

**SPECIAL
POINTS OF IN-
TEREST:**

**RURAL
TRANSPORT
PROGRAMME**

**DIGITISING
DUHALLOW'S
HERITAGE**

**TRADITIONAL
BUILDING
SKILLS
WORKSHOPS**

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Enterprise Working Group

Micro Finance Loans

Micro Finance has announced a new loans initiative in conjunction with Local Development Companies for **small enterprise** loans from €1 - €5k. These have an easier application process and quick turn around. Loans may be used for working capital, set up costs, equipment or vehicle purchase. Repayment terms from 1 to 3 years, fixed monthly repayments at 8.8% APR. These loans are aimed at people who have been refused from the banks or other lending institutions. For more information **contact Louise on 029-60633**.

Mentoring Programme

Thinking of starting up a business? Then why not avail of advice and guidance from the mentors on the IRD Duhallow mentor panel. The programme is open to start up or existing businesses within Duhallow. Receive independent advice and guidance from expert business consultants. Businesses can receive up to 10 hours one to one mentoring time with an experienced advisor and its entirely free!!! The 10 hours mentor time will be maximised using business analysis to identify the areas most in need of addressing. Between sessions participants will carry out project work to implement agreed solutions. For further information visit the website: www.irdduhallow.com/duhallow-enterprise/mentoring or **contact Louise at 029-60633**.

Start Your Own Business Programme

IRD Duhallow is running a Start Your Own Business Training Programme on 18th, 25th February and the 4th, 11th and 18th March. Cost is €50. For more details **contact Louise on 029-60633**.

Presentation Skills

IRD Duhallow is currently taking expressions of interest in a one day presentation skills workshop, to be held in March. Learn the fundamentals of powerpoint, and how to make that all successful, deal clinching sales pitch. To register your interest, please **contact Louise on 029-60633**.

Duhallow Arenas

The Duhallow Arenas (situated adjacent to the James O'Keeffe in Newmarket) are available for hire for all equestrian related events at a rate of €20 per hour. Become a keyholder for €160 (February – December), which will allow full access to the arenas. **For further details or information contact Louise on 029-60633**.

Duhallow Community Laundry

This facility has been put in place to assist the elderly, low income households and carers with washing and drying clothes, linen and towels. Duhallow Community Laundry has been set up in the James O'Keeffe Institute, Newmarket. This project was the brainchild of our Active Retired SAOI Network. Laundry can be dropped into Duhallow Community Laundry, Monday to Friday from 9.00am to 5.30pm. We can arrange for laundry to be collected and brought back to households who may have transport difficulties. **For further details please contact Yvonne at 029-60633**.

Warmer Homes Scheme

If you are in receipt of **one** of the following payments you will now be eligible to receive the insulation services **free of charge** :

Fuel Allowance **Or** Family Income Supplement **Or** Job Seekers Allowance (for more than 6 months and have children under 7 years of age).

Houses must be owner occupied and constructed before 2006.

Contact IRD Duhallow Warmer Homes at 029-60633.



Employment & Training Working Group

IRD Duhallow Community Employment Scheme is recruiting two childcare assistants for Boherbue Educare and two childcare assistants for Banteer Childcare Centre. If you are in receipt of a social welfare payment, over 25 years of age, unemployed 12 months or more, or on a disability payment 6 months or more, you may be interested in applying. You must be registered with the Employment Services Officer. Please note the successful applicants will need to obtain Garda Clearance. To apply for these positions please forward your CV together with your PPS number to Paddy O'Connor, IRD Duhallow, James O'Keeffe Institute, Newmarket. **Closing date for applications is 13th February 2015.**

Computer training for beginners or those seeking to improve their skills - This course is designed to provide learners with the necessary skills and knowledge required to access a website, access web addresses, social media and how to shop online. Two further hours will be available on Digital Photography and/or Skype. This training is open to everyone and will be delivered during the day or night time one session a week for five weeks. We are trying to ensure that no one is left behind as the digital gap widens therefore we are taking names of people interested in participating. **Places are limited for more information please contact Mary at 029-60633.**

