

IRD Dubhallow

PROGRESS REPORT | 2015 - 2016



Dubhallow

THE SPIRIT OF RURAL IRELAND

COMMUNITIES IN DUHALLOW

Duhallow The Land & People

The expanded IRD Duhallow region includes North West Cork and South East Kerry and Mid Cork. It is a largely rural area. Over 85% of the population live in the open countryside or in settlements of less than 200 people.

The expanded Duhallow region has five market towns: Macroom (3738), Kanturk (Pop 2263), Millstreet (Pop 1574), Newmarket (Pop 988) and Rathmore (Pop 778).



IRD Duhallow

James O'Keeffe Institute,
Newmarket, Co. Cork, Ireland.
Tel: 00-353-29-60633 Fax: 00-353-29-60694
Email: duhallow@eircom.net
Web Site: irdduhallow.com



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IRD Duhallow Chairperson Anne Maria Bourke
with Vice Chair Brian Kelly and CEO Maura Walsh

Chairperson's Address

I was honoured to accept the role of Chair of IRD Duhallow and will endeavour during my term of office to serve the Board and the Duhallow Region to the very best of my ability. We, the present Board are not only caretakers for this wide ranging organisation, which has been built over the years, but we are entrusted to do our best to meet the ever changing needs of our communities, businesses, farming and local organisations. There will be both challenges and opportunities. The challenges are from National, political decisions that can be urban based and more beneficial to those who live in bigger towns and cities. There is a need to present our concerns in Europe, from where many of the development programmes come. I am grateful to Jack Roche who has represented us and spoken so well on our behalf in Europe. I also acknowledge the work done by MEPs Marion Harkin and Liadh Ni Riada on our behalf. Currently we need to make representations, not only on the Financial Budget for post 2020 but also on the design and thrust of the new programmes to ensure the concept of Community Led Local Development is followed through in all member states.

The landscape of Europe will no doubt change with Brexit. We will carefully assess how this will impact rural communities and Duhallow in particular. To this end we are guided by Maura Walsh our CEO, who is very insightful and visionary in interpreting the small print and can see the repercussions and effects of decisions, of which may not be obvious. There is no doubt that we owe her a huge debt of gratitude and to our previous Chair, Cormac Collins for steering IRD Duhallow through a very turbulent few years in the company's history. It is to their credit that we have not only survived but expanded. The challenge is to maintain this momentum and though we will still be engaging with the LEADER programme, it is a massive disappointment that our own Irish Government has made the framework for delivery so difficult and reduced the money so greatly, that very few communities will benefit from LEADER. This has been a huge error and shows a lack of commitment to rural communities. Notwithstanding this we enjoy excellent relationships with the three new county council structures, the Local Community Development Committees that have been given LAG status for LEADER.

The Company has had to source other programmes that better serve the community. Skillnets, Dormant Accounts and the Local Training Initiative have served to fill some of the void. We can however never again become dependent on any one programme. We must continue to look at the changing political situation and watch for opportunities and niches in new policy formulation.

The IRD Duhallow region has been expanded to incorporate the greater Macroom, Clondrohid and Ballinagree area. We would like to assure these communities that they are not an add on but rather an inclusive part of what we are about. We will work with these communities to build bonds with our existing networks and this, I am confident, will be mutually beneficial.

The political situation in Ireland presently, presents an opportunity for each community to bring about change. We need to influence National decisions and a unique opportunity now exists. We encourage communities and individuals to talk to their representatives but to do so in an informed and constructive manner. Not only do we want to point out the problems faced but to put forward suggestions on how best to find solutions.

Mental well-being has been neglected for too long. This is an area that needs to be prioritised Nationally. IRD Duhallow provides services for the bereaved, lone parents, those impacted by domestic violence, migrants, young people and the elderly in rural isolated areas. Training and preparation for employment forms an ever increasingly part of our brief along with education and training. Our Youth and Education Working Group organises careers exhibitions, classes and competitions. These services need to be locally accessible and financially supported in order to be sustained into the future.



Due to the strategic planning and entrepreneurial vision of our Board and management team we are proud of the Community Laundry Services, Duhallow Community Food Services, The Pitch and Putt Course and the extensive renovation of the James O'Keeffe historic buildings. At their recent book launch here, former owners, the Sisters of St. Joseph were so proud that the house was restored and maintained and still carrying on much of the work, to which they dedicated themselves to deliver on the missions. Credit must be given to the Tús and RSS supervisors and participants for much of this work.

The communities need to encourage their members to use these facilities. This will help defray costs and ensure that the services can be sustained into the future.

On our behalf I want to express a sincere thank you to the Board members who chair each of these working groups. Under their leadership and with the hard work and dedication of the staff great results have been achieved and are outlined in the pages of this report.

The IRD Duhallow Board is a voluntary board and people give freely of their time and expertise. This is especially laudable at this time when there are so many revelations in the media of corruption albeit in a very small number of charitable organisations. I want to thank John Cott and Deirdre Green who will be retiring from the Board. Both John and Deirdre have given a lot of their time and experience over the last six years. This of course does not end their involvement with IRD Duhallow and they will be on call for our working groups and sub committees.

I wish to welcome new members Annette O'Mahony and John Linehan in their roles as representatives of North Eastern Duhallow and Aonghus MacSuibhne and Breda Kelleher representing the new Mid Cork region.

I wish to thank all the Board members who are on hand to advise me in this, my first year, as Chairperson and in particular my Vice Chairman, Brian Kelly. I want to acknowledge the work of all the chairpersons who have gone before me. It was with regret and sadness we learned of the passing during the year of three former Board members, Cllr Dan Joe Fitzgerald, John O'Sullivan and one of our founding members Frank Healy. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a n-anamacha.

My renewed thanks to Maura Walsh for her continuous dedication and commitment to the company and the region. There is no doubt that when history will be written her contribution to the improvements in the lives of the people of Duhallow, from all aspects of their welfare, social, cultural and environmental should be well documented and acknowledged.

Dreams cannot be realized and visions and aspirations achieved without hard work. To each and every member of the staff, thank you. You often work long hours and under pressure. Sometimes your own positions have been threatened and your futures uncertain but you have always put your shoulder to the wheel and got stuck in. Well done. We appreciate your work and though sometimes compliments may not be given individually I can assure you that your work has not gone unnoticed and that it is spoken of nationally. Long may you continue to work with us, Duhallow needs you. Ar scath a cheile a mharann na daoine.

With that, we will go forward together with the support of the communities. Let it not be said that on our watch IRD Duhallow or what it stands for was damaged. We know that united and supporting each other we can face the uncertain world that lies ahead and continue our work on your behalf for the betterment of the region and all its people.

Anne Maria Bourke
CHAIRPERSON

Manager's Report

In this, the 26th Anniversary of the founding of IRD Duhallow the company has much to celebrate, despite the challenges to our very existence from National policies in the past few years. It is over ten years since governance was first mentioned in the IRD Duhallow annual report at a time when National policy was directing us to become "Boards of management". IRD Duhallow always felt management was the function of CEO and management team and that our Board was best placed keeping its eye on the governance of the company. That was an insightful decision that has served us well. I do hope that in the new arrangements for LEADER and other programmes that Boards are not forced, through unrealistic reporting deadlines, to abdicate their vital governance function and leave it on the shoulders of junior staff.

From a governance perspective IRD Duhallow, having thrown off the shackles of the prescribed articles and memorandum and returned to our original first principles, through the new company constitution, has at last reached gender balance on its Board. Furthermore, this past year has seen the AGM elect the company's first woman to the Chair. Anne Maria Bourke is most worthy of the position having served the company on several Working Groups over the years as well as being elected a community representative in the late 90's.

We have had to operate in a climate of unprecedented cuts to all our programme budgets at a time when Duhallow, like the rest of rural Ireland, was starved of public investment. It will take many years to make up for that great loss of infrastructure and human capital and I must pay tribute to our Team Leaders and Development officers, whose resourcefulness won us other funding contracts so that we could continue to work with our target groups, who need our support more than ever.

We are delighted to have a Dormant Accounts supported programme which addresses young people's needs and the Department of Social Protection case officer Martina O'Connor and Area Manager of Killarney Intreo Centre Maurice Lawlor have come in behind with their "First Steps" programme which means work experience in local companies can be secured for them.

Cork Education and Training Board has supported us with a Local Training Initiative focused on horticulture which is led by Rachel Budd and Katie Crowley. Thanks to Patricia O'Mahony the Assistant Manager and Catherine Power the Development Officer at Cork Education and Training Board, the unemployed are on their way to QQI level 6 qualifications. The Social Inclusion Activation Programme is now in its final year and while we are happy with our work in that we are meeting all our key targets, we were uneasy at dropping community development supports for carers and small holders from our programme. Thanks to the Dormant Accounts fund once again, we have been able to resume work with Duhallow carers, a group of selfless people, who save the state millions every year, by looking after relatives and adult children with severe disabilities.

The LEADER 2014-2020 programme has just been launched and should be operated by the local councils Local Community Development Committees in the Autumn. Despite the huge cut to our funding, 79%, we will give it our best shot and make as much of it for communities and businesses as we can. My fear is that the scarcity of funding coupled with the new competitive aspect of the fund, which has replaced the developmental nature of previous programmes will lead to communities being pitched against each other, where winner takes all and there are going to be more losers than winners. Undoing what has taken us decades of hard work, to foster co-operation and integration of approach in communities through LEADER.

