 (including Salaries, Wages and Pensions)	€43826171

Topic	Indicator	Value	
Economic Development: J1 to J4 Approved	A. The number of jobs created with assistance from the Local Enterprise Office during the period 1/1/2021 to 31/12/2021 per 100,000 of population	38.7946	
	The number of jobs created with assistance from the Local Enterprise Office during the period 1/1/2021 to 31/12/2021	50.0	
	A. The number of trading online voucher applications approved by the Local Enterprise Office in 2021 per 100,000 of population	84.5722	
	B. The number of trading online vouchers that were drawn down in 2021 per 100,000 of population	15.5178	
	The number of trading online voucher applications approved by the Local Enterprise Office in 2021	109	
	The number of those trading online vouchers that were drawn down in 2021	20	
	A. The number of participants who received mentoring during the period 1/1/2021 to 31/12/2021 per 100,000 of population	545.4517	
	The number of participants who received mentoring during the period 1/1/2021 to 31/12/2021	703	
	A. Does the local authority have a current tourism strategy?	Yes	
	B. Does the local authority have a designated Tourism Officer?	Yes	
	Shared with Meath County Council.		
	The spend on local economic development by the local authority in 2021 per head of population	€2.65	
	The spend on local economic development by the local authority in 2021	€341936.27	







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