

Comhairle Contae **Lú**
Louth County Council

ANNUAL REPORT **2022**

Your Council for **Your** Community





CONTENTS

1: Introduction	4
2: Organisational Development	18
3: Social Development	64
4: Strategic Economic Development	96
5: Placemaking and Physical Development	132
6: Support and Water Services	150
7: Ukrainian Resettlement	156
8: Appendices	162

1

Introduction

Foreword

Overview

2022 at a glance

Elected Members





Comhairle Contae **Lú**
Louth County Council





To commemorate
the failure of the 6
of Great, and to mark
the beginning of a
new millennium

Foreword



Conor Keelan
Cathaoirleach

Having served as a Councillor with Louth County Council since 2009, I was humbled to be elected to the role of Cathaoirleach for Louth County Council in June 2022, taking over from the very capable hands of the outgoing Cathaoirleach Councillor Pío Smith.

I was and remain very conscious of the responsibilities that the position of Cathaoirleach of Louth County Council brings with it; it has both legal and ceremonial responsibilities, and appoints the holder as 'First Citizen' of the County for the term of office. I was incredibly honoured to be bestowed this title by my elected colleagues in a County I love dearly. During my term of office I have presided over Council Meetings, ensuring business discussed is in line with legislation, follows adopted standing orders, and is in the interest of the great community that makes up Louth. One meeting saw a new Draft Development Contribution Scheme for North Drogheda adopted which will pave the way for the long-awaited Port Access Northern Cross Route which is seen as pivotal to the economic development of Louth.

As Cathaoirleach over the last 6 months of 2022, I was proud to represent Louth at numerous events, many of which are listed in this report, and some which are not. Apart from attending the launches of several wonderful capital initiatives to enhance the County, my favourite events included those

recognizing community achievements and local efforts of the great people of Louth.

There were also some very poignant events in Louth during my term to date, such as my opening of books of condolences with the Chief Executive, including for the late great Vicki Phelan, and more closer to home for our own local hero Pte Seán Rooney a young man who served his time in Aiken Barracks Dundalk.

I welcome the Annual Report which lists only some of the great work done in 2022 by Louth County Council. I can only thank the Chief Executive, Joan Martin, the executive team, and all the staff of Louth County Council for their work and commitment to the people of Louth and their assistance to me in my role as Cathaoirleach.

At the annual budget meeting in November 2022 as Cathaoirleach, I cast the deciding vote where Members returned a split vote. This saw the adoption of the 2023 budget which plans for some exciting and ground-breaking initiatives which will enhance the lives of the citizens of Louth.

I look forward to the year ahead and my remaining term as Cathaoirleach.

Overview



Joan Martin
Chief Executive

On my 8th year as Chief Executive of Louth County Council, I consider that 2022 was a very active year for both the Members and Staff of Louth County Council. It was also a very satisfying year for the Council as we saw many projects which had been planned for years (and some for decades) finally cross the line towards fruition.

Contracts were signed on new Drogheda Civic Offices in Fair Street, €6.5million was awarded towards Active Travel Projects in our major towns, future public realm projects such as Westgate Vision, Narrowwater Bridge, Peters Hill Drogheda and Ardee 2040 all progressed. After 20 years of planning and disappointments, 2022 finally saw the progression of the Port Access Northern Cross Route with the signing of a Licence for Road Works by 'PANCR Developments Limited', which allows for construction of Phase 1 of the long-awaited scheme.

We invested in our future sustainability by employing energy saving methods in our own council buildings with the installation of more solar panels and heat pumps, and expanded on our Climate Action Team who will look to future proof the County as a whole, with Louth County Council selected as one of the first

signatories of the EU Climate Mission Charter which has the main goal of Climate Resilience by 2030.

Louth is leading the way Nationally on the roll out of Electric Vehicle chargers, and our beautiful coastline county secured four green flag awards in 2022.

As an inclusive County we welcome all residents and visitors to Louth. We are more than happy to support PRIDE and demonstrate this by annually flying the Pride Flag at all civic offices. We continually engage with advocacy groups either through our Community Section, Public Partnership Network and/or our Access Officer. Our communication team has organised multiple light ups of buildings in support of those in need or for initiatives that affect the people of Louth. 2022 saw us host our first World Africa Day with Culture Connect and in September we celebrated Culture night which offered free events for all in Louth.

Early in 2022 we offered assistance to those fleeing war from Ukraine, and have invested in resources to continue to assist those seeking sanctuary. We have a very active Homeless Action Team who engage with rough sleepers and coordinate with other state bodies

on issues affecting those who require more assistance. We held numerous events throughout the year, many in celebration of local communities and groups who are exemplary in their efforts to enhance their environs and the lives of those who live in Louth.

In June, Louth County Council conferred a Civic Honour on Amy Broadhurst on her outstanding achievement in winning the 2022 IBA World Lightweight championships.

As well as celebrations, there were some sombre events, Louth County Council remembered and honoured those lost to Covid and those who valiantly worked throughout Covid, with Ceremonies of Remembrance and Reflection held in both Drogheda and Dundalk on March 2022.

To coincide with national efforts to acknowledge the contributions of volunteers during the pandemic, Louth Volunteer Centre with the assistance of Louth County Council held a 'Covid Volunteer Recognition Event' in County Hall, Dundalk on the evening of Thursday, 19th May 2022.

This is just a snap shot of happenings in 2022, it doesn't even begin to go into the numerous works on the ground by staff on litter, library, planning, emergency services etc., the list is varied and endless. I hope that the Annual Report will capture the majority of services provided by the staff of Louth County Council who as always, I am incredibly grateful to, and without whom we would simply not be able to provide the professional service we strive to give to all who live in Louth and those who visit.

I invite you to read Louth County Council Annual Report 2022.





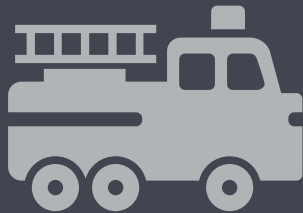
134,695
INTERACTIONS
WITH CUSTOMERS

1,030 PLANNING
APPLICATIONS **RECEIVED**



312 PRE-PLANNING
APPLICATIONS **RECEIVED**

1224 FIRE &
EMERGENCY SERVICES
INCIDENTS



ENERGY
EFFICIENCY
IMPROVED BY
48%



235 WARNING
LETTERS ISSUED
ON UNAUTHORISED
DEVELOPMENT



CIRCA
38 MILLION
LITRES OF WATER
DISTRIBUTED
DAILY



94% OF DOGS
RECLAIMED OR
RE-HOMED

268,250 LIBRARY
ITEMS ISSUED



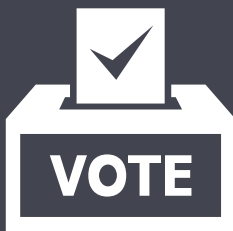
CLIMATE
ACTION TEAM
EXPANDED



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



3,276
HAP
TENANCIES



96,102
REGISTERED
ELECTORS IN
LOUTH



49 DANGEROUS
STRUCTURE FILES
OPENED



75 BUSINESS TRAINING AND
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES WITH
1,527 PARTICIPANTS



4,152
COUNCIL-OWNED SOCIAL
HOUSING STOCK



3,531
BUSINESSES
SUPPLIED WITH WATER



119 RIVER WATER
QUALITY SAMPLES
TAKEN

Electoral Areas of County Louth

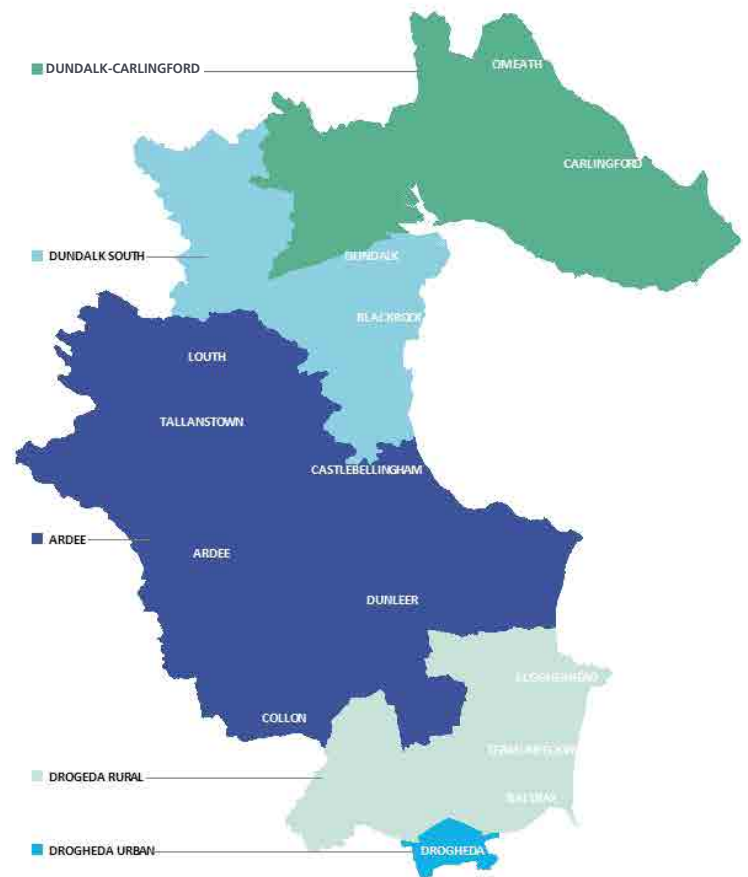
County Louth is divided into the 3 municipal districts of Drogheda, Ardee and Dundalk. For electoral purposes the County is made up of 5 electoral areas: Dundalk-Carlingford, Dundalk South, Drogheda Urban, Drogheda Rural and Ardee.

REGISTER OF ELECTORS

Louth County Council is responsible for compiling the Register of Electors for County Louth. The Electoral Reform Act 2022 came into force on the 13th October 2022. This means that both the Draft and Live Registers have now been replaced by a Rolling Register of Electors. This Rolling Register will be continuously updated. The Register of Electors, effective from 14th October 2022, showed a total voting population of **94,911** for Co. Louth.

Presidential Electors	88,712
Dáil Electors	89,703
European Electors	89,401
Potential European Electors	2,464
Local Electors	90,767

The Franchise Section of Louth County Council in preparation of the Electoral Reform Act 2022 began a 'data cleanse' of the Register of Electors in 2020 which continued in 2021 and 2022. In 2022 the section dealt with various issues including duplicate electors, duplicate eircodes, electors with no dates of birth and invalid eircodes. Louth County Council issued letters to electors to confirm their details, this helps to ensure the accuracy of the electoral register, which also includes ensuring electors are voting at the correct polling station. From the 13th October 2022 new applicants to the register are asked to provide their PPSN. The introduction of PPSNs also contributes to greater accuracy, enabling identity data to be cross-checked.



Voters are urged to check the register at www.checktheregister.ie to ensure their details are correct and to update their date of both, eircode and PPSN, where necessary.

Percentage of Electors, in Eircode recorded addresses	94%
Percentage of Electors, with a date of birth	98%

**ELECTED MEMBERS:
COMHAIRLE CONTAE LÚ / LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL****Ardee Electoral Area - 6 Members**

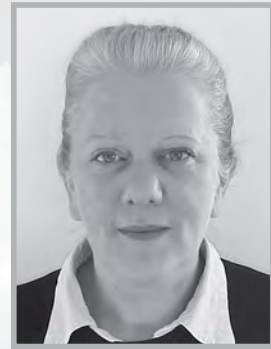
JOHN SHERIDAN
Fianna Fáil

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PEARSE McGEOUGH
Sinn Féin

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PAULA BUTTERLY
Fine Gael

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DOLORES MINOGUE
Fine Gael

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Non Party

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Drogheda Rural Electoral Area - 4 Members



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MICHELLE HALL
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TOM CUNNINGHAM
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DECLAN POWER
Non Party

e: declan.power@louthcoco.ie

Drogheda Urban Electoral Area - 6 Members



JOANNA BYRNE
Sinn Féin

e: joanna.byrne@louthcoco.ie



PIO SMITH
The Labour Party

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FIACHRA MAC RAGHNAILL
The Labour Party

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KEVIN CALLAN
Non Party

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JAMES BYRNE
Fianna Fáil

e: james.byrne@louthcoco.ie



PADDY McQUILLAN
Non Party

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Dundalk - Carlingford Electoral Area - 6 Members



EDEL CORRIGAN
Sinn Féin

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SEÁN KELLY
Fianna Fáil

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CONOR KEELAN
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Fianna Fáil

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ANTÓIN WATTERS
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Dundalk South Electoral Area - 7 Members



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MAEVE YORE
Non Party

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2

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Corporate Services provides support service to councillors and senior management, along with general services to members of the public. It is responsible for the delivery of customer services, the administration of council meetings, the compilation of the Register of Electors, preparing the Council's Annual Report, Corporate Estate Management, Health & Safety, Data Protection and handling of Freedom of Information requests.

The Community Section within Organisational Development promotes public participation with Louth County Council, supports pride of place and community efforts, assisting local groups to access grant funding for environmental, cultural and town enhancement, and pushing the community led tidy town and village ethos with a heavy focus on ensuring everyone in the community is included.





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.

The Climate and Waste Section address all matters in relation to our climate challenges and regulating all matters in relation to waste. This also includes water quality and the Litter Function.

Our Vets Section deals with all matters in relation to Dog and Horse Control and also our contracted functions with regards to Food Safety as provided in an agreement with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

Council Meetings 2022

A total of 15 Full Council meetings were held in 2022, which included a scheduled monthly meeting on the third Monday of each month, an annual meeting in June and a statutory budget meeting. There are usually no meetings held in August however a special council meeting was called for the 8th August in 2022. A special council meeting was also held in June 2022, to discuss conferring a civic honour.

Each of the Municipal Districts held 11 statutory monthly meetings, plus 1 annual meeting and 1 budget meeting. On top of this Ardee Municipal District held 2 special meetings.

Louth County Council Chairperson/Cathaoirleach - **Cllr Conor Keelan**

Municipal District of Dundalk Chairperson/Cathaoirleach - **Cllr Kevin Meenan**

Mayor of Drogheda and Borough District of Drogheda Chairperson/ Cathaoirleach - **Cllr Michelle Hall**

Municipal District of Ardee Chairperson/Cathaoirleach - **Cllr Paula Butterly**

Meetings of Louth County Council in 2022

Meetings of Louth County Council in 2022	
Monthly Meetings	11
Annual Meetings	1
Budget Meetings	1
Special Meetings	2
Corporate Policy Group (CPG)	11
Municipal District Meetings	
Borough District of Drogheda	11
Municipal District of Ardee	13
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	4
SPC - Planning & Support Infrastructure	4
SPC - Climate Action & Energy	3
SPC - Community, Quality of Life, & Creativity	4
Joint Policing Committees/Local Policing Forum (LPF)	
JPC Steering Group	3
LPF - Dundalk	4 including a public meeting
LPF - Drogheda	4 including a public meeting
LPF - Ardee	4 including a public meeting
Audit Committee	7

Council Meetings 2022

SPC ACTIVITIES 2022

There were 4 meetings of the Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC held in 2022. Agenda items included: Shop Front Grants, LECP Review, Tourism updates and Business Supports available.

There were 4 meetings of the Community, Quality of Life & Creativity SPC held in 2022. Agenda items included Decade of Centenaries Programme 2022, the new Louth Arts Development Plan, The County Museum, Healthy Ireland/Louth - Round 4 Planning Survey and Comhairle na nÓg Presentation.

There were 4 meetings of the Housing SPC held in 2022. Members had agreed a work programme in 2021 which was approved by the Corporate Policy Group. Agenda items included Private Rented Property Inspections, National Housing Strategy for Disabled Persons, Ardee Municipal District Security Programme initiative, Affordable Housing Scheme, Homelessness Services and Housing Delivery Action Plan 2022 - 2027.

There were 4 meetings of the Planning & Support Infrastructure SPC held in 2022. Agendas items included Casual Trading Bye-laws, Motorhome/ Campervan Bye-laws and the Road Safety Strategy.

There were 3 meetings of the Climate Action SPC held in 2022. Agenda items included a review of the Draft River Basin Management Plan, the Draft Litter Management Plan and the Climate Action Plan.



**CUSTOMER
SERVICES
2022
AT A GLANCE**



**134,695 INTERACTIONS
WITH CUSTOMERS INCLUDING
E-MAILS, CALLS AND PUBLIC
COUNTER QUERIES**

**COUNTERS WERE FULLY
OPERATIONAL IN 2022**

**ASSISTED 42,670
CUSTOMERS
AT THE PUBLIC COUNTER**



**ANSWERED 16,273 E-MAILS,
AN AVERAGE OF
65 PER DAY**



**75,752 PHONE CALLS WERE ANSWERED BY
CUSTOMER SERVICES – AN AVERAGE OF
303 CALLS PER DAY**

Civic Awards and Events

The Ardee Civic Awards, Dundalk Civic Awards and Drogheda Mayoral Awards are conferred 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.

Three Annual Civic Award ceremonies took place in 2022. The Borough District of Drogheda Mayoral

Awards 2021, were presented by Cllr. James Byrne, Mayor in the Highlanes Gallery, Drogheda. Cllr. Paula Butterly, Cathaoirleach of the Municipal District of Ardee presented the Ardee Civic Awards in Ardee Civic Offices, and Cathaoirleach of the Municipal District of Dundalk presented the Dundalk Civic Awards in the foyer of County Hall, Dundalk.

Recipients of awards are listed on our website https://www.louthcoco.ie/en/louth_county_council/civic-awards/



Ardee Civic Awards



Drogheda Mayoral Awards

Under Section 74 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended, a Local Authority may confer a civic honour on a distinguished person in such manner as it may determine. Following the holding of a special meeting of Louth County Council in June it was unanimously agreed by Elected Members present to bestow a Civic Honour on Amy Broadhurst, a Dundalk native, owing to her success in achieving a World Champion title as World Light-welterweight Champion, afterwards a reception took place in the foyer of County Hall. Civic Honours listings can be found on our website https://www.louthcoco.ie/en/louth_county_council/civic-awards/louth-civic-honours/.



Amy Broadhurst Civic Honour

Civic Awards and Events

As part of a National Recognition of those who had died of Covid and those who had valiantly worked through it, two Ceremonies of Remembrance and Reflection were held on Sunday the 20th of March 2022 in Dundalk and Drogheda. To keep the event inclusive of all citizens, an open invitation was issued to any person wishing to attend.

The event comprised of an outdoor brief solemn wreath laying ceremony of remembrance and reflection which allowed us to pause and remember those lost, and tied in with a National event in Dublin and other events held throughout the Country.



Drogheda Covid Memorial Event



Dundalk Covid Memorial Event

Louth County Council also accommodated the Volunteer Centre Recognition Awards for those Volunteers nominated by members of the public who assisted during COVID. A reception was held in the foyer of County Hall, first linking with and televising live a National Ceremony in Dublin Castle with Minister Joe O'Brien. A total of 87 Volunteers were recognised, demonstrating the overwhelming

great spirit of community and goodwill that exists in the County of Louth.

Louth County Council also contributed to and assisted with other ceremonies throughout the year including wreath laying at the Cenotaph in 12th November 2022 and an annual memorial for Halpin & Moran which took place on 13th February 2022.



Remembrance Sunday Event

A breakdown of costs expended by Louth County Council for civic awards is below:

Events 2022	Cost
Amy Broadhurst Civic Honour	€6,454.77
Ardee Civic Awards	€841.90
Covid Memorial Event	€6,993.05
Covid Volunteer Ceremony	€7,864.77
Dundalk Civic Awards 2020, 2021 & 2022	€779.70
Halpin Moran Memorial	€200.00
Drogheda Mayoral Awards	€1,327.75
Remembrance Sunday Memorial	€800.00
Total	€25,261.94

Climate Action

LOCAL AUTHORITY CLIMATE ACTION PLAN (LACAP)

Advanced planning, data collection and staffing were the main focus of the LACAP drafting process during the year. Recruitment commenced to appoint a Community Climate Action Officer and it is hoped this position will be filled in 2023. A baseline emissions inventory for County Louth was compiled and report was produced by the climate action team.

CLIMATE OUTREACH

The climate action team ran a schools colouring competition to highlight the first UN Sustainable goals week. Prizes were presented to the winners in each category by the two climate action graduates (Picture 1). A number of schools were visited during science week in collaboration with the library service and a presentation about climate change was given.



Jamie Nolan and Fiona Lennon, LCC Climate graduates and pupils from St. Malachys Girls School

EU MISSION, ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Louth County Council became one of the first Local Authorities in Ireland and one of the first 300 regions in Europe to join the EU Climate Adaptation Mission. This allows Louth County Council to access best practice guidance and EU-level cooperation in climate adaptation. The mission launch in Brussels was attended by the Louth County Council Climate Action Coordinator.



Launch of the EU Mission Adaptation to Climate Change in Brussels. Left, Prof. Shane Ward, DCU, Mission board member Right, Dr. Rory Sheehan, Climate Action Coordinator, LCC

LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL CLIMATE ADAPTATION STRATEGY

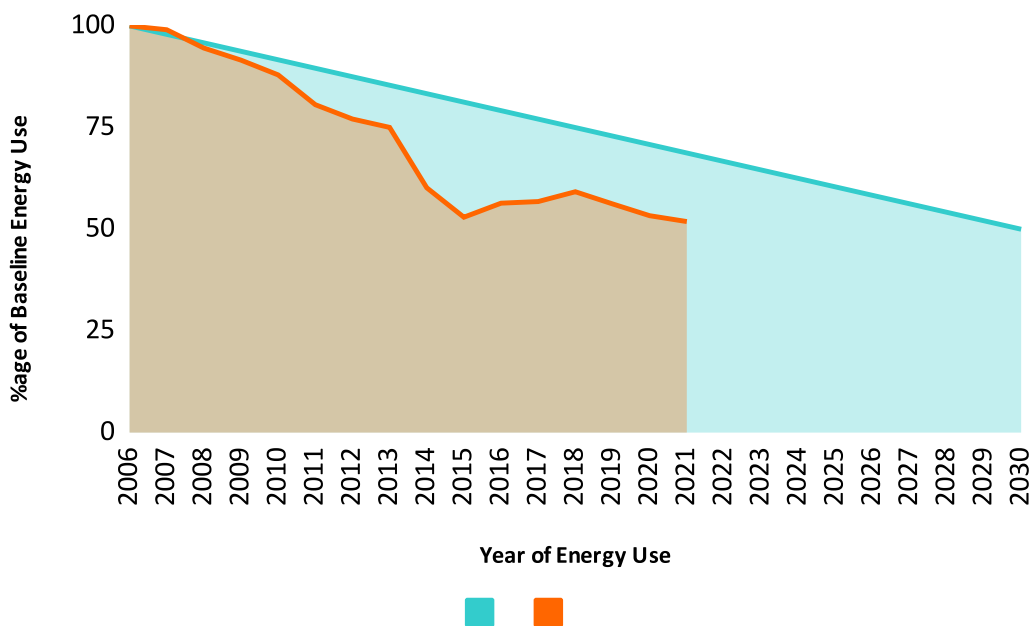
Reporting to the Department of Environment, Climate and Communication against the targets within the Louth County Council Climate Adaptation Strategy continued.

Environment & Facilities



Louth County Council reduced its energy use by over 48% since 2009, according to the Annual Report for Public Sector Bodies by SEAI (at the end of 2021, the Council used 51.89% of the energy it used in that baseline period, 2009).

Louth County Council Energy Use as a Percentage of Baseline (2009) Energy Use - SEAI AR



LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL'S ENERGY USE ENERGY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

ISO 50001 is an International Standard that enables organisations to establish the systems and processes necessary to improve energy performance, including energy efficiency, energy use, and consumption. The implementation of this standard is intended to lead to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, energy cost and other related environmental impacts, through systematic management of energy.

Louth County Council was previously certified under ISO 50001: 2018. The Council retained the certification of its Energy Management System (EnMS) in 2022.

9 Significant Energy Users (SEUs) are responsible for some 70% of the Council's energy use (the end of 2021), indicating that energy use by 4 SEUs that previously used that portion of energy, has reduced. The Council's Significant Energy Users are Public Lights, County Hall, Dundalk Town Hall, Council Transport Fleet, Dundalk Fire Station, Drogheda Fire Station, County Library, County Museum and County Archives Buildings.

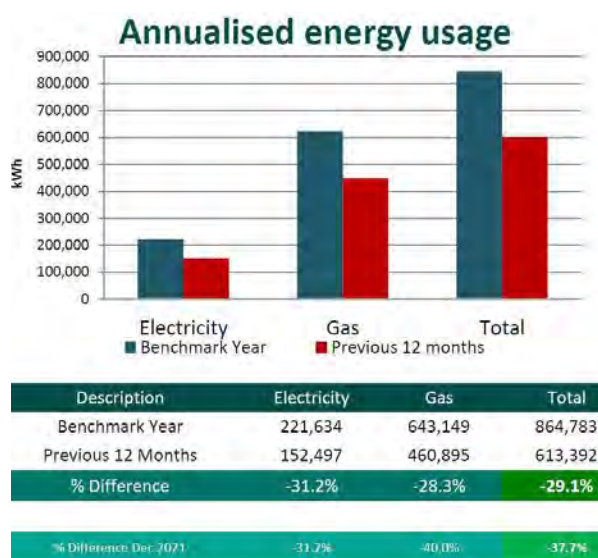
REDUCING ENERGY USE & PROMOTING ENERGY AWARENESS PARTNERSHIP WITH OPW FOR ITS OPTIMISING POWER AT WORK PROGRAMME

Louth County Council participated in the OPW's Optimising Power at Work Programme again in 2022. This national programme is a successful behaviour change campaign for public buildings. Louth County Council participates with the inclusion of two buildings - Dundalk Town Hall and County Hall which assists the Council to manage and improve energy use there.

Since joining the Optimising Power @ Work campaign in 2014 the Town Hall has seen the total annual unit consumption of energy decrease from 864,783 kWh

to 613,392 kWh; electricity consumption on site has reduced by 31%; The number of units of electricity has decreased from 221,634 kWh to 152,497 kWh; and gas consumption on site has reduced by 28%, from 643,149 kWh to 460,895 kWh (HDDC). Combined savings for the Town Hall relative to the Benchmark year 2014 has seen Energy consumption in this building **reduce by 29%**.

In the Town Hall, 259 MWh has been saved, along with 58 tonnes of carbon, resulting in **financial savings of €19,483** as compared to the benchmark year of 2014.

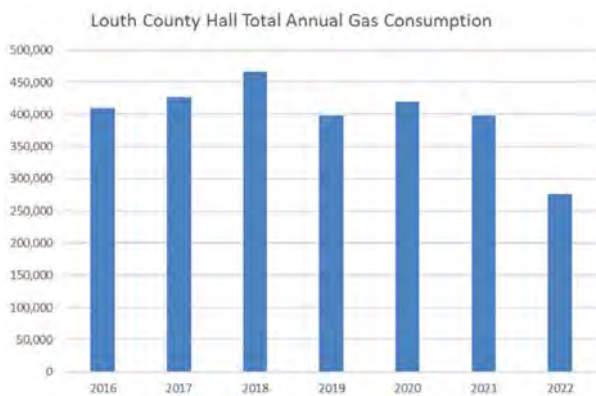


Increasing Energy Efficiency at Dundalk Town Hall

County Hall joined the Optimising Power @Work programme in 2016. Since then energy consumption in this building has reduced by 20. The total annual unit consumption of energy has decreased from 689,842 kWh to 553,394 kWh. Electricity consumption on site has reduced by 8% and Gas by 28%.

The last **12 months energy savings** versus the benchmark year have provided **financial savings of €9,061** from lower consumption of gas and electricity and 30 Tonnes of CO2 from entering the atmosphere.

The graph below shows County Hall a 28% reduction in gas consumption compared to the base year 2016 and a 41% reduction in gas consumption compared to 2018.



Reducing Gas Consumption at County Hall

Combined energy savings in 2022 for the Town Hall and County Hall buildings since joining the Optimising Power @Work programme are illustrated in the graphics below.

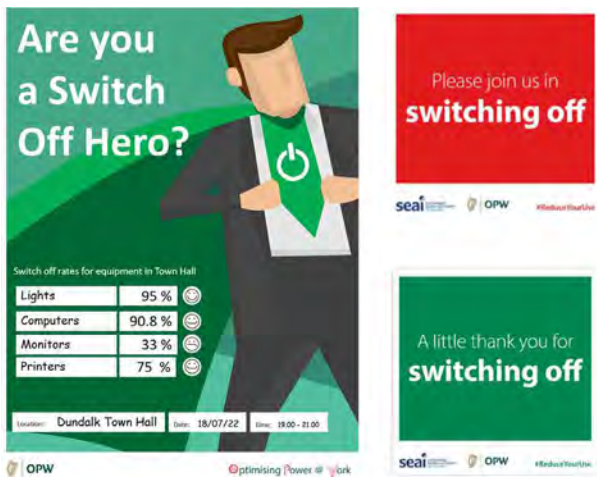


REDUCE YOUR USE CAMPAIGN

Louth County Council participated in the Government's **Reduce Your Use** energy efficiency campaign in 2022.

The Public Sector is challenged to take a leading role in reducing our nation's energy demand due to the current energy crisis. It is expected that this campaign can deliver 5-10% energy savings overall across the sector and up to 15% in buildings.

Louth County Council introduced a Heat Plan in 2022 to maintain the heat in its buildings at 19°C, in accordance with a directive from Central Government and as part of the Reduce your Use Campaign.



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.

Out of Hours Energy Use Audits were conducted in two buildings to raise awareness on equipment left on out of working hours. The results of these checks were very positive with staff showing great awareness to ensure equipment was switched off. The results of these audits were then disseminated to staff.

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.

Louth County Council also actively participated in the Reduce Your Use Campaign, by communicating energy message to staff - 'Monday Messages', 'Wednesday Webinars' and 'Weekend Wisdoms'.

To share knowledge and encourage staff engagement in energy saving, the Council maintains an Energy email account. This was very active in 2022. Emails sent to staff included relevant podcast recommendations, bank holiday weekend and Christmas energy shutdown campaigns, monthly



energy tips and energy saving information. The account is also used to receive suggestions from staff on actions that they think Louth County Council can undertake in buildings to save energy.

The 2022 Energy Newsletter was issued to All Staff with a focus on energy savings in the workplace and the home as an important aspect in our day to day habits and how we, as a leading Local Authority, are transitioning to a low carbon organisation. Details of the projects undertaken to help us in our transition over the last 12 months were highlighted, such as the purchasing of new EVs, the installation of new solar panels in the Town Hall and Archives buildings, A new heat pump in County Hall and the Animal Compound.

The newsletter was also filled with really useful tips on how staff can reduce their own energy and save money during these times of rising energy costs.

ENERGY EMISSIONS - GAP TO TARGET PLAN 2030

Louth County Council's energy emission target for 2030 is to **reduce carbon-related emissions by 1,000 tonnes.**

Staff are also developing a Gap to Target Plan to 2030 to identify suitable and sufficient multi-annual energy efficiency works to achieve a 51% reduction in carbon emissions by 2030. The implementation of those works will be undertaken as Annual Energy Action Plans in the Energy Management System. The improvements will focus on our highest energy users and be determined by energy emission savings and project return period for capital investment. The Council uses SEAI's Gap to Target online tool to assist in that work, supported by the SEAI-appointed Partnership Support Manager. For European citizens and the EU, this higher ambition will mean cleaner air, better health and lower healthcare costs, new, sustainable and local jobs, more sustainable food, a

lower energy import bill and more energy security, greener transport and more energy-efficient home.

In 2022, there was a change to SEAI's Community Energy Programme and grant funding offers for Council projects for the 2022 Energy Action Plan, as they were only confirmed at the end of 2022. Therefore, the implementation of those projects was extended somewhat and Council staff are progressing those energy works. In addition in 2022, Council staff developed and initiated a system for undertaking new energy audits in Council buildings to identify suitable energy projects for the Council's subsequent Annual Energy Action Plans.