Another positive of the past year was the co-operation we experienced from our neighbouring LEADER groups and the other members of the LCDC's in drawing up our Local Development strategies. In Kerry the CEO Moira Murrell with Chief Officer Mike Scannell led the development of a framework agreement, to which all three Local Development companies could sign up. We were well supported by council planning staff Marguerite Enright and Kevin Burns in completing the area analysis and strategy. In Cork our area is divided between two LCDC's. North Cork led by the Chairman Cllr Gerard Murphy and Niall Healy Chief Officer along with Fiona Hayes ensured an amicable agreement was reached.



Our first LIFE programme Salmon and Pearl Mussels, Otter, Dipper and Kingfisher – SAM OK was completed last year and the final reports were submitted during the year. Our project scientist and technical assistant have gone to take up employment with the new The Local Authority Waters and Communities Office. We wish them both well in their new roles. IRD Duhallow was absolutely delighted to be awarded its second LIFE programme focused on raptors, salmon and lamprey in the upper Blackwater catchment. Eileen Linehan has taken up the role of project manager and therefore I have every confidence that this programme will meet all targets and surpass all expectations.

During the year we bade farewell to a number of Tús and RSS supervisors, who have gone on to new opportunities and other jobs in the public and private sector. Tús and RSS continue to be a very significant part of our work in that the supervisors and participants support our communities in several aspects of their work as well as supporting the work of community enterprises and voluntary organisations throughout Duhallow. The schemes are also providing vital support to the work of our Life Raptor programme as well as providing training and carrying out refurbishment of the old buildings at the James O'Keeffe Institute. My thanks to Triona Murphy, Team Leader, for ensuring the smooth operation of both schemes as well as providing further education and training supports to supervisors and participants especially the under twenty-five age group as well as overseeing the setting up of the Furniture Revamp and Recycling project.

Our Warmer Homes Initiative has grown again in the past year and tribute must be paid to the Team Leader, Helen O'Sullivan, Colm Crowley and the professional team of installers we have. Helen is on a six-month break getting to know her new baby daughter and we look forward to her return along with Mary Creedon who also had a little girl this year.

Support to local enterprises was hugely important during the past few years of recession and austerity. Louise Bourke rolled out the, very welcome, Duhallow Skillsnets programme which has supported a wide range of local businesses with training and upskilling. She has also headed up the very successful Duhallow Enterprise awards in conjunction with the Corkman as well as running the business mentoring programme. Louise has also coordinated the production of this progress report.

Margaret O'Connor and Kasia Meller have worked in difficult circumstances during the past year to ensure the company remained within decreasing budgets. I am grateful to them, our administration team and Derval who also produces the monthly newsletter.

My job is made all the easier through the Trojan work and professionalism of our assistant CEO Eileen Linehan. She has taken on additional responsibility, again this year, for closing LIFE and LEADER programmes and her HR expertise has been tested and proven solid when we faced the awfulness of redundancies during the year.

My thanks to our Chairperson, Anne Maria Bourke, whose positive energy and outlook is indeed infectious and was so badly needed in this past year. She has become our ninth Chairperson and has brought her own unique style, which has inspired Board and Staff members to strive for even better outcomes. She has also wisely tapped into the wealth of experience of our previous Chairs which is a unique strength in this company.

IRD Duhallow has met and is rising above the challenges of the past few years because it is deeply rooted in the community. Our Board is visionary, innovative, motivated, committed, and courageous. It invests heavily in time committed to reviewing our operations, performance and strategies as well as listening to our communities at all levels. That is why IRD Duhallow is able to define itself as a Community Led Local Development Company, in the real sense of the term and has remained relevant to the communities it serves and has legitimacy conferred on it by those communities. As Charles Handy said:- "We cannot wait for great visions from great people for they are in short supply. It is up to us to light our own small fires in the darkness." And that is just what we are doing.

Maura Walsh
CEO IRD DUHALLOW

IRD Duhallow Board Members

Anne Maria Bourke

Anne Maria Bourke is the Board's Chairperson and sits on the Finance and HR Committees, and was elected to the Board to represent Trade Unions. Anne Maria is the Principal of Liscarroll N.S which offers special classes for children with autism. She is an active member of the union being the current secretary of the District 16 Branch of the I.N.T.O. Principal's forum and a member of Cork I.P.P.N. (Irish Primary Principal Network). In addition, she is Chairperson of Allianz Sciath na Scoil North Cork Primary Schools' Games. She is a keen bridge player and is a member of both Brogeen and Kanturk Bridge Clubs.



Brian Kelly

Brian was elected to the Board to represent the Western Duhallow region in June 2014 and is the current Vice Chairman as well as Chair of the Finance Committee. He has over 30 years experience in industry and worked as an electrical contractor and is a founding member and former director of ECSSA, a body set to regulate the electrical industry. Along with his wife Anna he runs two Subway restaurants, and served on the advertising Board for Subway. Brian is Chair of the Enterprise Working Group overseeing the Duhallow Skillnet. He is also an active member of Rathmore Community Council.



Cormac Collins

Cormac is a former Chairman of IRD Duhallow holding the role from 2012 to 2015. He's from Gneeveguilla and works as a project manager in ESB Networks based in Tralee. He was appointed to the Board to represent the State sector having previously served as Community Representative for Western Duhallow. The ESB has worked closely with IRD Duhallow in delivering three phase electricity to many small industries in rural Duhallow. He is chairman of Gneeveguilla Community Council and developed a cultural centre in Gneeveguilla village, "Teach Failte". He serves on the HR, Finance and Community Development Working Groups.



Breda Moynihan Cronin

Breda re-joined the Board in 2014 to represent Duhallow's Social Enterprises. Breda was a member of Dáil Éireann from 1992 – 2007 and a member of Kerry Co. Council from 1999 - 2003 and from 2011 - 2013. Serving her community for over 20 years, her constituency included the East Kerry area of Duhallow. At present she is chair of ECSSA (Electrical Contractors Safety Standards Association) Ireland and is involved in a number of voluntary and charitable organisations. Breda is Chair of the Social Economy Working Group of IRD Duhallow.



Eimear Guiney

Eimear is a 25 year old primary school teacher, teaching in Liscarroll N.S ASD unit. A Newmarket native, she was nominated to the board in 2015 representing Macra naFeirme, and she is a member of the Freemount Club. Eimear is current chairperson of IRD Duhallow's Youth and Education Working Group. Heavily involved in the community, Eimear is on the management committee of Bruach na Carraige, Rockchapel and is a member of Ceoltoiri Sliabh Luachra. She is an active member of Banteer Drama group. Eimear has served on the Board of Newmarket Credit Union.



Michael Twohig

Michael is a founder member of IRD Duhallow and served as Chairman from 2011-2013, he also in the past served as Finance Director. He represents Kanturk Chamber of Commerce on the Board. With his wife Noreen he manages the family owned Supervalu Stores in Kanturk, Abbeyfeale and Askeaton. A keen angler and hunter he has developed a number of angling projects in Duhallow. Michael is an active member of the Enterprise Working Group, Finance and Audit Working Group, HR Committee and Life + Steering Committee.



Don Crowley

Don lives in Banteer and is former Chairman of IRD Duhallow, having held the role from 2006 until 2009. He was re-appointed to the Board in 2012 representing Cork Institute of Technology where he is the Head of the Department of Organisation & Professional Development. He is a member of the Finance, Employment and Training, Youth and Education and Social Economy Working Groups. He brings experience of business and community projects as well as supporting lifelong education and training and delivering opportunities for marginalised individuals and target groups.



Inspector Aileen Magner

Aileen joined the Board in July 2015. Since the recent amalgamation of Garda Districts, Aileen is now the district Inspector for Mallow District, which incorporates the former Kanturk District. Aileen is based in Mallow Station. She is a native of Kilfinane in Co. Limerick and has worked as a Garda, Sergeant and now Inspector in Mallow District and is very familiar with the Duhallow area. Aileen and her partner Dave have a young daughter and baby boy.



IRD Duhallow Board Members

John Linehan

John, a full time Dairy Farmer from Dromtariffe was first elected on to the Board in July 2009 representing the farming organisations. In May 2016 he was elected as a community rep for North Eastern Duhallow. John and his wife, Angela, have three children. John is an active member of the Dromtariffe community. He has completed a degree in Rural Development and is the Chairman of IRD Duhallow's Agriculture Working Group and a member of the steering group for the Duhallow Skillnet. John is also Dromtariffe Juvenile GAA Chairman and is a member of the Focal Farmer Programme.



Annette O'Mahony

Annette was newly elected to the Board in May 2016 representing the North Eastern Duhallow region. She is married to David, they have 5 sons, and she works in Newmarket as a Practice Nurse. She has served on the Board of Management of Ballyhass National School and has also spent time as Chairperson of its Parents Association. She is currently Treasurer of the Parents Council in Mercy Secondary School. Annette volunteers with voluntary groups such as Castlemagner GAA, Croke Rovers, and the Irish Guide Dog Association and is involved in the local litter watch which is run by An Taisce.



