



Transforming Ireland

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# IRD Duhallow Community News

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## Community Consultation on Alignment

The Board of IRD Duhallow having carefully considered the proposal from cabinet to align LEADER groups like IRD Duhallow with the Local Authorities which would result in LEADER funds moving out of the control of communities and their voluntary elected Board, decided to embark on community consultations.

We are overwhelmed with the massive support for IRD Duhallow and its bottom-up community led model. There has been total rejection of the alignment proposal indeed communities are furious at the attempt to take away the LEADER funds from their control. I want to thank the communities for coming out in such number so close to Christmas. We have also received support from our local council representatives, T. D.'s, Senators and M.E.P.'s.

Since its inception in 1989, IRD Duhallow has supported every community and eligible business in Duhallow. In the current programme 2009 to date, 37 enterprises have received €1.4million in funding while 25 communities share €1.5million for Basic Services and our village Renewal Measure has granted €1.6million to 40 community projects. We have funded 62 community heritage projects worth €1million.

The proposed SEC or Socio Economic Committee which is to be established in each county by the new local authority chief executives is the cabinets preferred delivery model.

However, Local Action Groups like IRD Duhallow have been operating under a model designed at European Level, indeed Europe has recognised the Irish LEADER Method and IRD Duhallow as best practice.

I have travelled to most European countries at the invitation of the European Commission to outline how IRD Duhallow works.

The Commission has gone as far as to decide that in the next programme period 2014-2020, all European funds should have an element delivered by the LEADER groups, what they call Community Led Local Development (CLLD).

However, not all countries adopted the Irish LEADER model and some are under the stewardship of Local Authorities. The European Commission Court of Auditors examined the LEADER Programme across Europe and issued a report which concluded that

(1) "The potential value added of a partnership was not achieved in Local Action Groups where the decision making was dominated by the Local Authorities"

(2) "The Court identified a number of cases of where the LEADER principles were not being followed...the groups largely composed of associates created by Local Authorities"

and LEADER merely acting as an additional funding source for normal local government activities. Finally the Court concluded that Local Action Groups (like IRD Duhallow) go far beyond the scope of what regional or local authorities offer in their top down grant schemes.

This is ample proof that the community based Irish LEADER System is the preferred model of the European Court of Auditors and the European Commission.

In the new proposals much is being made of getting increased efficiency. In the most recent figures circulated by the Department Environment, Community and Local Government, IRD Duhallow is operating at just under 19% administration costs in 2012. The Minister will be hard pressed to find a public body more efficient than this.

IRD Duhallow has supported and funded local enterprises which have created over 1,200 jobs and sustained 1,500 existing jobs. We have trained 6,000 people, created 650 child care places, supported 130 community and voluntary groups to deliver over 850 projects to improve the quality of life in Duhallow and our job centre has placed over 800 people in local jobs.

In the past year we have carried over 58,000 passengers, delivered over 23,000 meals to the elderly, insulated over 400 homes and 13 community centres, carried out 844 Care and Repair Jobs and made over 7,000 phone calls to those living alone. We have placed 120 unemployed in community work through Tús and we have 58 small farmers on our Rural Social Scheme.

Our achievements are well recognised and result from huge community buy-in at Local, Sub-committee and Board level. Our volunteers do a tremendous job, at no cost to the State. We have served the communities of Duhallow to the very best of our ability. Our staff members are all from the wider Duhallow area, they are highly educated and totally committed to the Duhallow communities they serve.

We have had to deal with change on a constant basis and are not afraid of change. We have co-operated in every way with all public bodies that include us in their project plans. However, what we are now being asked to do is hand over local autonomy to a new Quango with no track record, to hand the Duhallow LEADER funds to a wider county pot.

You the members of the Duhallow community have conferred on us a local legitimacy that we can not and will not walk away from. You have mandated us to fight these proposals to centralise LEADER funds – we will not let you down.

*Maura Walsh*

Manager  
IRD Duhallow

## Enterprise Working Group

### AIB Threat to Close Newmarket

IRD Duhallow has joined in the campaign to maintain the AIB Bank branch in Newmarket. It would be a terrible blow to the town itself but even a harder blow to the surrounding countryside. Rural people are being left increasingly to their own devices as more and more services are being concentrated in larger towns. That an area of the countryside as expansive as North Western Duhallow, with an ever increasing elderly population will be left without any bank is unbelievable. This closure will undoubtedly lead to people running short of cash or worse still being forced to hold cash unnecessarily.

Our elderly deserve and have earned our respect and we all have a duty to care to them, not least our banking services. It is unthinkable that such an elderly population living in the remoteness of North West Cork will have this vital service withdrawn leaving them feeling even more vulnerable.

IRD Duhallow has written to senior officials in AIB and is requesting a meeting with interested parties which it is happy to facilitate here in the James O'Keeffe Institute.