Children with Additional Needs QQI Level 5 Accredited component training module. This programme is suitable for those who wish to equip themselves with the knowledge skill and competence to work effectively and efficiently with young children with additional needs. It aims to provide the participant with an understanding in the context of special needs and associated issues. The dates and times for this training are to be confirmed but **if you would like to register your interest please contact Mary on 029-60633.**

Community Development Working Group

The Rural Transport Programme for the Duhallow Region will no longer be operated by Duhallow Area Rural Transport following national changes where only 1 transport co-ordination unit will now operate per county. DART has operated successfully for the last 12 years for the region and we would like to thank all the users of the service for their support as well as all the sub contractors for the efficient service they delivered and our staff for their professionalism over the last 12 years. **Local Link Cork will have offices in Bantry and Fermoy and will operate from the 1st February. For information on routes in Duhallow please contact 0818 227 226.**

IRD Duhallow is seeking to train communities in **historic graveyard recording and publication.** We are calling on all communities from the following areas to get involved because only with the help of volunteers will we be able to tell, record and publish local stories of people and place. If you can take a photograph you can learn the survey system. All training will take place from 9.30a.m. to 4p.m. **Please look at the dates and if you think you will be able to come along please give Mary Creedon a ring on 029-60633.**

Old Kilcorney: Friday 6th and Saturday 7th of February

Taur: Friday 27th and Saturday 28th February

Lismire: Friday 13th and Saturday 14th of March

Kiskeam: Friday 27th and Saturday 28th of March

Drishane: Friday 13th and Saturday 14th of February

Lyre: Friday 6th and Saturday 7th of March

Dromtariffe: Friday 20th and Saturday 21st March

Rockchapel: Friday 3rd and Saturday 4th of April

The Duhallow Women's Forum will hold an information seminar **on "Mindful Living".....Skills to manage stress in an increasingly demanding world** in the James O' Keeffe Institute, Newmarket, **on Monday 9th of March** to mark International Women's Day. The seminar will be delivered by Susan Fitzgerald who is an international well being coach, motivation speaker, yoga teacher and author. This seminar is open to women and men and is free. **To register for seminar please contact Mary at 029-60633.**

Traditional Building Skills Workshops will take place in James O'Keeffe Institute, Newmarket. These workshops will run over a period of four weeks and modules are broken down into the following topics.

Workshop 1: Lime Mortar on 23rd - 26th February 2015 **Workshop 2:** Stone Cutting on 23rd - 26th March 2015

Workshop 3: Stone Masonry on 13th - 16th April 2015 **Workshop 4:** Ditch Building on 20th - 23rd April 2015

Stonemason and author **Pat McAfee**, who is an expert in his field **will deliver these workshops.** The cost of each workshop is €50 and this will include a light lunch each day. Places are limited so booking is essential. **For further information on these workshops and a booking form please contact Helen at 029-60633.**

Newmarket Pitch & Putt Course located on the grounds of the James O'Keeffe Institute **will be open to the public in early March.** Come and enjoy a round of pitch and putt on this newly renovated 18 hole course on scenic surrounds, re-designed to USGA standards making it more challenging and interesting for families, groups and single players alike. It guarantees a thoroughly enjoyable experience for young and old. **Membership is now open and for further information on prices and opening times please contact Gerald at 029-60633.** Or if you are feeling lucky why not log onto Facebook and like and share the Newmarket Pitch & Putt page to be in with a chance of winning a prize of free membership for 12 months.

Sliabh Luachra Music & Culture invite you to visit their facebook page to view a number of old photos & videos on sliabh luachra music and dance. This facebook page is receiving great interest recently with the addition of old videos to it.

Cork County Public Participation Network (PPN) - Cork County Council is inviting all community groups / organisations to register and participate in a new community based network that is being established in Cork County. This will be known as the Cork County Public participation Network (PPN). Online registration is now open and will continue until 4th February 2015. Enquiries from applicants can be made to corkcountypnn@gmail.com

Agriculture Working Group

Rural Social Scheme: The Rural Social Scheme is recruiting new participants. To qualify for the RSS a person needs to be in receipt of a means tested social welfare payment and have access to an active herd number, this means the person has to have a herd no. or have access to a herd no from his/her parents, brother or sister, provided this herd number is not already being used by an RSS participant. The farmer has to be actively farming and drawing Single Farm Payment. For further information please contact Sheila, or Michael at 029-60633.