VARCITIES (H2020 – FUNDED) PROJECT

Since September 2020, Louth County Council is a partner in the EU-funded project VARCITIES, which aims to implement visionary ideas and establish sustainable models for increasing the health and well-being of citizens in cities: children, young people, middle aged, and the elderly. This project is implemented by a consortium of 25 organisations, including 7 pilots, under the lead of the Technical University of Crete. Within the courtyard area of County Library / Museum Quarter in Dundalk, VARCITIES will support the implementation of a Pilot with 3 Visionary Solutions as part the regeneration of the area, aiming to create a diverse, accessible, safe, inclusive and high-quality green area that will increase well-being and health and deliver a fair and equitable distribution of the associated benefits.



Consortium partners biannual Progress Meetings

PROJECT UPDATE

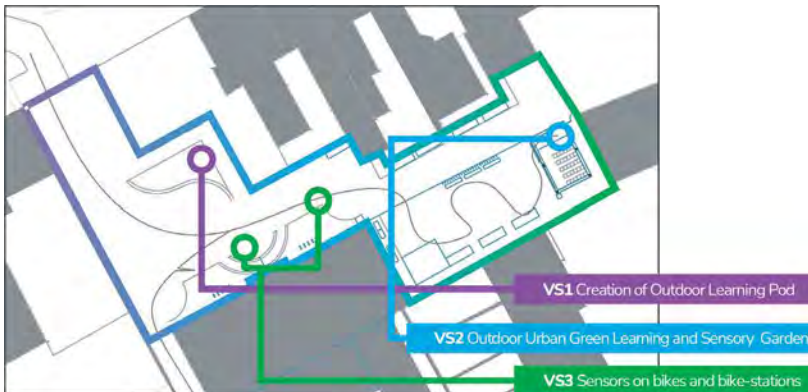
In 2022, VARCITIES entered its implementation phase and reached several goals:

- Several milestones were achieved, including:
 - In September 2022, Implementation and Execution Plans for the 7 Pilots were produced
 - The development of the Health & Well-Being platform, which collects data from across 7 Pilots, is over and the platform will go live in 2023
- A number of deliverables were submitted and approved, including an extensive report on the 28 sketched Visionary Solutions that marked the end of the co-identification and co-design process
- A video presenting the project was released: Click on this link to view: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CuF0nYgllTs>
- Communication on a number of platforms (Website, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram) ensure the visibility of the project, including that of Louth County Council, to several target audiences
 - Website: <https://www.varcities.eu/>
 - Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/VARCITIES>

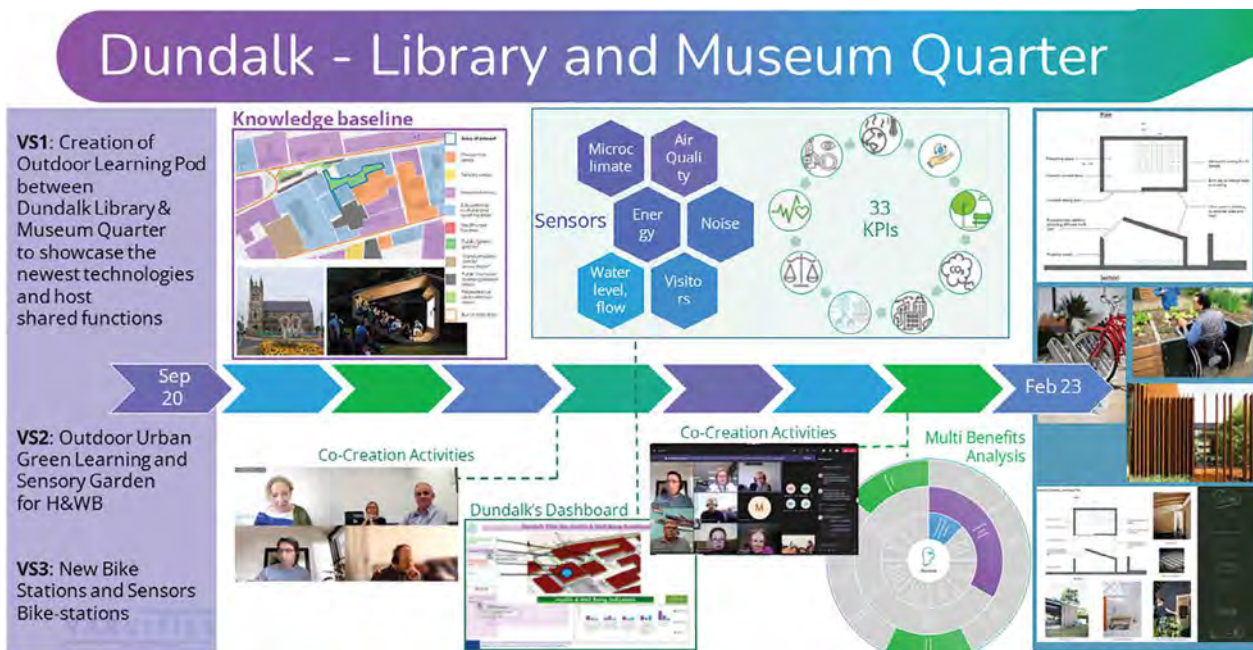
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/eu.varcities/>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/VARCITIES1>
- LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/69730315/>
- VARCITIES was presented at a dozen research conferences and professional events
- Consortium partners met twice for biannual Progress Meetings: once online in February due to COVID restrictions and in Malta in September 2022.



Stakeholder Engagement Meeting on 24th November 2022



The 3 Visionary Solutions Planned for Dundalks Library and Museum Courtyard



Varcities and Dundalk Pilot - The 3 Visionary , and the Milestones Achieved for 2022

GENCOMM INTERREG ENERGY STORAGE PROJECT PROJECT GENCOMM - GENERATING ENERGY SECURE COMMUNITIES

This project 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 updates 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.

Vets

FOOD SAFETY

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

There were 17 meat processing plants under the inspectorate of the veterinary section of Louth County Council, 2 abattoirs, 13 approved meat cutting/cooking plants and 2 registered meat plants.

In December, the veterinary team participated in an episode of RTE's 'Ear to the Ground', filmed at Commins' abattoir in Ardee.

ANIMAL CONTROL & WELFARE

The overall number of dogs entering the pound in 2022 was 290, an increase of 43% from 2021, which reflected a national upward development.

Another trend in recent years is the numbers of dogs surrendered to the pound by owners for various reasons, currently accounting for 45% of the dog intake, which is an example of responsible dog ownership.

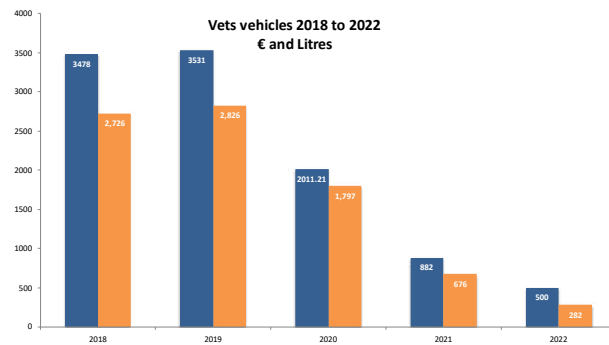
All dogs coming into the pound are wormed, vaccinated and assessed by our qualified staff. Approximately 50% of dogs coming into the pound were already micro-chipped, but any dog that is not is then chipped at the pound. Also encouraging is the reclaim and re-home rate of 97%, with 21% of these dogs being reclaimed by their owners.

Horse numbers continues to decrease, with only 3 horses seized in 2022 compared to 6 in 2021.

ANIMAL CONTROL FLEET AND DIESEL CONSUMPTION

The fleet consists of 2 electric vans and 1 jeep, which is required for use with the horsebox on horse control activities. The diesel consumption for 4 vehicles in 2018 was approximately 2,800L per year. Now with only 1 diesel vehicle in operation the diesel

consumption has reduced to less than 300L in 2022, resulting in an 89% reduction in diesel consumption since 2018.



Vets EV Vehicles



Mule seized in November 2022



Seamus the Airdale who was rehomed from the pound in July 2022



Pups rehomed from the pound in September 2022

BIODIVERSITY

Work continued throughout 2022 to encourage biodiversity at the Animal Compound, notably work on the pond at the Animal Compound in Dromiskin during March 2022.



Tadpoles in the Pound pond

Human Resources

2022 was a particularly busy year for Human Resources. In particular, activity in the Recruitment section was significant with considerable effort being made to minimise vacancies and ensure positions are filled in a timely manner. To this end, 38 recruitment competitions were held during the year, resulting in 94 new staff members joining the organisation and a further 133 existing members of staff being appointed to new positions within the Council.

In addition to bringing on board new staff, the Council also places considerable emphasis on up skilling and developing existing employees. Work by our Training Section continues to grow and a total of

146 training courses were provided in 2022, equating to almost 3 courses each week on average. In total, 869 staff were able to avail of some form of training. Applications for support through the Training and Assistance Programme grew significantly in 2022 with 38 staff commencing 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, while the Council's wellbeing initiatives will be significantly expanded in 2023.

Competitions	38
New staff appointments (joiners)	94
Total staff appointments	227
Retirements/Resignations	61
Number of Training Courses Held	146
Number of Staff Trained	869
Number of Training Days	1518
Number of Training & Assistance Applications Received	38



Group Induction of new staff who commenced in 2022



Group Induction of new staff who commenced in 2022

Community

MEMBERSHIP OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LCDC) IN 2022

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 (Chairperson LCDC)
Louth County Council Official	Riona McCoy (replaced Thomas McEvoy, ratified by LCC September 2022)
Louth Meath ETB	Sadie Ward McDermott
DSP	Anne Keeley
HSE	Bridie Pepper
Private Sector	
Louth Leader Partnership	Ciaran Reid
Community & Voluntary Interests	Alison Quail
Community & Voluntary Interests	Joanne Finnegan
Social Inclusion	Bernardine Quinn
Social Inclusion	Carol Murphy
Environment	Lisa Doyle replaced Elizabeth O'Reilly, ratified by LCC April 2022
Farming	John Carroll
Chamber of Commerce Dundalk	Una McGoey replaced Sean Farrell, ratified by LCC October 2022
Chamber of Commerce Drogheda	Steven Rice
Louth Volunteer Centre	Kayleigh Mulligan

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 2022 via Zoom platform and oversaw the following body of work administrated and facilitated through the Social and Community Office of Louth County Council.

Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2018 - 2023

- In 2022 SICAP supported 75 community groups and registered 1,045 individuals.
- 75 community groups received developmental supports
- 21 Local Community Groups received small grants
- 1,045 individuals engaged in lifelong learning and labour market supports
- 5 individuals were supported into employment
- 100 individuals referred by the Department of Social Protection were supported to establish their own business through the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance
- 64 individuals received education grants
- 28 individuals received enterprise grants
- 4 Social Enterprise received a social enterprise grant



Maeve Harkin Social Inclusion Manager (LLD), Christina King Education & Youth Coordinator (LLD), Tara Stacey Projects Officer (LLD), Johdi Quinn (Lecturer DkIT) with graduates of our Back to Education Access Course Headstart, in collaboration with DkIT, on Wednesday 22nd June 2022, the class included 4 students from Ukraine

Leader Programme

The LEADER Programme 2014-2020 was launched in County Louth in February 2017 with a project budget of €4.5million to be allocated to projects under 3 measures:

- Economic and Enterprise Development and Job Creation
- Social Inclusion
- Rural Environment

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 following high-level priorities:

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 Local Development is the Implementing Partner and Louth County Council is the Lead Financial Partner for the LEADER Programme in County Louth
- The Local Action Group (LAG) approved funding of €1,466,597.84 in 2022, grant aid awarded ranged from €5,031.75 to €99,900.00
- 38 contracts were issued to project promoters throughout the County
- A number of training programmes were rolled out in 2022 including Appreciation of the Hills, River Invasive Species Training and Plastics Recycling with over 200 participants taking part in training courses
- In May 2022 a Climate Awareness Training Day took place with over 70 in attendance
- Funding of €838,697 was granted to Enterprise Development projects in County Louth
- The LAG awarded, under the Activity/Adventure Tourism Measure, a grant of €5,031.75 to Dundalk Chamber of Commerce which will enable them to host the Cross Border Tourism Conference in 2023
- Grant aid was awarded to a number of wide-ranging community projects including the upgrading works at Lannleire Pavilion in Dunleer and the 5th Louth Buion Setanta Scout Hall in Dundalk

- A total of 58 Expressions of Interest for Funding were received in 2022
- The number of contracts issued in the LEADER Programme since it commenced in 2017 is 216
- The Innovating Communities Co-Operation project with Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Cavan, Monaghan and Louth continues to be rolled out in the 6 counties
- The Local Authority in their role as lead financial partner continued to carry out Article 48 checks on all project application and claims



Official Opening of the Cara Cancer Centre at Williamsons Place, Dundalk in October 2022.

Joe McGuinness - Chief Officer, Louth LCDC, Ciaran Reid- Chief Executive, Louth Local Development and Mary O'Neill- Rural Development Programme Manager pictured with the Cara Cancer Centre Committee. The project received LEADER funding of €197,816

LEADER PROGRAMME IN NUMBERS

	Total
Expressions of Interest (EOI) Received	58
EOI eligible for Funding	56
Ineligible for Funding	2
Contracts Issued	38
Food Contracts Issued	0
Claims Processed	54
Website Visits	2585
LEADER Funded Projects	€1,063,095.74
EURI Funded Projects	€403,502.10
Total	€1,466,597.84



An aerial view of the Biodiversity Sensory Garden at the Abacus School in Drogheda. The project received funding of €32,381 from the LEADER programme

Louth Public Participation Network (PPN) in 2022

HIGHLIGHTS OF LOUTH PPN IN 2022

- Increased membership from 513 in 2021 to 522 in 2022
- Secretariat meetings have continued to be held on a monthly-basis
- Online training and capacity building courses delivered to PPN member groups in 2022 include:
 - Digital Graphic Design (Canva)
 - Writing Effective Funding Applications
 - Annual Report Writing
 - Charities Governance Code Compliance
 - Community Radio
- Municipal District Meetings were held in-person across the County in Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee for the first time since COVID19 restrictions were introduced
- The first in-person all-County Plenary Meeting was held since the introduction of COVID19 restrictions
- Collaboration with Louth County Council for the "Increasing the Diversity of Women in Local Government" seminar event which took place on 27th September 2022
- Louth PPN held their annual Community and Voluntary Awards on 10th November in Bellingham Castle
- Louth PPN undertook public workshops held across the 3 municipal districts of County Louth in relation to the Community Well-Being Statement. The input received from these sessions informed the development of the Draft Community Well-Being Statement which is due to be approved in 2023
- In response to the increasing cost of energy Louth PPN held an Energy Conservation workshop in Dunleer on Thursday the 15th December 2022 in collaboration with Age-Friendly.
- Louth PPN successfully delivered on 3 thematic projects during 2022 under the themes of Youth, Environment and Wellness / Well-Being

For further information on Louth PPN please visit our website: www.louthppn.ie or sign up to our weekly newsletter (the Friday Communiqué).



Recipients of PPN Award, Culture Connect along with Joan Martin and Conor Keelan of Louth County Council



Members of Louth PPN Secretariat at 2022 PPN Awards

INCREASING THE DIVERSITY OF WOMEN IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT EVENT IN SEPTEMBER 2022



COMMUNITY WELL-BEING WORKSHOPS



Age Friendly



The Super Connectors Project was shortlisted for the Age Friendly Ireland Recognition and Achievement Awards 2022 under the communications category. The project was rolled out during the pandemic and the initial concept involved providing and gifting/regifting smart devices to older family members, friends or neighbours as Christmas gifts and showing them how to use them. This developed into a transferable model of assistance, facilitating older people to use online tools for personal, health and social reasons. The initiative eventually grew to assist residents of nursing homes, day care service users, informal carers, Men's Sheds active retirement groups, older farmers and new migrant residents to connect with loved ones during the pandemic.

Louth County Council, Age Friendly Ireland and Creative Lives held an Autumn Medley of Creativity in Ardee Parish Centre on 27th September 2022.

The event provided a number of free creative workshops for older people such as painting, pottery, flower arranging, creative writing, an holistic workshop and a dance workshop. The event was really well attended with up to 150 older people from all over County Louth taking part in the event. The participants were entertained by The Knockbridge Choir, The Castlebellingham Ukuele Band and Comhaltas. A number of local creative and community groups exhibited their arts/crafts and provided advice on how to engage in creative activities in the local community. The event was part of Age Friendly Louth's celebration of positive Ageing Week which takes place from 25th September 2022 - 1st October 2022.



Flower arranging participants at the Autumn Medley of Creativity in Ardee Parish Centre

Age Friendly Ireland provided training to Age Friendly Louth staff on the application and accreditation process for Age Friendly Libraries. Library Staff in all 5 libraries are now trained. The Louth Age Friendly Program Manager attended training on running and organising Older People's Council's (Forum). Age Friendly Louth staff attended training on OPC Guidelines. Age Friendly Louth will be commencing a campaign to recruit new members onto the Older People's Council (Forum) in County Louth over the coming months.



Age Friendly Louth supported the Drogheda Lions Club Tea Dance

Age Friendly Louth welcomed over 75 older people to an Open Day in the Crowne Plaza Hotel Dundalk on 5th December 2022. The aim of the open day was to help reinvigorate the Older People's Council in County Louth after the pandemic, to welcome back current members and invite new members to join the OPC. There was a packed programme of presentations, surveys and workshops on the day and issues discussed at the workshop included safety and security in home & community and how best to communicate with older people. The Older Peoples Council provides a platform for older people to actively participate in their community. The Older People's Council will work closely with the Age Friendly Team in County Louth to deliver the Age Friendly Programme and prepare a new Age Friendly Strategy for County Louth in 2023.

Age Friendly Louth, supported by the team from the Community Office in Louth County Council packed over 500 Christmas bags for older and vulnerable



Age Friendly Louth Older People's Council Open Day

people in County Louth. The Christmas bags included a selection of treats and goodies which were delivered by An Garda Síochána, Meals on Wheels, Drogheda Homeless Aid, Alone, Disability Louth, Redeemer Family Resource Centre, The Birches and Drogheda Alzheimer's Society and our other partners to older and vulnerable people across County Louth before Christmas.



Age Friendly Team and Community Team in Louth County Council who took part in Christmas Bag pack



EU_SHAFE ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Phase I of the project ran until the end of July 2022. During that, the project partners focused on creating and finalising our Action Plans. Louth's Action Plan, "Addressing Ageism in County Louth" was validated by the Joint Secretariat in June.

In the second half of the year, Louth EU_SHAFE worked with TU Dublin to develop a survey on perceptions of ageing and ageism. The survey covered self-perception of ageing, other people's attitude to ageing and structural attitudes to ageing in the work place, services and the media.

We launched our survey at the Older People's Council Open Day on the 5th December 2022. The survey was available online and in hard copy at local libraries and ran until mid-January 2023. The survey has been very successful with 712 submissions.

2022 has been a busy year for the project and we are looking forward to the next phase, which is analysing the data from the survey and creating a submission to the new Local Economic and Community Plan.



Healthy Ireland

HEALTHY IRELAND

2022 saw the completion of the Healthy Ireland Round 3 programme which helped organisations throughout the County promote health and wellbeing as well addressing issues during the Covid 19 pandemic.

HEALTHY IRELAND FUND ROUND 4 2023-2025

The Healthy Ireland Public Consultation for Round 4 was completed in 2022. The information gained from a survey and focus groups was used at an "Inspiration Station" co-design workshop, where stakeholders collaborated to identify the Health and Welfare priorities for the County.

The Healthy Ireland local strategy for County Louth will be put to the LCDC for approval, along with the terms of reference for a Health and Wellbeing subgroup to oversee the coordination and monitor the implementation of the programme for the next 3 years.



Community Support Team

During 2022, the community support team continued to support and interact with Schools, Community Groups, Residents Associations, Tidy Towns Committees and Business Sectors.



Dundalk Summer Clean

There was participation in the National Spring Clean month in April, National Tree week in March, facilitating the Gum Litter Taskforce pop up in July and providing a continuous supply of litter picking equipment to groups throughout the County. A Spring Clean Litter picking event took place in March in Drogheda in collaboration with Meath County Council and in July a Summer Clean litter picking event took place, with the support of V&W recycling centres. As a result there were many new engagements from individuals and new groups all of whom wanted to participate more within their environments and communities.



Drogheda Spring clean event with Harmony Heights Volunteers

Grant schemes to assist these groups to realise their projects were provided, with a new application process of an on-line portal being established for the Tidy Towns grant scheme. Actions were also built into all the schemes to encourage biodiversity/pollinator friendly projects, with additional weighting towards more sustainable practices to promote and raise awareness on the importance of tackling climate change.



Flower bed at Clarkes memorial garden, the Fairgreen TT project scheme funded under the Tidy Towns Project Scheme

A new online information session was devised during 2022 to offer support to Tidy Towns groups entering the National Tidy Town competition. In addition, support group meetings were held with Tidy Town representatives, senior officials, area engineers and other relevant staff members to offer support and advice.

The community, individuals and business sectors were also celebrated with a return to the "Louth In Bloom" competition this year with an in-person awards ceremony being held in Bellingham Castle in October 2022. This year entrants had an opportunity to enter through an online portal as well as the traditional methods. The event was a great success.



Louth in Bloom Awards Ceremony celebrating communities & volunteers in County Louth

Louth County Council was also represented in the Pride of Place competition this year by the “Reddoor Project” and “Creative Spark”, both putting in a remarkable performance and impacting positively on the Judges who visited each of the projects in person. Congratulations to the “Reddoor Project”, runners up in the community wellbeing initiative category and received their award at Gala event held on 21st January 2023, in Dublin.



The Reddoor Project welcomes Pride of Place Judges to County Louth

The Green Schools Programme saw 16 flags being awarded across County Louth in the 2021/2022 school year, with virtual assessments being facilitated and supported by the team throughout the year.

Climate action will be an integral focus throughout all the programmes we deliver in 2023, to demonstrate best practice to all the sectors we currently support. In particular, an emphasis on engagement of communities on all aspects of the climate agenda will be a priority and what direct actions communities can take to tackle and improve their areas.

A programme of work in 2023 will include all of the above and in addition will deliver continued support by way of grant aid and other forms of assistance to Residents Associations, Tidy Towns, Community Groups, Schools and Business Sectors in accessing some of the following local and national funding schemes:

CLAR, Town & Village Renewal Scheme, Town & Village Building Acquisitions measure Scheme, Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme, LA Prevention Network Programme, Anti-Litter & Anti Graffiti Awareness Scheme and Community Environment Action Fund.

BEACHES

In 2022 Louth County Council succeeded, once again, in achieving Blue Flag status for the beaches at Clogherhead, Port and Templetown. In addition the Green Coast flag was also awarded for Seapoint Beach at Termonfeckin. The Blue and Green Flags are among the world’s most recognised eco-labels and they continue to raise environmental awareness and promote sound environmental management of beaches around the world. The awards recognise beaches for their clean environment, excellent water quality and natural beauty.

A substantial upgrade of public convenience facilities at Gyles Quay and Omeath has been completed

following a successful application for funding under the CLÁR scheme. Carlingford also saw a total refurbishment to the public conveniences under the Town & Village Scheme.

Two new beach huts have been purchased and are planned to be installed on Templetown Beach and on Port Beach during 2023.

There are a number of Clean Coast groups operating countywide and the volunteers work in partnership with the Council to ensure that beaches are presented in good condition.



Educational activities at Templetown Blue flag Beach

COMHAIRLE NA nÓG

Dundalk Comhairle partnered up with Dundalk Credit Union and completed the CluedIn training programme last month which is designed to help young people understand personal finances and adopt good financial habits for the future.

On the 12th April 2022 Louth Comhairle met with the Honorary Consul to Ireland from Uganda, Dr Sylvia Ketate Gavigan at the launch of the Ugandan Art Exhibition in An Táin Arts Centre. The young people organised the exhibition to raise funds for the young people in Uganda and hope to build on the contacts for the future.



Ugandan Art Exhibition, in Dundalk

DEPARTMENT OF RURAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES FUND UNDER THE COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME

Municipal District	Number of Applications	Amount
Ardee	19	€60,195.70
Drogheda	22	€103,625.34
Dundalk	44	€127,262.96
Total	85	€291,084

Louth Comhairle na nÓg representative Kaitlin Gaddy was selected to sit on a country wide policy development committee to explore the issue of bullying in schools. This will involve six months work facilitating consultations with peers, speaking to the Department of Education and presenting to various committees in Dail Eireann.

JOINT LOUTH MEATH MIGRANT INTEGRATION FORUM

The purpose of the joint Louth Meath Migrant Integration Forum is to:

- oversee the implementation of the Louth Meath Joint Integration Strategy, advise on priorities presented and provide a collaborative solution focussed approach to integration in Louth and Meath
- maximise a cross county collaborative response to delivering a fully integrated strategy that benefits both the new and host communities
- examine all potential opportunities leading from national and regional plans and funding streams to progress the joint Louth Meath Integration Strategy whenever they present themselves
- Louth Libraries has a collection of booklets, brochures and information in a number of languages available to migrants
- Facilitated a successful roadshow in Mosney on 17th of June 2022 along with Louth Library Service. Promoted the eServices to approximately 50 people directly and registered 22 new members on the day
- Meath and Louth Libraries hosted author Gillian Perdue in an after-school session in Mosney for the Children's Book Festival 2022

Meetings have been held quarterly in 2021 and 2022 with the first in-person meeting held in Meath in Buvinda House, Navan in June 2022.

Some of the activities the Louth Meath Migrant Integration Forum members have supported to date include:

- Provision of conversational English classes
- Providing support and training for employability skills
- Flexibus provides regular services for Ukrainian's residing in Drumcar to Dundalk and Drogheda return
- Louth Arts Office & Culture Connect supported program the first Louth World Africa Day
- Louth County Council has established a Ukrainian Humanitarian Support Team as a response to the Ukrainian Emergency. The team is assisting with accommodation pledges and has established a webpage with information for newly arrived Ukranina's on accommodation, health and education supports

Sport Facilities

To develop, operate and facilitate the use of Louth County Council's Sports Facilities, and to provide opportunities for all in the community of Louth to participate in Sport and Physical Activity, in a safe and inclusive manner.

SPORTS FACILITIES ATTENDANCE FIGURES 2022

Dundalk Sports Centre	
Children's participation in Soccer Activities	>18000 participants
Adult's participation in Soccer Activities	>5000 participants
Children's participation in Athletics Sessions	>1500 participants
Children's participation in Multi Sports Activities (after-schools activities/camps)	>2000 participants
Individuals with a disability participation in Multi Sports Activities	>1500 participants
Participation in Fitness Classes	>1200 participants
Adults participation in Multi Sports Activities	>750 participants
Active Adult Programmes	>500 participants
Children's participation in Basketball	>3500 participants
Lourdes Stadium	
Casual Track users	>1000 participants
Bowling Green users	>1300 participants
Clubs and Groups Facilitated	>500 Hours

Dundalk Sports Centre in 2022

DUNDALK SPORTS CENTRE ACHIEVE GOLD NQS AWARD

Dundalk Sports Centre has achieved an Outstanding (Gold) NQS Award for the 4th year running and 5th Award in 5 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 NQS award is the only industry specific award for the leisure, health and fitness sector in Ireland.

AFTER SCHOOLS PROGRAMMES:

DSC Futsal and Basketball activities ran weekly in 2022.

SUMMER CAMPS 2022

Multisport Camps x 3

Basketball Senior / Junior Camps x 2

Basketball Development Camps x 3



SISTER SISTERS CLUB

Social Basketball Programme for Teenage Girls returned to DSC in 2022.

MINDFUL MOVEMENT

Physical Activities for People with Intellectual Disabilities returned to DSC in 2022 following a long absence due to Covid19 with 40-60 weekly participants including Santa attending for Christmas Activities.

MIND-FUL DANCE

New Dance Initiative for people with Intellectual Disabilities every Monday.

ACTIVE SENIORS ACTIVITIES

Weekly Activities held in DSC for senior adults.



FITNESS CLASSES

DSC provided a variety of fitness classes throughout the year.

Activities were held weekly in DSC for all abilities.



DSC BASKETBALL

Youth Social Basketball programmes were developed by DSC with assistance from Dundalk Ravens Basketball Club including a 3v3 in-house tournament in December.



WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

DSC & North East Thunder host wheelchair basketball activities every Friday night for both children & adults.



WALKTOBER

In conjunction with Smarter Travel the Sport Facilities staff coordinated this year's Walktober Challenge. Walktober is a fun and free annual step challenge to help build team spirit and encourage colleagues to stick on their shoes and get walking. It is a great way to encourage a regular walking routine while encouraging long-term physical activity. 4 teams in total took part from Louth County Council and 2 of those teams are from the Sports Section.

Lourdes Stadium in 2022

IMPROVEMENT WORKS AT LOURDES ATHLETIC STADIUM

In 2022 improvement works across the facility have continued with new car park lights fitted and a new tow board in the shot put circle.

Green footprint hawthorn trees were also planted at the Lourdes Stadium in December 2022 as part of stadium improvements.

BOOT CAMPS

In 2022, 3 outdoor boot camps were delivered at the Lourdes Stadium Drogheda.

BUGGY BUDDIES

Buggy Buddies is 6 week exercise programme for parents, careers or guardians of babies/toddlers to get involved in Physical Activity meet other individuals and share experiences while not having to stress about childcare as the little ones can take part in their buggies.

AFTER SCHOOL ATHLETICS

An After Schools Athletics Programme was delivered for the first time at the Lourdes Stadium. The programme, which started on Wednesday 30th November 2022 ran for 4 weeks every Wednesday from 4:15pm - 5:30pm. This programme was aimed at secondary school students aged 13-17 with an interest in athletics, who want to further develop athletics knowledge and technical ability, who want to get extra practice or who want to learn and try different athletics disciplines. The programme consisted of javelin, shot put, long jump, high jump and relays.

BOOMERANG CAFÉ 'BE ACTIVE' SUMMER CAMP

Boomerang Youth Café attended the Lourdes Stadium on Monday 11th and Thursday 14th July to use the bowling green and athletics track as part of their 'Be Active' summer camp. The children tested their athletic track and field skills to include: hurdles, long jump, high jump and relays while also enjoying learning and playing outdoor bowls.

OUTDOOR BOWLS TOURNAMENT

The Lourdes Stadium hosted an all-weather outdoor bowls tournament on Wednesday 20th July 2022 with 34 bowlers in attendance.

EVENTS AT LOURDES STADIUM 2022

Through the year the Lourdes Stadium hosted several events. These ranged from Athletics Louth Competitions, Memorial Walks and School Sports Days.

Louth Local Sports Partnership

2022 was an exciting year for Louth Local Sports Partnership with a total of 224 programmes, events and training courses delivered to 19,021 people across County Louth.

LSP OVERVIEW 2022

PARTICIPATION

During 2022, Louth LSP delivered 178 events and projects targeting an increase in participation in sport and physical activity within clubs, schools and community organisations at local level in County Louth. These programmes included activities such as: Cycling, Basketball, Swimming, Kayaking, Walking, Football, Gaelic Games, Yoga, Pilates and Nordic Walking, to name a few.

SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURES

During 2022, Louth LSP provided grant funding totalling €71,286 to 54 sports clubs and community groups through Small Club Grants and Covid19 restart grants to assist them to develop sustainable structures and increase participation in sport and physical activity.