We urge all Duhallow people to support the campaign.



### Developing Your Digital Strategy

Are you hearing all about Facebook? Twitter? Four Square, ebay, paypal and other digital sites? Should your business be on these platforms? Maybe, but also maybe not! Learn how to develop a digital business strategy knowing the strength of all these sites, so that you can get the best value out of the time you spend online and ensure that the platforms that you are on are the right platforms for your business. The seminar will be held on **Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> January from 9.30-4.30pm in the James O'Keeffe Institute. Registration is essential and spaces are limited so please contact Louise at 029-60633.**



IRD Duhallow **Mentoring Programme** is free and open to 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 business advisor. 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](http://www.irdduhallow.com/duhallow-enterprise/mentoring) or contact Louise at 029 60633.

## Warmer Homes Scheme

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

- Fuel Allowance
- Family Income Supports
- Job Seekers Allowance (for more than 6 months and have children under 7 years of age)

### Services provided include:

- Upgrading of attic insulation
- Cavity wall insulation
- Draught proofing windows and doors
- Fitting lagging jackets on cold and hot water tanks
- Providing low energy light bulbs
- Energy Advice

**Houses must be owner occupied and constructed before 2002.** If you or a member of your family are eligible for this service please contact **Colm or Eileen at 029-60633.**

## Duhallow Care & Repair Programme

IRD Duhallow would like to encourage older people in Duhallow to register for our **Weekly Phone Call Service to ensure that they have regular contact with someone.** The purpose of this service is for older people to receive a phone call from trained volunteers to check in with them to ensure that they are safe and well as well as having a friendly chat and give them information on services and activities that they can avail of in the locality. IRD Duhallow is inviting individuals as well as actively retired groups, day care centres and family members to contact IRD Duhallow regarding this service. This phone call service is **free of charge** and is available to all older people at a time suitable to them. **For further information please contact Helen at 029-60633.**

**Are you 65+ years of age? Do you live in the Duhallow area? Have you a small repair job which you would like to have done for you?**

**Care and Repair Duhallow** uses a pool of trustworthy volunteers and handypersons to carry out minor repairs for older people.

The service is free to those who cannot afford it; you only pay for the materials used. However, a small contribution to defray costs payable to Duhallow Care and Repair Programme would be welcome. The programme is run by IRD Duhallow in association with Age Action Ireland. For more information **please contact 029-60633.**



### REVAMP – Furniture Recycling Project

We are very grateful for the many items of furniture which we have received over the past few months and thank all donors most sincerely for their generosity.

Thanks to Tús and Towards Occupation Participants who have done an excellent job in revamping all the items.

We now have many pieces of furniture e.g. tables, kitchen chairs, arm chairs, couches etc. available for low income households. **For further information please contact Con or Don at 029-60633.**

## Employment & Training Working Group

**IRD Duhallow's Job Centre** continues to be a core element of our service to the unemployed and to other job seekers and local businesses. The job centre provides the following services to those seeking employment: **CV assistance and compilation, Interview guidance and preparation, access to training and educational opportunities.**

The 'Pathfinder' programme is also available on appointment. This is a psychometric tool designed to aid career decision-making. Career Pathfinder can be used by anyone who wants a clearer picture of the possible career directions and the skills and competencies required to perform in their chosen field.

**Employers can avail of an effective local recruitment service** whereby you can advertise your current vacancies with us. From our database of candidates we will select applicants that have the job specific criteria and forward their Curriculum Vitae to you. For further information or to register with the Job Centre please phone **029-60633.**



### Upcycling / Recycling your Clothing

IRD Duhallow is planning to run another course in Upcycling/Recycling. **This course will begin on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> of February and will run once a week for 10 weeks from 7p.m. to 9p.m.** This course will allow you to

discover the sense of achievement in revamping or altering your once loved clothing whilst learning a new skill. Be provided with inspiration and ideas and how to develop your skill level on a domestic sewing machine. Learn how to upcycle using fabric, buttons, classic embroidery stitches, corsages and beads. If you are interested in doing this training please contact Mary McHugh at 029-60633 to register your name. **Please note numbers will be limited.**

### **IRD Duhallow Social Protection CE Scheme**

The IRD Duhallow CE Scheme is recruiting a Childcare assistant for Boherbue Creche. The successful applicant will be looking after children with staff, Kitchen duties, Admin etc.

If you are receiving Social welfare payment and over 25yrs old, unemployed 12 months or more or on a disability payment 6 months or more you may be eligible. You must also be registered with FÁS.

To apply please forward your CV and PPS Number to Paddy O'Connor, CE Supervisor, IRD Duhallow, James O'Keefe Institute, Newmarket.