Grow it Yourself Duhallow: GIY Duhallow inspires and empowers people to grow their own food by bringing them together in a group setting once a month to share tips, advice and expertise. Next meeting will take place on **Tuesday 24th February** commencing at 7.30pm in the James O’Keeffe Institute, for further details contact Katie 029-60633. New Members Welcome.

Duhallow Bee Keepers: Beekeeping is a fun and very interesting hobby, some people develop beekeeping into a profitable sideline providing themselves with a supplementary income. Beekeeping can provide you with a lifetime interest that will keep you continually learning something new. If you are living in the Duhallow area and are interested in Beekeeping contact **Andy on 087-2783807**. There will be a number of Workshops for Beginner Beekeepers in the coming weeks. **Contact Katie at 029-60633 for details.**

Duhallow Bird Watch Group organises outdoor and indoor information events each year which are open to the public. Our events enable birdwatchers to recognise birds and discover all about their habits and the habitats in which they live. We always ensure that each field trip is well organised and led by a expert Birdwatcher. Bird-watch members have access to our Environmental Resource Library which is a learning resource for wildlife enthusiasts. **For further information please contact Katie at 029-60633.**

Youth and Education Working Group

Literacy Support Programme - IRD Duhallow offers a literacy support programme for children with Dyslexia and Dyspraxia. Two strands: Literacy Workshops and TTRS. **For further information and registration please contact Louise at 029-60633 or email duhallow@eircom.net**

Internet Safety Seminar

IRD Duhallow will hold an information seminar on **Thursday 12th February on Internet Safety @ 7.30pm** for parents, teachers, guardians etc. This seminar will help parents to educate their children on how to behave safely while online. Dr Maureen Griffen of MGMS Training has vast experience in speaking to parents, teachers and students about internet safety and advocates that the best parental control when it comes to internet usage is parental involvement as many software programmes will only block certain unsuitable websites but does not educate children on how best to behave online. **To book a place at this seminar please contact Helen at 029-60633.**

Equality Working Group

The Duhallow Carers Support Group will be meeting on **Thursday the 5th of February** at 8pm in the James O’Keeffe Institute. Meet with other family and voluntary carers and enjoy a confidential chat and support. For further details please **contact Louise on 029-60633.**

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS - Closed meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous is held in the James O’Keeffe Institute, Newmarket every Sunday morning at 11.30am and Thursday night at 8.30pm.

AI ANON If you are affected by somebody else’s drinking, come and hear the experience of others at the James O’Keeffe Institute, Newmarket, every Thursday night at 8.30pm or to the Health Centre in Millstreet on Sunday nights 6pm winter time and 7.30pm Summer time as per change of clock.

MABS An Outreach Clinic is available in the James O’Keeffe Institute, Newmarket. Contact the MABS Mallow Office to arrange an appointment **Tel. No: 076-1072440.**

Emotional Support Service

IRD Duhallow is offering a One to One Integrative Counselling service. This service is being offered by two pre-accredited counsellors and is free of charge. **If you would like to make an appointment or have any further enquiries please contact Kate or Aoife on 087-1179990.**

“A Journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step”

-Confucius

IRD Duhallow LIFE + Project

This project is supported by the LIFE Financial Instrument of the European Community

Whilst most of us are huddled up in our warm homes, nature around us carries on. Salmon and trout have just spawned and their eggs are now incubating between the riverbed gravels and will hatch out as fry sometime in late Spring. Otters too are busy and often at this time of year, the cubs are born into the world to be nurtured by their mothers, as they too learn the ways of nature. Through the LIFE project IRD Duhallow is working on the ground making the best of the difficult weather conditions and concentrating on activities that can be done at this time of year. Much of our work is now centred on pruning trees along the river banks where the growth is too dense, and conversely planting young native trees, where river stretches are too open. A healthy balance of trees along the river bank benefits wildlife and helps protect farmland against river erosion and flooding.