Breda Kelleher

Breda joined the Board in February 2016 representing the Mid Cork area. Breda lives in Clondrohid where she farms with her husband John, and minds some of her grandchildren. She has 3 grown up children and 7 grandchildren. Breda has always been involved in voluntary work and she was chairperson of Clondrohid Parents Association for many years. Breda has also been treasurer of Macroom Ploughing and its current PRO. She is very involved in Community Alert, and is presently the Assistant Secretary and Treasurer of Clondrohid Development Group.



Aongus MacSuibhne

Aongus joined the Board of IRD Duhallow in February 2016, representing the new Mid Cork region. He is an active member of Ballinagree Community Development Group and is the current chairperson and they have ambitious plans to develop the community infrastructure in the coming years. Aongus works in Fexco Killorglin as an Information Technology Program Manager by profession. He hails originally from Co. Meath and is married in Ballinagree with three children. Aongus has a keen interest in GAA and is involved in his local Aghinagh Club.



Mary Wallace

Mary originally hails from Béal na Bláth, but has lived in Donoughmore for 27 years. She was elected to the Board in 2015 representing the South Eastern Region. She is Chairperson of the Community Development Working group and a member of the Women and Childcare Working group. She is married to Vincent, has 2 children and works in the Department of Social Protection. She has served on the Boards of Management of both primary and secondary schools. She is a member of Donoughmore Community Alert and Community Council serving as treasurer. She co-ordinates the area's text alert scheme.



Noreen Duggan

Noreen is a native of Banteer and was elected to the Board of IRD Duhallow to represent the South Eastern Duhallow region in 2015. Having completed a BSc and a Higher Diploma in Education in UCC, Noreen received her primary teaching qualification from Mary Immaculate College, and is the Principal of Scoil Fhursa, Lyre. She volunteers with many community groups in Banteer including Banteer Community Centre and Annual Show Committee, the Glen Theatre Banteer, and currently holds the position of Chairperson of Banteer/Lyre and Districts Community Council.



Batt Casey

Batt was elected to the Board of IRD Duhallow in June 2014 representing the Western Duhallow region. He is an active member of the Kiskeam community and volunteers with many community and voluntary groups. He is the current chairperson of Kiskeam's Development Association, and a member of Kiskeam Social Action Group, the Graveyard Committee and also of Boherbue/Kiskeam St. Vincent de Paul Society of which he is a founding member. He is also a former Board member of Newmarket Co-op. A full time farmer by profession, Batt is married to Joan and they have seven children.



IRD Duhallow Board Members

Jack Roche

Jack is from Rockchapel and represents the Saoi Network of which he is the Chairman. A former IRD Duhallow Chairman, he sits on the Social Economy, Finance, Human Resources and Community Development Working Groups. Jack represents IRD Duhallow on ILDN and also represents ILDN on ELARD the European LEADER Association for Rural Development of which he is past President. Steeped in the cultural development of the region, he developed Bruach na Carraige Cultural Centre in Rockchapel, the Sliabh Luachra Archive and the Cultural Trail.



Judy O'Leary

Judy first joined the Board of IRD Duhallow in 1997 representing women's groups. She Chairs the Women and Childcare Working Group and is a member of the HR Working Group. Judy is a founder member of the Duhallow Women's Forum. She hails from Dromtariffe and is actively involved in her local community. She is a long standing member of the Irish Country Women's Association and is the Vice President for the North Cork Guild and Secretary for the Dromtariffe Guild. She has also served as Vice Chairperson of IRD Duhallow for three years.



Cllr Maura Healy Rae

25 year old Cllr Maura Healy Rae joined the Board of IRD Duhallow in March of 2016. An independent Councillor for the Killarney Municipal District, Maura was co-opted onto Kerry County Council following her father, Danny Healy-Rae's election to Dail Eireann. Maura is the fourth of the six Healy-Rae children of Danny and his wife Eileen. Her constituency includes the East Kerry area, so she is very familiar with Duhallow and the projects and work that have been carried out in her area. Maura works as an English and History teacher in St. Brogan's College, Bandon.



Cllr John Joe Culloty

John Joe joined the Board of IRD Duhallow in July 2015, as a Nominee of Kerry County Council. John Joe is self-employed in the construction industry for the past 30 years. He is Chairman of a number of committees including the HSE Health Forum South, Killarney Municipal District Strategic Twinning Committee, and Killarney Arts Working Group. He is a Board Member of St. Bridget's Secondary School, Kerry Recreation & Sports Partnership, the Joint Policing Committee, and the Killarney National Park Liaison Committee. Involved in Killarney Mountain & Town Meitheals, and Killarney Looking Good, and he served as Mayor of Killarney from June 14 - 15.



David Doyle

David Doyle joined the Board of IRD Duhallow in July 2015, as a nominee of the Chief Executive of Kerry County Council, Moira Murrell. David holds the position of Senior Engineer in the Operations & Safety section of Kerry County Council. He previously worked in Killarney as a Town Engineer. He and his staff in the Municipal Districts, support and work with local development groups and tidy town organisations. David lives in Beaufort, Killarney and is an active member of the local Tidy Towns Committee.



Cllr Melissa Mullane

Cllr Melissa Mullane joined the Board of IRD Duhallow in 2015 and is a member of Cork County Council representing the Kanturk-Mallow area and was previously a Town Councillor in Mallow. Melissa is a long term employee of Dairygold Co-operative Society and former part-time VEC Tutor on Payroll and Taxation. She sits on both the Housing and Environment Strategic policy committees in Cork County Council and is the Chair of the LTACC. She chairs the IRD Duhallow Youth & Education Working Group and sits on the Project Evaluation Committee.



Suzanne Campion

Suzanne represents Inland Fisheries Ireland where she is Head of Business Development and Logistics. Suzanne has previously worked as a manager and accountant in the public and private sectors with experience in the agri-food and tourism industries. As head of Business Development with IFI, her focus is on developing the business of angling and has recently published The National Strategy for Angling Development. Suzanne plays a pivotal role in the partnership between IRD Duhallow and IFI who were our partners in the EU Life+SAMOK Programme and the development of the Duhallow Angling Centre of Excellence.



IRD Duhallow CLG. Company Structure

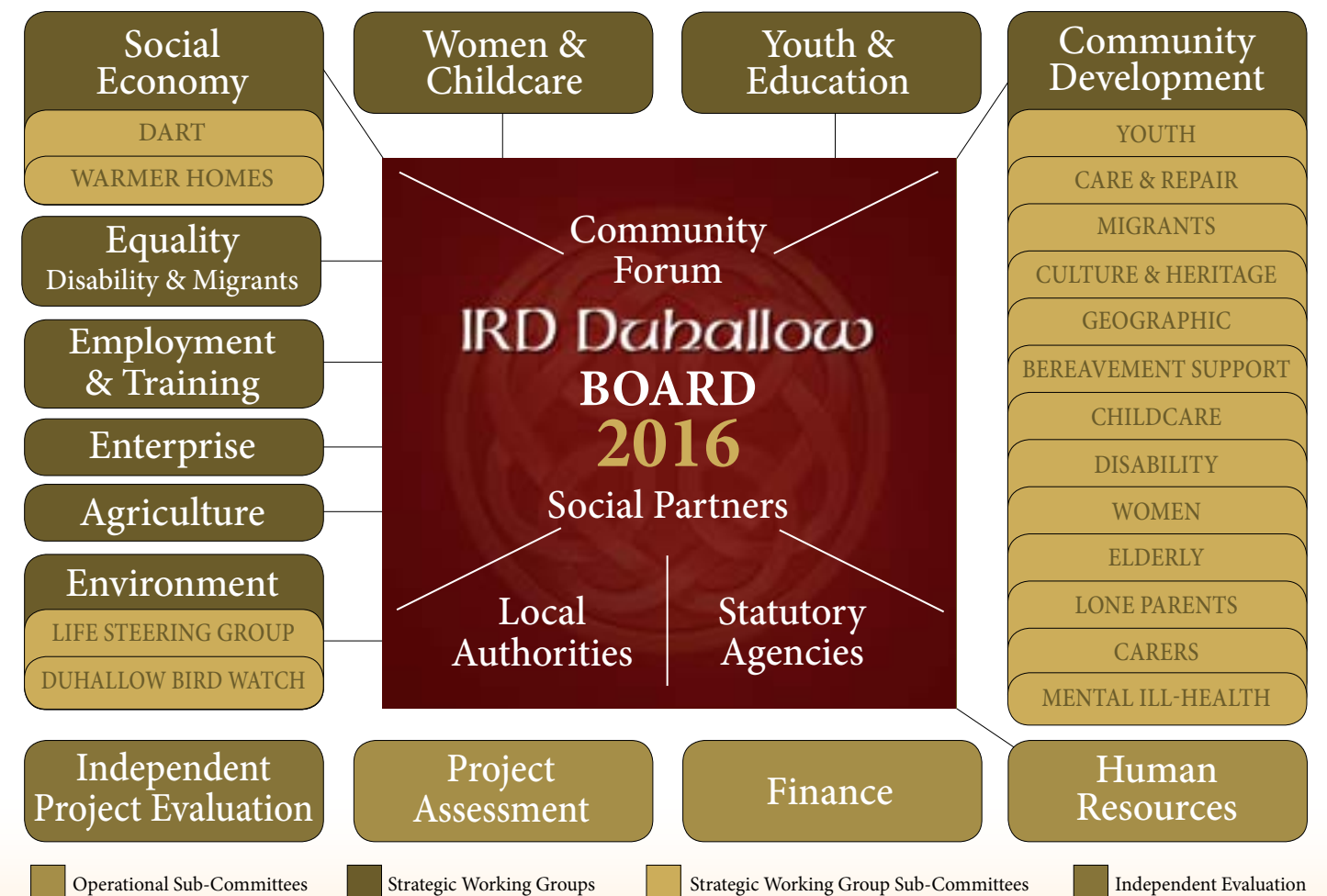
IRD Duhallow is a Community based Rural Development Company established in 1989. It is a Company Limited by Guarantee without share capital. It has charitable status and our directors are voluntary and receive no remuneration for their services. The Board of IRD Duhallow adopted the Governance Code Principles Statement in 2013 and is listed on the Register of Compliance. The Constitution reflects best practice and are in accordance with the Charities Act, 2011.