The Covid19 restart grant funding allowed clubs and community sporting organisations to begin their activities again after Covid 19 in a safe environment in compliance with Covid19 regulations.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In 2022, Louth LSP facilitated 46 workshops and courses for 678 coaches and volunteers in Louth to improve governance and capacity for sports clubs and community groups. These workshops included some of the following topics: Safeguarding, Disability Inclusion, Coaching Teenage Girls, Coaching Children, Autism in Sport, Learn to Cycle, Inclusive Learn to Cycle, Walk Leaders Training, FAI PDP 1 and 2.

INFORMATION HUB

During 2022, Louth LSP provided information and guidance in relation to sport and physical activity in Louth in a variety of different ways. 142,823 people

visited the Louth Local Sports Partnership. In 2022, 2,496 people followed our Facebook page and 235 people followed our Instagram page. We developed 12 newspaper adverts or articles in the local press and developed 5 information resource booklets with specific information and advice on sport and physical activity.

HER OUTDOORS 2022

Louth Local Sports Partnership, in collaboration with stakeholders and partners across the County delivered a hugely successful programme of opportunities for females of all ages and abilities to enjoy Physical Activity and Sport in the outdoors as part of Sport Ireland's HER Outdoors week national initiative from August 8th – 14th 2022.

The aim of HER Outdoors week is to celebrate and encourage more females to get out active in the outdoors while also bringing visibility to the opportunities for females to get involved in outdoor physical activity in their local communities.





In Louth, over 400 females participated in 17 different activities across the week including: Open Water Swimming, Beach Yoga, Nordic Walking, Kayaking, Stand Up Paddle Boarding, Hill Walking, River Rowing, Cycling, and a Teenage Girls in Active in the Outdoors programme.

BIKE WEEK 2022

Louth Local Sports Partnership in conjunction with Louth County Council and Transport for Ireland delivered a hugely successful programme of events and opportunities for children, adults and families to enjoy cycling across Louth as part of National Bike Week which took place from 14th – 22nd May 2022.

In Louth, National Bike Week featured over 40 programmes and events catering for beginners, leisure cyclists, families and the more serious cycling enthusiasts.

Bike week endeavours to attract and encourage cyclists, particularly new cyclists of all ages and abilities to discover the benefits and the enjoyment of cycling while also availing of on-going sustainable cycling opportunities within the County.

CLUB & COMMUNITY GRANT FUNDING

In 2022, Louth LSP, grant support funding to 54 sports clubs and community groups to develop sustainable opportunities to increase participation in sport and physical activity within communities across the County. The grants were administered through Small Club Grant funding and Covid19 restart funding.



SPORTS LEADERSHIP AWARDS 2022

Louth Local Sports Partnership delivered three Level 1 Sport Leaders Awards in 2022 in Dundalk Sports Centre and Drogheda with 75 teenagers taking part.

The programme works with teenagers aged 13-17 who wish to develop their leadership skills through sport and physical activity. The young leaders also complete voluntary coaching hours within their own sports club or community groups as part of the programme.

GAA ALL-STARS INCLUSION PROGRAMME

Louth Local Sports Partnership supported the ongoing development of GAA All Stars clubs in Louth working directly with GAA clubs in the County to develop their structures and capacity to create a sustainable GAA All Stars programme. The All Stars programme was developed for children with disabilities and additional needs. The main objective of the programme is to ensure that children are provided with an opportunity to participate in Gaelic

Games in clubs focusing on inclusion and enjoyment in a safe environment.

8 clubs in Louth have currently developed and rolled out their GAA All Stars programme with 3 more clubs in the early stages of developing their programme for 2023.

All 8 clubs participated in the National GAA Inclusion Day in Croke Park in August 2022.

Louth LSP supports the clubs to ensure that all of the coaches adhere to best practices and are all Garda vetted have received child protection training, GAA inclusion module training, and completed disability training training.



Waste and Environmental Services

WASTE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Responsibilities of Louth County Council's Waste Management & Environment section include – waste regulation and enforcement, landfill aftercare, litter enforcement, air quality, noise and water regulation and climate change 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 and statistics for 2022:

- 2,046 environmental inspections completed
- 1,560 litter complaint investigations
- €17,860 in litter fines received
- 324 litter fixed penalty notices issued
- 11 Septic tank inspections completed
- 120 Bathing Water samples taken
- 120 River Quality samples taken
- 4 projects completed under the "Anti-Dumping" Initiative
 - x2 mattress and sofa amnesty events
 - A community summer clean up event
 - A site clean-up of a garden allotment
- 4 roadside waste activity checkpoints completed
- 247 IBCs of dumped illegal diesel sludge collected
- Tier 2 and 3 assessments commenced and completed at unlicensed landfills in the County.





3

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The Directorate of Social Development has key responsibilities in delivering Housing and Cultural Services.

Housing Services deliver a myriad of services designed to meet the needs of housing clients through social housing allocations and support services including rents administration, homeless services, housing maintenance and delivery of the capital programme set out in the Housing Delivery Action Plan.

Cultural Services provide accessible services through the County Library branch network and ever improving virtual services, Archives and County Museum. A wide range of Arts initiatives are also supported by way of direct and collaborative delivery models.





Comhairle Contae **Lú**
Louth County Council





**HOUSING
SERVICES
AT A GLANCE**



**€13,762,267
MILLION
IN RENTAL INCOME**



**3117
HAP TENANCIES
SUPPORTED**



**511 HOMES
ALLOCATED**



**227
NEW HOMES DELIVERED**



**4,692 ON COUNCIL WAITING
LIST, A DECREASE FROM 2021**



**185 ASB
INVESTIGATIONS**

Housing

HOMELESS SERVICES 2022

Louth County Council's Homeless Service provides assistance to both single individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless in County Louth. In 2022, 45 homeless individuals were allocated a social/voluntary property and 92 availed of assistance from Homeless Services in accessing private rented accommodation under the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Scheme.

Louth County Council, in conjunction with our partners in the NGO sector, continues to provide supported temporary accommodation for homeless individuals and families.

At the end of 2022 there were a total of 125 adults availing of emergency accommodation in County Louth. The number of families in emergency accommodation stood at 25, including 43 adults and 56 children.

HOUSING FIRST

Louth County Council continues to lead the implementation of the Housing First model in the North East Region (Louth, Monaghan and Cavan) as part of the National Implementation Plan for Housing First. The Peter McVerry Trust have been contracted to provide the service on behalf of the North East Local Authorities since 2020. By year end of 2022, 27 individuals in County Louth were successfully placed in supported tenancies utilising this model.



Housing First Tenancy Sinead Corrigan LCC, Karen Dullaghan and Aileen Murphy PMVT

HOUSING ALLOCATIONS

A total of 511 allocations were made in 2022 of which 239 were Local Authority homes and 272 were provided by Approved Housing Bodies. In addition 49 transfer requests were facilitated during the year.

PRIVATE RENTAL INSPECTIONS

The private rental inspection team continued its work during 2022 which is enforcing the Housing (Standards for Rented Houses) Regulations 2019.

In total 846 rented dwellings were inspected with the vast majority of dwellings found to be not compliant with the standards. A total of 760 Advisory Notices, 79 Improvement Notices and 5 Prohibition Notices were issued in 2022.

HOUSING CAPITAL

In 2022 under the 'Housing for All' Action Plan Louth County Council delivered 227 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 Approved Housing Bodies.

In September 2022 Louth County Council welcomed the completion of Cox's Demesne Phase 2B, Dundalk. This Scheme comprised 22 units with a mix of unit types: 1 and 2 bed apartments, 2, 3 and 4 bed houses (bungalows and two storey). All units are A-Rated energy efficient residential homes.

During 2022 Louth County Council acquired Turnkey housing units in developments such as Park Green, Coulter Place in Dundalk, Stoneylane in Ardee and Ellwood, Ballymakenny Road in Drogheda (Phase 1). All houses in these developments are A-Rated energy efficient homes.

In 2022 Louth County Council also commenced construction works on the Local Authority scheme at Doire Beag, Collon (6 units) and a single house construction at Gort Uaine in Clogherhead. Both of these developments are due to be completed in 2023.

Louth County Council's Capital Housing Section in conjunction with their appointed Architect Design Teams continue to progress the designs of new residential schemes such as Mount Avenue, Dundalk (93 units), Boice Court, Drogheda (72 units) and Muirhevnamore Infill, Dundalk (11 units). It is expected that these Schemes will progress to construction in 2023.



Turnkey Units, Cuirt na gCloch Stoney Lane, Ardee



New Louth County Council A Energy rated homes at Aisling Crescent, Dundalk

TENANT LIAISON OFFICERS ACTIVITY 2022

Description	Number
Number of tenants who attended pre-tenancy training sessions	254
Number of post-tenancy inspections provided for new tenancies	288
Letters issued for breaches of tenancy agreements	
Verbal Warnings	9
Written Warnings	0
Tenancy Notifications	4
Tenancy Warnings under Section 9, Housing Act, 2014	3

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR OFFICERS ACTIVITY 2022

Description	Number
Number of Anti-Social Behaviour Investigations	185
Letters issued for breaches of tenancy agreements	
Verbal Warnings	34
Written Warnings	0
Tenancy Notifications	4
Tenancy Warnings under Section 7, Housing Act, 2014	6

HOUSING ADAPTATION GRANTS FOR OLDER PEOPLE AND PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

The Council received an allocation €1,721,000 from the Department, of which the Council funded €351,883 to provide grants for adaptations to private homes.

Description	Number of Grants Awarded
HAG, (Housing Adaptation Grants)	42
MAG, (Mobility Aids Grants)	14
HOP, (Housing Aid for Older Persons)	175

ADAPTATIONS TO COUNCIL STOCK FOR PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY

The Council spent €450,000 on 2 extensions and 24 smaller adaptations to Council homes. Funding of €405,000 was received from the Department, with additional funding of €45,000 received from Council funds.



Level access shower installation using private house grant



New apartment building at Patrick Tierney Crescent, Dundalk

DISABILITY

The local housing strategy for disabled people will be reviewed in 2023 to align it with the National Strategy and the Implementation Plan.

The 2022 annual target for social housing allocations to disabled people was 49 units of accommodation. 93 units of accommodation were provided to disabled people in 2022, which is equivalent to 190% of the target.

18.2% of all social housing allocations (511) in 2022 were made to people with disabilities which exceeds the target of 15%.

TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION

66 Traveller households have been allocated social housing since the beginning of the 2019-2024 Traveller Accommodation Programme. 61 of those have been for Standard Social Houses and 5 have been to Traveller specific accommodation.

Two group housing schemes in Dundalk are progressing and the prospective tenants have been consulted about the designs and the estimated delivery time. Several enquiries have been made by halting site residents regarding the nationwide pilot caravan loan scheme, which is reopening in 2023.

Traveller accommodation programme funding was approved for several adaptations for Traveller households and for showers to be installed in Woodland Park Halting site.



Elizabeth McDonagh and family at their new home

Louth Library Service

INTRODUCTION

Throughout 2022 Louth Library Service continued to focus on the library's role in literacy support, supporting lifelong learning opportunities and establishing the library as a community hub. It has been a hugely positive time for Louth Library Service with considerable investment, numerous new initiatives, services and infrastructural upgrades taking place.

The enthusiasm and hard work of all library staff enables us to continue to serve the needs of a diverse and growing population. This presents unlimited opportunities for the library service to respond with a range of cultural and educational services, fit-for-purpose spaces and relevant print and digital collections.



**LIBRARY
SERVICES
AT A GLANCE**



**15,891
REGISTERED
MEMBERS**

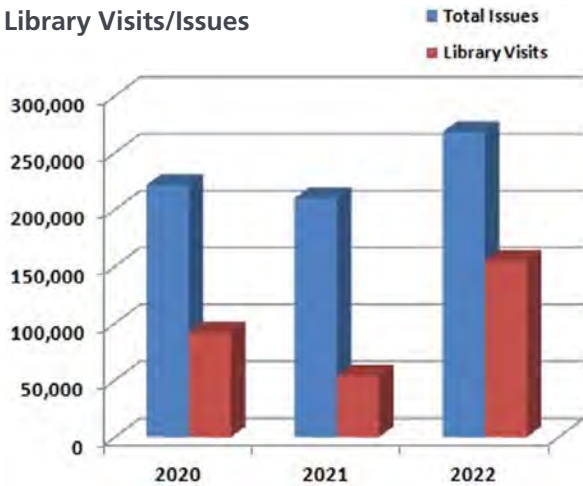


**154,905 VISITS
TO LIBRARY
BRANCHES**

**268,075
ITEMS
ISSUED**

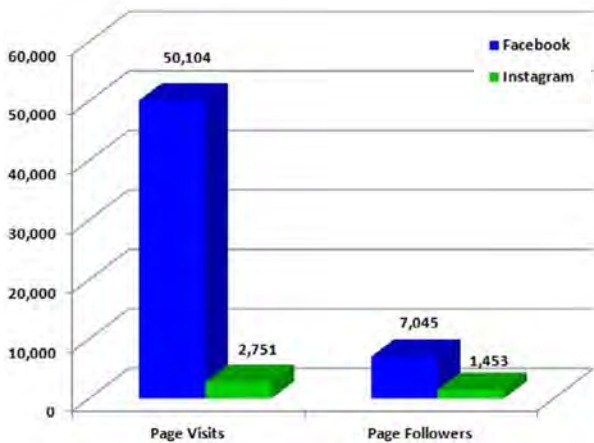


Library Visits/Issues



SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Social Media Use in 2022



Social Media is a key marketing tool to promote and share the wide array of initiatives and events taking place during 2022.

In 2022 Louth Library Service had:

Facebook: 7,045 followers

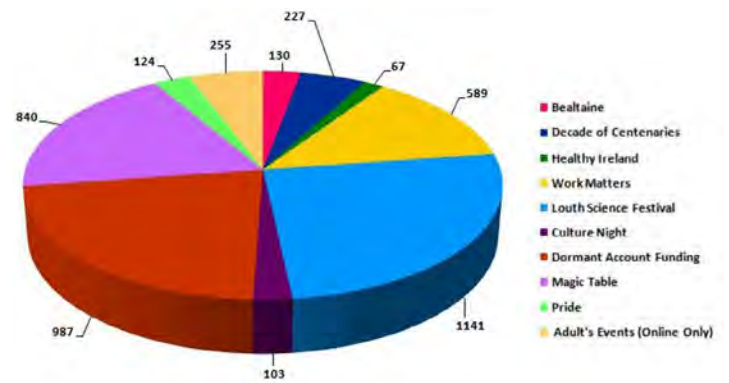
Instagram, @louthlibraryservice: 1,453 followers

Library staff further enhanced their social media presence by launching a **TikTok** account 'Louth Libraries' during 2022 which has gained 313 followers. The increasing popularity of TikTok with

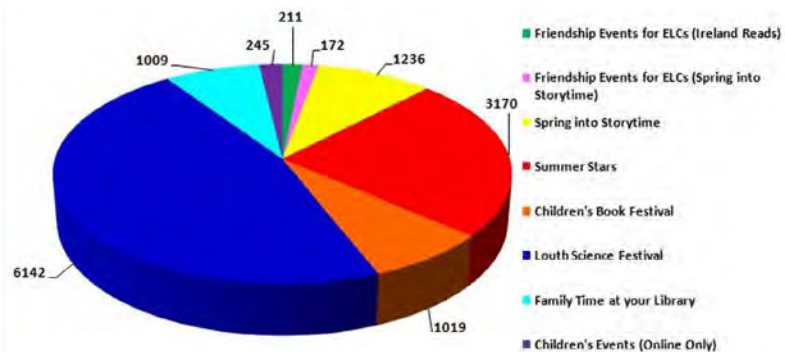
young adults allows us to engage and recommend books in our collection to this age group by using tags such as #BookTok.

LIBRARY PROGRAMMING

Adults Events Attendance



Children's Events Attendance



ESERVICES

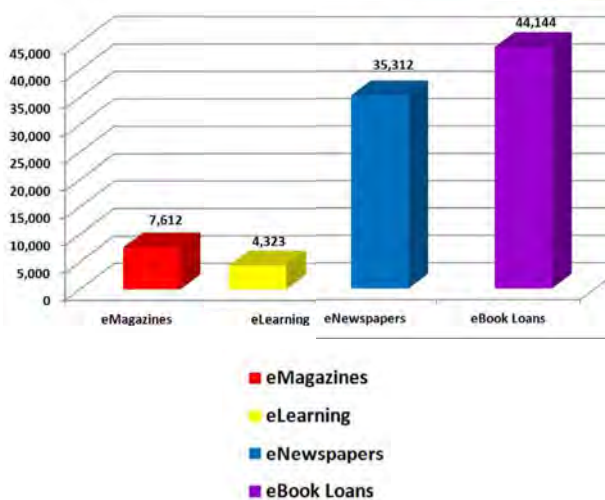
The wide range of services includes:

- Borrow Box for free eBooks & eAudiobooks, Press Reader offers for newspapers & Libby for magazines
- Transparent Language Online with over 100 languages to choose from
- Universal Class for various courses
- eServices information sessions are held every month in Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee Libraries

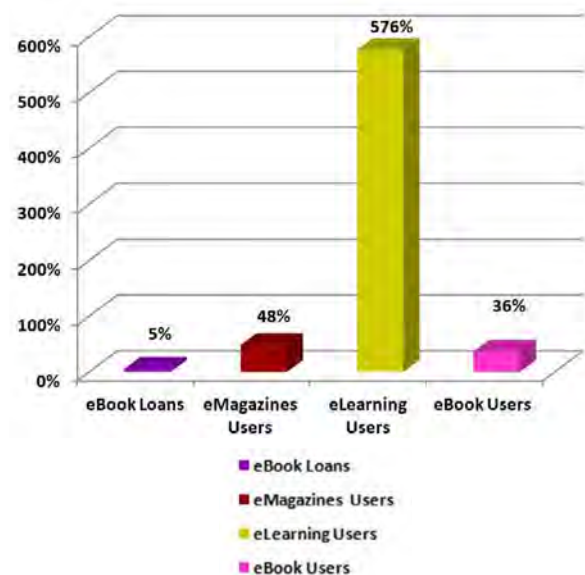
LOTE ONLINE FOR KIDS

LOTE Online for Kids (LOTE) was launched in February 2022 as part of the Ireland Reads initiative. LOTE is a database for Primary School aged children of digital books, stories, and activities, which boasts over 1,200 digital picture books in more than 40 world languages, including English translations. Just like the other eservices, LOTE, which stands for 'Languages Other Than English', is absolutely free to all Louth Library Service members.

eResource Use



% Increases in 2022



HOUSEBOUND SERVICE

In response to the challenging circumstances the library service experienced over the last few years due to the pandemic, we found we had to adapt and respond rapidly to ensure services were delivered to the individuals and communities we serve. Louth Library Service currently offers a door to door service through our housebound deliveries for users who are not able to visit their local library. This service helps the most vulnerable in our communities by keeping them engaged as active members of the library. In 2022, approximately 535 individual housebound deliveries were made throughout County Louth offering customers who are not able to come into the library in person a way of staying connected to their communities and keeping up to date with reading trends and materials.

Louth Library Service was among the winners at the 2021 All Ireland Community and Council Awards on Saturday the 9th of April 2022. Nominated for two awards on the night, the library's housebound service earned the top prize in the Best Business Working with the Community Category.



LAMA award Library Assistants John Murphy and Marcella Reynolds with Marty Morrissey at the LAMA award presentation

LIBRARY OF SANCTUARY AWARD

Louth Library Service was awarded with national recognition as a Library of Sanctuary by Places of Sanctuary Ireland in December 2022. The award recognises the good practice taking place in Louth Library Service and the contribution libraries make to build a community of welcome and sanctuary across County Louth, welcoming people seeking sanctuary and all new arrivals in our community. Welcome and inclusion are core principles of Louth Library Service and our vision going forward is to continue to be safe and nurturing spaces for all and to support other organisations such as schools to gain Sanctuary status.

A WELCOME FOR UKRAINE

Library branches held information sessions for Ukrainians and their host families weekly from March 2022 onwards. These informal gatherings offered Ukrainians an opportunity to meet in a safe and welcoming space. Library staff provided brochures, information on the local area and help and advice on using the library service.

Library staff also facilitated LMETB English classes and visited local accommodations with translated leaflets and information for recently arrived Ukrainians. All Louth Library Service information leaflets were translated into Ukrainian and are available in all of our branches. A collection of books in English and Ukrainian, selected and funded by LGMA is also available in all branches.

LIBRARY STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

HEALTHY IRELAND AT YOUR LIBRARY

This Department of Health led initiative enables us to provide quality, reliable and valuable health information within the community. HIAYL provides a wide range of resources and supports to users including comprehensive collection of HSE recommended books on health and wellbeing in all branches, online health information such as e-books, e-Audiobooks and online courses. We also provide talks and information sessions on health related topics.

The Healthy Ireland at your Library Programme this year saw several events take place in various libraries in Louth. These included topical talks on *Mastering the Menopause Dementia*, *Mindfulness*, *Clutter Free Living* and a *Food and Nutrition Workshop* advising on healthy ways to feed your family. We also welcomed Psychotherapist on Mental Health, Fiona Hall, who presented an informative workshop on *Who Do you Tell When you child has a Neurodiverse Diagnosis*.

We live streamed many of our events via Crowdcast this year in an effort to engage with library users who cannot attend in person.

We sought and received additional funding this year for the development of health zones in four library branches. This allowed libraries to offer ergonomically designed seating and access to health information in a friendly open setting, including digital display screens so members of the public can access health information, lists of new books and news of HI events we have planned. We will continue to liaise with the Department of Health and the Louth County Council Healthy Ireland coordinator with regard to event planning and funding opportunities for 2023.

RIGHT TO READ

Right to Read supports literacy development for families, adults and children as part of a locally coordinated, sustainable and standardised approach across County Louth. Louth Library Service was delighted to re-introduce a programme of in-branch activities for children, adults, families and groups for 2022.

These literacy supports and initiatives include:

IRELAND READS CAMPAIGN

The second year of the Healthy Ireland led national campaign Ireland Reads commenced on the 4th February which led up to a national day of reading on 25th February. The campaign promotes the power of reading for enjoyment and wellbeing by encouraging everyone, young and old to get into the habit of

reading and regularly setting aside time to sit and read a book, a poem, a comic or a newspaper.

Local ambassadors for Louth Library Service included Dr Niamh Shaw, Prof Luke O’Neil, authors Conor O’Callaghan, Nicola Pierce, Grace Tierney and Garda Anita O’Shea. Promotion included online stories, bookclubs, and dedicated author blogs including a blog by author Ronán Hession. Borrowers could pledge to read on the Ireland Reads website and record their reading pledge on the reading tree in Drogheda Library and on an hour glass display in Dundalk Library. Social media gained over 2,000 views for Louth Library Service with the nation pledging 246,598 minutes to read on Ireland Reads day on the 25th February.



A young borrower pledging his reading time for Ireland Reads Day in Drogheda Library.

- **Spring into Storytime**, 36 events were scheduled throughout April, with a welcome return to visits into the library with 1,236 participants.
- **Summer Stars Reading Programme** is the public library national reading programme for children running during summer months. Louth Library Service had a very successful return to in branch events for Summer Stars with 89 events with 3,170 participants and 947 registered for the programme.
- **Children’s Book Festival** helps spread the enjoyment of reading among children and families, during the month of October. 34 events took place, with 1,019 participants. Events included school visits, author visits, arts and crafts and a collaboration with Meath Library Service for an author visit to Mosney.
- **Family Time at Your Library** in December took place in all libraries to support the involvement of the whole family in childrens reading. There were 37 events with 1,009 participants attending.
- Four **DEIS Schools Literacy & Numeracy Summer Camps** were supported with visits to the library.
- The DAF funded **Right Book, Right Child, Right Time** project continued with St. Oliver’s Community College, Drogheda, 1st Year JCSP students. This involved librarian-led visits to the school and the provision of project specific reading resources. Responding to feedback from students in 2021 we focused investment to develop our Young Adult Graphic Novels collections.
- We developed our **adult literacy services** during 2022 by continuing our collaboration with our Right to Read network partners. We maintained a focus on adult literacy development with visits to adult literacy students in local LMETB sites and our library spaces were in demand for English classes. Library staff also delivered library tours, signed up new members, facilitated book clubs, promoted the Open Door Series collection and provided magic table sessions.

- **Louth Library Service and Meath Library Service** continued on the joint literacy initiative aimed at those living in Mosney Direct Provision Centre which is one of the actions under the Drogheda Implementation Plan. Louth Library Service committed a portion of their book budget to support the resourcing of a community library in Mosney. Library staff provided e-services roadshows, where residents could join the library. Staff provided information and demonstrations on e-services while highlighting the digital services available in the library branches and the extended access available via My Open Library. Events were held during Childrens Book Festival and Family Time at your Library and Summer Stars packs were provided for the community library.
- **Little Library Book Bag Initiative 2022** funded by Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Inclusion and Youth (DECDIY) and Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD). The initiative aimed to build on the relationships between the Early Learning and Care (ELC) and libraries as part of the First 5 Government Strategy for babies and children and the Right to Read Programme. The 3rd phase included two dedicated events for the sector funded by DCEDIY and DRCD and a friendship themed book bag for each registered ELC/childminder.

As part of the initiative, a 'My Little Library Book Bag' was available free for every child starting school in September 2022.

Each My Little Library Book Bag contained:

- 3 books on starting school, making friends and being comfortable to be yourself
- A story card on going to the library
- A postcard the child can write or draw on and send to their new teacher
- Their very own library card and special 'My Little Library' cardholder.



Library Assistant Eilish Boyd entertaining some borrowers at a storytime event

PRIMARY SCHOOL LIBRARY SERVICE

Louth Library Service provides a comprehensive and easily accessible service to schools throughout the County. From January to March 2022 many of our services to schools were virtual due to Covid19. Class visits and contact remained online as we sought to provide schools with a continued connection to the library. Many of these virtual visits tied in with Literacy Week, World Book Day and Spring into Storytime.



St. Oliver's NS Drogheda, Senior Infants visit for World Book Day

There were 246 attendees at our online virtual visits, 151 secondary schools children and 95 primary school attendees. As we progressed on into 2022, the schools service saw a return to in person engagement with many schools. Class visits resumed in branches and as a result we saw a marked increase in new junior members, additional teacher cards and also increased stock issues.

As 2022 progressed we were able to reach full active engagement again with the welcome return of the **Schools Library Van** in September 2022. Schools were delighted to engage with this service and in total we saw 2407 pupils and teachers visit the mobile van during this period. A significant investment has been made in reading resources and literacy stock suitable for all ages and this has certainly been reflected in the increase in issues from September to December. In total we were out on the road 29 days reaching 59 different schools, with 363 new teacher card accounts created.

- 29 Number of Days Visiting Schools
- 59 Number of Schools Visited
- 363 New Teacher Accounts
- 2407 Visitor Numbers on van

We provided help in the form of Rockstars - a times tables maths programme as well as TTRS- Touch Typing Programme which is available on request via Schools Library Service. These initiatives are well used and are a welcome addition to schools in the area.

Library staff provided consultations to schools on the spending of the schools library grant, including on site visits.

SECONDARY SCHOOLS SERVICE

Library staff provided workshops for history projects, as well as resources and assistance to students and teachers for school project work and research, either within the library branch or electronically, as available. The local studies department/staff provides access, including online resource access, to a wide range of historical material about your local area, such as maps, photographs, documents and information.

NEW LIBRARY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Libraries Ireland launched a new national Library Management System 'Spydus' in March 2022 with improved functionality for library users. The new system has a new fresh look with more user friendly features. Borrowers can manage their library accounts online, browse a catalogue of 12 million items and reserve items to borrow from any branch in Ireland. It is now much easier to use the catalogue with images and recommendations, it works great on mobile devices and users can renew their membership online.

WORK MATTERS

Work Matters at your library continued in 2022 returning to in-person events and information sessions. We collaborated with partners around the County for 111 events with a total of 674 attendees. With LMETB we held 33 language classes, 6 Jobseeking Skills sessions and gave 9 library tours to LMETB groups. We hosted 7 information sessions with Malta Services, 2 with DKIT, 11 with Louth Volunteers and 2 with MABS. New Work Matters resources available through our eServices and Borrowbox were promoted online.

LIBRARY FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES: MY OPEN LIBRARY

Louth Library Service launched the My Open Library service in Drogheda Library in October 2022. This followed the re-opening of MOL in Ardee Library in July following the lifting of Covid19 restrictions.

The MOL service provides access to the library outside of staffed hours for browsing, borrowing, studying, using IT equipment or having a meeting, thereby making facilities more accessible for members. Especially for those who cannot attend their library during regular staffed times, or for families with children with special needs who may find the library a little overwhelming during regular hours.

The My Open Library service is available to members from 8:00am to 10:00pm, 7 days per week, 365 days per year. Staffed hours combined with the My Open Library service, which offers an automated self-serve facility, will ensure the best delivery of library services, support for customers, community engagement and the development of programming activities.

To further improve the offering, all of Louth Library branches have had a digital upgrade through the Digital Learning Spaces scheme with the introduction of new PC's, printing devices, an enhanced Wi-Fi solution, interactive whiteboards, iMacs, Surfbox self service printing and gaming equipment, available for use by all library members.

Louth Library Service has partnered with the Higher Education Authority (HEAnet) to enable **Eduroam** in Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee. This initiative allows students to access their college learning platform off campus in locations that have signed up for it.



Chief Executive Joan Martin, An Cathaoirleach Conor Keelan, Acting County Librarian Amanda Branigan, Director of Services Paddy Donnelly and Councillor Paddy McQuillan at the My Open Library Launch in Drogheda Library

DORMANT ACCOUNTS FUNDING

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 2022. Grant aid of 90% of the total eligible cost incurred was made available. Louth Library Service successfully secured funding under the following:

1. Programming

The need for a Family Resilience Programme of events tailored to support families from disadvantaged areas as well as new residents in County Louth was identified.

Events were in person and virtual and included:

- “Mindfully Me” Programme, virtual Zoom workshop
- How to help your child cope with Trauma and Nurture Resilience, virtual Zoom workshop
- Family Storytime and Puppetry with Story Gate
- Messy Play and Toddler Yoga with Beyond the Bump
- Strum for Fun Ukelele workshops for adults

Almost 600 adults and children attended the events.

2. Digital Equity and Social Inclusion

Under this DAF funding stream, a dedicated space for the Magic Table, sensory workshops and storytime was created on the ground floor of Dundalk Library. This is a continuation of the commitment to sensory programming resulting from the 2020 and 2021 DAF funding. The space has further enhanced the investment in the creation of sensory spaces in Louth Library Service and led to a more accessible and welcoming environment for families and individuals with sensory needs.

It also serves as a quiet space for children or individuals who may experience sensory overload when visiting the library. Together with the introduction of 'Quiet Time at your Library' and staff training with AslAm, this will further encourage families and individuals with sensory needs to engage with the library service.

3. Literacy Supports

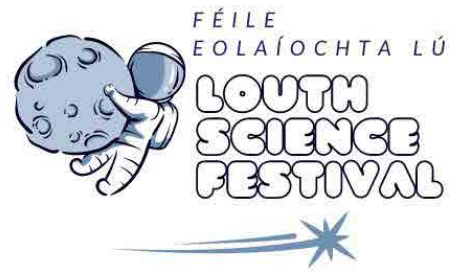
Times Tables Rock Stars is a carefully sequenced maths programme created by maths teachers to solve the perennial problem of pupils struggling with tables. 45 school plan licences were purchased to allocate to DEIS primary schools.

Time Tables Rock Stars uses computer game-design elements and principles to make times tables & maths fun. It can be used in the classroom as whole-group instruction or for homework. Teachers can choose to print worksheets or have their students play the game on the app (via IOS and Android) or website. Teachers can also benefit from access to valuable data on the performance of their pupils, which enables them to view progress and easily celebrate successes through the use of custom leader boards and certificates.