Closing date for applications is **Friday 11<sup>th</sup> of January 2013**. Please note Successful Applicant will be required to have Garda Vetting done.

### **Equality Working Group**

**"Living Well with Diabetes"**

**At The James O'Keefe Institute, Newmarket  
On Thursday 24th January 2013 @ 7.30pm**

Pauline Lynch, Regional Development Officer with Diabetes Ireland will provide information on Diabetes, types of Diabetes, its causes, symptoms, the incidence of it and why it is increasing. Importantly Pauline will look at the various treatment options available and will focus on healthy eating and lifestyle in general. This event is open to everyone and will be particularly relevant to people looking to minimize their risk of developing Diabetes. Light refreshments will be served everyone is welcome. **To book your place, please contact, Mary at 029-60633.**

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### **Self Care and Well Being Workshop**

IRD Duhallow in association with Margaret O' Connor and Liz O' Regan are seeking to organise a workshop around the issue of *Self Care and Well Being*. The workshop will seek to look at how we are managing in our lives now and hope to cope better. It will find easy ways to change our thinking, feeling and behaviour so that we feel happier and more at ease in our lives. The workshop will begin **on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2013 from 7p.m. to 9p.m.** It will take place once per week for five weeks. **If you would like more information or if you want to book your place, please contact Mary at 029-60633.** Please note numbers will be limited.

### **Youth and Education Working Group**

**Newmarket Breakfast Club & After Schools**

IRD Duhallow's **Breakfast Club** opens from 8.00am to facilitate parents to get to work on time while knowing their child is in a safe environment and will be dropped to school in time. This new service includes transport to Newmarket Girls and Boys School.

The facility also continues to operate its **After Schools Service** from 2pm-6pm for children attending Newmarket and Lismire School. Currently transport is available from these two schools. A warm nutritious home cooked dinner is provided along with homework support daily. Children

attending the **IRD Duhallow Literacy Programme** can also avail of this transport from school and receive dinner before starting their classes. Please note IRD Duhallow offers a **tiered pricing system** allowing families in receipt of a social welfare payment, Family Income Supplement or a medical card to receive a reduction in price.

There is no requirement to book a place for a full week rather parents have the opportunity to be flexible and book a place only when they need to.

If you are interested in sending your child to the Breakfast Club and / or Afterschools please contact **Helen at 029-60633.**

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### **IRD Duhallow Literacy Support workshops for Primary School Children**

Is your child experiencing difficulty with reading, spelling or writing? Has your child been diagnosed with a learning difficulty and are you concerned about their progress?

Do you need advice on how to support your child?

IRD Duhallow is running weekly literacy classes in **James O'Keefe Institute, Newmarket** to support primary aged children in the area. The classes are run by an experienced Primary teacher who has specialised in teaching children with learning difficulties and the classes aim to support the students' literacy needs, taking account of their strengths and weaknesses. The service also provides regular advisory clinics for parents/guardians to discuss the students' progress in class, offer advice on how to support the child at home or to discuss any other educational queries/concerns. Classes are open to children aged between Senior Infants and 6<sup>th</sup> Class. **For further information and registration please contact Louise at 029-60633.**

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### **TTRS (Touch Type Read and Spell)**

TTRS (Touch Type Read and Spell) is a specially devised computer programme for children with learning difficulties. The programme has two functions, firstly, it teaches children to touch type, which is a vital skill for all ages. In addition, the words used for typing are the most commonly misspelt words, so children are unknown to themselves, learning how to spell. **For further information and registration please contact Louise at 029-60633.**

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### **Internet Safety for Parents**

On **Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> of January at 8.00pm** in the James O'Keefe at 8pm the PAL group will be organizing a seminar on internet safety for parents. In the digital era, how can you as a parent ensure that your child surfs the web safely. All parents are welcome to this information evening. **For further information and registration please contact Louise at 029-60633.**

### **Agriculture Working Group**

**Managing Lameness in Cattle**

The Agriculture Working Group and XLvets are organising a seminar on lameness in cattle.

The Main Objective of this workshop is to equip farmers with the knowledge to pre-empt cattle lameness problems and to provide guidance on how to treat cases of lameness cases appropriately and effectively.

**Topics covered to include:** Basics of hoof anatomy, problem diagnosis, hoof paring, treatments, causes and prevention of lameness. This workshop is free of charge to all Focal Farmers Members, Farmers on Farm Assist and Farmers on the Rural Social Scheme. **For further information or to book your place please contact Katie at 029-60633.**

## Know Your Entitlements

The number of farm families in receipt of Farm Assist has increased to over 11,000 but, looking at the national average income, it could be a lot more. With poor weather conditions and the increased input costs we urge more farmers to look for the payment. If farmers qualify for a small payment through Farm Assist it could allow them apply for other schemes such as the RSS and the Household Benefits Package.