The Board membership reflects the integration of Social Inclusion and Rural Development, the importance of the environment and community volunteers and the democratically elected Local Authority Members. Reflective of the integrated nature of our work, the Company's Board and Sub Committee Structures have evolved over the years and enjoy a massive amount of good will and voluntary contribution in the region. Upwards of 3,500 people participate from the bottom up through these structures. IRD Duhallow has a number of working groups with representatives from our Board and staff as well as community and State sector representatives. This structure allows us to target specific expertise beneficial to the implementation of the strategic aims assigned to the particular working group.

IRD Duhallow continues to strive for excellence through the ongoing training and development of our staff. We have maintained the Excellence Through People Standard, Ireland's standard for Human Resource Management which is now administered by the National Standards Authority of Ireland.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED SINCE 1989:

1500	Jobs Created
720	Businesses Supported
130	Community Groups Supported
1282	Community Work Placements Supported
5701	Training Places Created
3375	Homes Insulated
500	Childcare Places Created



Details of Staff



EILEEN LINEHAN, B.A. (Econ & Geog), MBS (Business Economics),
Dip. Personnel Mng. Dip in Public Procurement EU funded projects

Eileen is the Assistant Manager with responsibility for the Enterprise team which includes the Raptor Life, SICAP & LEADER Programmes. She supports the Manager in the day to day running of the company including Human Resources, prepares the Programme of Activities and oversees the financial operations of a number of programmes. Eileen monitors programmes through the IRIS & LEADER systems and she also represents Local Development Companies on Cork County Childcare Committee, which she currently Chairs, and represents CCC boards Nationally on CCI and also sits on Pobal's Pension Board.



MARGARET O'CONNOR, MAAT- Accounting Technician,
Aipa - Payroll Technician

Margaret is the Senior Accounts Administrator and has been employed by IRD Duhallow for nineteen years. She is responsible for the establishment and maintenance of the company's financial systems and procedures and the implementation of the apportionment of overheads across the various programmes delivered including LEADER and SICAP. She also oversees the Payroll and Pension administration and prepares Financial Reports for Management and the Board of Directors on a monthly basis. Margaret prepares financial management reports for LCDCs, Pobal and various programme implementers.



MARY CREEDON, B.B.S., Postgraduate Dip in Rural Dev, Food Marketing
and Co-operative Studies. Cert in Community Dev. IMCV Professional Manager Award

Mary joined IRD Duhallow in 2006 and is responsible for Equality, Employment and Training. She promotes lifelong learning animating and supporting LEADER and SICAP projects and works directly with the unemployed tackling disadvantage and delivering employment support services through the Job Centre. She coordinates the Equality for Women Measure, Benefit I.T. training and Integration of New Communities. Mary is the staff resource for the Duhallow Women's Forum, the Employment & Training and Equality Working Groups. Mary is Chairperson of the Health and Safety Committee.



DR. ILSE CORKERY,
PhD in Ecology, BSc Science

Ilse joined IRD Duhallow in April 2016 as Project Scientist for the EU funded RaptorLIFE programme. Ilse is responsible for monitoring a range of EU Habitats Directive Annex species (including plants, fish, raptors and their prey); leading on invasive species control/eradication programmes; heather and moorland management; restoration of riparian areas and spearheading upland farmland conservation management, in line with the National Hen Harrier Threat Response Plan and new Locally Led Hen Harrier Agri-environment Scheme.



KASIA MELLER,
MA in Political Science,
IPASS Payroll Technician, Accounting Technician

Kasia was appointed Accounts Officer in March 2007. In January 2008, Kasia took over as Finance Officer on the Community Development Team. She is responsible for the preparation of weekly and monthly accounts for RSS, TUS, Out of school, Walks, Warmer Homes, and prepares quarterly reports to Pobal. Kasia also processes the Out of school and Warmer Homes wages on a weekly basis and she prepares financial reports for the Social Economy and Finance meetings and the reports for the Main Board.



KIERAN MURPHY,
BSc in Wildlife Biology

Kieran joined the full time staff of IRD Duhallow in June 2012 as Project Scientist for the DuhallowLIFE project. As the project came to its end, Kieran was involved in submitting the final technical and scientific reports to the European Commission. He was involved in the successful bid for IRD Duhallow's second LIFE Project, RaptorLIFE. Kieran is now engaged in implementing the AfterLIFE programme of the DuhallowLIFE project. This programme entails the continuation and maintenance of many of the conservation works that were implemented during the course of the DuhallowLIFE Project.



HELEN O'SULLIVAN, B.Soc.Sc., M.Soc.Sc.,
Dip Com, Leadership & Mgt, Cert in Agri.

With over 10 years' experience in both Community Development and Enterprise Helen is the Community Services Team Leader with responsibility for the management and development of the Warmer Homes Scheme, Duhallow Community Laundry & Newmarket Afterschools. Helen is the Designated Child Protection Officer for the company. She works closely with community, youth and voluntary groups in South and North Eastern Duhallow to support their vision for improving their communities and develop their projects for both the LEADER and SICAP support. She is also the co-ordinator of the IRD Duhallow Bereavement Support and Domestic Violence Helpline.



KATIE CROWLEY, B.B.S. Postgraduate Dip in Rural Dev,
Food Mkt & Co-ops, Cert in Agri, IMCV Professional Manager Award,
Training Delivery & Evaluation (QQI L6)

Katie joined the Enterprise Team of IRD Duhallow in 2007 and works across the SICAP and LEADER Programmes. She is Assistant Coordinator of the Horticulture Local Training Initiative (LTI) and works on the Dormant Accounts Youth Employment Initiative. Katie is the staff resource to: Duhallow Bird Watch Group, Duhallow's GIY Group and the Duhallow Beekeeper Association. She assists individuals with LEADER and SICAP grant applications and is also the staff resource to the Agriculture and Environment Working Groups.



LOUISE BOURKE, B.C.L., Masters in Criminal Justice,
Masters in Management, Cert in Agri., IMCV Professional Manager Award

Louise joined the IRD Duhallow Enterprise team in November 2010, as the Enterprise and Tourism Development Officer, coordinating the Enterprise and Tourism supports of LEADER and SICAP. She provides targeted support to start up and micro enterprises and SMEs. Louise implements the skillnet programme in the region. She is the appointed staff liaison for the Enterprise Working Group, Business Mentoring Programme, the Duhallow Carers Group, the Lone Parents group, the SAOI Network, Duhallow Hill Walkers, Duhallow Boxing Club, Duhallow Befriending Network and the Literacy Support Programme.



JOHN BALLINGER, M.Sc Physical Geography,
B.Sc Environmental Studies & Geography

John Ballinger joined the Enterprise Team in April 2016 as the Technical Assistant for the RaptorLIFE project. He is an Environmental Scientist from New Zealand, with experience working in local government in an environmental monitoring role. He previously worked at IRD Duhallow as a researcher on the EPA Integrated Catchment Management Project. John liaises with many of the project stakeholders and oversees much of the on the ground actions. Together with the Project Scientist, he is responsible for scientific project reporting, and ecological monitoring through field studies and mapping using GIS.



DERVAL CORBETT,
ECDL, Cert in Supervisory Management

Derval joined IRD Duhallow in 1999 and is employed as a clerical officer. She is based in the Reception and Administration Office. She deals with general enquiries and administration and supports the manager in participation on a number of National Networks. Derval is editor of the company's monthly Newsletter which is circulated to 10,000 homes in Duhallow. She is responsible for the company's stationery requirements. Derval is the Authorised Signatory for the processing of National Vetting Bureau Applications for LEADER Partnerships that manage Tús and RSS programmes in the Southwest.



JACINTA CARROLL,
Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), Geography and English

Jacinta joined IRD Duhallow in 2014 as a Tús Participant, where she gained experience of undertaking various administrative duties within the company. Since April 2016, she now works full time with the Employment and Training Team. She offers employment and support services to the unemployed through the Jobs Centre including CV Preparation and Interview Skills. She is also responsible for the co-ordination of many projects such as the Careers Exhibition, organised through SICAP by the Youth and Education Working Group.

Details of Staff



TRIONA MURPHY, MBS Cooperative and Social Enterprise,
B.Sc Public Health & Health Promotion, IMCV Professional Manager Award

Triona is the Tús and RSS Team Leader with special responsibility for those under 25 years. She manages the support functions for all RSS and Tús Supervisors to ensure good planning, participant deployment, monitoring of outcomes/reporting and quality assurance. She is the liaison with the Department & Pobal and ensures the flow of internal communications. Triona provides employability mentoring and training for NEET (not in employment, education or training) under 25s as part of the Dormant Accounts Fund Youth project and is the employer liaison for work placements. Triona is the coordinator of the Towards Occupation and oversees Duhallow REVAMP. She works with communities in Western Duhallow and supports the work of both the Community and Youth and Education Working Groups.