Service users from RehabCare New Visions, Dundalk using the Magic Table

Clár Éire Ildánach
Creative Ireland
Programme



CREATIVE IRELAND LIBRARY LED MULTI-AGENCY PROJECT WITH FIGHTING WORDS

This project, funded by Creative Ireland's Excellence Grants, got underway in Drogheda Library on 24th March with young people from Cable Youth Diversion Project and Boyne Youth Project groups. In partnership with Garda Anita O'Shea (Juvenile Liaison Officer, Drogheda) and facilitators from Fighting Words, this ongoing project is proving to be a great success with lots of creative ideas formed. Participants have created stories from their experiences with the support of the Fighting Words facilitators, youth leaders and library staff.

Phase 2 of the Fighting Words project began in September and this phase is about bringing the story to life in artistic form, be it song, art or a play. This ongoing project will continue into 2023 and is very much led by the participants and what they want to achieve.



Our young borrowers got to try their hand at digital fabrication - including 3D printing and laser cutting - thanks to Creative Spark Dundalk's Mobile Fab Lab, which visited all 5 library branches for Louth Science Festival 2022

LOUTH SCIENCE FESTIVAL 2022

Louth Library Service enjoyed the biggest ever Louth Science Festival in November 2022, marking the 5th year of the initiative.

Having been granted festival funding by Science Foundation Ireland, Louth Library Service partnered with Creative Spark Dundalk and the ESB to bring science to audiences throughout County Louth. Working with new and existing collaborators - including our colleagues in Louth County Council, local schools and nursing homes; DKIT; Dr Niamh Shaw and Youthreach - the festival saw over 100 workshops, sessions and events take place in Ardee, Carlingford, Drogheda, Dunleer and Dundalk. These included the science of Blacksmithing, the mobile Fab Lab with Creative Spark, the Strongwomen of Science, the Science of Superheroes and much, much more.

2022 also saw the launch of the Louth Science Festival website - <https://louthsciencefestival.ie/> - which gives an outline of the fun we've had with the festival so far to date.



Circus250 brought the StrongWomen Science Show to Dundalk Library and the Barbican Theatre, Drogheda much to the delight of staff and borrowers alike!

DECADE OF CENTENARIES 2022 PROGRAMME

Taoiseach Micheál Martin, Tánaiste Leo Varadkar and Minister 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 2022 under the Community Strand of the Decade of Centenaries Programme.

In programming for 'Local Legacies 1922/2022', 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 1922
- The partitioning of Ireland – its impact on communities living alongside the border of Louth
- Ireland and the wider world – exploration of the international dimensions
- The experiences of women during the revolutionary period and their contribution to the events that occurred, including their changing role in society
- A changing society during this period
- Archival projects including conservation and digitisation of archival material.
- Creative thinking and the arts

LCC initiatives for the DoC programme included:

HISTORIAN-IN-RESIDENCE

Dr Thomas Tormey continued in his role as our HiR during 2022. The outputs from his role can best be grouped under two headings: events and research. A number of events were held to mark Decade of Centenaries related anniversaries which fell in 2022. These involved panel discussions and lectures which sought to offer a national context for the events of the Civil War. All events were available to view live on the Louth Library Service crowdcast channel and to watch back afterwards.

Events included:

A question and answers session entitled 'Spiritual wounds trauma, testimony and the Irish Civil War' with Dr Síobhra Aiken in relation to her book "*Trauma and Civil War Memory*".

A two-part lecture by Dr. Richard McElligott on the Civil War: '*A fine day to die for Ireland: The Irish Civil War: The conventional phase June – Sept 1922*' & '*There is no glory ... only the dead: The Irish Civil War: The guerrilla campaign September 1922 – May 1923*'.

A lecture by Dr Eve Morrisson on the legacy of the Civil War '*Legacies of bitterness and reconciliation: the Irish Civil War*'.

A lecture by Ailbhe Rogers on '*Co. Louth Cumann na mBan and the Civil War*'.

The list of research outputs by Dr Tormey during 2022 include:

- A book of essays about events in Louth during the revolutionary period
- A research guide designed to help students at all levels research events in County Louth

Primary School's "The Great Escape" 100 years on

Facilitator Maeve A. Devoy hosted a two part workshop with 5th & 6th class students from St. Joseph's National School, Dundalk. Students created their own prison diary with an illustrated map of the prison and in the process learned about the history of the time.

DECADE OF CENTENARIES GRAPHIC NOVEL

Facilitator and artist Wayne O'Connor hosted a series of workshops with secondary school students from Colaiste Cuchullain in Dundalk to create a graphic novel around historical events and characters of 1922 to create a visual story. Students created their own work of art as a graphic novel and explored County Louth during 1922.

REMEMBRANCE TRILOGY; PART 3

This was the 3rd part of An Táin's Remembrance Trilogy following on from Easter Service and Women of Independence.

Like the previous 2 projects this was a piece of community theatre devised in conjunction with Upstate Theatre group and members of the community. This part of the trilogy was based around the Civil War and stories from Louth during that time.

FARAWAY HILLS

The County Museum held a Faraway Hills Secondary Schools Outreach Project and produced a Digital educational resource pack.

CLIMATE ACTION

Louth Library Services continued promotion and uptake of eServices and the recycling/re-distribution of book stock to schools and community facilities contributes to lowering our carbon footprint. 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. Each library branch has an appointed climate action champion and we worked closely with the Climate Action Co-ordinator during 2022. During Sustainable Development Goals week there were book displays in library branches and arts and crafts events for schools.

WORLD LIBRARY AND INFORMATION CONGRESS 2022

Louth Library Service was represented at the 87th IFLA World Library and Information Congress which took place in Dublin from July 26th – 29th. Over 2,000 delegates from all around the world attended the conference with library staff attending as both delegates and volunteers. Ray Gainford from Drogheda Library was selected to present his poster entitled 'Library Outreach in Secondary Schools via Junior Achievement Ireland'. Banners outlining Louth Library Service work in the community, including Louth Science Festival, the Schools Service, Decade of Centenaries and our partnership with DKIT library were a prominent feature on 'Library Boulevard' where libraries from across the world highlighted their services, initiatives and events.



Library Assistant Ray Gainford with his poster at the WLIC Congress 2022

OTHER EVENTS:

- **International Women's Day** took place on Tuesday 8th of March. Louth Library Service celebrated International Womens Day with videos posted throughout the day on social media discussing the theme "Break the Bias". "Wild Women in Mythology" by Tara Tine, Artist in Residence in An Táin Arts Centre was in Drogheda library to discuss her work including the story of An Táin Bó Cúailnge.
- **Seachtain na Gaeilge March 1st-17th** - Ag Léamh faoin mBinse Scoile: Scéal Chathail Uí Shándair. This bilingual exhibition launched on the 10th of March and ran in Dundalk Library from the 1st - 26th of March. The Ciorcal Cómhrá returned to meet in Dundalk Library on the first Tuesday of every month for adults to learn and practice Irish. Scéalaíocht do pháistí, in collaboration with the Drogheda group of Conradh na Gaeilge, had music stories and song 'as Gaeilge' for families to enjoy.
- **Quiet Time** resumed in Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee Libraries on a weekly basis, providing a peaceful hour, with phones turned down, lights dimmed and sensory equipment and toys provided.
- **Summer Solstice** - Anthony Murphy of Mythical Ireland presented a special talk entitled 'The Oenach of Brú na Bóinne: A forgotten assembly site of the prehistoric past' on the summer solstice in Drogheda Library.
- **Pride 2022** - Dundalk Library hosted 'Pride Storytime and Coffee & Chats' with all welcome to attend in July. Drogheda Library hosted 2 LGBTQ+ Coffee and Chat drop in events during Summer 2022. Library staff provided LGBTQ+ book recommendations and provided reading guides. Library staff promoted our expanded LGBTQ+ book collection and held a LGBTQ+ book club event in Drogheda Library in association with Outcomers.
- **Bealtaine Festival** - This Age and Opportunity Festival is Ireland's national celebration of the arts and creativity as we age. Louth Library Service had a packed schedule of events throughout May with a welcome return for many borrowers to in-branch events. Events included the Bealtaine Table Quiz in Dundalk Library, flower arranging demonstrations and a virtual "Walking the Camino" event.
- **Heritage Week, August 13th - 21st** - Library staff in Drogheda Library compiled a video recording entitled '*Exploring the Landmarks & Heritage of Drogheda*' which was streamed on the Louth Library Service Facebook page and on the digital display in the Library. The short video brought viewers on a historical journey exploring some of Droghedas most famous landmarks.
- **Culture Night, 23rd September** - Dundalk Library welcomed world-renowned storyteller Niall De Burca for a hilarious bi-lingual storytelling for families and Scoraíocht Lann Léire performed traditional Irish music for all in attendance. Drogheda Library celebrated Culture Night by welcoming local storyteller Dónal Mullen for tales of pots of gold, salty seas and immortality.



Library Assistant Ciara Brodigan with a captive audience during Culture Night in Dundalk Library

- Dundalk Mens Shed Christmas Choir held a wonderful celebration of Christmas music in Dundalk Library on the 8th of December.



Men's shed



Mixed Media Sculpture created by participant in Crunniú na nÓg 2022



Tumble Circus Drogheda Arts Festival 2022



AAEX (Art as Exchange) Irish Sign Language Art Workshop

Louth County Archives Service

CONSERVATION AND DIGITISATION OF ARCHIVES

As part of the Louth County Council Decade of Centenaries Programme 2022, a quantity of Rural District Council and Board of Guardian minute books that support the 1921-1923 period were digitised for future online access. A smaller quantity of the volumes received conservation treatment at the outset of the project. This will improve the democratisation of access to records through the provision of free online public access to original archival sources. The Decade of Centenaries Programme is funded by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media.

In March, the County Archives launched its short-film and accompanying booklet on 'Dundalk Jail during the Civil War period'. This centenary project was produced as part of the Louth County Council Decade of Centenaries Programme 2021 in collaboration with the County Louth Archaeological & Historical Society. It commemorated the centenary of the 'Hole in the Wall' escape that occurred on 27 July 1922. The film and booklet contain a definitive account of the events that led up to the mass escape by Frank Aiken and over one hundred of his men. The short-film remains available on Louth County Archives YouTube channel at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbO_FVI7Rb408fJeBb1qC3Q. A joint talk between the County Archives and the County Louth Archaeological & Historical Society took place in June on the topic of 'Dundalk Jail during the Civil War period' where the County Archivist talked about Civil War archives available in the service.

LGMA LIBRARY UNIT DIGITISATION PROJECT

A section of the Joseph Dolan Papers was digitised under the Library Unit's Decade of Centenaries digitisation project. It is expected to be made available online in 2023.



NS Teacher Training Visit Archives-2022

GROUP VISITS

A group of National School teachers visited Louth County Archives during their training week in July, while a local history class from the LMETB visited in November to find out about local archive sources that are available for research and how to use the online archive catalogue.



LMETB History Class 2022

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 2022 included minute books of the Council of County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society; School Account of the Railway



Russell Humphries family donation

Works Class Room, Dundalk; and archives of the Ardee Loan Fund Society and Charlestown parish. These donations enhance the research sources available for the study of Louth's heritage.

HISTORIC STRUCTURES FUND

Interior conservation repair works were carried out on the south gable wall of the County Archives building to address damp issues. A grant was received from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage via the Conservation section for this work.

NATIONAL RETENTION POLICY RECORDS MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP

The County 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 2022. 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 and Development, Housing, Procurement, Finance, HR, Water, Transport and Infrastructure, Corporate, and Enterprise & Economic Development have been completed, approved and issued out to Local Authorities, whilst Environment and IT are currently in the final stages. The Archivist also advises staff on the preparation of records both for destruction and for transfer to the Records Centre and the County Archives.

Louth Arts Service

CreateLouth, the Arts Service for County Louth, delivered a wide range of actions in 2022 including the delivery of the new Louth Arts Development Plan 2022-2026.

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 6 healthcare settings around the County. It was great to be able to go back indoors on all occasions and having interaction with the residents. Musicians Liam Merriman, Grainne Hope and Lisa McGuinness sang songs and took requests and everyone was dancing and singing along.

LOCAL LIVE PERFORMANCE SCHEME

Funded by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, CreateLouth coordinated a series of live events throughout the year. Taking place across the County we had events in locations across Drogheda, Ardee, Dundalk, Termonfeckin and Carlingford. Highlights included the Kick up the Arts events on the Brian Boru boat on the Boyne River in Drogheda, the Live at the Abbey outdoor event, Circus at the Square in Dundalk and Culture Connect Choir in Carlingford Heritage centre as part of Culture Night. Zoe Conway & John McIntyre and Glas Quartet also worked with Music Generation Louth in schools across Omeath, Bellurgan, Ardee and Dunleer and the students got to perform with the musicians at live events in their local community centres. All concerts were free of charge and provided a much needed boost not only to the professionals, but to the community as a whole.

WORLD AFRICA DAY

2022 saw the first Louth World Africa Day taking place. Culture Connect facilitated 2 events in both Dundalk and Drogheda to mark the inaugural celebrations in Louth. With funding from the Department of Foreign Affairs and CreateLouth there was food tasting, a fashion show, dance workshops and more for everyone to enjoy at both events.



World Africa Day Event in Drogheda

GRANTS & AWARDS

In 2022, CreateLouth continued to make available a range of bursaries and awards to individuals and organisations in Louth, including: Grants under the Arts Act & School Musical Instrument Purchase Scheme. A total of 33 grants were awarded during 2022. In addition to the grant scheme we supported festivals including Drogheda Arts Festival, Ardee Baroque, Drogheda Traditional Music Weekend, Drogheda International Classical Music Series and the Carlingford Summer and Autumn Music Series. We also provided support to the Diwhali festival, World Africa Day and the Dundalk Pride weekend in July.



Rogu Fire at Millmount, Drogheda Arts Festival
Image Credit Jenny Callanan

INFORMATION & ADVICE

We launched our new Louth Arts Development Plan in 2022, which gives 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 which will benefit the whole community. The plan was delivered following a 12 month consultation process which included workshops with internal and external stakeholders, a public survey and desktop research. English and Irish copies of the Arts Development Plan are available to read at all 5 Libraries in Louth, the County Museum and all Local Government Offices. Alternatively you can read the plan or download it from our website in English or Irish at www.createlouth.ie.

The www.createlouth.ie website is the hub for 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 can provide.



Louth Arts Development Plan Launch with Aisling Morgan, Michele Haechler, Cathaoirleach Conor Keelan, CE Joan Martin, Moya Rodgers & Paddy Donnelly. Image credit Ken Finegan

Artistic Programming

YOUTH EVENTS

Starting in May and running through the summer and autumn CreateLouth supported Mark Corcoran, Dundalk Youth Centre and Spirit Store in their initiative to support local youth bands and performers. The 'Emergence' program was a series of afternoon sessions in the Spirit Store which allowed these young performers to showcase their talents. For many it was their first time performing on stage to a live audience and proved very successful.

December saw the arts office provide support to Droichead Youth Theatre and MAD Youth theatre using IMPRO expert Darren Yorke to work with the younger members of their groups on confidence, creativity and spontaneity. The young members got a fantastic opportunity to learn from an expert and the session also enable some up skilling to be done by the local facilitators.

CULTURE NIGHT 2022

Culture Night took place on 23rd September and 2022 saw us hosting our largest programme to date. Over 20 events took place across 11 venues in Louth and we had everything from spoken word to live music, Lego workshops and storytelling. Highlights included soprano Sarah McCourt live in the County Museum AV theatre, storytelling with Niall de Burca and the Culture Connect Choir performed to a packed Carlingford Heritage Centre. Over 800 people attended the live events and over 50 artists facilitated the events on the night.

ART PROJECT – BIRCHES CENTRE

In the Autumn we partnered with the Birches Alzheimers Centre in Dundalk and Artist Rozzi Kennedy to deliver an art project with participants at the day care facility. The project ran for a number of weeks and proved a really important tool for the participants in expressing their frustrations, their anxiety and just to showcase the joy that participating in art brought them.

Other projects

Other initiatives that we supported financially in partnership with our local strategic partners included the inaugural Boyne Valley Film Festival, Quintessence play 'Behind Locked Doors', DRAWDA Faoin Speir murals and festival, Harp Festival and the 'Stories From The Civil War' theatre piece as part of the Decade of Centenaries initiative.



Etain by Nina Valkhoff, part of the DRAWDA Faoin Speir mural trail.
Image Credit – Jenny Callanan

Creative Ireland

Creative Ireland is a 5-year collaborative programme connecting people, creativity and wellbeing in Louth. In 2022 the Creative Ireland culture team continued to manage their funding streams to span the fields of history and heritage, visual arts, crafts and drama, literature and music.

The Creative Ireland Community Grant Fund supported 9 groups in researching, planning and delivering projects. One of the highlights was the Holy Family Boxing Club in Dundalk who worked with filmmaker Laurence McKeown on producing a short film chronicling the work of the local club, which is one of the leading training facilities for boxers and has hosted Olympians Katie Taylor and Kellie Harrington in the past, as well as local boxing hero Amy Broadhurst. Also funded were Art in Sign workshops with AAEX (Art As Exchange). These workshops were specifically for members of the deaf community and the workshops had an ISL interpreter present to help facilitate.

Cruinniú na nÓg, the national day of youthful creativity, took place on Saturday 11th June. This was the first Cruinniú back in person since Covid and we came back with a bang. We ran a series of workshops across Louth in the weeks leading up to Cruinniú day including Stop Motion Animation and DJ workshops in Mid Louth, art and nature workshops with toddler groups in Dundalk and afterschool workshops in Drogheda, with a focus on Ukrainian refugees. On the day itself we had live music at the square in Dundalk with Music Generation and Youth Bands from across the county. There were workshops in both Droichead and An Tain Arts Centres, and Creative Spark took their printmaking workshops to the historical grounds of Carlingford Heritage Centre. Over 600 young people took part across all the events and our music at the square had an attendance of over 700 across the 3 hour concert.



Cruinniú na nÓg – Local youth band on the Live at the Square music event at Market Square in Dundalk – photo Ken Finegan

Large Scale Projects - other large scale projects with significant impact or legacy were also funded. These included a community outreach project run by Droichead Arts Centre with local schools, the 'Greetings from Greenore' project which saw a series of prints and booklets produced, cataloging the architectural heritage of the Greenore buildings and the SEEK Festival. Also supported were the Louth Libraries Wellness for Women initiative which is specially designed for women from marginalized backgrounds. Another highlight was the Lullaby Leaf Project which was a collaborative project between Louth, Meath, Cavan and Monaghan. The project saw Ceol Connected commissioned to create an immersive theatre experience specifically for children with Down Syndrome and children with complex needs.

CREATIVE IRELAND 2023-2027

The Government announced in December the extension of the Creative Ireland Programme for a further 5 years from 2023-2027 inclusive. In line with this announcement a new Creativity and Culture Strategy for Louth has been developed and launches on 23rd February 2023 along with all other Local Authorities.

County Museum, Dundalk

2022 was very much a case of 'back-to-business' for the Museum. As with society the return to normality was an opportunity to re-engage with the public in a manner that was much more meaningful and rewarding than previous years of virtual meetings and displays that had been the norm since 2020. Over the course of last year the Museum re-introduced and refined its traditional services. Without doubt though, the most significant of the years events occurred at Kilkenny Castle. The Museum was recognized as having reached the maintenance standard required under the Heritage Council's *Museum Standards Programme* for Ireland. MSPI is the industry standard for Museums in Ireland benchmarking and promoting professional standards in the care of collections which are subsequently recognized through accreditation. In total there are 34 standards covering every aspect of Museum activity ranging from collection management to the development of policies such as loans and education to visitor access. The Museum was in the position to maintain its existing accredited status which reflects well on Museums and staff.



Presentation of MSPI Maintenance Certificate by Ms Martina Moloney to Cathaoirleach Cllr. Conor Keelan, Brian Walsh (Curator, County Museum, Dundalk) and Ms Yvonne O'Brien (County Librarian)

As the year progressed the Museum continued to develop and organise events for a diversity of audiences. Calendar events such as *Seachtain na Gaeilge* (March); *International Museums' Day* (May),

Heritage Week (August), *Culture Night* (September), *Science Week* (November) were observed either online or in-person (mirroring society's gradual movement from life online to something more personable). For *Seachtain na Gaeilge*, an online evolving exhibition was held featuring items from the collection (both on display and in-storage) coupled with an appropriate *seanfhocail* or proverb; to mark both *International Museums' Day* and *Heritage Week* the Museum hosted a 'behind-the-scenes' tour of the Museum for school groups introducing them to principles of storage care, environmental control and record management. Similarly *Culture Night* afforded the public to sample not only the delights of the Museum but also to engage in LEGO building classes or to sample the singing talent of classical singer Sarah McCourt. Whilst *Science Week* provided the opportunity for the public to view the spectacular images of space unveiled by the James Webb probe, to examine and appreciate the science that underpins football; as well as to learn about the career and achievements of Arctic explorer, Sir Francis Leopold McClintock.

Similarly the diversity of the Museums audiences was seated through the showcasing of a number of exhibitions over the course of the year. Summer saw the *Living with Pride* exhibition which depicted the journey of pride in Ireland from 1992-2007 with photographic images taken by trailblazing LGBTQ+ and civil rights activist Chris Robson. In early autumn that life and career of Carlingford's Thomas d'Arcy McGee was commemorated in the exhibition *Thomas d'Arcy McGee Irish Rebel- Canadian Patriot*. Of particular interest here was the inclusion of McGee's christening robe and his death hand. The Museum saw out the year with the *Peace Heroines* exhibition a celebration of the role of women in the Peace Process. The Museum was one of a select number of venues in the Country to host the exhibition which was scheduled to visit Derry, Belfast and the UN in New York in early 2023.



View of the Peace Heroine's exhibition at the County Museum, Dundalk

Of course, the Museums activities were not restricted to workshops, exhibitions and concerts. It also hosted a variety of talks over the course of the year. Subjects included:

- the attack on Aiken Barracks
- the changing face of the Gardaí
- the career and achievement of athlete Pat McArdle
- the housing and living conditions in Dundalk 1900-1960.

In addition to the above, the Museum hosted a special screening of a film developed by students from Coláiste Cúchulainn and Belfasts Lagan College as part of the Futures Entwined project operated by Co-operation Ireland. It also hosted the launch of a short video highlighting the nature of the trees located at Dundalks Demesne.

Whilst the above activities hint at many of the Museums obvious successes it was in relation to one of the Museums primary roles - that of collection - that confirmed the importance of its role in the community. The Museums mission statement reads that:

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.

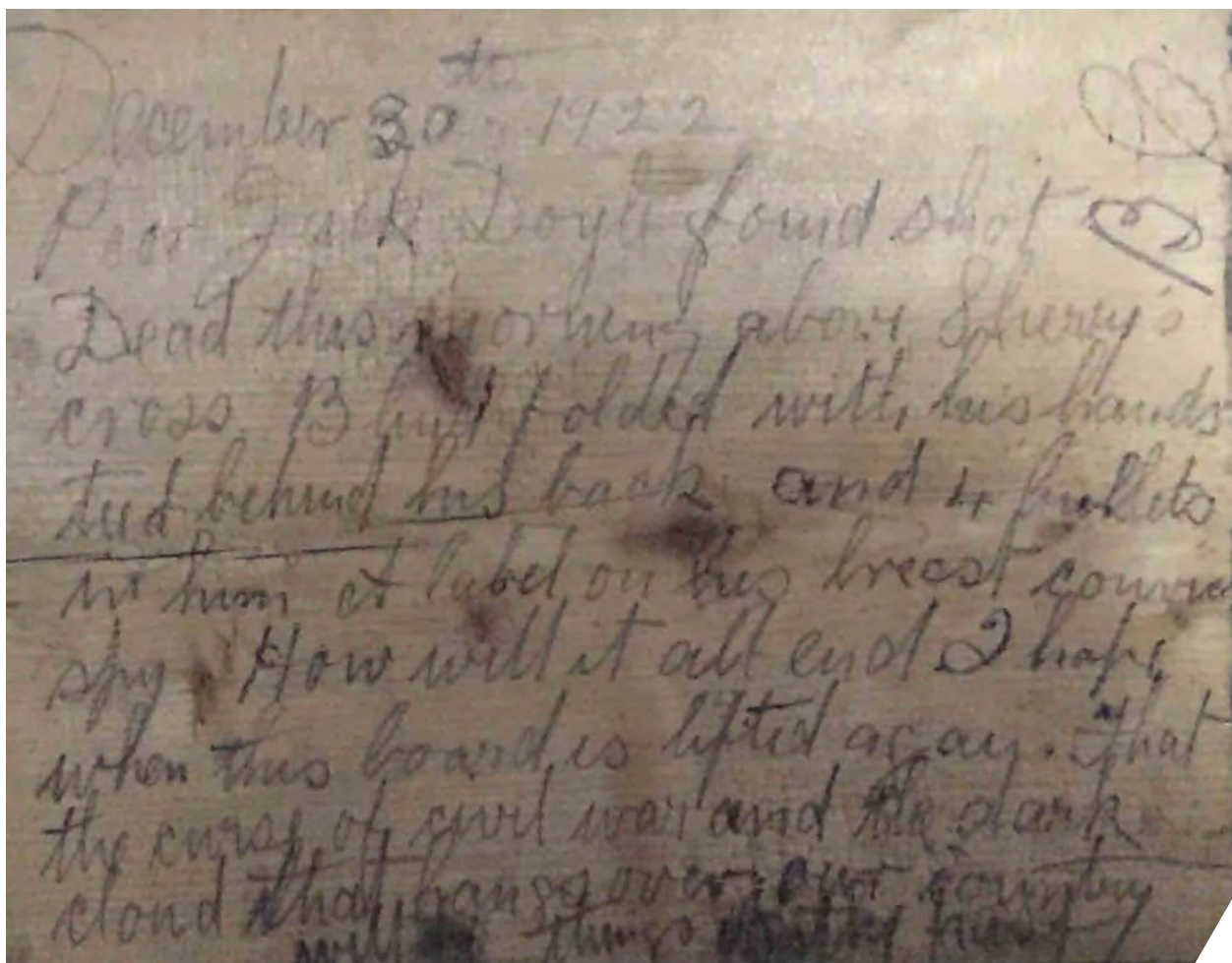
Over the course of the year the Museum acquired a variety of objects which touched upon the cultural and social life of the County – children's books, toys and clothes; items of a religious nature; equipment used by men and women in the course of their daily work lives. However two donations highlight the intimate role of the Museum in presenting to future generations the very nature of life as experienced by their predecessors. The donation of a Purple Heart awarded posthumously to Patrick White and a floorboard with a handwritten note decrying the brutality of the Civil War capture the essence of the human experience.



The Purple Heart awarded to Patrick White displayed in the County Museum, Dundalk

In the case of the latter the note articulated the writers hopes for the Countrys future in the immediate aftermath of the discovery of a mans body executed for apparent collusion with the Army. By their very context these artefacts capture the rawness and randomness of the Irish story. In one instance the hope of an emigrant to America to earn American citizenship in order to eke out a life and future that would not be possible at home. Whilst

the other highlights the turmoil and bloody nature of the States earliest days. Essentially these artefacts recall the Hand of History as it touches our collective shoulders; imploring us to learn the lessons of the past. As we as a society seek to re-assert normality in the post-covid period, recognition of what previous generations have achieved in difficult circumstances will serve as the inspiration to recover and re-embrace all that was missing in the past two years.



The Hand of History - the note expresses the hope that "when this board is seen again the curse of civil war and the dark cloud that hangs over our country will be things of the past"



Ferdia and Cuchulainn Statue Ardee



4

STRATEGIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Strategic Economic Development Directorate provides for the coordinated economic development of the county by planning for, initiating and managing projects that contribute positively to its ongoing development.

The Directorate has three key areas of responsibility:

- Economic Development, including the Local Enterprise Office, tourism services and work involving partners and funding outside the state, including European Affairs and the EU PEACE programme.



- Fire and Emergency Services, including the Fire Service, Civil Defence, and Building control, providing vital and lifesaving services to the public.
- Planning, the way in which we organise the built environment in our county. Planning, conservation works, heritage and the implementation of strategies which help to keep our citizens safe.

The Directorate 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.



**PLANNING
SERVICES
AT A GLANCE**



OPENED **261 FILES**
ON UNAUTHORISED
DEVELOPMENT

**218 WARNING
LETTERS ISSUED**



**1,030 PLANNING
APPLICATIONS RECEIVED**



**312 PRE-PLANNING
APPLICATIONS RECEIVED**



**26 DANGEROUS
STRUCTURES
REGISTERED**

**94 DERELICT SITES FILES
OPENED**



**24 ENFORCEMENT
NOTICES ISSUED**

Planning Section

VARIATION 1 OF THE LOUTH COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021-2027

A variation to the Louth County Development Plan was published in May 2022. This variation updated the County Development Plan to take account of the methodology and housing projections as set out in the Section 28 Guidelines 'Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning' and the 'Projected Housing Demand by Local Authority Area 2020-2031 - ESRI NPF Scenario Housing Supply Target' provided by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in December 2020. This ensured the housing provision in the Development Plan was consistent with national and regional policy. The variation also updated the County Development Plan to ensure it is consistent with Part V of the Planning and Development Act as amended by the Affordable Housing Act 2021. The Variation was agreed by the Elected Members on the 18th July 2022.

LOCAL AREA PLANS

The Forward Planning Team commenced preparatory works on the Local Area Plans for Drogheda and Dundalk. This included the publication of a tender to invite applications from consultants to prepare the Environmental Assessments for these Plans.

NORTH DROGHEDA – R132 TO DUBLIN BELFAST RAILWAY LINE DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTION SCHEME

Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended enables the Planning Authority when granting permission under Section 34 of the Act to include conditions requiring the payment of a financial contribution in respect of public infrastructure and facilities benefiting development in the area of the Planning Authority that is intended will be provided by or on behalf of the Local Authority. A Draft Scheme for North Drogheda was put on display and following the preparation of a Chief Executives report was adopted by members on 29th September 2022.

RESIDENTIAL ZONED LAND TAX

The Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT) is a new tax that seeks to activate zoned and serviced land for residential purposes. It was introduced by the Department of Finance and the Revenue Commissioners in conjunction with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage under Section 80 of the Finance Act 2021.

The role of the Planning Authority is to prepare maps that will show the residential and mixed-use land the tax will relate to (i.e. zoned and serviced land), including where relevant the date that the lands satisfied the criteria for inclusion in the tax. These maps take the form of a Draft and Supplemental Map identifying land which is considered to be in scope for the tax measure. The Draft Map was put on public display from 1st November 2022 to 1st January 2023 and submissions were invited from the public. These submissions are available online. A further report will be prepared on these submissions and a Supplementary Map may be prepared as required.

Homeowners will not be liable for the tax where houses are included in the maps.

Planning - Enforcement

The Planning indicators are given below in relation to Enforcement complaints regarding unauthorised developments for the year January – December 2022.

Description	Enforcement in relation to Derelict Sites
Number of Planning Enforcement Complaints Investigated	261
Number of Planning Enforcement cases received which didn't require follow up	0
Number of cases closed/resolved through negotiation	270
Number of Warning Letters issued	218
Number of Enforcement Notices issued	24
Number of cases referred for legal proceedings	5
Number of Injunctions	0
Number of Prosecutions	0

The Planning indicators listed below are in relation to Notices Issued under the Derelict Sites Act, 1990 for the period January – December 2022.

Description	Enforcement in relation to Derelict Sites 1st January 2022 to 31st December 2022
Number of Derelict Sites Files Opened	94
Number of Section 11 Notices – Directing owner to carry out work	17
Number of Section 8 Notices – Intention to enter on DS Register	70
Number of Section 8 Notices – (Entry on DS Register)	0
Number of cases referred for legal proceedings	4
Number of sites removed from the Derelict Sites Register	0
Number of DS Levies Raised	4
Number of Prosecutions	0
Number of Files Closed	55

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 January to December 2022.