### Cut –Off Points for Farm Assist

Home Situation	Annual Income
Single	€11,501
Married Couple	€19,136
Married couple with one child	€20,959
Married couple with two children	€22,782
Married couple with three children	€24,605

For further information please contact Katie at 029-60633 or Department of Social Protection, Newmarket at 029-22110.

**Please Note: Budget 2013** The assessment of means from self-employment, including farming, will be raised from 85% to 100%. The deductions from income for children are being discontinued (currently €127 per year for each of the first two dependent children and €190.50 per year for each subsequent child). (April 2013) This measure is not yet in effect and legislation is required to bring it into effect.



**IRD Duhallow FARMERS MARKET will re-open on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> January and Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2013 -**

We thank all our customers for your custom in 2012 and we look forward to serving you all in 2013.

**THE FARMERS MARKET**, located at the rear of Twohig's Supervalu takes place every **Thursday and Saturday** from 10.30am -1.30pm.

A selection of farm produce can be sourced at the market including Home Baking, Chutneys, Jams, Eggs, Free Range Oven Ready Chicken's (Sat. only), Homegrown Vegetables, etc. If you are interested in selling your products at the Market please contact Katie Crowley at 029-60633.



### Beginning with Bees

Beekeeping for Beginners will commence early in the New Year if interested in starting with bees **please contact Katie at 029-60633.**

## LIFE Project

### We need your Christmas Trees

Make a difference this January by recycling your Christmas trees to help wildlife in Duhallow. The LIFE project is looking for used Christmas trees to help with its river restoration work. The project team use the Christmas trees to help reduce river bank erosion, by pinning the trees to willow stakes along the river bank which are under threat of being washed away by floods. The trees help reduce the force of the flood water which can erode into the river destabilising the river bank and causing a loss of valuable farming land. By placing the trees in a line along the river bank, the natural vegetation gets a chance to grow between the Christmas tree branches and in time the river bank becomes more stable. This is particularly important in rivers where Freshwater Pearl Mussel and salmon occur, as siltation resulting from bank erosion has been shown to reduce their survival. This novel technique imported from the USA and modified by Fisheries has been shown to be successful on a number of rivers throughout Ireland. Recently the LIFE team and Rural Social Scheme participants carried out river bank protection with Christmas trees and the results are very promising to

date. Interestingly other wildlife seem to like them and we have noticed that the number of birds such as Wrens and Wagtail have increased in the area, presumably feeding on insects washed into the branches of the trees after the big floods.

**What you can do:** To recycle your trees please bring them to IRD Duhallow main office at the James O'Keeffe Institute between the hours of 10.00am to 5.00pm (Monday to Friday), and ask for Nuala Riordan of the LIFE team.

Please note only Natural Trees (is no plastic trees) are suitable for this work. Please also remove any tinsel, fairy lights, etc before delivery.

**Many thanks from the LIFE team here at IRD Duhallow!**

## Community Development Working Group

### Domestic Violence Support Helpline

IRD Duhallow's Domestic Violence Support Helpline is operated by trained volunteers and provides support and information to those affected by domestic violence. This service is for both men and women and volunteers are available to provide a supportive and listening ear.

**One to One sessions** are also available with a trained volunteer at a time suitable to the individuals. Family members and friends who are concerned for a loved one can also contact this helpline for information.

The Domestic Violence Support Helpline is **087-7733337** and operates from **Monday to Saturday** from **10am – 10pm**. **The helpline will operate right through the Christmas Period and into the New Year.**



### Bereavement & Loss Support

If you find that the intensity of loss is unsettling, causing you undue grief and sadness, there is help at hand. The Bereavement Support Group of trained volunteers who provide a **free confidential service** to people who have experienced a loss in their lives whether through death, separation, divorce, job loss etc. This is not a counselling service but a friendly and supportive listening service.

A trained volunteer can meet on a one to one setting at a time suitable to both parties. **To make an appointment please ring the Bereavement Support Helpline on 087-6279000.**

## Duhallow Area Rural Transport (D.A.R.T.)

### DART Supporters Travel Club – Keep your Local Transport Service Going!

Duhallow Area Rural Transport provides an invaluable transport service in the Duhallow region with 49 regular routes now in operation and carried over 58,000 passengers in 2012. Unfortunately DART has received some substantial cuts to its public funding for 2013 which will make it impossible to maintain all routes this year.

Our regular passengers have been a great support to the DART since its inception in 2003 and we are now running the **DART Supporters Travel Club** and asking all our regular users and supporters to contribute **€30.00** per person per year.

**This club will help to ensure that existing routes are not cut and that local people are not cut off** from accessing their local towns, villages and local events. Payment can be made directly to IRD Duhallow or to a passenger assistant on your route.

**For further information and to support this service please contact Yvonne Brosnan at 029-60648.**