SHEILA O'KEEFFE, Dip. Community Education; Cert in Genealogy and
Family History; Manual Handling Instructor (QQI L6), Supervisory Mgmt (QQI L6)

Sheila O'Keeffe joined IRD Duhallow in July 2004 as a Rural Social Scheme Participant with responsibility for administration. She was promoted to RSS supervisor in January 2008. Through IRD Duhallow she has upskilled her administration skills and completed a Supervisory Management Course. She was awarded a diploma in Community Education delivered in UCC in 2007 and a Certificate in Genealogy and Family History from UL in 2013. Sheila is a fully qualified Manual Handling instructor.



PADDY O'CONNOR

Paddy has been supervisor of the CE Scheme in IRD Duhallow for over fifteen years. Over the years, he has taken on responsibility for Health and Safety within IRD Duhallow and has been instrumental in developing policies and procedures in line with best practice. Paddy supports the participants on the scheme in developing their skills and supports them to access training in their bid to return to mainstream employment using the online Individual Learning Plan Computer System, each participant receives a tailored progression plan.



CON O'SULLIVAN,
Cert in Family History and Genealogical Methods;
Manual Handling Instructor (QQI L6)

Con was appointed Tús supervisor in June 2011. He has responsibility for placement and supervision of the Scheme participants. He is also responsible for the keeping and recording of time sheets and wages. Con supervises participants working across a number of projects including the walks maintenance, village Renewal, the LIFE Project, Community building Maintenance and Renovations. Con holds a certificate in Family History and Genealogical Methods, obtained in the University of Limerick in 2013.



DANNY MCAULIFFE,
Manual Handling Instructor (QQI L6)

Danny was appointed a Tús Supervisor in September 2013. He has the responsibility for supervision of scheme participants working with them daily on different projects both in the James O'Keeffe Institute and out in the communities. His background is in construction and carpentry and has been a foreman on various projects. Danny has supported successive teams of participants in conservation works across the James O'Keeffe complex.



GERALD O'CONNELL

Gerald joined IRD Duhallow in 2014 and his responsibilities include training, coordinating and supervising participants in all aspects of maintenance and green keeping on Newmarket Pitch & Putt course. He is also secretary of Newmarket Pitch & Putt Club. Gerald supervises coaching sessions for local youths as well as the annual pitch and putt summer camp. Since joining IRD Duhallow, Gerald has qualified as a Manual Handling Instructor and delivers manual handling training to new participants on a regular basis. Gerald recently took on the transport portfolio and now coordinates the maintenance for our fleet of cars and vans. His participants look after a number of communities in the eastern Duhallow area.



MICHAEL CORCORAN

Michael worked in the sugar factory as a supervisor and following its closure in 2006 secured employment with IRD Duhallow through the CSP Programme in 2009. Michael worked on our Warmer Homes Scheme and in July 2014 was promoted to RSS Supervisor. Michael has a team of 20 participants responsible for maintenance works carried out in a number of projects and communities across the Duhallow region. Michael also oversees a maintenance works across the James O'Keeffe complex.



MARIE FLEMING,
BSc Rural Development, Certificate in Health & Safety in the Workplace

Marie is Senior Administrator with special responsibility for the Rural Social Scheme, the Community Laundry and Company Archiving processes. She is a member of our health and safety committee of which she is the current secretary and coordinates the company policies, briefing supervisors and team leaders in order to reduce risk of accidents. Marie coordinates staff training and development and oversees the Company's IT and Phone Systems.



COLM CROWLEY, Diploma in Rural Development,
Certificate in Business Studies, IMCV Professional Manager Award

Colm joined IRD Duhallow in July 2007 as the Warmer Homes Scheme Coordinator. Colm is responsible for the day to day running of a number of SEAI programmes which include the Better Energy Warmer Homes Scheme, Home Incentive Scheme and Better Energy Communities and has responsibility for the teams of installers we have working on warmer homes. Colm works as part of the Community Services Team and reports to the Social Economy Working Group on a monthly basis.



DON MURPHY,
Cert in Archaeology; Cert in Oral History;
Training Delivery and Evaluation (QQI L6)

Don was appointed Tús Supervisor in June 2011. His main areas of responsibility include placement, induction, training and supervision of scheme participants in the areas of built heritage renovation and vintage machinery restoration. Don has over 20 years' experience as a sub-contractor in the construction industry in Ireland and abroad.



SHEILA ROCHE,
Dip. Comp. Sc.; Trainer Skills Cert; MOUS Masters Certified; Cert. VDU
Assessor; CPT Certificate; SNA (QQI L5); Supervisory Management (QQI L6)

Sheila joined IRD Duhallow in December 2012 as a Tús Supervisor. Previous to that she worked in the IT department at Alps Electric Ltd in Millstreet for 9.5 years. Sheila is responsible for recruiting participants, preparing the wages on a weekly basis, timesheets and updating the Pobal One View record management system as well as preparing reports and accounts. Sheila oversees the administrative demands of the busy JOK training & meeting centre.



JOE PIERCE

Joe ran his own construction business for a number of years and has a wealth of experience as an employer. He joined IRD Duhallow in 2013 as a Tús Supervisor and has responsibility for 20 participants. Joe's construction experience ideally placed him to oversee the community building projects undertaken in the past few years, leading on the construction of the JOK Food Innovation Centre. His vast experience allowed him to lead a team of Tús participants to complete the foundations, blockwork, plastering and car park facilities of the building, greatly enhancing their confidence, skills and abilities and supporting their re-entry to the labour market while realising a dynamic and impressive facility that will serve the community well into the future.



RACHEL BUDD,
B.A. Hons Sociology, Cert in Training and
Development, Cert in Community Development, Cert in Therapeutic Horticulture

Rachel joined IRD Duhallow in 2014 as a Horticultural Trainer, working with Tús participants and members of the T.O group and Cope Foundation trainees to create the award winning IRD Duhallow Community Gardens. In March 2016 she became the Co-ordinator for the Local Training Initiative in Horticulture, currently running at IRD Duhallow. She also works closely with the local GIY group which meet monthly at the James O'Keeffe Institute.

The EPA Project: Integrated Catchment Management

The project's official title is 'Delivering Integrated Catchment Management Through the Bottom-up Approach: A Critical Analysis' and was funded through the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Research Programme 2014–2020 as a joint venture between IRD Duhallow, Cork County Council and Mary Immaculate College, Limerick.



Fran Iggoe demonstrating the flood friendly fence design during filming of RTE's Eco Eye.

Managing our water is essential to support life and protect our ecosystems. Integrated Catchment Management (ICM) is about bringing water issues, people, and organisations together at the right scale in order to achieve effective management solutions which benefit all stakeholders. It incorporates what legislation says we need to do (i.e. from the top down), with the aspirations of the community (i.e. from the bottom-up). It integrates environmental, economic and social issues within a catchment into a coherent management strategy. Expert guidance can help communities to participate in the development, and implementation of an agreed vision of sustainable land and water use for their catchment.

The approach is of direct relevance to the Water Framework Directive (WFD), and therefore to River Basin District (RBD) managers and environmental regulators. The End of Project Report is available at <http://erc.epa.ie/safer/reports>. A synthesis of the results will be published by the EPA, in accordance with the four objectives of the project:

- Document a real time practical example of how ICM can operate through a bottom-up approach.
- Examine Irish examples of the bottom-up approach to catchment management.
- Research international experiences of ICM.
- Utilise theory and real life experiences to develop a guide for collaborative catchment management in Ireland.



Nuala Riordan (IRD Duhallow), Tony Aherne, Eddie Vaughan, Mossie Reidy (RSS) and Katie Crowley (IRD Duhallow) pictured here with IFA President Joe Healy on his visit to Duhallow.

This project was made possible by the IRD Duhallow LIFE project, which had been working on the Allow River since 2010 and IRD Duhallow has worked closely with local landowners since its inception in 1989. The EPA Research examines how the ICM approach has been implemented in Ireland and abroad, while also focusing on an existing ICM approach on the River Allow in Co. Cork. To fulfil the first objective of the research the River Allow Catchment Management Group (RACMG), which is a working group of IRD Duhallow, was examined as a real time practical example of bottom-up development and with local communities and key stakeholders. The local partnership approach adopted in the RACMG

is a functional and iterative process, which is constantly evolving. The approach centres principally on catchment "on the ground works" and stakeholder management group meetings. RACMG meetings have provided a forum for pooling of stakeholders, knowledge, skills, resources and actions. Bringing together this group has enabled increased social, economic and political awareness of issues on the River Allow, thus ensuring the generation of maximum added value. The added value lies in its potentially long-term outcomes, resilience, and lower costs of implementation of catchment works.



IRD Duhallow staff from the LIFE Project sharing their knowledge with other community conservation projects at a Freshwater Pearl Mussel conference in Donegal. Knowledge sharing is an important part of the Integrated Catchment Management process.



Fran Iggoe explaining the benefits of vegetated riparian buffer strips for improving water quality and biodiversity.