Description	Enforcement in relation to Dangerous Structures January to December 2022
Number of Dangerous Structures Files opened	49
Number of Section 3 (1)(a) Notices – Directing Owner to carry out work	38
Number of Section 3(2)(b) Notices – LCC carry out works	0
Number of Section 2 Notices – Dangerous Place	3
Number of Dangerous Structures Entered on the DS Register	26
Number of cases referred for legal proceedings	17
Number of Prosecutions	0
Number of Dangerous Structures Removed from the DS Register	34
Number of cases closed	58

SHORT TERM LETS

Louth County Council had 23 cases under investigation at the end of December 2022 for breaches of the planning legislation contained in the Residential Tenancies Amendment Act 2019 relating to the short term letting of residential properties in rent pressure zones.

- 9 Notification Letters were issued during 2022 informing property owners of their legislative responsibilities in this regard. 15 Form 15s (annual notifications) were received in 2022.
- 20 planning applications were received in 2022, of which 6 were subsequently granted Planning Permission and 3 were refused, one of which has since been appealed to An Bord Pleanála. 5 applications are out on Further Information, 5 applications were deemed to be invalid and 1 application was withdrawn.

- 26 Warning Letters issued / re-issued in 2022; 16 of these subject cases are still open and under review and the remaining 10 subject cases have since been closed.
- 5 Enforcement Notices issued in 2022 and all 5 of these cases are still open; 1 case is the subject of a retention application which is currently out on further information.

TAKING IN CHARGE

The planning section continued to work on resolving remaining unfinished housing developments in the County in collaboration with Uisce Eireann and other sections of the Council. There were 8 estates taken in charge in 2022. There are currently 29 on-going estates which are progressing through the varying stages of the taking in charge process.

ONLINE PLANNING

The planning section in conjunction with the IT department worked with the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) over the last year to deliver the Louth online e-planning system. This system allows applicants to lodge applications online without having to print paper copies. Members of the public can also make submissions/observations to applications or Part VIII's in County Louth using this portal.

Customers who wish to lodge a planning application or make a submission to a particular application can use the e-planning portal and upload documents via this platform <https://planning.localgov.ie/en/local-government-ireland-planning-system>.

The online e-planning system went live in December 2022 and the use of the portal is growing each week. A once off registration on the portal is required for all users.

LARGE SCALE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The Strategic Housing Development legislation was repealed and replaced with the Planning and Development (Amendment) (Large-Scale Residential Development) Act in December 2021. This essentially reverts the function of determining large scale residential development applications back to the local authority. There are 3 main stages in dealing with such applications: - Pre-planning (S. 247 consultation), LRD Meeting following which an Opinion issues and finally the application. The Opinion must issue within 4 weeks following the holding of the LRD meeting. The table below sets out the extent of pre-planning and Opinions that have issued for these types of development.

Application	Date received	Location	Number Units	Status Stage 1-4			
				S.247 Consultation	S.32 LRD Meeting	LRD Opinion	Planning Application
LRD001	17/2/22	Haggardstown, Dublin Rd	205	Y	Y	Issued 23/8/22	Received 23/64
LRD002	26/7/22	Dawsons Demesne, Ardee	136	Y	N	N	
LRD003	1/2/22	Lands north of Boyne Road, Drogheda	192	Y	Y	Issued 26/9/22	
LRD004	13/9/22	Muirhevnamore, Dundalk	115	Y	Y	Issued 21/2/23	
LRD007	3/11/22	Lisdoo, Dundalk	211	Y	N	N	
LRD008	23/12/22	Haggardstown, Dundalk	517	Y	N	N	

BUILT HERITAGE INVESTMENT SCHEME AND HISTORIC STRUCTURES FUND 2023

Louth County Council received 20 applications under the Built Heritage Investment Scheme, with a further 10 applications under the Historic Structures Fund in 2022.

Funding of €115,818.75 was shared between 14 applicants under the BHIS. This comprised of, Bellew's Castle (essential repairs); Beaulieu House (timber repairs and replacement of lead guttering & slates); Townley Hall, Drogheda (repairs to damaged gate piers); Donore Road Thatch (repairs/replacement to sliding sash windows, casement windows and doors); 19 St. Mary's Cottages., Drogheda (roof and drainage repairs), The Sycamores, Drogheda (gable wall repairs and roof and drainage repairs); the Red Door Project, Drogheda (repair/replacement of rainwater goods); Monvallet House, Louth (re-glazing and repointing of defective glazing); Canonstown Outbuilding, Termonfeckin (stone and repointing works); Euston Street, Greenore (repair/replacement of sliding sash windows); Banktown, Baltray (thatching works); Lisrenny House, Tallanstown (repair/replacement of sliding sash windows); Whiterath Cottage, Dromiskin (render and ridge clapping repairs); Smarmore Castle (repair/replacement of sliding sash windows).

Funding of €114,769.30 was drawn down under the Historic Structures Fund 2022, covering 4 projects at Collon Parish Church, Foresters Hall Dundalk (year one of two-year project), Louth County Archives and St. Josephs Redemptorist.



Townley Hall Before



Townley Hall After



The Sycamores Capping Stone & Front Gable Rebuild



Tatchwork Renovation



The Sycamores Capping Stone



Townley Hall After

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 2022 Budget.

LEO Louth provides local business with information advice, training, mentoring, seminars and selective financial supports. It engages with over **2000** local businesses annually and has a portfolio of **222** clients to which it has provided direct grant assistance in recent years. In turn these **222** businesses increased their employment levels by a gross **206** and net **61** jobs in the past year.

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 2022, **18** loan applications were prepared and submitted to MFI via LEO Louth.

BREXIT SUPPORTS

LEO Louth continued to offer Brexit specific supports to local small businesses in 2022. The assistance provided included:

BREXIT CONFERENCE

LEO Louth organised a cross-border conference on Post Brexit with InterTrade Ireland and the Chambers of Commerce in Dundalk and Newry, in March 2022 with **292** in attendance.

PREPARE YOUR BUSINESS FOR CUSTOMS TRAINING

LEO Louth delivered a free Prepare Your Business for Customs workshop to 8 businesses helping them to prepare custom documentation requirements post-Brexit.

FINANCIAL SUPPORTS

During 2022, LEO Louth continued to provide financial supports 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.

- **18** loan applications were advanced to Microfinance Ireland
- **26** total grant applications were received: Feasibility Study (6), Priming (4), Business Expansion (7) and Technical Assistance Export Grants (9) were approved with a total approved value of €468,539.60.

EXPERT ADVICE & GUIDANCE BUSINESS TRAINING

The training schedule for 2022 continued albeit virtually.

- LEO hosted a total of **51** business training and development programmes with **1403** participants plus:
- **4** Trading Online Workshops were delivered to **150** participants
- LEO hosted 9 Start Your Own Business programmes which were delivered to **157** people looking to establish a new business.

BUSINESS MENTORING

In total, **504** 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**

This was made up of:

347 - General Business Advice Clinics

8 - Financial Business Clinics

149 - 1 to 1 Mentoring

FOOD SECTOR SUPPORTS

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 2022 and Loughinmore Farms were accepted on to the programme.

FOOD STARTER PROGRAMME 2022

5 Louth Businesses took part in the Regional Food Starter Programme in 2022. 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 2022, 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 County 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 2022.

LIDL FOOD KICK - STARTER PROGRAMME

LEO Louth and LEO Meath with Boyne Valley Flavours ran a Lidl Food Kick-Starter information session in August 2022. **12** producers from the region attended the information session. **2** County Louth companies McEntee's Tea and The Pantryist were successfully chosen for the Lidl Food-Kick Starter Programme.

LAUNCH OF THE VISION OF THE FOOD CULTURE PROJECT

Following the completion of a Feasibility Study in 2021, Louth County Council and Meath County Council worked together in 2022 to develop the Centre of Food Culture, Boyne Valley project. The working group completed a draft strategy, which was then presented to Fáilte Ireland. Following the presentation Fáilte Ireland appointed Mark O'Connell to work with the working group and two County Councils to bring the project forward and to plan for a soft launch of the "Vision" of the project at the regional Boyne Valley Flavours festival, The Samhain Festival, in Kells in November 2022. The launch event was a huge success and in 2023 a Project Manager will be appointed to the project to start the 5 year development plan.

FOOD TOUR TO KILKENNY

Gráinne McKeown, Food Development Officer, and Colette Moss, Senior Executive Officer took a group of 8 businesses (hospitality & producers) from Drogheda on a FAM trip (Familiarisation) to Kilkenny on Wednesday 31st August 2022 to do the Foodie Walking Tour of Kilkenny. The tour guide was very accommodating to the group on sharing his knowledge and experience on setting up the food tours and his learning from running them since 2018. Next steps is to work with the group on setting up something similar in Drogheda in 2023. This visit was sponsored by Fáilte Ireland through Boyne Valley Flavours.

SUPPORTING THE CRAFT SECTOR Creative Industries & Design Technology Sectors in Irelands North East Report 2022

On 15th November 2022, Creative Spark, supported by Enterprise Ireland and LEOs Louth, Cavan and Monaghan, launched a report on the Creative Industries & Design Technology Sectors in Irelands North-East. From this report it shows the creative sector in the North East employees more than 2,000 people.

SUPPORTING RETAIL Look for Local /Shop Local Campaign

LEO continued to promote #ShopLocal #LookforLocal throughout 2022, 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. The very popular LEO Christmas video from last year featuring business owners and images of the major shopping areas was again very well received in 2022. Across the main social media channels of the LEO, the video was viewed **17,248 times**.

As part of the 2022 Christmas Campaign LEO pushed for new businesses to join Louth's online shopping directory which now has **267** local businesses and their eCommerce websites listed.



Look For Louth This Christmas - Look for Louth

In Picture (L-R): Sarah Mallon, Local Enterprise Office Louth, Thomas Kearney, KearneysClick.com, Ardee, Sarah McKenna, Sarah McKenna Ceramics, Dundalk, Marcella McRory, Amici Flower and Gift Shop, Dunleer, Lelia Doolan, The Design Gallery, Drogheda, Eavan Brady, Coast & Co, Greenore and Wayne Macken, Local Enterprise Office Louth.

PRODUCTIVITY & COMPETITIVENESS SUPPORTS

GREEN for Micro

In 2022, **16** applications were approved under the Green for Micro Programme.

LEAN for Micro

In 2022, **10** applications were approved under the Lean for Micro Programme.

Digital Start

In 2022, **1** application was approved under the Digital Start (Pilot) Programme.

Trading Online Voucher Scheme

In 2022, **44** Trading Online Vouchers were approved with a total value of **€96,086.11**.

OTHER MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

eCommerce Cluster supported **15** Louth businesses in 2022, 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.

Retail - LEO Louth launched a suite of **3** Retail Management Development Programmes in July – (1) Retail Management in a Post Pandemic Environment, (2) Building Your Brand and Content and (3) E-Commerce and the Retailer in 2022.

These management development programmes were delivered between July and October 2022. **27** businesses took part in these retail programmes.

Financial Capability Skills - LEO Louth launched its Financial Capability Skills management development programme in August. **12** businesses took part in this programme.

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** businesses from Louth participating.

Client Portfolio Review and Consultancy:

The programme reviewed **137** LEO portfolio clients of which 89 were successfully contacted for an update on their business. Of those successfully contacted **22** 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.

Enterprise Support Networks

Assistance and funding towards a number of local enterprise networks was provided by LEO during 2022, including:

Female Entrepreneurship: LEO sponsored Network Louth, the county's women in business network. LEO supported 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.

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 2022 with a total of **73** 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 2022.

Louth County Councils 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 2022.

Creative Sparks Down Town Hub opened its doors in 2022. This Hub allows for remote working and helps 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 2022:

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 Drogheda Implementation Board.

LEO EVENTS & PROGRAMMES

NATIONAL ENTERPRISE PROGRAMMES

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

NATIONAL WOMENS ENTERPRISE DAY - 13TH OCTOBER 2022

LEO Louth and Meath held a joint event on 13th October in City North Hotel to celebrate National Womens Enterprise Day. The event was opened by Minister Helen McEntee and welcomed almost 100 female entrepreneurs from across the region to a morning of networking and education through a panel discussion on current business topics. MC for the event was Miriam Simon a leading business strategist with panelists Marita Collier of Drummond House Garlic, Sinead Crowthers of Soothing Solutions, Shona Osbourne of Osbourne recruitment and Lavina McGahon from the Thrive programme in DkIT. There was considerable promotion in print, online and radio adverts and television coverage for the event. This was the first large in person event run by LEO Louth since the Covid-19 pandemic and we were delighted with the number attending.



Minister of Justice Helen Mc Entee TD (Third from Left with members of the LEO Louth team (L-R) Riona Mc Coy, Paula Daly, Wayne Macken, Grainne McKeown and Niamh Dennehy

STUDENT ENTERPRISE PROGRAMME

985 students from 19 2nd level schools in County Louth took part in the Student Enterprise Programme for the 2021-2022 academic year. On the 11th March 2022, during Local Enterprise Week, these 4 County Louth schools were chosen by a judging panel to go forward to represent County Louth in the national finals:

County Senior Winner - Roci Sports



Ronan Tallon & Cillian McCullough (Roci Sports) from Ardee Community School with Thomas Mc Evoy, Head of Enterprise Louth Local Enterprise Office

County Intermediate Winner - Jewellery By Soirse
Soirse Branigan (Jewellery by Soirse), Our Ladys College, Drogheda was unable to attend the award ceremony.

County Junior Winner - Handmade by Laoise



Laoise Fogarty (Handmad by Laoise) from Scoil Ui Mhuiri, Dunleer, with Fionnuala Rogers, Student Enterprise Coordinator (Louth) and Thomas Mc Evoy, Head of Enterprise Louth Local Enterprise Office

County My Entrepreneurial Journey Winner - Pottery By Dearbhla



Dearbhla Mc Ardle (Pottery by Dearbhla) from St. Vincent's Dundalk with Thomas Mc Evoy, Head of Enterprise, Louth Local Enterprise Office

Due to COVID-19, a preliminary selection process was made before the national final but unfortunately those representing County Louth were unsuccessful.

LOCAL ENTERPRISE WEEK 2022

2022 saw the first ever virtual Local Enterprise Week with a series of online seminars and events held throughout the country. There were 10 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** workshops on digital business strategy

and **2** 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 2022 – COUNTY LEVEL

LEO Louth announced County winners of the National Enterprise Awards during Local Enterprise Week. Awards were presented to the Best Start-Up Business, Best Established Business, and an Innovation and Sustainability Award. With an Overall County finalist picked to represent Louth in the national final.

Best Established Business

Thomas McEvoy, LEO Louth presents the Best Established Business Award to Colm O'Hagan, Project Engineering.



Thomas McEvoy, Local Enterprise Office and Colm O'Hagan from Project Engineering

Best Start-up Business

Joan Martin, CE Louth County Council presents the award for Best Start-Up Business to Nathanael Cooney from Digital Design Consultancy.



Joan Martin, CE Louth County Council and Nathanael Cooney, Digital Design Consultancy

Sustainability Award

Joan Martin, CE, Louth County Council presents the Sustainability Award to Sarah McKenna from Sarah McKenna Ceramics.



Joan Martin, CE Louth County Council and Sarah McKenna from Sarah McKenna Ceramics

Innovation Award

Conor Kerley, Setanta Nutrition Ltd., T/A Phytaphix won the Innovation Award and was also chosen as Overall County Winner to represent County Louth in the National Final to be held in Mansion House in June.



Joan Martin, CE Louth County Council presenting the Innovation Award to Conor Kerley, Setanta Nutrition Ltd., T/A Phytaphix

National Enterprise Awards 2022

The National Enterprise Awards 2022 took place on 2nd June. Overall National Enterprise Award County winner Conor Kerley of Phytaphix represented County Louth in the prestigious business competition.



Conor Kerley, Setanta Nutrition Ltd., T/A Phytaphix with both his Innovation Award and Overall County Winner Awards

BLAS NA hÉIREANN AWARDS 2022

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 the 2022 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.

9 businesses from Louth were up for awards in 2022.

Gold winners included:

- Carlingford Oyster Company
- Coffee & Food Equipment
- Hilton Foods
- Altech Beverages

Other finalists included: Dan Kellys Cider, East Coast Bakehouse, Morgans Fine Fish, Natures Best and P. McCloskey.

Altech Beverages also won the Best in Louth award which was sponsored by LEO Louth.

SHOWCASE 2022

Showcase is the leading trade show for the craft and gift sector. LEO Louth took 5 Louth craftmakers to the event to help connect them to Irish and international buyers from 27th February to 2nd March. Showcase 2022 was opened officially by Tánaiste Leo Varadkar.

Fantastic news for Louth as Niamh Gillespie from Tidings, exhibiting for the first time at Showcase, won the Best Product Award for the Local Enterprise Office area.

Louth also had 2 other winners at Showcase 2022 from within the Design and Craft Council Area of Showcase with Garrett Mallon Jewellery and Martina Scott Designs winning Highly Commended Awards in their respective categories.



Adrian Regan from Hilton Foods with John Sheehy Blas na hÉireann and Debra Henderson, Henderson Food Machinery, official sponsor receiving his award



Representing Louth are local makers Caóilfionn Murphy O'Hanlon of Cushla Of Gullion - Irish landscape textile art, Maria Morgan of Esker Fields, Niamh Gillespie of Tidings, Designer Sophie Hunter and Lisa Heeney of AromaBuff. They are proudly supported by Sarah Mallon and Riona McCoy of Local Enterprise Office Louth



Niamh Gillespie from Tidings, exhibiting for the first time at Showcase, won the Best Product Award for the Local Enterprise Office area



Garreth Mallon from Garreth Mallon Design House exhibiting at Showcase 2022, got highly commended in the Best Product Awards



Martina Scott from Martina Scott Design exhibiting at Showcase 2022, got highly commended in the Best Product Awards

JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT RECOGNITION EVENT 2021/22 - 29TH AUGUST 2022

On 29th August 2022, in conjunction with Junior Achievement Ireland, the Local Enterprise Office organised the annual Junior Achievement Recognition Event 2021/22 in the Council Chamber in County Hall to recognise the staff of Louth County Council who volunteered during the last academic year.



(Back L-R) Elaine O'Brien Lynch – Junior Achievement Ireland, Joan Martin – Chief Executive Louth County Council, Volunteers Pamela Dagg & Siobhain Carroll - Louth County Council, Wayne Macken - LEO Louth (Front L-R), Riona McCoy (Acting) Head of Enterprise - LEO Louth & Susan Murphy - Louth County Council

NORTH EAST REGIONAL ENTERPRISE PLAN 2024 LAUNCH

On 24th February 2022, Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail, Damien English TD and Minister for Social Protection and Rural & Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, officially launched the North- East Regional Enterprise Plan to 2024 in Cavan Digital Hub. Attendees at the launch included Oireachtas members, elected representatives, and representatives from the Development Agencies and Local Authorities from across the North-East Region. Both Ministers acknowledged the various stakeholder engagement and collaboration that had taken place over the past twelve months which had culminated in the finalisation and launch of the Plan.

The Working Groups which have been set up to deliver on the Plan will continue to meet throughout March and April. The final working group to be set up relates to the development of the Agri Sector in the region and work has commenced on the establishment of this group. The announcement at the launch that some €180 million will become available over the lifetime of the Plan to support the implementation of the 9 Regional Enterprise Plans across the country was welcomed and will help to underpin and support the development and implementation of projects across Cavan, Monaghan and Louth.

CROSS BORDER CONFERENCE

The Local Enterprise Office in collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce Dundalk, InterTrade Ireland, Newry Chamber of Commerce, Newry, Mourne & Down District Council held a virtual Cross Border Conference held on the morning of Wednesday 9th March. Interest in this event was particularly high over 300 attending the event virtually.

The Conference was opened by the Leas Cathaoirleach James Byrne and included an address by Minister for Public Expenditure & Reform, Michael McGrath TD.

This Cross-Border Conference provided businesses with among other things an update on the challenges, opportunities and supports available.

ENTERPRISE IRELAND STRATEGY 2022-2024

EI's strategy, 'Leading in a changing world', which outlines the strategic priorities for the Local Enterprise Offices was launched in January 2022.

CARLINGFORD LOUGH CROSS BORDER BUSINESS CRUISE

On 16th June, 170 representatives from 6 cross border business groups came together to connect on a Cross Border Business Cruise on Carlingford Lough. The event was sponsored by Louth County Council, and was a collaboration between, Dundalk, Drogheda, Newry, Kilkeel, Warrenpoint, Burren and Rostrevor Chamber of Commerce and the South Armagh Business Improvement Group.



Paddy Malone, PRO, Dundalk Chamber of Commerce, Michael Savage, Chairperson, Newry Mourne and Down District Council, Thomas McEvoy, Louth County Council, Julie Gibbons, President, Newry Chamber, Alan Knox, President, Kilkeel Chamber, Michael Gilsean, South Armagh Business Improvement Group, Mark Kelly, President Warrenpoint Chamber, Michael Gaynor, Dundalk Chamber, Miriam Simon, Drogheda and District Chamber and Paul O'Sullivan, Carlingford Lough Ferry

EMPLOYMENT INCENTIVES & SUPPORTS LUNCH - 11TH MAY 2022

Thomas Mc Evoy, Head of Enterprise, represented LEO Louth at the Employment Incentive & Supports Lunch hosted by Dundalk Chamber of Commerce in association with the Cross Border Partnership Employment Services in the Fairways Hotel on 11th May. The lunch was attended by over 100 SMEs in the Cross Border Region.



Michael Gaynor Cross Border Partnership for Employment Services, Thomas McEvoy LEO Louth, Eugene Conlon, The Energy Team. Deirdre Maguire InterTrade Ireland, Barbara Gibson Dept for Communities, Sean Farrell President Dundalk Chamber and Lorraine O Malley Dept of Social Protection.



Robert Murray President of Drogheda & District Chamber with Maureen Ward from #Louthchat and Peter McGrane Louth Local Enterprise Office



Thomas Mc Evoy, Louth Local Enterprise Office with Robert Murray President of Drogheda & District Chamber, Miriam Simon, Vice President of Drogheda & District Chamber and Paddy Donnelly, Louth County Council

BUSINESS NETWORK LUNCH FRIDAY 24TH JUNE 2022

On 24th June 2022, 120 guests attended the Business Network Lunch in the Monasterboice Inn organised by the Drogheda & District Chamber, to launch www.indrogheda.com, a new website to promote local and international investment in Drogheda and surrounding region.

The lunch also served as an opportunity to recognize the contribution of local champions who have been instrumental in promoting diversity, inclusion and community development within the greater Drogheda Area. Louth LEO was a sponsor for one of these awards. Maureen Ward "A champion for local business, built a strong network of local business owners and managers using Twitter. She created a support network that connects businesses of all sizes online, locally. She created #LouthChat and continues to manage it weekly.

OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE NORTHEAST BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARDS 15TH JULY 2022

On 15th July, 50 guests attended the official launch of the Northeast Business Excellence Awards in the Highlanes Gallery Drogheda. The event was organised by the Drogheda & District Chamber.



Peter McGrane, Local Enterprise Office Louth with Robert Murray President of Drogheda & District Chamber at the Official Launch of the National Business Excellence Awards

LOUTH BUSINESS AWARDS 2022

A record crowd of 620 delegates attended the Louth Business Awards on 22nd October 2022 in the Carrickdale Hotel, organised by Dundalk Chamber of Commerce. LEO Louth sponsored the category of Best Emerging New Business at the 2022 awards. The finalists for this category were ZOMA, Nude Foods, Loughran Brewing Store and Soothing Solutions Ltd with Soothing Solutions Ltd awarded the title of the 2022 Best Emerging New Business.



DOS Thomas McEvoy, David Kierans, ZOMA, Una McGooey, President of Dundalk Chamber of Commerce, Sinead Crowther & Denise Lauaki, Soothing Solutions Ltd, Sarah Brennan, Loughran Brewing Store & Brian Gartland, Nude Foods at the Louth Business Awards 2022



DOS Thomas McEvoy, Una McGooey, President of Dundalk Chamber of Commerce with Sinead Crowther & Denise Lauaki from Soothing Solutions Ltd winners of the Best Emerging Business Award which was sponsored by LEO Louth

DROGHEDA & DISTRICT CHAMBER AWARDS 2022 - 26TH NOVEMBER 2022

On 26th November 2022 Drogheda & District Chamber hosted their annual Business Awards in the City North Hotel, LEO Louth sponsored the category of Rising Star/Best Emerging Business award at the 2022 awards. TRIBE Restaurant was awarded the title of Rising Star/Best Emerging Business.



Management & Staff of TRIBE Restaurant with Thomas McEvoy, DOS Strategic Economic Development, Louth County Council. TRIBE Restaurant are the winners of the Rising Star/Best Emerging Business Award which was sponsored by LEO Louth.

VISITORS TO CO. LOUTH

Australian Ambassador Mr. Gary Gray

The Australian Ambassador to Ireland, Mr. Gary Gray visited Louth in January 2022. He met Dundalk businesses to discuss opportunities with Australia.

Economic and Commercial Counsellor, Luis Carmo Reis from the Portuguese Embassy of Ireland

Economic and Commercial Counsellor, Luis Carmo Reis from the Portuguese Embassy of Ireland met with local businesses on the 18th May 2022.



Riona McCoy, Louth Local Enterprise Office with the Australian Ambassador the Honourable Gary Gray on 12th January 2022

Fire and Emergency Services

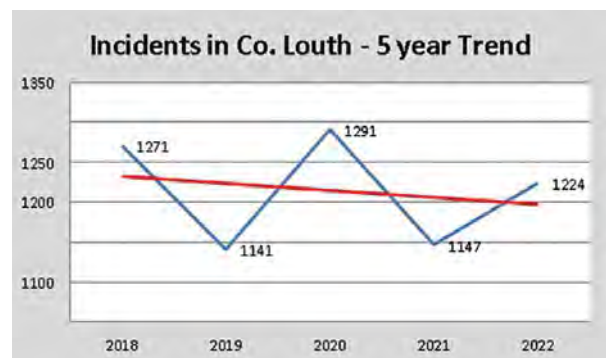
FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

There was a 6.7% increase in emergency incidents attended by Fire Brigades in Louth in 2022 compared to 2021. However there is a downwards trend in incident numbers in the longer term.

Comparative Period	No of Incidents	% Difference +/-
2018	1271	+1.1%
2019	1141	-10.2%
2020	1291	+13.2%
2021	1147	-11.2%
2022	1224	+6.7%

The training programme included the following courses (as well as other courses):

- Pump Operators course
- Compartment Fire Behaviour course (in Hacketstown)
- Winch course
- Emergency Driving (ESDS) courses
- Breathing Apparatus and Road Traffic Accident Refresher courses



Training Programme



**FIRE SERVICES
2022
AT A GLANCE**



198 ROAD TRAFFIC
ACCIDENTS ATTENDED
INCREASE FROM 2021,
DUE TO INCREASED TRAFFIC VOLUMES WITH
THE ENDING OF COVID RESTRICTIONS

51 GORSE / FOREST
FIRE INCIDENTS
ATTENDED
DOWN FROM 2021

238 SMALL OUTDOOR
GRASS FIRES, RUBBISH
FIRES AND SKIP FIRES
DOWN FROM 2021



A LARGE INCREASE IN
FIRE ALARM ACTIVATIONS
MAKING IT THE MOST COMMON
INCIDENT TYPE



DUNDALK
FIRE STATION ATTENDED
417 INCIDENTS

DROGHEDA
FIRE STATION WAS THE
BUSIEST STATION WITH
440 INCIDENTS

174 INCIDENTS
ATTENDED IN COUNTY
MEATH

THE NUMBER OF INCIDENTS ATTENDED
IN MEATH IS ALMOST THE SAME AS THE
COMBINED NUMBER OF INCIDENTS IN
ARDEE, CARLINGFORD AND DUNLEER
STATION AREAS



Christoff Fire



CFBT Course in Hacketstown



Civil Defence

Louth County Council has selected a Design Team for the construction of a new fire station in Dunleer, following a tender process. Louth County Council is purchasing the site for the new fire station and once this is complete, the design will proceed.

Approval was received from the DHLGH for a €1.145 million extension and upgrade of Dundalk Regional Fire Service Training Centre. A summary cost plan was completed by a Quantity Surveyor, indicating an increased project cost of €2.9 million. Approval for this has been sought from the DHLGH.

The number of Fire Safety Certificate applications received by the Fire and Building Control Section increased from 119 in 2021 to 131 in 2022. The number of Disabled Access Certificate applications received increased from 96 in 2021 to 106 in 2022.

The Fire Prevention Section inspected a large number of buildings used for the accommodation of Ukrainian refugees for fire safety purposes. Other enforcement activity included two Closure Notices in Carlingford.

The Building Control Section inspected new developments for compliance with the Building Regulations and met national inspection targets.

Major fires attended during 2022 included the Christoff fire, Jenkinstown on 14th May 2022 and the Oxigen fire, Dundalk on 15th June 2022.

LOUTH CIVIL DEFENCE continued to recruit new volunteers during 2022. The response by Louth Civil Defence during the Covid pandemic has honoured at a ceremony in Croke Park on 29th November 2022 when volunteers received specially commissioned medals from the Minister for Defence Simon Coveney.

Economic Development

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Economic Development Unit supports the co-ordinated economic development of County Louth by planning for, initiating and managing projects that contribute positively to the Countys ongoing economic development. The unit is involved in the marketing and promotion of the County as a business friendly location and engages in strategic economic planning which informs Louth County Councils policy decisions. This work is important to ensure that the maximum benefit is derived from economic and employment development decisions associated with major infrastructure.

LOUTH ECONOMIC FORUM (LEF)

The forum, established in 2009, comprises the business sector of County Louth, Local Authority Management and all of the State Agencies that interact with those generating economic activity in the County and is a one stop shop for potential investors. The award winning continues to build partnerships and fosters 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 & Training. Mr Martin Cronin stepped down as Chair late November with Mr Gerry Murphy taking on the role as Chairperson.

With the move in direction on some funding opportunities to a more regional basis, the Forum agreed to incorporate a regional focus to some future meetings with presentations being given by Regional representatives, thus ensuring stakeholders in County Louth are aware of the opportunities which are available at an early stage. In 2022, this included a presentation on the Regional Enterprise Plan to 2024, an update on the revamped M1 Corridor website, a presentation on the current status of DkIT, and a very informative tour of the Advanced Manufacturing Training Centre of Excellence (AMTCE) at the Xerox Technology Park.

SHOPFRONT IMPROVEMENT GRANT SCHEME

The Shopfront Improvement Grant Scheme which forms part of Louth County Councils suite of business incentives was available to local retailers and business owners in the towns of Ardee, Drogheda and Dundalk to continue to help enhance shop fronts in the town centres.

In 2022, the scheme was extended to areas not covered by the original scheme, this resulted in an overall number of 29 applications received under the scheme.

STREETSCAPE ENHANCEMENT SCHEME 2022 - OMEATH

24 applications were received by Louth County Council under this Scheme. Minister Humphreys, Department of Rural and Community Development announced on the 14th December 2022 she was giving the green light for works to take place in Omeath under the Streetscape Enhancement Initiative.



Minister Heather Humphreys announcing the towns to receive funding under the 2022 Streetscape Initiative

FESTIVAL FUNDING

Louth County Council received 23 applications under the 2022 Festival Grants Initiative which was open to local and community events to benefit the local economy and tourism in the County. 19 applications received letters of offer of funding and 4 were unsuccessful.

Louth County Council received 4 applications under the Large Festival / Participative Event Programme 2022. Applications were sought for large scale festivals/events. All 4 applications received letters of offers of funding.