Agri-Environment Scheme

The final report on this scheme which we have been developing in partnership with the local farming community has now been completed. We had hoped to meet with the Department of Agriculture before Christmas. However developments in Europe precluded such a meeting but we are hopeful that this meeting will take place early in 2015. A huge amount of work went into the development of this scheme which aims to be both practical and effective from the farmers perspective and provide real benefits to the local environment on the River Allow. We would like to thank all of the farmers and landowners who have been so supportive and taken part in the process.

River Allow Catchment Management

This initiative aims to improve river management on the Blackwater River by first concentrating on the River Allow catchment to develop a model of management that involves all of the key interest groups. The aim is to find common ground, share resources and develop and follow a road map towards better river and water quality for everybody's benefit. The group meets on a monthly basis. If you are interested in this process and would like to get involved please contact the IRD Duhallow LIFE+ project at 029-60633. We are particularly interested in increasing our local community involvement.

EPA carry out Catchment study on the River Allow

An EPA funded study was recently carried out by expert hydrologist Katie Tegg on the River Allow catchment. The aim of the study is to draw together all existing data on the River Allow catchment to provide scientific background support for good decision making on the River Allow catchment initiative. This information is relevant to much of Duhallow and will be of interest to most people. For example between 65% and 99% of effective rainfall (difference between total rainfall and actual evapotranspiration) ends up as surface water as the soils are poorly draining with low permeability subsoils. Therefore we must be extra cautious when spreading slurry or fertiliser in Duhallow and follow best practice by avoiding spreading in wet weather. Similarly it is important that we manage waste water treatment plants properly and clean out septic tanks as appropriate. The report found that water quality on the River Dalua was "good", on the River Allow it was "moderate" and on the River Brogeen it was "bad". A copy of the report is available on request by ringing 029-60633.

Public Talk - "Giving wildlife a helping hand: Bird boxes, Christmas trees and moving swiftly on". Will take place on 11th February 2015 at 8.00pm in the James O'Keeffe Institute. Teas and coffees provided. An interactive workshop and lecture will be given by the IRD Duhallow LIFE+ project team focusing on some of the work carried out on the grounds of the James O'Keeffe institute to increase wildlife. Also in case you were wondering where have all of those Christmas trees gone a presentation will be given on what they were used for!

TRAP final conference IRD Duhallow's Dr. Fran Igoe gave a presentation in Slovenia at the EU INTERREG IV TRAP project conference. The LIFE project outlined IRD Duhallow's rural community approach to working to improve the environment for all and the difficulties facing local communities to achieve this goal. It is important that policy makers in other European countries as well as Ireland are made aware of issues affecting people on the ground when it comes to the protection of water quality and wildlife.

Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Programme (OPW flood maps) IRD Duhallow provided assistance to the OPW during their Public consultation, on Draft Flood Maps which show the extent of flood risk in certain locations. We encourage anybody who might be affected by flooding to check out the Flood Risk website <http://www.cfram.ie>.

Freshwater Pearl Mussel are our water quality "canary in the mine" - In olden days, miners used to bring a canary in a cage down into the mine shaft where they were working. If the canary stopped singing it was a sure sign for the miners to get out. You see, the canary was more sensitive to the toxic gasses which the miners couldn't smell or see. Similarly Freshwater Pearl Mussels are carrying out the same function in the River Blackwater. While the Freshwater Pearl Mussels are still alive and healthy, we know that the river is clean for farming, farm animals, fish and humans. We should be using the Freshwater Pearl Mussels as the Quality Assurance for our water and for agricultural products and tourism. It is our green image that gives us our competitive edge abroad in countries such as the USA. Recent media coverage suggesting that Freshwater Pearl Mussel is preventing progress and development on the River Blackwater does not give the full picture. In IRD Duhallow we believe that by working together and planning ahead it should be possible to not only protect our wildlife, water and our health but we should also benefit from them both in terms of economics and recreation.

The IRD Duhallow LIFE project acknowledge and thank all of the landowners, supporters and volunteers for their assistance with the project. If you would like further information or to participate as a volunteer please contact us on 029-60633 or check out at www.duhallowLIFE.com