Ten case studies from Ireland (Allow, Bantry Bay, Burren, Mulkear, Owenmore, Owenduff, Glenamoy, Lough Leane, Lough Melvin, Raised bog Conservation), and eight case studies from abroad (UK, Netherlands, New Zealand, Australia, USA, Canada) were critically examined in accordance with project objectives 2 and 3. Interviews were conducted with programme managers and key stakeholders. Problems, including gaps, barriers and constraints encountered in the implementation of an ICM programme are identified, and recommendations are made to help guide the management of a collaborative catchment group. While the governance structures and objectives varied between projects, they all utilised collaborative processes within an Integrated Catchment Management framework.

The final objective of the research, to develop a guide for collaborative catchment management in Ireland, is based on the projects reviewed and on the ground experience in the Allow catchment. Three key phases are identified in the collaborative ICM process, establishing collaborative groups, running collaborative groups, and implementing collaborative group recommendations. At each phase recommendations are made on how to complete the process. Guidance for implementing collaborative processes has been produced. However, it is important to recognise that there is no single approach to collaboration, as each process will develop in response to individual catchment circumstances.



Agricultural advisor, PJ Phelan introducing the River Allow Catchment Agri-Environmental Scheme to the farming community.

Following the completion of the EPA project, the Minister for the Environment established a Local Authorities Water & Communities Office [LAWCO] to facilitate a coordinated regional approach to the delivery of the Water Framework Directive. Kilkenny County Council and Tipperary County Council, acting jointly, have been appointed as lead local authorities to act on behalf of all local authorities. Tow IRD Duhallow staff, DR. Fran Iggoe and Kieran Murphy have both worked on the IRD Duhallow Life project have taken up jobs with LAWCO.

Duhallow AfterLIFE Plan

IRD Duhallow's Commitment

The DuhallowLIFE Project came to an official end in June 2015. IRD Duhallow, however, is committed to maintaining a number of the project actions that were delivered for a further five years. The AfterLIFE Plan is an opportunity to build on the project's successes. IRD Duhallow has set up the River Allow Catchment Management Group as an appropriate means to continue the improvement of the conservation status of the site.



Nuala Riordan (LIFE Project Officer), Michael Twohig (Board Member), Fran Iggoe (LIFE Project Coordinator), Michael Doyle (Board Member), Dan O'Donoghue (RSS Participant), Tom Anketell (Duhallow Angling Centre of Excellence), Sheila O'Keeffe (RSS Supervisor) and John Ballinger (IRD Duhallow/EPA Catchment Management Researcher) received an award from the Cork Environmental Forum for the work carried out under the LIFE Project to eradicate Himalayan Balsam.

DuhallowLIFE's Success

The IRD Duhallow LIFE project has improved riparian areas in the River Allow catchment that were vulnerable to erosion from unsustainable land and water quality management and practices. The work included over 500m of bank protection works and 38km of riverbank fencing. While fencing off over 80 cattle drinking access points the project provided alternative cattle drinking strategies. Silt traps were installed in seven agricultural and forestry drains to help prevent tonnes of fine material from entering the river and degrading Salmon and Freshwater Pearl Mussel habitat. Nearly 6.5km of river affected by overshadowing or 'tunnelling' were pruned. Native trees were planted along nearly 7km of exposed riverbanks areas. The project also installed 38 artificial otter holts and log piles, 12 kingfisher and 20 dipper nest boxes. In what is the largest invasive species eradication and management programme of its kind in Ireland, and maybe even Europe, Himalayan balsam was removed from over 35km of riverbank, drain and ox-bow lake along the Allow and Dalua rivers. In December 2015, under the Community and Voluntary Sector, the Cork Environmental Forum presented IRD Duhallow with an award in recognition of our contribution to sustainability through partnership and participation in the promotion of environment care for Himalayan Balsam eradication.



Tree planting success.

Delivering AfterLIFE Objectives

IRD Duhallow continues to host the RACMG meetings and the group is a sub committee of our Environment Working Group. Through these meetings conservation efforts for the Allow Catchment are discussed with the appropriate stakeholders lending their expertise and possible funding strategies to further improving the Allow catchment's habitat. IRD Duhallow will also continue to provide on-the-ground staff (RSS and Tús) to perform maintenance work to many of the actions the LIFE Project conducted (e.g. silt trap and fence maintenance, tree pruning and Himalayan balsam monitoring). Each measure will need to be delivered in a manner that ensures maximum uptake from the relevant stakeholders. IRD Duhallow will lend technical and practical support to stakeholders for a number of the measures.



James McCarthy (Tús) and Dan O'Donoghue (RSS) repairing fencing wire along the River Allow.

Continuing Success

DuhallowLIFE provided an excellent example of stakeholder engagement in habitat and environmental management of a river catchment Special Area of Conservation. Many of the project actions could not have been achieved without involving landowners, anglers, state agencies and the general public. Through IRD Duhallow's long established relationship with the communities, trusting relationships were further forged over the duration of the Project, and will be maintained and improved through the AfterLIFE and other IRD Duhallow programmes. Having RSS and Tús participants working on-the-ground to maintain many of the works conducted during the LIFE Project, and continually hosting RACMG meetings, will ensure that landowners, and other stakeholders, will be engaged and invested in the long term process of protecting the River Allow and its tributaries.

Young Scientists Compete on National Level

IRD Duhallow would like to congratulate Darragh O'Keeffe and Riona Sheahan (Transition Year Students from Colaiste Treasa, Kanturk, Co Cork) and their teacher Derry O'Donovan, who came 3rd in the Intermediate Section (Biological and Ecological Category) with their project "Plight of the Pearls". Working with the DuhallowLIFE project and the staff at IRD Duhallow, the students examined meta data on Freshwater Pearl Mussel distribution and densities along the River Allow to see if there were environmental indicators or patterns that could be associated with low Pearl Mussel density or their absence.

They showed clearly that siltation of the river bed was not just an issue for juvenile mussels but also was associated with the absence of mussels or low densities and where river erosion was severe Pearl Mussels were absent. Some absences appear to be linked with serious pollution events. They strongly advise that we should look after the Pearl Mussels as they are a great indicator of clean water and a unique part of our heritage. What inspired them to carry out this research, was that their primary school had been visited by our LIFE project four years ago and they developed a deep interest in the Freshwater Pearl Mussel along the River Allow and their conservation.



"Plight of the Pearls" – Successful Young Scientists Darragh O'Keeffe and Riona Sheahan with their teacher Derry O'Donovan

RaptorLIFE

IRD Duhallo applied for and successfully secured its second EU LIFE+ Nature Project in 2014, which commenced February 2015. This €3million LIFE+ project is a 4.5 year project and aims to work with the local community to achieve a better environment for everyone in Duhallo. As the first Local Action Group in Ireland to access LIFE funding, we have demonstrated that the Rural Development Company model is suitable for large-scale nature conservation projects. The RaptorLIFE project is adjacent to that of the project area in our first Project, DuhalloLIFE. The unifying work on these important catchments of the River Blackwater cannot be overstated.



Jean Clarke from the Dept of the Environment with Laszlo Betsy DG Environment and IRD Duhallo's Dr. Fran Igoe at the EU LIFE Conference in London

Raptor LIFE Theme: "Connecting and restoring habitats for Hen Harrier, Merlin, Atlantic Salmon and Brook Lamprey in Duhallo, Ireland."

The RaptorLIFE project is innovative in a number of respects not least in that it aims to link up the conservation efforts of two important EU designated sites (Blackwater Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Stack's to Mullaghareirk Mountains, West Limerick Hills and Mount Nagle Special Protection Area (SPA)). This is the first time that the conservation of two Natura 2000 sites (SPA and SAC) has been integrated in this way. Raptors are birds of prey and Duhallo is one of the most important areas in Ireland for these iconic and threatened birds. Hen Harrier in particular have seriously declined due to loss of habitat and persecution. A 37% decline has been recorded within the local SPA in recent years. One of the aims of RaptorLIFE is to explore the positive aspects of these birds by working with the local community and relevant stakeholders to promote their conservation through improved public awareness and habitat restoration. The Merlin is Ireland's smallest bird of prey and little is known about the species. The project aims to find out more about Merlin in Duhallo and to promote and improve their habitat.



Alan Mee from Irish Raptor Study Group and Brin McDonald from IRD Duhallo Birdwatch Group surveying for hen harrier for LIFE.

Stakeholder Engagement

The project has many aspects and stakeholders' inputs are always welcome and indeed vital to the success of the project. A corridor will be opened along the upper reaches of the Blackwater River to provide nesting and foraging habitat for Hen Harrier and Merlin. Coillte and the Forestry Service are lending advice and expertise in this regard. Along with riverbank invasive species removal (Himalayan balsam and Japanese knotweed) roadside invasive plants are being tackled with the welcome input and help from both Kerry and Cork County Councils, and the Cork Nature Network. BirdWatch Ireland, expert ornithologists, and the Duhallo Birdwatch Group and volunteers are currently surveying



Fencing off waterways prevents cattle overgrazing along riverbanks and supports bank stabilisation. Over 28km of riverbank will be fenced as part of this project.

and monitoring Hen Harrier, Merlin and their habitat. We also regularly have students on work placement providing valuable assistance to our staff as well as gaining experience and insights into how an applied conservation programme works. Two students from Tralee IT and one from UCC have just finished their placement and we currently have one student all the way from Canada helping out on various aspects of the project.