Louth County Council also provided funding for the following in 2022:

- Sponsorship of the Drogheda and Ardee St. Patricks Day parades
- Sponsorship of the Cross Border Tourism Conference 2022
- Sponsorship of the Cross Border Summer Business Cruise 2022
- Sponsorship of the Omeath Halloween Fireworks Display
- Contribution to the Shop Local Gift Voucher Scheme
- Contribution to 'Lú Festival of Light' 2022
- Contributions towards Ardee, Dundalk & Drogheda Christmas Lights 2022

TOURISM

MARKETING AND PROMOTION

As part of our collaboration with Fáilte Ireland on the various tourism projects, Fáilte Ireland engaged a Digital Specialist to undertake a review of our tourism destination to look at 1) digital orientation and 2) review of the tourism websites. Arising out of the findings and recommendations, work on the upgrading of the websites will be undertaken in 2023.

The newly designed Visit Louth tourism map and guide was published and distributed to tourism providers in County Louth in 2022. It is also available to download from the Visit Louth website.



New Visit Louth brochure

A number of tourist itineraries were developed in 2022 to help visitors to County Louth plan their trip. They have been published on the Visit Louth website and further itineraries are being planned.

A social media campaign showcasing all there is to see and do throughout County Louth has resulted in a notable increase in the number of interactions and engagements with our social media platforms in 2022.

Visit Louth, together with 'Sea Louth', had a stand at the National Ploughing Championships in September 2022 where everything there is to see and do in County Louth was promoted. It was a very successful event with continued footfall at the stand on all 3 days. A raffle was held for a hamper which included a selection of goods produced in County Louth together with an overnight stay sponsored by the Fairways Hotel.



Visit Louth/sea louth stand at the National Ploughing Championships

'SEA LOUTH' SCENIC SEAFOOD TRAIL

Following its successful launch in June 2021, the Tourism Section has been actively promoting this new tourism initiative throughout 2022. The trail showcases Louth's picturesque coastline and locally sourced seafood and aims to drive footfall into our restaurants and eateries which serve good quality seafood dishes, and to also enhance the visitor experience while in County Louth thus increasing dwell time.

A total of 17 blogs on various topics relating to the trail were published in 2022, starting with a bucket list of '22 things to do on the sea louth scenic seafood trail in 2022' and finishing up with the 'Cosiest Places to Eat'. All of the blogs were published on the sea



louth website and were shared across social media to encourage tourists / outdoor enthusiasts to start their very own scenic seafood trail adventure.

A new sea louth flyer was printed published and distributed to tourism providers in County Louth in 2022.



New Sea Louth flyer

To raise the profile of the seafood trail, successful marketing initiatives and competitions were run in the Irish Times 'Something for the Weekend', Woman's Way magazine and the RTÉ Guide during 2022.

Sea Louth was promoted at a number of trade shows during 2022 including the Dundalk Agricultural Show, the National Ploughing Championships and by Carlingford Oysters at the Global Seafood expo held in Barcelona.

Award winning travel writer and expert Pól O'Conghaile completed the trail in May and published an article in the INM's Weekend Magazine in June

with a great response from the public to the article. Sea Louth also featured in Easy Food magazine, the Sunday Worlds Sunday Supplement and the summer edition of Mums and Tots magazine during 2022



Sineád Roche, Dundalk Tourist Officer and Susan L. Murphy, Tourism Section with Pól O'Conghaile

To mark the 1st year anniversary of the seafood trail, a competition was run across all our social media channels offering followers the chance to win a break for two in Carlingford, one of the scenic viewpoint locations along the trail. The prizes were sponsored by the tourism providers who are keen supporters of sea louth. There were a total of 354 entries to the competition.

Ireland AM on Virgin Media TV hosted a live outdoor broadcast from Carlingford with Deric Hartigan in September in association with Sea Louth. There was a boost in the supporters online following the broadcast. They also visited with one of our key producers 'Carlingford Oysters' and broadcast live from the middle of the Lough.



Susan L. Murphy, Tourism Section with Deric Hartigan, TV3 Weatherman in Carlingford

The sea louth project was shortlisted in the annual Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards 2022 in the 'Supporting Tourism' category.

The awards were held in November and were sponsored by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to recognise and celebrate the outstanding work being carried out by Local Authorities all over Ireland.

Filming took place in November for an RTÉ Nationwide special showcasing the sea louth seafood trail, together with a number of the seafood producers and participating restaurants. The show will be aired on RTÉ in late Spring 2023.

BOYNE VALLEY TOURISM

Journalists were invited to experience the Boyne Valley throughout the year with a number of press visits organised with a particular emphasis on press from Northern Ireland.

www.discoverboynevalley.ie was revamped in 2021 and now has 540,000 pageviews with dedicated listings for members. A tiktok video is created every week along with 2 blog articles to inform and attract visitors to the destination. This has proven successful with many blogs about County Louth within the Boyne Valley.

A series of Heritage Familiarisation Trips were carried out in association with the OPW. This included a visit to Old Mellifont Abbey on 24th August for members of the tourism trade.

Two training videos were created to assist tourism businesses to upskill staff on things to see and do throughout the Boyne Valley. Owner/Managers of attractions were invited to give a short description of their attraction in two short 20 minute videos. These videos have proven very popular for hotels and accommodation providers.

A new and improved Boyne Valley Guide was released which includes a map. The new look guide is available at T1 and T2 Dublin Airport. The main Boyne Valley Holiday Guide 2022 which has 18,000 printed copies, along with Boyne Valley brochures are available in tourist offices and tourism businesses throughout the Boyne Valley and beyond.

Promotional Shows

The Boyne Valley was promoted at a dedicated stand at the Balmoral Show from 10th to 14th May, Bord Bia Bloom from 2nd to 6th June and at the National Ploughing Championships in September with a combined 517,000 visitors to all 3 shows.

#My Boyne Valley Videos

3 new videos of the Boyne Valley were created with the support of Fáilte Ireland. The purpose is to provide a personal tour of the Boyne Valley by meeting the industry who demonstrate their passion for their local area. The Drogheda video has been completed and will be launched ahead of the 2023 season to maximise its exposure.

Autumn Marketing Campaign

An Autumn marketing campaign was undertaken to attract business in the shoulder season throughout September and October. The campaign was delivered via 98FM (208k listeners) and in the Northern Ireland market via U105 Radio (230k listeners) with a key focus on good value mid-week breaks available on www.discoverboynevalley.ie



Discover Boyne Valley stand at the Balmoral Show

LOUTH/MEATH FOOD DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

EVENTS

The Boyne Valley Food Series returned with in-person events in 2022. In excess of 30 events took place culminating in the Samhain Festival which took place from 3rd to 6th November 2022.

The Centre of Food Culture Project

Boyne Valley Flavours Steering Committee have put a strategy document together which outlines the vision, mission, objectives and 5 year plan for the Culinary Project. This strategy document was presented to Louth and Meath County Councils and Minister Helen McEntee on Friday, 3rd June 2022.

A workshop was held on 15th September 2022, supported by Fáilte Ireland, to work on the next steps of the project which included a soft launch of the Vision at the regional annual Samhain Festival in November.



Launch of The Centre of Food Culture, Boyne Valley – A Vision at the Samhain Festival

Both Louth and Meath County Councils have agreed to fund the position of Project Manager for the Food Culture Project. Meath County Council will do the recruitment process.

Food Development Strategy

Plans are in place for a review of the Louth/Meath Food Development Strategy, tenders for which will be issued in the coming months.

Boyne Valley Flavours Brochure



New Boyne Valley Flavours Brochure

A new Boyne Valley Flavours brochure has been published to promote the Food Tourism Experiences that are open across Louth and Meath. The brochures have been distributed to all Tourist Offices across the two counties and also to the Food Experience providers and are available at all Food Series events.

FAM Trips (Familiarisation Trip)

Boyne Valley Flavours took their members on a FAM trip to Airfield Estate at the end of March.

The Food Development Officer was in Kilkenny on the 31st of August for a FAM trip with a Drogheda group to see the Kilkenny Walking Foodie Tour with a view to establishing one in Drogheda.

CAPITAL PROJECTS AND PLANS

Destination Towns

Following receipt of funding from Fáilte Ireland and the appointment of Design Team Consultants, work was undertaken on the design and content of the bespoke wayfinding and interpretive signage for visitors in Drogheda's historic core. The tender process was also undertaken for the provision and installation of the signage, seating and paving works, the contract for which is expected to be completed by the Summer of 2023.

Urban Animation / Lú Festival of Light

As part of the funding from Fáilte Ireland under the Urban Animation scheme, Louth County Council hosted 'Lú – Drogheda's Festival of Light' from 28th October to 5th November. The festival attracted huge numbers to the town with three of the town's most iconic buildings – the Old Abbey, St. Peter's Church and St. Laurence's Gate – lit up with spectacular displays. The buildings were transformed with dramatic moving images into a colourful canvas telling remarkable mythological tales through speech, sound and projection.

It is intended that this lighting festival will run for the next 2 years. It is planned to proceed with the other two elements of the funding, an Augmented Reality Trail and Mural, in 2023.



Trevor Connolly, BIDS Drogheda, Mayor of Drogheda, Michelle Hall, Sam Cosgrove as Lú, Fiadh O'Grady as Bóinn, Mark Mohan, Fáilte Ireland and Colette Moss, Louth County Council at the launch of Lú Festival of Light



St. Peter's Church – Lú Festival of Light



Senator Erin McGreehan, An Taoiseach Micheál Martin and Colette Moss, Louth County Council at the Shared Island Funding Announcement

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Shared Island Development Fund

Louth County Council's application to the Shared Island Development Fund for a cross border feasibility study incorporating the Carlingford/Cooley area together with Newry, Mourne and Down was successful with the funding announced by An Taoiseach Micheál Martin in the Townhall Theatre in Cavan on 29th September 2022.

Night-Time Economy Adviser for Drogheda

Following a competitive process involving over 40 towns and cities in Ireland, Louth County Council's application to recruit a new Night-Time Economy Adviser was chosen. The process to appoint a new Night-Time Economy Advisor will commence shortly, and their key role will be to work towards a plan for the betterment of Drogheda.

Louth County Council Heritage Office

Many successful projects were run by the Heritage Office of Louth County Council in 2022, thanks to the increased availability of external funding from central government.

COMMUNITY MONUMENTS FUND

Conservation works were begun on Glaspistol towerhouse castle, near Clogherhead, in association with its private owner. A fascinating discovery there was of what is only the second ever Mediaeval carving of an "Elephant and Castle" to be found in Ireland (the other is at the Rock of Cashel). The conservation of this towerhouse will be a multi-year project, assuming the continuation of funding support from the Community Monuments Fund (CMF).

The CMF also funded the creation of a Conservation and Management Plan for Cill Mhuire ruined church and graveyard at Templetown, where many relatives of U.S. president Joe Biden are buried. Unfortunately the plan cannot currently be put into effect as the graveyard has no known owner and it is not registered.

NEW INTERPRETATION PANELS ERECTED AT CASTLETOWN MOTTE AND THE HILL OF FAUGHART

Two new interpretation panels were erected near the entrance to Castletown Motte (a National Monument in the care of the OPW) and in the car park on the Hill of Faughart. Works were funded as a LEADER Cooperation Tourism project, led by the Louth Heritage Officer and the Tourism Officers of Cavan and Monaghan County Councils, acting on behalf of their counties' LCDCs. Monuments consent was obtained for all works, which were overseen by licensed archaeologists.

LOCAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN FUND

Enhanced funding was obtained for the expansion of the Little Tern Conservancy project at Baltray. The funding allowed the Louth Nature Trust to increase its staffing, leading to the most successful year on record for fledging of little tern chicks.

Contractors developed a plan for the management of public access in relation to the need for cattle grazing on the Council's nature reserve at Clogherhead.

Sadly, no tender responses were received for the creation of a Sustainable Access Plan for the sand dunes at Seapoint, near Termonfeckin.

Grants were received for a survey of nesting swifts in County Louth, which BirdWatch Ireland carried out on behalf of the Heritage Office, which also obtained funding for the Louth Barn Owl project for the making, erecting and monitoring of nest boxes and for the Friends of Ardee Bog, for making a video about this wonderful wetland.

The Heritage Office also participated in the making of a short, educational video about the importance of the remaining trees of Dundalk's Demesne.



The Elephant and Castle carving at Glaspistol



A summer visit to Glaspistol towerhouse by members of the CLAHS



Conservation works, funded by the CMF, ongoing at Glaspistol towerhouse

5

PLACEMAKING AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Placemaking and Physical Development Directorate manages many of the most visible services provided by the Council, including road maintenance and improvements, street cleaning, maintenance of our award-winning public parks and playgrounds, harbours and piers and the upkeep of a number of cemeteries across the County. Our Placemaking team is developing projects to regenerate our town and village centres and addressing vacancy and dereliction. The Physical Development Team are providing key infrastructural projects to enable the development of new residential communities, the economic development of County Louth and the development of Drogheda and Dundalk as regional growth centres.





Comhairle Contae **Lú**
Louth County Council



Active Travel

BALLYMAKENNY ROAD

This project involved the design and construction of a combined cycleway and footpath, approximately 700m in length from Ballymakenny College to new housing developments located to the north of the school. Included as part of the scheme were the provision of public lighting and surface water sewers.

The new combined cycle lane and footpath forms part of the overall Port Access Northern Cross Route Scheme (PANCR) as part of the realignments of the Ballymakenny Road. This new infrastructure will now provide a safe route for school kids to walk and cycle to school in a safe environment.



Ballymakenny Road, Drogheda



Cherrybrook, Ardee

CHERRYBROOK

Existing footpaths in Cheerybrook Ardee which had completely failed were causing accessibility issues to the local residents. The footpath was newly upgraded in 2022 which has brought about a safer means of walking from this old estate for the residents to access the facilities within Ardee Town.

ST. DOMINICK'S BRIDGE

St. Dominick's Bridge is located in the Boyne Coast and Estuary Special Area of Conservation and is the oldest bridge crossing the Boyne River in the town of Drogheda. Built in 1863 by Thomas Grendon's Foundry of Drogheda, the bridge is constructed of iron with limestone piers and buttresses at either end. It was originally called the Western Bridge but was later renamed after the completion of St. Dominick's Catholic Church in 1878. Now used solely by pedestrians since the opening of the "Bridge of Peace" to its west in the 1970s, St. Dominick's Bridge provides a vital connection between the town centre on the north bank and the residential areas on the south-western side of Drogheda and encourages the residents living on the south side of the River Boyne to walk and cycle into the town centre. Additionally the bridge will also link the Greenway along the River Boyne between Old Bridge and eventually Mornington.

The works for the bridge came about following an inspection on site where it was noted that the structure was in need of maintenance/ refurbishment works. The bridge paint system had shown signs of failure and structural members had areas of high corrosion. Elements of the horizontal bracing members provided between pier columns have been completely corroded with 100% section loss in places. Vertical cracking was evident on the deck slab/ edge beams at the pier locations. Longitudinal beams/ girders were showing evidence of corrosion with up to 100% section loss evident in a number of locations in the main girder webs. Overall, the deterioration of the structural members was progressing. In order to

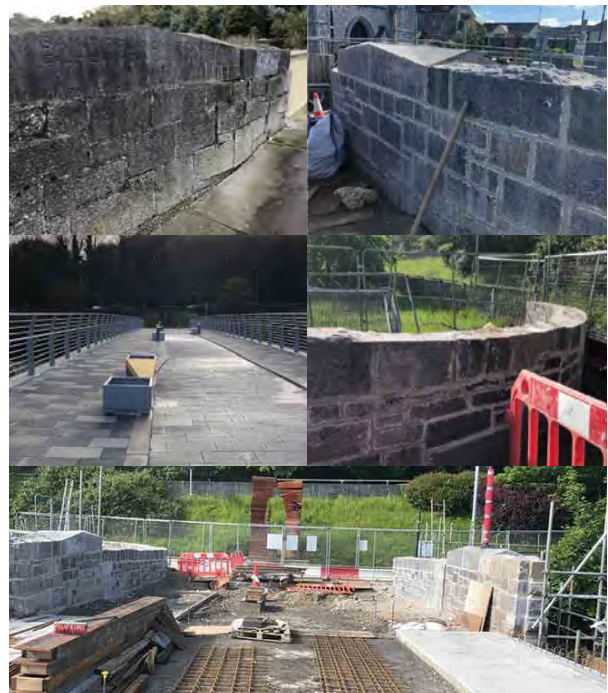
to take advantage of its strategic location within the town, it was also viewed as an opportunity to improve the cycling and pedestrian infrastructure over the bridge, with a public realm scheme that respected the historic location of the bridge and the adjacent heritage within the town.

The remedial works that were completed to the structure included the repair of expansion joints, rebuilding of the parapet and retaining walls, repairs to pier capping beams, and replacement of elements with significant cross-section loss/reinstatement of steel bearings, as well as repair and strengthening to protect against corrosion. Additionally, blast-cleaning and painting were necessary throughout, as well as steel repairs.

Given that the bridge is in a special area of conservation, management of environmental constraints were a key component in the delivery of the project on site. To ensure the work was completed with minimal impact on the river and in a way that allowed for work to be done in poor weather conditions, scaffolding was erected to access the underside of the bridge and scaffolding encapsulation was used to collect residue from the works. As the river is tidal and the lower section would be below the water level during the day, metal planks with openings were used instead of kicker boards to avoid any additional load on the structure during tidal movements or when the scaffold was underwater.

Consultants O'Connor Sutton Cronin & Associates were engaged to manage the delivery of the project on behalf of the client through planning, detailed design, tender, construction supervision, contract management and handover. To carry out the remediation works, Jons Civil Engineering was appointed who engaged specialist contractors such as Gabriel Hughes Ireland who were hired for the painting and scaffolding of the works.

The project had a construction value of €2.2m, the works commenced in November 2021 with substantial completion being reached in October 2022 with the bridge reopened to the public.



DROGHEDA CIVIC OFFICES REDEVELOPMENT

In March 2022, Louth County Council signed a significant contract to refurbish the Drogheda Civic Offices at Fair Street, Drogheda, County Louth.

The project consists of the dismantling, demolition, extensive conservation works on protected structures, upgrade works and construction of a new link building at Drogheda Civic Offices.

The works will include;

- Refurbishment of the existing former council chamber building (Block B), 54 Fair Street, this is a two storey protected structure
- Refurbishment of the existing community services building (Block C), 55-56 Fair Street, this is a two storey protected structure

- Demolition of Valhalla Theatre Building, retention of brickwork and slates for reuse on Blocks B and C for conservation purposes

Construction of a new Link Building (Block N), this will connect the protected buildings on both the ground floor and first floor via a mezzanine.

Extensive landscape external works to the front and back of the buildings which will also include an ESB substation.

Building Design Partnership (BDP) were the Architects appointed. They were required to manage a range of multi disciplines needed to complete this type of large and complex project. The construction works are being undertaken by Townlink with a contract value at €11.8 million excluding VAT.

Works commenced on site during March 2022 and are programmed to be completed by December 2023. Works in 2022 consisted of site clearance demolition works, conservation works and ground works.



Block C Community Services Building West Elevation pre dismantling



Contract Signing-Drogheda Civic Offices Development

Faster Project



The FASTER Project is a joint initiative across Scotland, Ireland and Northern Ireland to support the overarching ambition to transition to low carbon transport systems and to demonstrate how each of the three jurisdictions can provide early systems learning in relation to electrification of transport.

One of the main barriers to the take up of electric vehicles is the lack of public charging infrastructure and in particular rapid charging infrastructure. The project aims to ensure that the availability of charging stations is not a major obstacle to the Electric Vehicle (EV) market penetration.

The FASTER Project partnership will implement the physical roll out and installation of 73 rapid charging stations (50KW capacity and above) across Scotland, Ireland and Northern Ireland before 31st December 2023. Louth County Council is acting as lead partner of the Ireland jurisdiction. Louth County Council was allocated €1.9 million for delivery of the project.

During 2022, Louth County Council and other associate partners have completed preliminary assessments of sites to generate an approved site list 25 EV Rapid Chargers across the border counties, which have now been released. The full list and maps across all regions can be view on the project website: <https://www.fasterevcharge.com/provisional-locations-for-faster-project-charging-stations-revealed/>

Louth County Council has also procured Multidisciplinary Consultants and Legal Services teams to the project, which Louth County Council will be working closely with in 2023 in preparation of the final tender documents, Service Level Agreement and ultimate delivery of project by 31st December 2023.

Summary of 2022 Operations

14 DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT PROGRAMMES

- Restoration Improvement
- Restoration Maintenance
- Supplementary Restoration Maintenance
- Discretionary Grant
- Bridge Rehabilitation
- Safety Improvement Works
- Speed Limits (Housing Area Signage)
- Speed Limits (Rural Speed Limit Signage)
- Climate Change Adaptation & Resilience Works
- Training Grant
- Community Involvement Scheme
- Former National Roads
- Drainage Works
- PSCI: Survey Support



OTHER PROGRAMMES

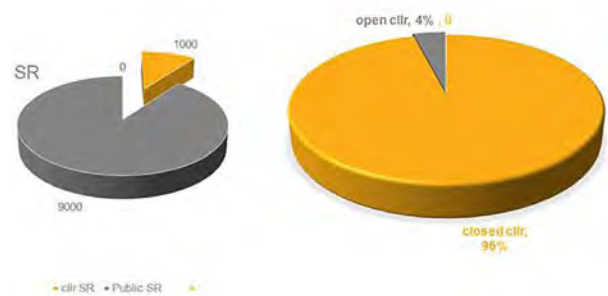
- ADI Assist
- NTA - Accessibility
- 30 Solar Bins
- DPER Innovation JCB Pro, HHU Proworks, QR Codes
- TII GeoApp, VRS Barriers, HD28, HD17, Mini Parr
- IPB Footpath Programme NLA/SLA
- ORIS - North Boyne, Feede Loop, Blue Flag Access

The spend efficiency on these projects for 2022 was 97%.

FUNDING VS. KM RESURFACED

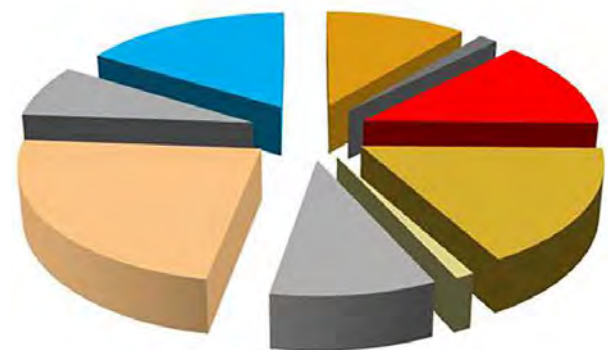


SERVICE REQUESTS (SR) SUGAR CASES 2022



Closure Efficiency - Public 94% and Councillor 96%

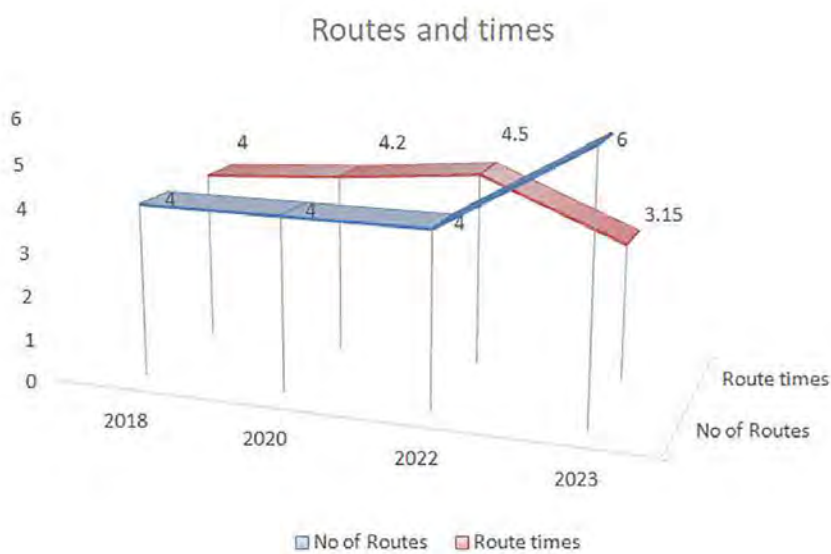
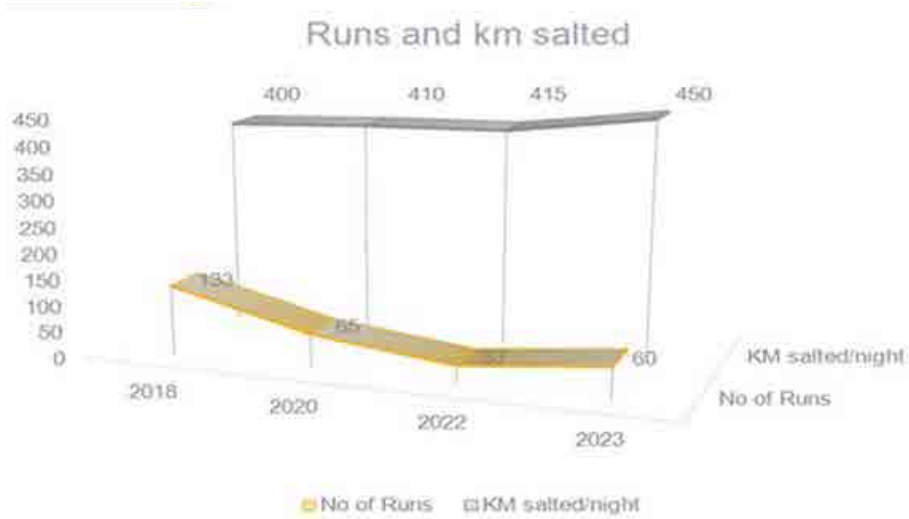
COUNCILLOR REPS 2022 BY TOPIC



SAFETY AUDITS 2022

58 health and safety audits were due to be carried out in 2022 with 33 having been conducted.

WINTER MAINTENANCE



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 to the Schemes. When complete it will afford protection to 249 residential and 205 non-residential properties during flood events. This project is at Stage 1, with CCTV of culverts etc and Topographical Surveys being carried out in 2022 along with the construction of the Hydraulic and Hydrological models underway. Following final model calibration, the model will be used to simulate a range of preliminary options for assessment. Environmental & Archeological impact assessments commenced in 2022 and will continue in 2023, ground investigation works will commence in 2023.



BLACK-TAILED GODWIT VIEWED IN BALTRAY

In August 2020, Binnies UK Limited and Nicholas O'Dwyer Limited a joint venture were commissioned to carry out the Dundalk and Ardee Flood Relief Scheme by Louth County Council, working in partnership with the OPW. The project is at Stage 1 with the Hydraulic model now complete and modeling of the Preliminary Options for consideration as possible Flood Relief Measures continuing throughout 2023. The first draft of the Wave Overtopping Analysis and Assessment along the Dundalk and Blackrock Coast has been completed for a range of design event probabilities. This provides key information on the impact of the flooding mechanisms and feeds into the assessment of the list of options being considered along the coast. The project team will access optioneering for the Greenway Design in tandem with potential flood relief options along the coastline of Dundalk and Blackrock in 2023.



N53 - DUNDALK TO CASTLEBLAYNEY ROAD PHASE 4. HACKBALLSCROSS TO RASSAN

Following approval by Dundalk Municipal District of Part 8 Planning for this scheme and subsequent advertisement, Louth County Council notified An Bord Pleanála of making the CPO for the Scheme. 11 objections to the scheme were received by An Bord Pleanála by the closing date of the 8th February. Representatives met each of the objecting landowners and their agents, listened to and responded their concerns.

Further correspondence took place with An Bord Pleanála regarding the CPO process throughout the year. The Board set an Oral Hearing date of the 10th January 2023 to deal with remaining objections to the scheme.

Detailed design commenced in relation to proposed structures and drainage on the scheme including a pedestrian underpass at Shanmullagh. In preparation for the oral hearing legal representatives were procured and steering meetings held with TII. Further ground investigation took place in 2022 and planning took place in relation to diversions of ESB networks, telecoms and watermains. Payments were made to landowners for investigation works carried out on their lands.



Narrow Water Bridge

Following on from the Government announcement on the 29th June 2021 that 3m in funding was allocated to progress work on the cross-border Narrow Water Bridge Project. Throughout 2022, Louth County Council and their design team began updating the design and restablisng consultations with the relevant statutory authorities. In January 2022 works began on updating the NI Bridge Orders, which went before the Northern Infrastructure Committee on the 16th of February and became operative on the 26th March 2022. Tenders were issued in February 2022 for Wind Tunnel Modelling Services and SOH Wind was appointed in May. Works on the Wind Tunnel Modelling and reporting of same to the design team continued to December, with the interpretive report to be issue in January 2023. Tenders were issued for an Advance Works Contract for construction of a compensatory Bird Roost Site. These works were required as part of a planning condition to establish a roost site further away from the bridge site location, such that any feeding birds would not be disturbed by the construction or operation of the bridge. These works were carried out as an advanced works contract such the birds would have a full season to use the site. Construction works commenced in August and where completed in October.

Other third party Tenders issued and completed throughout 2022 relate to:

- Bathymetric and Topographical surveys - required as previous information was 2010 and the ITS System has been updated since then.
- Grab Samples: to test sediment of the river channel to ensure that any containments found can be included within the Contract Tender Documents and also establishes an baseline level for the works.
- Water Quality Monitoring: establishes a baseline as required under the planning conditions.

MAIN CONTRACT PREQUALIFICATION

A PIN Notice on e-Tenders and OJEU was issued by Louth County Council in June 2022, the PIN notices was to inform potential contractors of the upcoming

project but also give information on a Market Day for the Industry. The Market day was held on the 24th of June and was attended by 6 large construction Firms based on the island of Ireland. Resultant from this day Prequalification document was issued in September 2022 seeking documentation from Proposed Tenderer to establish a restricted panel of Tenderer. Documentation has been submitted in December and are currently been reviewed.

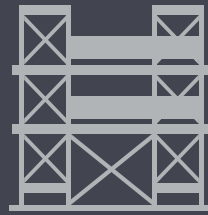
GOVERNMENT APPROVAL

On the 18th of November An Taoiseach, Micheál Martin, announced at an event near Narrow Water Keep, that the Government have approved the project to proceed to the tender process. In attendance was Minister O'Brien and representatives from Louth County Council, Newry Mourne Down District Council and other attendees. Works in 2023 will essentially revolve around the tender process with Tenders been issues in Quarter 2.





**PLACEMAKING
& PHYSICAL
DEVELOPMENT
AT A GLANCE**



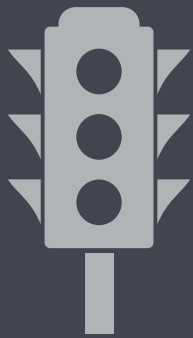
**19 HOARDING
(SCAFFOLDING)
LICENCES ISSUED**



**70 SKIP
PERMITS ISSUED**



**6 FUNFAIRS
LICENCES ISSUED**



**114 TRAFFIC
LIGHT FAULTS
REPORTED AND
INVESTIGATES
DUNDALK - 66
DROGHEDA - 48**



**SECTION 254 LICENCES
FOR OUTDOOR FURNITURE**

**18 APPLICATIONS RECEIVED
12 LICENCES ISSUED**



**85 EVENTS
LICENSED BY THE
SECTION IN 2022**



**14 OFFICIAL
COMPLAINTS
AND RESPONDED TO**



**17 FREEDOM OF
INFORMATION
REQUESTS RECEIVED
AND RESPONDED TO**



**7 APPLICATIONS RECEIVED
FOR DISABILITY PARKING BAYS
OUTSIDE HOMES, 3 GRANTED**



**OPERATIONS
AT A GLANCE**

200
TREES PLANTED AND 500
HANGING BASKETS WERE
DISPLAYED IN URBAN AREAS OF
DUNDALK AND DROGHEDA

290,000 OF VARIOUS SPECIES
OF SPRING BULBS WERE PLANTED

1200M²
OF MIXTURE OF
WILDFLOWER WAS PLANTED



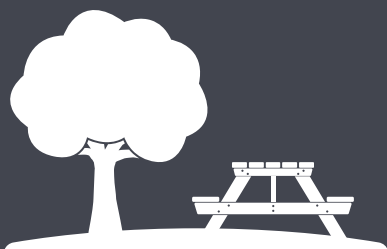

MAINTAINING **GREEN FLAG** STATUS
FOR FOUR PARKS; BLACKROCK PARK,
ST. HELENA PARK, ST. DOMINIC'S PARK
AND ICEHOUSE HILL PARK

ONGOING PROVISION OF ADVICE,
SUPPORT AND ON THE GROUND
ASSISTANCE TO
**TIDY TOWNS GROUPS
AND ALLOTMENT GROUP**

C.2500M²
OF JAPANESE KNOT
WEED TREATED




ONGOING INSPECTIONS, IMPROVEMENT
WORKS AND MAINTENANCE OF
PLAYGROUNDS



CONTINUED INTENSIVE MAINTENANCE
PROGRAMME IN RESPECT OF
**GRASS CUTTING,
ARBORICULTURAL PROGRAMME**
(PRUNING AND FELLING)

POTHOLES

Louth County Council has become the first local authority in Ireland to introduce a new pothole fixing machine, which will halve the cost of current repair work being used by County Councils across the Country.

The machine, which was manufactured by JCB, is operational across the UK and can cover up to 250 square metres a day or up to 700 potholes a month.

The machine works by cutting, planing and sweeping the road before filling defects with hot asphalt, which is more long lasting.

It is designed to operate in congested urban areas and a faster repair time means less disruption as roads will be closed for shorter periods.



Footpath reinstatement works in Dundalk

PUBLIC REALM

Louth County Council have developed a multidisciplinary team to deliver placemaking and regeneration projects across the County. This team, working with internal departments and stakeholders, are identifying, planning and developing a number of projects which will enhance the attractiveness and improve the vibrancy and vitality of the towns and villages in Louth, building sustainable communities and supporting economic activity.

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.

CURRENT PROJECTS

Westgate Vision, Drogheda

Under the Urban Regeneration Development Fund funding was received to carry out feasibility and preliminary design of the public realm and to seek planning permission for these works. Turley Planning was appointed as consultants to form a design team and to create a series of linked urban spaces taking advantage of their unique site and creating a stronger connection and visibility to the Riverfront. Designs have been developed for each of the character areas: Westgate; Medieval Wall; Riverfront and the Old Abbey. This is an ambitious project which will be submitted for planning permission in 2023.

Ardee 2040, Ardee

Under the Rural Regeneration Development Fund funding was received to carry out feasibility and preliminary design of the public realm and amenity lands and to seek planning permission for these extensive works in Ardee. This project has developed a plan to transform the town from its traditional manufacturing centre to a community centred town with defined character areas highlighting the distinct heritage of the town.

Turley Planning was appointed as consultants to form a design team to develop exciting plans to improve the streetscape and amenity of Ardee with a focus on four key sites: Main Street; Ash Walk; The Old Railway; and Amenity lands to the east of the Town to allow planning consent to be received.

During 2022 the design proposals have been developed, finalized and presented allowing the planning pack to be completed and lodged in 2023.

Ardee Castle, Ardee

Under the Rural Regeneration Development Fund funding was allocated for a regeneration scheme to this historic Castle which sits in the heart of Ardee town centre and will play a significant role in the streetscape plans under Ardee 2040. The plan is to

open the building and make it fully accessible for all, providing safe egress to and from the main castle building.

Alastair Coey Architects have been appointed as the Lead Consultant and Grade 1 Conservation Architect to oversee the design and works to this national monument. Surveys have been completed and the team have been dealing directly with National Monuments to apply for Ministerial consent to undertake the required works.

Living in Carlingford Visiting Carlingford

Under the Rural Regeneration Development Fund funding was received to carry out feasibility and preliminary design of the public realm and vision for the Carlingford area and to seek planning permission for these extensive works. RPS were appointed as the consultants for this project. The design team have completed consultations, survey and analysis which has allowed the identification of three Character Areas: Gateway; Town Square; and Recreation Zone. Each of these character areas have been developed with the Gateway as welcoming meeting space connecting to the heritage, mountains and sea. The Town Square will be developed as the commercial heart of the town and a shared space for pedestrians and the Recreation zone as the family space, informal and safe with a strong biodiversity element. This project will create a plan with the aim to enhance the connectivity and visual routes for pedestrians in the area with improved public spaces that can be used for a variety of events and activities. The project will enhance the lives of the residents but also improve the experience of visitors to the medieval town. The plan is forward looking and seeks to develop a sustainable living town and tourist destination.

Omeath Placemaking Scheme

The Omeath Placemaking Scheme involves the regeneration of the heart of the village with improvements to the public realm, traffic management and road improvements. This will be achieved by

economic and social regeneration, increased footfall and maximising the tourism potential of the Great Eastern Greenway which runs through the heart of the village.

BDP were appointed as consultants with a multidisciplinary design team 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 pedestrians and developing measures to decrease vehicular speed and appropriate lighting schemes 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. Planning for the project has been completed with the appointment of Contractors due to take place in 2023.

St. Nicholas Quarter & Backlands

Under the Urban Regeneration Development Fund funding was received to carry out feasibility and preliminary design of the public realm and to seek planning permission for these works. This project is building on the completed Clanbrassil Street project to further enhance the experience of those living, working and visiting Dundalk Town Centre. The vision for the St. Nicholas Quarter/Backlands area is to create a thriving hub for the community. The physical and visual transformation of the area will introduce new opportunities for all to enjoy walking, cycling, meeting, shopping, working and regenerating the area for the local community. A preliminary business case received approval from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the tender brief for the appointment of a multi-disciplinary design team have been completed.

Long Walk, Dundalk

This project is jointly funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and Louth County Council and will create a master plan for the Long Walk area of Dundalk that will involve significant residential development with supporting retail outlets and office accommodation. This plan aims to tackle vacancy, combat dereliction and breathe new life into the Long Walk area, assisting and creating towns that function as 'viable, vibrant and attractive locations for people to live, work and visit'. This non-statutory masterplan will create a vision and set out specific objectives and interventions to help re-imagine and revitalise this area. When completed, the plan will be used to seek further funding and attract investment into the area.

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.

Drogheda Digital Innovation Hub

This project is designed to encourage high-potential future oriented tech projects seeking to start and grow, to locate in the greater Drogheda/North East region. The project aims to foster an environment to facilitate these businesses, to succeed in the region, through the provision of a bespoke and affordable co-working space in Drogheda Town Centre complemented with tailored management and mentoring support to facilitate their growth and export potential.

This project will offer entrepreneurs a viable alternative to locating in Dublin City, which has successfully built a reputation as a centre for future oriented technology companies. The project is funded by Louth County Council and Enterprise Ireland via the Border Enterprise Development Fund and are part of Project Ireland 2040.

The original proposed location for the hub has not become available and an alternative location was sourced in 2021 and an internal design team has been put in place with the intention of this being made available to clients in mid 2022.

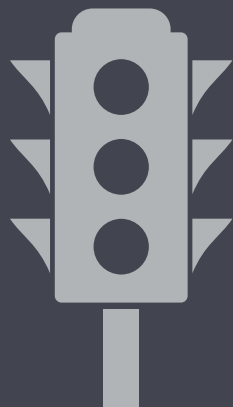


ROADS RESURFACED
OVERLAYS USING
30% RECYCLED
ASPHALTIC PLANINGS

6,000
GULLIES
CLEANED



OVER
1KM OF NEW
FOOTPATH
PROVIDED



110 TRAFFIC
CONTROL LIGHTS
OPERATED

6

SUPPORT & WATER SERVICES

Louth County Council Water Services manages the day-to-day operation of Water and Waste-Water plants and networks on behalf of Uisce Eireann under an SLA agreement. Support Services includes the Finance and Information Technology sections and provide efficient and responsive support to the organisation and the Members of the Council. The Finance section is responsible for the managing and reporting on the finances of the Council and the Information Technology section is responsible for the management, development and security of our IT systems.



Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council



Water Services

Louth County Council manages water supply to 49,498 homes and businesses across the County on behalf of Uisce Éireann. As part of Louth County Council's agreement with Uisce Éireann, the Council is also responsible for waste water treatment. Significant capital investment was made into the County's water and wastewater infrastructure in 2022. This included:

- Upgrade works at 2 Water Treatment Plants at Cavan Hill and Staleen completed and taken back in-charge by Louth County Council on 30th June 2022.
- Water Conservation works ongoing throughout the County.
- The Construction Phase for Omeath Wastewater Treatment Plant at both the Pumping Station and Wastewater Treatment Plant commenced, works progressed during 2022, including the associated rising main which was substantially completed. The Project is programmed for completion in 2023.
- Ongoing works on schemes/projects under the *Multi-Annual Rural Water Programme 2019-2021 (*extended into 2022).
- Detailed design advanced for the rationalization of Tallanstown water supply. Louth County Council are liaising with Uisce Éireann and their consultants to advance the project. Land acquisition is currently being progressed by Uisce Éireann. Projects to include works at Mullacrew Reservoir, new Pumping Station at Allardstown and new Pumping Station at Bannons Cross. Planning permission has been granted.
- Phase 1 of the Shared Waters Enhancement and Loughs Legacy (SWELL) Project is complete.
- Regional Sewer Network Rehabilitation, Programme for 2022 completed. A new schedule for 2023 to follow.
- Work commenced on the Dundalk Drainage Area Plan (DAP) and Louth County Council liaised with continued to liaise with Uisce Éireann and their consultants on the Dundalk Drainage Area Plan (DAP). The Project Consultants are moving ahead with the Hydraulic Model for the agglomeration.
- Dundalk East Strategy, Consultants are working with Uisce Éireann on the design, in consultation with Louth County Council. The project is currently at detailed design stage.
- Operational modifications to Coe's Road Pumping Station were undertaken by EPS. Options for the cleaning of existing large diameter sewer are being progressed within Uisce Éireann.
- To facilitate the progressing of the Dundalk Local Network Reinforcement Programme (LNRP), a Strategic Review is underway for Dundalk Wastewater Treatment Plant and Blackrock Wastewater Treatment Plant. Louth County Council staff are assisting Uisce Éireann with this assessment. The Local Network Reinforcement Project (LNRP) will develop following the completion of the Blackrock/Dundalk Strategic Drainage Study.
- Drogheda Local Network Reinforcement Programme (LNRP) works including the provision of Non-Return Valves on the three no outfalls and an Event Duration Monitor Atkins Consulting Engineers were progressed.
- The detailed design of the North Drogheda Strategic Wastewater Network was advanced, as was the planning and procurement process, including extensive engagement with developers and landowners' representatives. Work continued on the Planning Submission for the proposed Pumping Station with procurement to follow in 2023.
- Quay Street /Saint Helena Rising Main, Dundalk: Detailed design progressed. Construction has been completed along the Inner Relief Road and carried on along Quay Street. Anticipated project completion in early 2023.
- Greenmount WTW: This project continued to develop. Louth County Council continue to engage with the design team on relevant data gathering and site visits. Planning application and procurement is programmed for 2023.

- Drogheda Wastewater Treatment Plant, Uisce Éireann continues to work closely with EPS Limited who operate the plant on their behalf.
- Water Network Rehabilitation Programme, 2 rehabilitation schemes commenced.
- Uisce Éireann have appointed consultants to undertake the Drogheda Drainage Area Plan (DAP). The Catchment Appreciation Workshop has completed and Louth County Council staff are currently liaising with Uisce Éireann and the project consultants in various aspects of the project.
- Contractor has been appointed to undertake Upgrade Works at Cockle Hill Pumping Station. Preliminary investigation and assessment have been undertaken. Date for commencement on site is to be confirmed. The Scope of Works has been expanded. Commencement on site expected Q1 2023.
- South Drogheda Wastewater Network Upgrade, the site investigation for the South Drogheda Wastewater Network has been completed and the draft design was progressed.



Cavan Hill Water Treatment Plant



Staleen Water Treatment Plant




**WATER SERVICES
AT A GLANCE**



4,536 CUSTOMER
QUERIES



180 PRE CONNECTION
ENQUIRIES
191 CONNECTION
APPLICATIONS



APPROXIMATELY
45,967 HOMES
AND **3,531**
BUSINESSES
SUPPLIED WITH WATER



297 PLANNING
APPLICATIONS
RECEIVED



APPROXIMATELY **725**
MAINS AND CONNECTION
REPAIRS



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

Information Technology

The IT Department continued to support all IT systems that facilitate business processes during 2022. IT staff facilitated the introduction of Louth County Councils Blended Working Policy, by providing peripheral hardware, enabling secure remote access and rolling out softphones to approximately 250 staff.

An Office 365 pilot was undertaken in 2022. This involved streamlining a process to upgrade all the office versions on relevant PCs, migrating accounts to the Office 365 environment and supporting staff and councillors during the transition. A full Office 365 deployment is scheduled for 2023.

ICT supported more than 130 physical staff moves, movement of departments to alternative offices and the reorganisation of public counters required because of the Louth County Council Workforce Plan, which was published in May 2022.

ICT worked with our Finance Department to support the upgrade of the Agresso Financial System to MS7. This involved installing new servers and meeting all technical requirements of the project. ICT co-ordinated with all relevant 3rd party systems, which integrate with Agresso to facilitate the configuration of their systems to work with the new version of Agresso. The new version of Agresso back-office software was installed on all relevant staff members devices.

ICT supported the upgrades of existing systems such as iReg, iHouse and iPlan.

The ICT section worked with the Planning Department to implement E-Planning for Louth County Council. This involved the rollout of additional screens to relevant staff and implementing all technical requirements.

The IT Helpdesk dealt with an above average number of support requests due to the rollout of office 365 to some staff, blended working, softphones and a revised password policy. The Councils server and network infrastructure were managed and upgraded, where necessary, to ensure reliability.

7

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE TO THE UKRAINIAN CRISIS

Louth County Council manages the Humanitarian response to the Ukrainian crisis through a cross organisational approach. The Council provides emergency accommodation and support to beneficiaries of temporary protection who have fled the conflict in Ukraine. Working with the Government, the Ukraine response service facilitates the delivery of sustainable medium to long term accommodation to displaced Ukrainians arriving in Louth. It coordinates the community and integration supports to beneficiaries of temporary protection; and delivers the Louth Offer A Home initiative, which provides vacant homes offered by owners for temporary accommodation to the refugees. The service works with non-government organisations to facilitate shared accommodation solutions.



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Louth County Council

MASS DISPLACEMENT OF UKRAINIANS

In the aftermath of the Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24th 2022, millions of displaced Ukrainians made their way to safety across Europe. In response to the unprecedented movement of thousands of these refugees to Ireland, Louth County Council activated its Crisis Management Team (CMT) in early April 2022 to provide a cross organisation and inter departmental approach to manage the Humanitarian Response to those fleeing the conflict in Ukraine. In Q2-Q4 2022 a small Ukraine Response support team was formed led by the Acting Director of Service.

EMERGENCY REST CENTRE

The strategic priority was to set up a temporary Rest Centre in Dundalk Sports Centre run by Louth County Council, which allowed us to quickly receive beneficiaries of temporary protection arriving nationally via the National Reception Centres. The rest centre had a capacity for 65 persons and operated from the 2nd April to 25th May 2022. It provided accommodation for 172 Ukrainian refugees managed by Louth County Council staff.



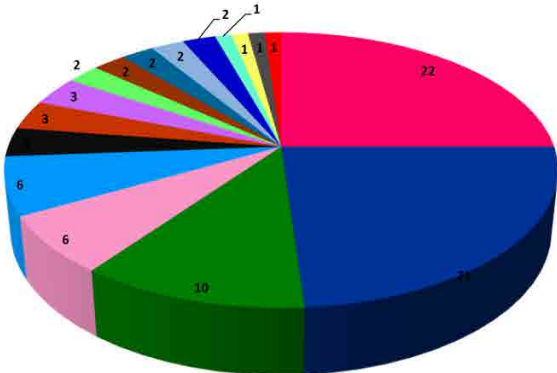
Dundalk Emergency Rest Centre in Dundalk Sports Centre

MEDIUM TO LONG TERM ACCOMMODATION

Our second strategic goal, identified from the outset, was to provide sustainable medium to long term accommodation to those fleeing the war in Ukraine. The Council identified, sourced, leased and delivered refurbished accommodation units at St. Mary's, Drumcar and The Marist, Dundalk. We refurbished two council properties at the Dominican Priory and the Franciscan Friary in Drogheda and leased two Bed and Breakfast Businesses in Blackrock to house Ukrainians in stable environments. The medium to long term accommodation model provides for own bedroom with shared kitchen and bathroom facilities. The children in the accommodation are attending the local primary schools and secondary schools and many are employed in the locality.

By end of 2022, 320 beneficiaries were provided with accommodation at these sites, which are managed and supported by a facilities management company reporting to the Council. 88 of these beneficiaries subsequently relocated outside Louth. In total, 1,360 displaced Ukrainians were placed in various accommodation throughout the County by the end of 2022.

Departures from Louth County Council Accomodation Sites to outside of County Louth (2022)



- Ukraine
- Citywest
- Dublin (Not Citywest)
- Unknown
- USA
- Kilkenny
- Wicklow
- Cork
- Mayo
- Donegal
- Sweden
- Roscommon
- UK
- Prague
- Germany
- Poland
- Meath



Kitchen Diner, The Marist pre works



Kitchen, Dining Hall, The Marist post works

IRISH RED CROSS PLEDGES IN LOUTH

On behalf of The Irish Red Cross, Louth County Council in collaboration with the International Organisation for Migration (Ireland) IOM, facilitated moves of 55 displaced Ukrainians to 25 properties that had been pledged to the Irish Red Cross by residents in Louth. 17 of these homes were shared with families.

OFFER A HOME, OFFER HOPE FOR UKRAINE

Louth County Council launched a call for offers of vacant houses, apartments or holiday homes for temporary accommodation on November 24th 2022. The objective of the call, which runs into 2023, is to provide homes to Ukrainian families for a minimum period of 6 months. A recognition payment of €800 per month is available to the owner and administered by the Department of Social Protection. The Ukraine response team liaised with owners to assess suitability and arranged for suitable families to match to the

homes. 7 Ukrainian beneficiaries were welcomed into vacant homes by 3 property owners in the first three weeks of the initiative. The Ukraine response team provide ongoing support to the property owners and beneficiaries during the arrangement.

COMMUNITY RESPONSE FORUM

Louth County Council activated the Community Response Forum to provide support and assistance to displaced Ukrainians settling in Louth. The Forum consists of a statutory agency working group made up of the Louth Meath Education and Training Board, The Health Service Executive, An Garda Síochána, and TUSLA Child and Family Agency to respond to immediate needs of Ukrainian beneficiaries arriving into Louth; and Community organisations such as Louth LEADER Partnership, Dundalk and Drogheda Youth Centres, Flexibus, Citizens Information, Louth Volunteer Centre and the DEE Hub to provide community integration supports.



Offer a Home, Offer Hope

Offer a home to those fleeing war in Ukraine.

Do you have a house, apartment, or holiday home that is not in use at the moment?
Please consider offering it as temporary accommodation for those displaced by the war in Ukraine.
Go to [Gov.ie/OfferAHome](https://gov.ie/OfferAHome) to offer a property or for more information.

[Gov.ie/OfferAHome](https://gov.ie/OfferAHome)







St. Mary's, Drumcar, Thanksgiving Mass, 23rd October 2022. In attendance were Ukrainian residents at Drumcar, Paula Hand, Interim Regional Director, St. John of God, North East Community Services, Yvonne O'Brien, Acting Director of Service Ukraine Response, Joan Martin Chief Executive, Paddy Donnelly, Director of Social Development, Brother Donatus and Archbishop Eamon Martin



Thanksgiving reception in St Mary's Drumcar on August 5th 2022. In attendance were Yvonne O'Brien, Acting Director of Service Ukraine Response, Ukrainian residents at Drumcar, Paula Hand, Interim Regional Director, St. John of God, North East Community Services, Senior Executive Officer, Social Development, John Lawrence



St. Mary's, Drumcar

8

APPENDICES

Conference attendance

**Record of payments to Members
for meetings Committees and
Representation**

Corporate Plan Progress Report

Financial Statements

Performance Indicators





Comhairle Contae **Lú**
Louth County Council



Councillor Attendance Record

Title	Dates	Members Attended	Travel & Subs Cost	Conference Cost	Total Cost
Conferences at Home					
Celtic Conference Housing for All	21st to 23rd Jan 2022	Jim Tenanty Pio Smith	€600.00 €579.42	€100.00 €100.00	€700.00 €679.42
Training					
AILG Module 1 Mullingar Park Hotel	17th Feb 2022	Marianne Butler	€73.74	€70.00	€143.74
AILG Module 1 Silversprings Hotel, Cork	19th Feb 2022 (Saturday)	Pio Smith Jim Tenanty	€400.34 €420.95	€70.00 €70.00	€470.34 €490.95
AILG Spring Training Buncrana, Co Donegal	23rd & 24th Mar 2022	James Byrne Bernie Conlon Conor Keelan Paddy McQuillan Pio Smith Jim Tenanty Maeve Yore	€253.21 €429.63 €415.38 €383.20	€155.00 €155.00 €155.00 €155.00 €155.00 €155.00	€408.21 €155.00 €155.00 €584.63 €570.38 €538.20 €155.00
LAMA Spring Training Hotel Kilkenny	11th & 12th April 2022	James Byrne Pio Smith Jim Tenanty	€137.12 €419.72 €448.12	€180.00 €180.00 €180.00	€317.12 €599.72 €628.12
LAMA Autumn Training Four Seasons Hotel, Monaghan	9th - 11th November '22 9th - 11th November '22	Pio Smith Jim Tenanty	€150.44 €106.94	€180.00 €180.00	€330.44 €286.94
AILG Module 2 Hillgrove Hotel, Monaghan	14th May 2022	Marianne Butler Pio Smith Jim Tenanty	€46.24 €133.65 €96.89	€70.00 €70.00 €70.00	€116.24 €203.65 €166.89
AILG Module 3 Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone	16/6/2022 16/6/2022	James Byrne Pio Smith	€207.92 €314.47	€70.00 €70.00	€277.92 €384.47
AILG Module 4	23/7/2022	Pio Smith Jim Tenanty	€435.17 €402.52	€70.00 €70.00	€505.17 €472.52
AILG Autumn Training Seminar '22	14th & 15th September	Jim Tenanty	€79.75	€155.00	€234.75
AILG Module 5 Training Brehon Hotel, Kilarney	22nd Octoberr 2022	James Byrne	€492.41	€70.00	€562.41
AILG Module 5 Training Radison Blu Hotel, Sligo	27th October 2023	Pio Smith Jim Tenanty	€478.78 €429.78	€70.00 €70.00	€548.78 €499.78
AILG Module 6 Training Newgrange Hotel, Navan	27th October 2022	Jim Tenanty	€31.10	€70.00	€101.10

Title	Dates	Members Attended	Travel & Subs Cost	Conference Cost	Total Cost
Attendance Other Meetings					
East Region Border Charter Canal Court, Newry	23rd June 2021	Michelle Hall	€32.25	nil	€32.25
Faster Launch EBR, Armagh City Hotel	9th Sept 2021	Michelle Hall	€80.62	nil	€80.62
Annual General Assembly AEBR (Netherlands) Travel to Dublin Airport	Oct-21	Michelle Hall	€32.25	nil	€32.25
EBR Exec Board Meeting Newry	18th Feb 2022	Michelle Hall	€58.23	nil	€58.23
FASTER project Stakeholder Engagement Forum Hillgrove Hotel, Monaghan	9th March 2022	Michelle Hall	€76.14	nil	€76.14
Foreign Travel					
New York	13th -18th March 2022	Pio Smith Jim Tenanty	€2,688.66 €2,803.38	nil nil	€2,688.66 €2,803.38

Side view of Town Hall Dundalk on a summers evening, overlooked by a mural of The Arctic Fox, Francis Leopold-McClintock painted by artist 'Friz' for the Seek Festival



Payments to Members for Meetings, Committees & Representation 2022

	Payments to Members of Louth Local Council	Louth County Council
1	Number of Council & Committee Meetings	112
2	Annual Expenses, Allowance (travel, subsistence & misc. Expenses e.g. postage, including vouched expenses). Total of expenses paid to members in respect of attendance of meetings of the Council and its committees	€192,138.14
3	Representational Payment	€762,536.44
4	Chairpersons Allowance	€20,000.00
5	Vice Chairpersons Allowance	€4,000.00
6	Chairpersons of SPC's/MPC's	€30,000.00
7	Chairpersons of Municipal Districts	€30,000.00
8	Member of Municipal District Allowance	NIL
9	Mobile/Blackberry Phones & Broadband	€15,677.73
10	Expenses on Conference & Training etc. attended: Home Abroad	€11,286.89 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	<p>Louth County Council exceeded the target set by Government under the Rebuilding Ireland Programme 2018-2021.</p> <p>In 2022 Louth County Council published its Housing Delivery Action Plan for the period 2022-2026. This plan has set a ambitious target to delivery new build units through a combination of own build, leasing, Approved Housing Bodies & Acquisitions.</p>
Delivering the Homeless Action Plan	<p>The Council during 2022 focused on the establishment of a homeless family hub for the north end of the County which is expected to be delivered in Q1 2023.</p> <p>At the end of 2022 33 tenancies have been established through the Housing First Programme.</p>
Implementing the Traveller Accommodation Programme (TAP)	<p>Two Part 8 applications for group housing schemes were approved in 2022 with delivery expected in Q4 2023.</p>
Working with key stakeholders to achieve a mix of housing options	<p>During 2022, the Approved Housing Body sector assisted with delivery of national housing targets. In addition, NGO's worked collaboratively with the Council in areas such as Homelessness and Disability. There are many housing schemes currently underway by AHB's with expected delivery in 2023.</p>
Delivering compact growth in Dundalk & Drogheda, including town centre and multi-storey living	<p>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.</p>
Prioritising the role of housing in placemaking	<p>The County Development Plan identifies the key principles of placemaking in creating successful neighbourhoods that are attractive, safe and easy to navigate.</p>

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 and Dundalk Local Area Plan has commenced. It is anticipated a Draft Local Area Plan will be published later in 2023.
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	There are currently three projects funded under the Urban Regeneration Development Fund: Westgate Vision, Drogheda; Long Walk, Dundalk; and St Nichola's Quarter, Dundalk.
Enhancing Recreation, Cultural and Sports Facilities	The Westgate Vision led by Louth County Council and appointed Consultants Turley Planning has completed its drawing pack and is due to be submitted for Planning consent in 2023. Consultants BDP have been appointed for the design of phase 1 of St. Nichola's Quarter. A brief for the Long Walk area is being developed.
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.

DROGHEDA & DUNDALK continued

Title	Update
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. This document underpins and embeds climate action within each section of the Local Authority.</p> <p>In 2022 Louth County Council recruited a Climate Action Co-ordinator to lead out on climate action delivery. This person leads the core team of the two Climate Action Graduates in assisting the climate issues at county level. The Climate Action Team collected a large body of information to produce a Baseline Emissions Inventory (BEI) report at the County's detailed tier-two level. This report will form the base of the Local Authority Climate Action Plan process, due to commence in 2023.</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>Louth County Council became one of the first 5 counties nationally and 300 EU regions to join the new EU Mission, Adaptation to Climate Change. This mission aims to make regions across the European Union more resilient to climate breakdowns current and ever-increasing impacts. It allows for knowledge transfer and best practice sharing across the regions at EU level to answer climate adaptation questions and problems.</p> <p>The Louth County Council Climate Action Team ran a primary school colouring competition to promote the first UN sustainable development goals. The Theme was Goal 13, Climate Action.</p> <p>The Climate Action Graduates gave a presentation on climate change to 4 schools during science week.</p> <p>The work of the Climate and Energy SPC continued. This was supported by the Climate Action Team with a number of presentations across different SPC meetings delivered.</p>

CLIMATE ACTION continued

Title	Update
<p>Working to deliver Irelands Climate Action Strategy</p>	<p>Louth County Council continues to work towards delivery of the Climate Action Plan 2023 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>This included assisting the PPN co-ordinator in delivering on the National Climate Dialogue 'Climate Conversations'.</p> <p>The advanced planning stages for the Local Authority Climate Action Plan (LACAP) process began. Tendering for consultation services to deliver risk assessment for climate adaptation to inform this planning process was carried out.</p>
<p>Continuing to develop as exemplars for energy efficiency and awareness</p>	<p>Louth County Council has maintained its registration for compliance with ISO 50001 certification for our Energy Management System. We are one of a small number of public sector organisations with that certification. We have also improved the partnership with the Energy Team at Dunleer Sustainable Energy Community. Through that partnership, the Council participates in grant funding applications for community energy projects and has been successful in claiming the funding. That also inspires other groups, organisations and individuals to participate in the funding process and to progress energy projects.</p>
<p>Combat the flood threat in Drogheda & Dundalk and other areas in partnership with the Office of Public Works</p>	<p>In 2022 progressing with Stage I continued on the Dundalk and Ardee Flood Relief Scheme which includes the identification and development of a preferred scheme to alleviate flooding in the towns of Dundalk, Blackrock and Ardee.</p> <p>An Emerging Options Public Consultation Day for Ardee was held on 25th November 2022, and it's expected that the preferred option report will be issued in Q2 of 2023.</p> <p>Additional CCTV and topographic surveys were conducted in Dundalk to obtain further information for inclusion into the hydraulic modelling. The Dundalk hydraulic model was revised to incorporate this survey data and it's expected that the model runs will be completed in Q2 of 2023.</p>

CLIMATE ACTION continued

Title	Update
	<p>The first draft of the Wave Overtopping Analysis and Assessment along the Dundalk and Blackrock Coast has been completed for a range of design event probabilities.</p> <p>The completion of these models in Q2 will allow for the long list of flood defence options to be developed in 2023.</p> <p>Drogheda and Baltray Flood Defence: Consultants were appointed to the scheme in September 2021, the preliminary phase of works are ongoing with data gathering and environmental scoping studies. A review of the detailed topographical survey data of the river channels, structures and building threshold levels. This data has been used to complete the construction of the computational hydraulic model, which will be used to simulate flood events for a range of present day and climate change scenarios and to assess various flood relief measures.</p> <p>The final Environmental Scoping Report has been completed. This report highlights the main characteristics and sensitivities that would be present in the local environment and the main environmental aspects within the project. The Invasive Species Management Plan (ISMP) has also been completed; detailing the location and extent of invasive species in the study area, along with the potential treatment options including a cost estimate for each option. Overwintering bird surveys are continuing to be undertaken. The hydrological analysis, which includes an assessment of the frequency and magnitude of river flows over a range of scenarios and the establishment of coastal design boundaries, is substantially complete. This, along with the survey data, will provide the necessary inputs to the computer model as part of the hydraulic analysis.</p>
Being part of the Local Authority Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project	The procurement process has been completed and Louth County Council is included in a work programme for replacement of all its public lights with low energy lights. That work is now expected to be completed in 2024.
Developing and pursuing strong policies on biodiversity	Louth County Council internal cross-sectoral Biodiversity Committee led by the Heritage Officer continues to meet regularly, to discuss best practice and synchronize processes, meetings are also attended by the Climate Action Coordinator.