Surveying and Monitoring

In order to assess the outcomes of RaptorLIFE's conservation actions, it is essential to monitor the project's target species and their potential prey throughout the project. If prey abundance and raptor numbers increase through time, then we can confidently say the project has been a success. For this reason, the RaptorLIFE Project is currently busy with prey surveys on all of our project farms. Over the last few months there has been great progress made with the conservation actions on four project farms, with new hedgerows planted and lots of wilding conifers removed. The IRD Duhallo Raptor LIFE staff, volunteers, as well as external experts Tony Nagle and Alan Mee, have been very busy conducting daily monitoring of hen harriers, and are keeping watch for signs of nesting activity. Once the chicks are old enough, four lucky chicks will be fitted with satellite tags providing us with valuable real time data on Hen Harrier movements. Another species of interest, the short eared owl has also been spotted recently in the vicinity. This is a rare breeding species and also favours upland habitats so any habitat restoration for Hen Harriers is likely to benefit this species as well.



RSS participant Davey Joe Breen removing Himalayan balsam from the banks of the River Blackwater.



Nuala O'Riordan, Raptor LIFE speaking with MEP Deirdre Clune at the Ploughing Championships about the work of the project.

RaptorLIFE



IRD Duhallo has visited 44 schools in Duhallo and beyond to enhance awareness of the environment and specifically the target species, coordinated by Nuala O'Riordan, LIFE officer.



The best time to get people interested in the environment is when they are young, so that they can promote a secure a greener environment for future generations.

Wildlife workshops

Tomás Murray of the International Biodiversity Data Centre delivered a biodiversity workshop and provided our participants with the skills to monitor Ireland's pollinators to International standards. Great fun was had by all, and we expect lots more records to be submitted to the National Biodiversity Monitoring Centre from the Duhallo region!

Merlin are a target species of RaptorLIFE. Installing nest baskets to attract merlin to nest within the region is one of the projects target actions.



Himalayan Balsam

With the help from Tús and RSS workers, we are making great progress on clearing Himalayan Balsam. This plant is the tallest annual (completes its life cycle in one year) in Ireland and due to its rapid growth, it shades out most of our native species, leaving banks bare in the winter time and open to erosion. The balsam favours damp soil areas such as along the banks of watercourses, where it often forms continuous stands. Following on from the success of SAMOK, another 126km of riverbank and roadside, will be cleared of Himalayan Balsam by 2019. New participants have been trained up this year, land owners have been informed



Short-eared Owls are visitors to our uplands. This picture was taken by a former Tús participant, Finola O'Sullivan

informed of ongoing work and removal is currently underway and will continue until August. We are also asking all Nature Lovers, Landowners, Anglers, Walkers and River Users to join in a 2 minute pull. Look out for the invasive plant the Himalayan balsam along the Upper Blackwater (Allow, Dalua, Brogeen, Araglin, Finnow rivers and drains especially). We are requesting the public to help IRD Duhallo through our RaptorLIFE project to continue to remove the invasive species from our water courses. All it takes is 2 minutes to spot, pull and break roots off a Himalayan balsam plant to prevent it from spreading. One plant alone can produce 2,500 seeds that easily float on water and can invade river banks very quickly. Already IRD Duhallo with the support of the community, have removed Himalayan balsam from over 35km of river banks, drains and ditches through the LIFE programme.



Students Tomasz Seikaniece, Tralee IT; Richard McGillicuddy, IT Tralee; Rachel Hayden, UCC; and Conor Curtis, Memorial Institute University in Canada monitoring Hen Harrier.

Volunteers

We are collaborating with BirdWatch Ireland on a number of bird surveys from Meadow Pipits to Hen Harriers. If you are interested in volunteering on any of the work mentioned above, from bird watching to conservation actions, including invasive species removal and wildlife management, contact IRD Duhallo.

We would like to acknowledge the support of Pobal as an Associated Beneficiary of the project as they hold the payroll function for our Tús and RSS Schemes.



Nuala O'Riordan and Julie O'Flaherty keep track of budgets and costs for the RaptorLIFE Project.

Agriculture

The Agriculture and Food sectors are key economic drivers for Ireland and IRD Duhallow's Agriculture Working Group is very aware and recognise the essential role the agri-food sector has in providing employment and economic development within the Duhallow area. Ireland's agriculture and agri-food industry is heavily dependent on Ireland's position as a small open economy and its ability to export food products to 170 countries worldwide. We are the largest net exporter of beef in Europe, and the fourth largest in the world. Farmers in Duhallow and beyond and Irish agribusinesses are now bracing themselves for the outcome of Brexit, as the UK remains our prime market outlet.



John O'Sullivan feeling quite confident about the quality of this year's silage due to the wonderful fine spell of weather in May.

End of Milk Quota Era

The country's 18,000 dairy farmers woke up on the 1st April 2015 to a new dawn following the abolition of milk quotas at midnight on the 31st March. While the abolition of milk quotas has facilitated opportunities for expansion on many dairy farms, the Agriculture Working Group are cognisant that it has also posed real challenges in terms of increased investment at farm level within a very volatile milk price environment. While prudent use of debt is an effective part of growing businesses, heavily geared farms are significantly exposed to volatile milk prices which is being experienced by all dairy farmers across Duhallow currently.



A quick pick up before the rain, silage contractor Gerard Drew.

Positivity, Laughter and Tears at the 2015 Women and Agriculture Conference

More than 650 women from across the country descended on the Knightbrook Hotel Co Meath for this year's Women in Agriculture Conference. 25 women from Duhallow attended the conference which celebrated the role of women in agriculture in all forms. In his address Minister for Agriculture Simon Coveney urged the women present to rethink the traditional model of succession and to take a more active role on the farm.

Three female entrepreneurs Mary Flahavan of Flahavans Oats, Dairy Farmer Ann Moore and Colette Twomey of Clonakilly Black Pudding explained how they dealt with the challenges of business, from succession to illness. Diane Banville delivered a very emotive presentation about the death of her husband, Kevin due to a farm accident. Maura Canning of the IFA Farm Family committee asked the audience to think carefully about farm safety and to carry out audits on their farms. Psychologist Dr Fergus Heffernan delivered a humorous yet important talk on mental health and anxiety stating that "families need to be more honest with each other" and finally Evelyn O'Rourke and keynote speaker Majella O'Donnell made very personal and emotional presentations on cancer and positivity.



Joe Healy, newly elected president of IFA during a trip to Duhallow before the elections.



Members of GIY Duhallow enjoying the fine evening during a recent garden visit.

GIY Duhallow

Perhaps our taste buds detect what our eyes cannot. Truly fresh produce is more nourishing and deeply satisfying to the senses. Although our remarkable food distribution system provides a diverse selection of foods year round, cost and quality are inevitably compromised.

Only a few generations ago, most of the food on the dinner table had been growing in a garden only hours before it was served and GIY groups are now rejuvenating this process by growing their own produce. IRD Duhallow's GIY group members also volunteer with TO and Cope Foundation participants in our demonstration garden.

Beekeeping in Duhallow

Beekeeping is crucially important for agricultural well-being as it represents and symbolises the natural biological interdependence that comes from insects, pollination and production of seeds. However, bees are in danger of disappearing from our environment, as intensive farming practices continue to disturb their natural habitats and bumblebees are declining at a rate which gives them little chance for re-establishment. The honey bee is under attack from the atrocious Varroa mite and it is only the exceptional treatment and care provided by beekeepers that is keeping colonies alive, many wild honey bee colonies have been wiped out as a result of this disease. The Duhallow Bee Keeping Association is doing tremendous work in order to keep the population of bees in Duhallow healthy and well and passing on their skills and craft to a new generation. During the year they organised a seminar on an Introduction to Beekeeping and a seminar on How to Keep your Bees Healthy.



Pat Keane Chairperson of Duhallow Bee Keepers & Andy Bourke Secretary enjoying a well-earned cup of tea, at the conclusion of the Bee keeping seminars.



Good Management is one way to help prevent the spread of verroa among the Duhallow Bee population.

Embracing Technology to help Simplify Farming

Since the arrival of smart phones, apps have increased the functionality of the phone in a new way that was not conceivable before. Mobile apps are now helping farmers by providing them with available information assisting them to make informed decisions. Farmers can monitor calving on their smart phones, calculate the volumes of fertilizer they require, GPS monitor fertilizer spreading, crop monitor and much more. Phone app training for farmers was funded through Skillnets and the course provided farmers with the skills and knowledge to utilise apps on smart phones. Some of the apps covered included, iFarm, Farmers Journal, Grass2Milk, Farmflo, Gleadell, Farmer Business Network and Dairygold Mymilk.



Farmers in Duhallow are growing more comfortable with mobile devices.

IRD Duhallow's Local Training Initiative



Catherine Power Cork ETB pictured with LTI Participants and tutor Rachel Budd during a site visit at IRD Duhallow.

IRD Duhallow's Horticulture Local Training Initiative (LTI) is a community based training programme specifically designed to provide opportunities for the long term unemployed, early school leavers and marginalised learners who are unable to participate in other training interventions for personal, social or geographic reasons. Funded through Cork Education and Training Board (ETB), it is a full time 44 week programme focusing on the acquisition of skills for progression to employment or further relevant education and training. IRD Duhallow's Employment and Training Working Group would like to acknowledge the commitment and support of both Patricia O'Mahony, Assistant Manager and Catherine Power, Development Officer from Cork ETB in getting this new training programme off the ground in Duhallow.