CLIMATE ACTION continued

Title	Update
<p>Working with key stakeholders throughout County Louth to improve sustainable transport options</p>	<p>Works on St. Dominic Bridge have commenced in late 2021 and where completed in October 2022.</p> <p>Ballymakenny Road, Drogheda cycle lane and footpath, c.560m was completed in 2022, in conjunction with works undertaken by developers. Footpaths in Knockbridge and Cherrybrook, Ardee were also completed. A round of minor interventions to rectify mobility issues on footpaths and junctions were also completed in 2022.</p> <p>Larger Active travel projects in conjunction with the NTA are currently going through the design phases and underway for the development of cycleways and footpaths in Dundalk and Drogheda.</p>
<p>Reducing the carbon emissions by improving it's energy efficiency</p>	<p>Louth County Council has developed a Gap to Target Plan to reduce it's emissions by 50% by 2030. The Council develops annual Energy Action Plans, as part of it's Energy Management System (EnMS) and those plans enable the completion of energy projects to reduce emissions towards that 2030 target.</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 & commenced in April 2022, it's envisaged that construction will be completed in December 2023.
Ardee Castle Upgrade	The Ardee Castle project has funding under the Rural Regeneration Development Fund. Part 8 planning has been granted and detailed design and preparation of the tender documents is completed. Ministerial Consent has been applied for.
Port Access Road	<p>A Licence agreement for Road Works by 'PANCR Developments Limited', which allows for construction of Phase 1 of the Port Access Northern Cross Route, along with other necessary infrastructure was signed in mid 2022.</p> <p>The project, known as PANCR Phase 1, will cover a new stretch of road from the Rosehall Roundabout to the proposed Ballymakenny Road Roundabout, together with the realignment of Twenties Lane and remaining upgrades to the Ballymakenny Road. This Phase 1 of the Project is being delivered by the Housing Infrastructure Services Company (HISCo) on behalf of PANCR Developments Ltd. and is being funded by the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund. Clonmel Enterprises have been appointed as Main Contractor. Construction is commenced in Q4 of 2022 and its envisaged it will take 18 months to complete shortly.</p>
Ardee bypass	<p>Part 8 Planning Consent Process was completed in 2022. However a Judicial Review by Third Parties to An Bord Pleanala directions to Louth County Council relating to EIAR / NIS, with Louth County Council being a noticed party was made to the High Court. It is envisaged that this hearing will not be heard until 2024.</p> <p>Following on from the announcement in June 2021 of €3m being allocated to Louth County Council to bring the project to tender stage, Louth County Council & there designers have update the Design, appointed wind Tunnel Testing specialist, received the Northern Ireland Bridge Orders, and works in conjunction with the relevant bodies including DFI and the Lough Agency in 2022. On the 18th of November 2022 Louth County Council received permission to proceed to tender for the Project. Louth County Council is currently in the process of establishing a restricted panel of contractors with a view to issuing tender in Q2 2022.</p>

KEY INFRASTRUCTURAL PROJECTS continued

Title	Update
Sporting & Leisure Facilities	The Athletic Track has progressed and is hoped to be available for use this summer. Design works continue on the Lourdes Stadium.
Clanbrassil Street & St. Nicholas Quarter	<p>Public Realm works on Clanbrassil Street were completed and St Nicholas Quarter has been identified as an area for public realm works. Funding has been allocated by the Urban Regeneration Development Fund and a business case approved. Consultants BDP have been appointed for the design element of Phase 1. A brief for phase 2 has been developed.</p> <p>Design and engagement with stakeholders will commence in 2023.</p>
Long Walk	A brief for the appointment of Consultants is being prepared and will be advertised in 2023.
Westgate Vision	Design on the key character areas in the Westgate Vision has been completed under funding from the Urban Regeneration Development Fund. The plans will be lodged for planning consent in 2023.
Ardee 2040	Ardee 2040 has funding under the Rural Regeneration Development Fund Turley Planning have completed a drawing pack for planned improvements to 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. Planning consent for the project will be sought in 2023.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND JOB CREATION

Title	Update
<p>Delivering quality job opportunities in Louth for the people of the County</p>	<p>During 2022 the Local Enterprise Office Louth (LEO Louth) continued to deliver supports to business in County Louth. 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 enterprise supports available to them.</p> <p>During 2022 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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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>LEO is a party to 9 Memorandums of Understanding with national protocol partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Social Protection • Education Training Boards Ireland • Microfinance Ireland

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND JOB CREATION *continued*

Title	Update
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue Commissioners • National Association of Community Enterprise Centres • Skillnet • Fáilte Ireland • Credit Review Officer • Louth Leader Partnership <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 2 Seminars/Webinars during 2022. These events were held in conjunction with Dundalk and Drogheda Chambers of Commerce, InterTrade Ireland and Enterprise Ireland.</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 2022 with over 292 attendees.</p> <p>Brexit mentoring – There were 3 business who availed of the Brexit Mentoring</p> <p>Brexit consultancy – (Export Advisor) 20 businesses</p>

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND JOB CREATION continued

Title	Update
	<p><i>Brexit Prepare Your Business for Customs Training</i> – LEO Louth delivered 1 (free to attend) customised workshop to 8 Louth businesses. These workshops aimed to help businesses prepare for customs documentation requirements.</p>
<p>Continuing to work with Louth Economic Forum as the key collaborative driver of economic development in County Louth</p>	<p>Louth County Council continues to provide the secretariat for the Louth Economic Forum. The forum comprises the business sector of County Louth, Local Authority Management and all of the State Agencies that interact with those generating economic activity in the County. It continues to build partnerships and fosters a culture of joined-up thinking to proactively facilitate further economic development and job creation in Louth, focusing on key areas including Foreign Direct Investment, Indigenous Industry and Education & Training and Tourism & Heritage.</p> <p>Louth County Council facilitated a number of presentations on regional projects.</p> <p>Mr Martin Cronin stepped down as Chairperson late November with Mr Gerry Murphy taking on the role as Chairperson. Mr Murphy is the former Executive Director for International Sales and Partnering at Enterprise Ireland.</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, 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> <p>In 2022, LEO delivered a series of business supports which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trading Online Voucher Scheme: 44 microenterprises were approved a Trading Online Voucher - Microfinance Ireland (MFI) Business Loan: In 2022, 18 loan applications were submitted to MFI.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND JOB CREATION continued

Title	Update
<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 Local Authorities located from Dublin City to Belfast City, to promote and highlight the benefits of the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor.</p> <p>The Council also continued its cross-border work through the East Border Region, the Local Authority led cross border network.</p> <p>In 2022 LEO Louth delivered two cross-border business programmes, namely Co-Innovate 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 2022 the Economic Development and Tourism Office continued to ensure Louth is known as a great place to work, live and play. We aimed to improve the tourism offering via the 'Sea Louth Scenic Seafood Trail' and Lú Festival of Light which added to the recreational amenities available to the residents and visitors of County Louth.</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 2023.
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. Variation 1 of the County Development Plan was made by the members on the 18th July 2022.
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 2023.
Westgate Vision	The Westgate Vision is a key plan for the regeneration of sections of Drogheda Town Centre. A project, stemming from this plan, has been undertaken in conjunction with consultants Turley Planning. Funding from the Urban Regeneration Development Fund has been utilised and the plans will be submitted for planning consent in 2023.
Louth Climate Adaptation Plan	<p>Work continues on the 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 2023 & 2024. Reporting on these actions continues.</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 for an Orange weather warning.</p> <p>The Crisis Management Team met on a regular basis since early April 2022 in relation to the accommodation of Ukrainian refugees in Louth. The Fire Prevention Section inspected and assessed multiple buildings and sites for the accommodation of refugees.</p>

KEY PLANS & STRATEGY continued

Title	Update
	<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> <p>A Major Emergency briefing for all senior Council staff took place in the Council Chamber on 12th December 2022. An inter-agency Major Emergency exercise will take place during Quarter 4 of 2023.</p> <p>The recommendations of the report on the Seveso Exercise of 21st September 2021 have been implemented. These mainly comprised the updating of plans and staff information.</p>
Louth Economic Forum Action Plans	<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. It continues to build partnerships and fosters a culture of joined-up thinking to proactively facilitate further economic development and job creation in Louth, focusing on key areas including Foreign Direct Investment, Indigenous Industry Education & Training and Tourism & Heritage.</p> <p>With the move in direction on some funding opportunities to a more regional basis, the Forum agreed to incorporate a regional focus to some future meetings with presentations being given by Regional representatives. In 2022, this included a presentation on the Regional Enterprise Plan to 2024, an update on the revamped M1 Corridor website, a presentation on the current status of DkIT, and a very informative tour of the Advanced Manufacturing Training Centre of Excellence (AMTCE) at the Xerox Technology Park in Dundalk.</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>2022 again saw Louth people display incredible community spirit and pride of place.</p> <p>To coincide with national efforts to acknowledge the contributions of volunteers during COVID, Louth Volunteer Centre with the assistance of Louth County Council held a 'Covid Volunteer Recognition Event' in May 2022, wherein 87 individuals were acknowledged for their community efforts during the pandemic. These 87 represented a handful of those who display outstanding community spirit on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>The Community Section continued to provide funding via amenity and other grants to assist Community Groups to develop pride of place while annually acknowledging group efforts through various award ceremonies, while discretionary funding provided to Elected Members saw a myriad of local groups supported for various works to enhance local areas.</p>
<p>That all of our citizens avail and enjoy our Arts, Culture & Library Services</p>	<p>Louth Library Service:</p> <p>Throughout 2022 Louth Library Service continued to focus on the library's role in literacy support, supporting lifelong learning opportunities and establishing the library as a community hub. It has been a hugely positive time for Louth Library Service with considerable investment, numerous new initiatives, services and infrastructural upgrades taking place.</p> <p>The enthusiasm and hard work of all library staff enables us continue to serve the needs of a diverse, growing population. This presents unlimited opportunities for the library service to respond with a range of cultural and educational services, fit-for-purpose spaces and relevant print and digital collections.</p> <p>Louth Arts:</p> <p>CreateLouth, the Arts Service for County Louth, delivered a wide range of actions in 2022 including the delivery of the new Louth Arts Development Plan 2022-2026.</p> <p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music in Healthcare Settings • Local Live Performance Scheme • World Africa Day

QUALITY OF LIFE continued

Title	Update
	<p>Grants & Awards: In 2022, CreateLouth continued to make available a range of bursaries and awards to individuals and organisations in Louth.</p> <p>Creative Ireland: Creative Ireland is a five-year collaborative programme connecting people, creativity and wellbeing in Louth. In 2022 the Creative Ireland culture team continued to manage their funding streams to span the fields of history and heritage, visual arts, crafts and drama, literature and music.</p> <p>Louth Archives: Conservation and Digitisation of Archives: As part of the Louth County Council Decade of Centenaries Programme 2022, a quantity of Rural District Council and Board of Guardian minute books that support the 1921-1923 period were digitised for future online access. A smaller quantity of the volumes received conservation treatment at the outset of the project. This will improve the democratisation of access to records through the provision of free online public access to original archival sources.</p> <p>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 2022 included minute books of the Council of County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society; School Account of the Railway Works Class Room, Dundalk; and archives of the Ardee Loan Fund Society and Charlestown parish. These donations enhance the research sources available for the study of Louth's heritage.</p> <p>Historic Structures Fund: Interior conservation repair works were carried out on the south gable wall of the County Archives building to address damp issues. A grant was received from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage via the Conservation section for this work.</p>

QUALITY OF LIFE continued

Title	Update
	<p>County Museum Dundalk:</p> <p>Over the course of 2022 the Museum re-introduced and refined its traditional services. Without doubt though, the most significant of the year's events occurred at Kilkenny Castle, when the Museum was recognized as having reached the maintenance standard required under the Heritage Council's <i>Museum Standards Programme for Ireland</i>. MSPI is the industry standard for Museums in Ireland benchmarking and promoting professional standards in the care of collections which are subsequently recognized through accreditation.</p> <p>Over the course of the year the Museum acquired a variety of objects which touched upon the cultural and social life of the County – children's books, toys and clothes; items of a religious nature; equipment used by men and women in the course of their daily work lives, however two donations highlight the intimate role of the Museum in presenting to future generations the very nature of life as experienced by their predecessors. The donation of a Purple Heart awarded posthumously to Patrick White and a floorboard with a handwritten note decrying the brutality of the Civil War capture the essence of the human experience.</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 2022 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. The Louth Meath Migrant Integration Forum continued to implement its strategy.</p> <p>The Access Officer of Louth County Council acts as a point of contact for reps from advocate groups and individuals on accessibility issues and ensures any issues raised are directed to the relevant sections.</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 works 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 works 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 works 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 31 ST DECEMBER 2022

The Income & 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 the 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	Income	Net Expenditure	Net Expenditure
	€	€	€	€
Housing & Building	44,045,257	47,028,464	(2,983,207)	(1,275,808)
Roads Transportation & Safety	23,043,366	12,553,935	10,489,431	10,819,455
Water Services	6,723,303	6,668,198	55,105	30,629
Development Management	19,063,874	13,139,320	5,924,553	5,559,381
Environmental Services	17,314,386	2,344,156	14,970,229	13,949,245
Recreation & Amenity	9,420,382	1,655,208	7,765,174	7,031,388
Agriculture, Food and the Marine	767,821	443,196	324,624	260,191
Miscellaneous Services	5,338,177	7,581,705	(2,243,528)	(38,512)
Total Expenditure/Income	125,716,566	91,414,184		
Net cost of Divisions to be funded from Rates & Local Property Tax			34,302,382	36,335,969
Rates			34,546,750	35,233,676
Local Property Tax			9,866,196	9,866,198
Surplus/(Deficit) for Year before Transfers			10,110,564	8,763,905
Transfers from/(to) Reserves			(8,517,954)	(7,401,088)
Overall Surplus/(Deficit) for Year			1,592,610	1,362,817
General Reserve @ 1st January 2022			2,370,230	1,007,413
General Reserve @ 31st December 2022			3,962,840	2,370,230

Statement of Financial Position

Statement Of Financial Position (BALANCE SHEET) AT 31st DECEMBER 2022	2022	2021
	€	€
Fixed Assets		
Operational	773,913,430	750,114,528
Infrastructural	1,355,364,519	1,355,364,519
Community	4,306,004	4,380,298
Non-Operational	49,079,247	50,035,497
	2,182,663,200	2,159,894,843
Work in Progress and Preliminary Expenses	35,734,096	29,787,429
Long Term Debtors	167,423,081	160,036,926
Current Assets		
Stocks	-	-
Trade Debtors & Prepayments	34,347,570	32,726,491
Bank Investments	118,474,999	57,320,639
Cash at Bank	2,364,285	5,684,125
Cash in Transit	343,129	161,070
	155,529,984	95,892,324
Current Liabilities (Amounts falling due within one year)		
Bank Overdraft	-	-
Creditors & Accruals	80,758,441	45,111,001
Finance Leases	-	-
	80,758,441	45,111,001
Net Current Assets / (Liabilities)	74,771,543	50,781,324
Creditors (Amounts falling due after more than one year)		
Loans Payable	124,705,599	130,439,621
Finance Leases	-	-
Refundable deposits	18,350,665	16,532,594
Other	99,303,163	91,408,914
	242,359,427	238,381,129
Net Assets	2,218,232,493	2,162,119,392
Represented by		
Capitalisation Account	2,182,663,200	2,159,894,843
Income WIP	33,947,064	27,675,415
General Revenue Reserve	3,962,840	2,370,230
Other Specific Reserves	469,071	469,071
Other Balances	(2,809,682)	(28,290,166)
Total Reserves	2,218,232,493	2,162,119,392

Summary of Major Revenue Collections for 2022

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 @ 31/12/2022 = (G-H)	Specific doubtful arrears*	% Collected = (H)/(G-J) **
	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€
Rates	10,273,724	34,546,760	2,268,103	539,303	1,508,127	40,504,952	32,943,487	7,561,465	926,198	83%
Rents & Annuities	2,517,135	13,896,569	-	29,551	-	16,384,153	13,762,267	2,621,885	-	84%
Housing Loans	241,004	1,912,918	-	(8)	-	2,153,929	1,858,546	295,384	-	86%

To alleviate the impact of Covid-19 on eligible businesses during 2022 the Government funded a 3 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 rather than the Waived/Credits column the % collected would have been 84%.

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 1/1/2022	4030
	B. Number of dwellings added to the local authority owned stock during 2022 (whether constructed or acquired)	107
	C. Number of local authority owned dwellings sold in 2022	18
	D. Number of local authority owned dwellings demolished in 2022	0
	E. Number of dwellings in the ownership of the local authority at 31/12/2022	4119
	F. Number of local authority owned dwellings planned for demolition under a D/HLGH approved scheme at 31/12/2022	2
	A. The percentage of the total number of local authority owned dwellings that were vacant on 31/12/2022	2.16 %
	The number of dwellings within their overall stock that were not tenanted on 31/12/2022	89
	A. Expenditure during 2022 on the maintenance of local authority housing compiled from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022, divided by the number of dwellings in the local authority stock at 31/12/2022, i.e. the H1E less H1F indicator figure	€616.16
	Expenditure on maintenance of local authority stock compiled from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022, 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).	€2536748

Topic	Indicator	Value
Housing: H3 & H5 Approved	A. The time taken from the date of vacation of a dwelling to the date in 2022 when the dwelling is re-tenanted, averaged across all dwellings re-let during 2022	37.71 wk
	B. The cost expended on getting the dwellings re-tenanted in 2022, averaged across all dwellings re-let in 2022	€14152.05
	The number of dwellings that were re-tenanted on any date in 2022 (but excluding all those that had been vacant due to an estate-wide refurbishment scheme)	112
	The number of weeks from the date of vacation to the date the dwelling is re-tenanted	4223 wk
	Total expenditure on works necessary to enable re-letting of the dwellings	€1585030
	A. Total number of registered tenancies in the LA area at the end of June 2022	
	B. Number of rented dwellings inspected in 2022	
	C. Percentage of inspected dwellings in 2022 not compliant with the Standards Regulations	
	D. Number of dwellings deemed compliant in 2022 (including those originally deemed non-compliant)	
	E. The number of inspections (including reinspections) undertaken by the local authority in 2022	

Performance Indicators

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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 2022	30.51 %
	The number of adult individuals classified as homeless and in emergency accommodation on the night of 31 December 2022 as recorded on the PASS system	118
	The number out of those individuals who, on 31/12/2022, had been in emergency accommodation for 6 months continuously, or for 6 months cumulatively within the previous 12 months	36
Roads: R1 & R2 Approved	A. (a) The percentage of Regional road kilometres that received a PSCI rating in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2022	95.00 %
	A. (b) The percentage of Local Primary road kilometres that received a PSCI rating in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2022	96.00 %
	A. (c) The percentage of Local Secondary road kilometres that received a PSCI rating in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2022	95.00 %
	A. (d) The percentage of Local Tertiary road kilometres that received a PSCI rating in the 60 month period prior to 31/12/2022	88.00 %
	B. (a.1) The percentage of total Regional road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 1-4 at 31/12/2022	1.67 %
	B. (a.2) The percentage of total Regional road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 5-6 at 31/12/2022	6.54 %
	B. (a.3) The percentage of total Regional road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 7-8 at 31/12/2022	57.65 %
	B. (a.4) The percentage of total Regional road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 9-10 at 31/12/2022	33.68 %

Topic	Indicator	Value
	B. (b.1) The percentage of total Local Primary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 1-4 at 31/12/2022	7.86 %
	B. (b.2) The percentage of total Local Primary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 5-6 at 31/12/2022	5.97 %
	B. (b.3) The percentage of total Local Primary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 7-8 at 31/12/2022	62.05 %
	B. (b.4) The percentage of total Local Primary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 9-10 at 31/12/2022	23.94 %
	B. (c.1) The percentage of total Local Secondary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 1-4 at 31/12/2022	12.26 %
	B. (c.2) The percentage of total Local Secondary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 5-6 at 31/12/2022	5.69 %
	B. (c.3) The percentage of total Local Secondary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 7-8 at 31/12/2022	59.29 %
	B. (c.4) The percentage of total Local Secondary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 9-10 at 31/12/2022	22.13 %
	B. (d.1) The percentage of total Local Tertiary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 1-4 at 31/12/2022	21.66 %
	B. (d.2) The percentage of total Local Tertiary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 5-6 at 31/12/2022	24.93 %
	B. (d.3) The percentage of total Local Tertiary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 7-8 at 31/12/2022	24.29 %
	B. (d.4) The percentage of total Local Tertiary road kilometres with a PSCI rating of 9-10 at 31/12/2022	18.53 %
	A.1 Kilometres of regional road strengthened during 2022	6.1 km
	A.2 The amount expended on regional roads strengthening work during 2022	€1707368.00

Performance Indicators

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Topic	Indicator	Value
	A.3 The average unit cost of regional road strengthening works per square metre (€/m ²)	€38.70
	B.1 Kilometres of regional road resealed during 2022	9.3 km
	B.2 The amount expended on regional road resealing work during 2022	€326856.00
	B.3 The average unit cost of regional road resealing works per square metre (€/m ²)	€5.45
	C.1 Kilometres of local road strengthened during 2022	9.6 km
	C.2. The amount expended on local road strengthening work during 2022	€2283887.00
	C.3 The average unit cost of local road strengthening works per square metre (€/m ²)	€46.17
	D.1 Kilometres of local road resealed during 2022	54.0 km
	D.2 The amount expended on local road resealing work during 2022	€1791866.00
	D.3 The average unit cost of local road resealing works per square metre (€/m ²)	€6.48
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 2022	83.16 %

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	100 %
	The number of registered schemes monitored in 2022	8
	Total number of registered schemes in 2022	8
Waste: E1 Approved	A. The number of households which availed of a 3-bin service offered by a licensed operator at 31/12/2022	24555
	B. The percentage of households within the local authority that the number at A represents (based on agglomerations of more than 500)	77.65 %
Environmental Pollution: E2 Approved	A. Total number of pollution cases in respect of which a complaint was made during 2022	1868
	A. Number of pollution cases closed from 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022	1860
	A. Total number of pollution cases on hands at 31/12/2022	23
	The opening number of pollution cases carried forward from the year end 2021	15

Performance Indicators

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

Topic	Indicator	Value
Litter Pollution: E3 Approved	A1. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2022 was unpolluted or litter free	
	A2. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2022 was slightly polluted	
	A3. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2022 was moderately polluted	
	A4. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2022 was significantly polluted	
	A5. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2022 was grossly polluted	
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 2022	30.43 %
	Schools which attained a Green Flag for the first time in 2022	1
	Schools which renewed their Green Flag in 2022	15
	Schools which held a Green Flag from 2021 and therefore do not require renewal until 2023	12
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 annual consumption of the public lighting system	6948.01 MWh
	B. Average wattage of each public light	95.18 W
	C. Percentage of the total system that LED lights represent	52.49 %
	Number of LED lights in the public lighting system	7445
	Number of non-LED lights in the public lighting system	6738

Topic	Indicator	Value
Climate Change: E7 Approved	1 a) Does the local authority have a designated (FTE) Climate Action Coordinator?	Yes
	1 b) Does the local authority have a designated (FTE) Climate Action Officer?	No
	2. 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	19.84 %
	Total number of new buildings notified to the local authority i.e. buildings where a valid Commencement Notice was served in the period 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022 by a builder or developer on the local authority	615
	Number of new buildings notified to the local authority in 2022 that were the subject of at least one on-site inspection during 2022 undertaken by the local authority	122
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 2022	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	84.09 %
	Number of determinations confirming the local authority's decision (either with or without variation)	37
	A. Total number of planning cases referred to or initiated by the local authority in the period 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022 that were investigated	261
	B. Total number of investigated cases that were closed during 2022	271

Performance Indicators

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Topic	Indicator	Value
	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	54.24 %
	D. Percentage of the cases at B that were resolved to the local authority's satisfaction through negotiations	0.74 %
	E. Percentage of the cases at B that were closed due to enforcement proceedings	45.02 %
	F. Total number of planning cases being investigated as at 31/12/2022	230
	Number of cases at B that were dismissed as trivial, minor or without foundation or were closed because statute barred or an exempted development	147
	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	122
Planning: P4 & P5 Approved	A. The 2022 Annual Financial Statement (AFS) Programme D data divided by the population of the local authority area per the 2022 Census	€29.72
	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 2022	€4133517
	A. The percentage of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2022 that were decided (granted or refused) within two months of their receipt	48.05 %
	B. The percentage of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2022 that were decided (granted or refused) within an extended period agreed with the applicant	41.56 %

Topic	Indicator	Value
	The total number of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2022 that were not withdrawn by the applicant	77
	The number of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2022 that were decided (granted or refused) within two months of the date of receipt of the application	37
	The number of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2022 that were decided (granted or refused) within an agreed extended time period	32
Fire Service: F1 Approved	A. The Annual Financial Statement (AFS) Programme E expenditure data for 2022 divided by the population of the local authority area per the 2022 Census figures for the population served by the fire authority as per the Risk Based Approach Phase One reports	€71.38
	AFS Programme E expenditure data consisting of E11 - Operation of Fire Service and E12 - Fire Prevention for 2022	€9928452
	F1A - This figure is pre populated. This figure used is for Louth only and does not include the Meath area (Louth Fire Services have a SLA with Meath Fire Services to respond to fires within the East Meath catchment area) or 'local authority area per the 2022 Census figures for the population served by the fire authority as per the Risk Based Approach Phase One Reports' and the increase in the figure from €59.19 for 2021 to €71.38 reflects this.	
Fire Service: F2 & F3 Approved	A. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Full-Time Stations in respect of fire	1.42 min
	B. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Part-Time Stations (retained fire service) in respect of fire	4.88 min
	C. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Full-Time Stations in respect of all other (non-fire) emergency incidents	1.62 min

Performance Indicators

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Topic	Indicator	Value
	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	4.55 min
	A. Percentage of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at scene is within 10 minutes	71.91 %
	B. Percentage of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	23.11 %
	C. Percentage of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	4.98 %
	D. Percentage of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is within 10 minutes	54.92 %
	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	36.95 %
	F. Percentage of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	8.14 %
	Total number of call-outs in respect of fires from 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022	623
	Number of these fire cases where first fire tender attendance at the scene is within 10 minutes	448
	Number of these fire cases in which first fire tender attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	144
	Number of these fire cases in which first fire tender attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	31
	Total number of call-outs in respect of all other emergency incidents (i.e. not including fire) from 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022	295

Topic	Indicator	Value
	Number of these non-fire cases in which first fire tender attendance at the scene is within 10 minutes	162
	Number of these non-fire cases in which first fire tender attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	109
	Number of these non-fire cases in which first fire tender attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	24
Library Service: L1 Approved	A. Number of visits to libraries per head of population for the local authority area per the 2022 Census	1.11
	B. Number of items issued to library borrowers in the year	268250
	C. Library active members per head of population	
	D. Number of registered library members in the year	15891
	Number of visits to its libraries from 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022	154905
Library Service: L2 Approved	A. The Annual Financial Statement (AFS) Programme F data for 2022 divided by the population of the local authority area per the 2022 Census	€25.71
	B. The annual per capita expenditure on collections over the period 1/01/2022 to 31/12/2022	€1.03
	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 2022	€3576806
	B. The annual expenditure on new stock acquired by the library in the year	€143387.2

Performance Indicators

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

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 31/12/2022	18
	Number of second level schools in the local authority area from which representatives attended the local Comhairle na nÓg AGM held in 2022	17
	A. The number of organisations included in the County Register at 31/12/2022 and the proportion of those organisations that opted to be part of the Social Inclusion College within the PPN	24.09
	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 31/12/2022	548
	Total number of those organisations that registered for the first time in 2022	35
	Number of organisations that opted to join the Social Inclusion Electoral College on whatever date they registered for the PPN	132
Corporate: C1, C2, C4 & C5 Approved	A. The wholetime equivalent staffing number as at 31 December 2022	689.59
	A. Percentage of paid working days lost to sickness absence through medically certified leave in 2022	3.50 %
	B. Percentage of paid working days lost to sickness absence through self-certified leave in 2022	0.58 %
	Total number of working days lost to sickness absence through medically certified leave in 2022	6302.42 day
	Total number of working days lost to sickness absence through self-certified leave in 2022	914.32 day

Topic	Indicator	Value
	Number of unpaid working days lost to sickness absence included within the total of self-certified sick leave days in 2022	9 day
	Number of unpaid working days lost to sickness absence included within the total of medically certified sick leave days in 2022	819.5 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	71
	A. All ICT expenditure in the period from 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022, divided by the WTE number	€4643.51
	Total ICT expenditure in 2022	€3202115.24
	A. All ICT expenditure calculated in C4 as a proportion of Revenue expenditure	2.55
	Total Revenue expenditure from 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022 before transfers to or from reserves	125716566
Corporate: C3 Approved	A. The per capita total page views of the local authority's websites in 2022	6.90
	B. The per capita total number of followers at end 2022 of the local authority's social media accounts (if any)	0.37
	The cumulative total page views of all websites operated by the local authority for the period from 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022 obtained from a page tagging on-site web analytics service or equivalent	959490
	The total number of social media users who, at 31/12/2022, were following the local authority on any social media sites	51558
	The number of social media accounts operated by the local authority	23
	Last year only LCC main account was input	

Performance Indicators

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

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	There was a change made to cookie policy in October 2022
Finance: M1 to M4 Approved	A. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2018 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€545520
	B. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2019 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€950351
	C. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2020 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€1007413
	D. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2021 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€2370230
	E. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2022 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€3962840
	F. Cumulative surplus or deficit at 31/12/2022 as a percentage of Total Income in 2022 from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	2.92 %
	G. Revenue expenditure per capita in 2022	€903.79
	H. Revenue expenditure per capita in 2022 excluding significant out of county / shared service expenditure	
The 2022 Total Income figure from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€135827130	

Topic	Indicator	Value
	The 2022 Total Expenditure figure from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€125716566
	The 2022 Revenue expenditure excluding county / shared service expenditure for the service providers of HAP, MyPay, DRHE and Dublin Fire Services	
	A. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2018	80.0 %
	A. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2018	76.0 %
	A. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2018	76.0 %
	B. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2019	83.0 %
	B. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2019	80.0 %
	B. c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2019	82.0 %
	C. a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2020	63.0 %
	C. b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2020	81.0 %
	C. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2020	85.0 %
	D. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2021	76.0 %
	D. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2021	84.0 %

Performance Indicators

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

Topic	Indicator	Value
	D. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2021	88.0 %
	E. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2022	83 %
	E. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2022	84 %
	E. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2022	86 %
	A. Per capita total cost of settled claims for 2022	€19.25
	IPB Insurance: Number of notified claims for 2022	131
	IPB Insurance: Number of settled claims for 2022	132
	IPB Insurance: Total cost of settled claims for 2022	€2480892.96
	Total cost of claims settled under excess for 2022	€196383
	Self-insured: Number of notified claims for 2022	
	Self-insured: Number of settled claims for 2022	
	Self-insured: Total cost of settled claims for 2022	
	A. Overall central management charge as a percentage of total expenditure on revenue account	14.76 %
	B. Total payroll costs as a percentage of revenue expenditure	37.51 %
	Overall central management charge from the Local Authority FMS and defined in the Annual Budget	€18560871
	Total payroll costs from Appendix 1 of the AFS for 2022 (including Salaries, Wages and Pensions)	€47156315

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 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022 per 100,000 of population	43.8533
	The number of jobs created with assistance from the Local Enterprise Office during the period 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022	61.0
	A. The number of trading online voucher applications approved by the Local Enterprise Office in 2022 per 100,000 of population	31.6319
	B. The number of trading online vouchers that were drawn down in 2022 per 100,000 of population	7.9080
	The number of trading online voucher applications approved by the Local Enterprise Office in 2022	44
	The number of those trading online vouchers that were drawn down in 2022	11
	A. The number of participants who received mentoring during the period 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022 per 100,000 of population	362.3293
	The number of participants who received mentoring during the period 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2022	504
	A. Does the local authority have a current tourism strategy?	Yes
	Shared with Meath County Council	
	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 2022 per head of population	€141.07
	The spend on local economic development by the local authority in 2022	€19622248



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