Ben Blackowicz and his fellow participants on the horticulture LTI preparing the ground in the Kitchen Garden.

There are currently seventeen learners completing this nationally recognised qualification QQI Level 4 Major Award in Horticulture through the LTI, which includes training in Safe Horticultural Practice, Plant Identification, Care and Maintenance, Plant Propagation, Growing Vegetables, Growing Fruit, Hard Landscape Construction, Establishing Turfgrass, Information Technology, Personal Effectiveness and Work Experience. Delivered five days a week, the course incorporates a mix of indoor and outdoor work. Participants learn in an informal, relaxed environment where they are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and are supported to develop individual learning plans to aid their progression.

Something Different! Brushing up the I.T. skills with tutors Sheila Roche and Jacinta Carroll.

Award Winning Community Gardens

Set in the community garden of the James O'Keeffe Institute, IRD Duhallow's Horticulture LTI is firmly rooted in the community and encourages learners to develop their existing skills and learn new skills in an environment that is tailored to meet their individual needs and career aspirations. This approach allows learners to develop valuable employment-related skills and knowledge while contributing to their community. The joint efforts of IRD Duhallow's Grow It Yourself (GIY) group, the Towards Occupation



LTI Coordinator Rachel Budd and participant Maria Curtin weeding the onions.

programme participants and COPE participants were celebrated when Cork Environmental Forum presented IRD Duhallow with an Award in the Community Gardens Category of their annual awards in 2015.

A new 7m x 18m polytunnel has been erected in addition to the existing tunnels. This new structure was erected by the learners of the LTI and has allowed the Community Gardens on the grounds of the James O'Keeffe Institute to extend the range and volume of crops available. New individual allotments have also been sectioned off for each of the participants as part of the Growing Vegetables module where learners can showcase the 'fruits' of their labour. Newmarket Pitch and Putt Course provides the base for the Turfgrass Module and learners are gaining valuable experience, not only in establishing grass for golf courses, but also in maintaining and operating the machinery required to do so while also enhancing the employability options for the learners.

Progression Opportunities and Linkages with Employers

This community education programme aims to empower participants to grow in confidence to further their own employability aspirations and engage more effectively with the labour market whilst also positively contributing to their mental health. Following a comprehensive Training Needs Analysis with employers in the Duhallow Region, for those who complete the LTI, IRD Duhallow identified horticulture cross sector based employment opportunities in commercial nursery production, food production including fruit and vegetable, landscaping, garden maintenance contractors, retail, garden centres, parks, sports turf and sports field maintenance, horse arenas, golf courses and green keeping. This engagement with employers assisted us both in identifying the skills requirement by employers in the sector and in seeking potential work placements for LTI participants. Employers were also able to provide valuable feedback with regard to the proposed content for modules. Sixty five per cent of those surveyed specified the requirement of a minimum of QQI Horticulture Level 4 when hiring. Furthermore, employers expressed their difficulties in finding staff with this qualification as it was unavailable in the Duhallow region prior to the commencement of IRD Duhallow's LTI.



Paddy Curtin, Ben Murphy, Brendan Heffernan and Zbigniew Pedrak, picking out young plants raised from seed as part of the Plant Propagation module.



Ben Blackowicz and Willie John Buckley edging and raking the bunkers on the pitch and putt course as part of the Establishing Turfgrass module.



Brendan Heffernan, LTI participant having a contemplative moment.



Mariusz Kurzawa watches on as Tutor Don Murphy, marks out the footings as part of the Hard Landscaping Module.

Duhallow Angling Centre of Excellence

Tourism and in particular angling tourism continues to grow at a rapid rate in Ireland. A recent Inland Fisheries Report has shown that the value of the angling tourism sector is worth €833 million to the exchequer per annum and supports 12,000 jobs. This is a big increase from the previous study taken four years ago and reported an income of €750 million and 10,000 jobs.

Duhallow is a region with a natural wealth of angling opportunities with many crystal clear trout streams full of natural wild brown trout. The Duhallow Angling Centre of Excellence was set up in 2012 with the intention of developing this natural amenity into an angling destination with a difference and to assist local people of all ages and gender to try angling as a pastime and to provide all the necessary assistance and equipment required.

Two angling camps are held every year one at Easter and one in the summer for children. These comprise of three day events and all equipment is provided for those who require it. To date over ninety boys and girls have attended the camps and they continue to be well attended with learners attending every year. A number of these young anglers have gone on to represent Ireland in international fly fishing championships. From the initial summer camp in 2012 Eoin Curtin will represent Ireland in the World Championships in Spain in 2016. This is Eoin's third year in a row to represent Ireland in the World Championship having previously competed in the USA 2015 and Poland 2014. Another young angler from the 2012 summer camp to represent Ireland is Arron McCann who competed in the youths home international in 2015 and 2016.

Angling classes and lessons are always available to anyone that wishes to try the sport and regular masterclasses are held for experienced anglers who wish to learn new angling methods. The Duhallow Angling Centre of Excellence, has also recently been appointed as the main angling coaching hub for Munster by the Trout Anglers Federation of Ireland.



Chris Zogby from Washington USA made a recent trip to Duhallow for a day trout fishing.

The number of visiting anglers to Duhallow continues to grow every year with anglers from all over the world wishing to fish the rivers of Duhallow. So far in 2016 we have had anglers from Finland, Belgium, Germany, England, France and North America. Some of these anglers are repeat visitors which can only be encouraging. All over Europe most rivers and lakes are stocked with adult fish and now Ireland is one of the very few countries in Europe with wild brown trout angling available, and this is what attracts the discerning angler. For them the thrill of landing a wild brown trout in its natural surroundings irrespective of the size is what it's all about.



Alec Birchall from England enjoying his trip to Duhallow. The Duhallow Angling Centre of Excellence has attracted visitors all over the world since its establishment.



Bernhardt Klaser from Germany enjoying a day on the Allow.

The angling centre has attended major angling shows in Utrecht in Holland and the Cla game fair in England to market angling in Duhallow and this has proven to be a very successful venture. The Duhallow Angling Centre of Excellence assists visitors to gain accommodation and provides angling equipment, day tickets for all Duhallow's rivers, up to date angling information and transport if required. It also provides information on local pubs and restaurants and all local events.

Creating better physical access to the rivers is very important for all anglers and to this end the Duhallow Angling Centre of Excellence with the support of LEADER, has installed footbridges as well as stiles in a number of locations and will continue to improve the access points and car parking areas.

The Duhallow Angling Centre of Excellence in conjunction with Banteer Community Council has also improved the access for disabled anglers at the Banteer pond. A number of extra angling platforms and lifesaving equipment have been installed and restocking of the pond will also take place.



The Easter Angling Camp proved very popular amongst young people in Duhallow.

The future success of the Duhallow Angling Centre of Excellence can only have an improved effect on the local economy and we look forward to introducing more people to angling and welcoming more anglers to Duhallow.



A group from Finnish LAGPaijanne, tried out their angling techniques on the Duhallow rivers when they visited earlier this year. They were led by Michael Twohig and Thomas Anketell, both World class anglers.



Hook 'em while they're young! Tom Anketell co-ordinator of the Duhallow Angling Centre of Excellence teaches a young prospective angler the art of casting.



Margaret Burke Wittmer from Buffalo New York enjoying her day fishing the local rivers of Duhallow.

Environment



Mother nature at her best in Banteer Pond Field.

Duhallow's natural environment and resources have great intrinsic worth. IRD Duhallow's Environment Working Group initiates projects to ensure communities and individuals are made aware of and value these resources as key assets for the region and protect this wealth in order to provide for future generations. A clean environment is a critical component for a good quality of life, with clean air and safe water being two of our most basic human needs. Abundant biodiversity and healthy soil are other aspects of our natural environment that are essential to humanity. Meeting the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and protecting our water resources in a changing climate are pressing challenges locally, Nationally and Internationally. Maintaining clean air and healthy soil also require continuing attention, as well as protecting biodiversity and nature from further loss and damage. The management and protection of our environment is a shared responsibility involving communities, farmers, business, industry and public bodies all working together, as was demonstrated in our Allow catchment programme.

Duhallow Bird Watch Group

Birds are very relevant to our quality of life, from the song of the skylark to the arrival of swallows in spring or geese in winter. Birds form the visual and audio backdrop to our time in the countryside, they are intertwined with Irish folklore and form part of our heritage just as much as our music, culture and history.



Some members of Duhallow Bird Watch Group together with Michael Doyle, Chair of the Environment Working Group and Brin McDonnell during a bird identification workshop.



Some of our youngest bird enthusiasts, testing out the Binoculars before heading on the Dusk Chorus in the Island Wood.

Hedgerows

Duhallow's intricate network of hedgerows, primarily comprising of native trees, shrubs and flowers, are a unique feature of our landscape and vital for safeguarding our environment. Hedgerows play an important role in our society, because we have so little native woodland in Ireland, hedgerows are a critical substitute for habitats along forest margins as they have an extensive variety of plant and bush species, insects, birds

and other wildlife. Last December Mark McDowell of the Irish Hedge Laying Association demonstrated the correct procedures when laying a hedge and trained participants in the art of hedge laying.

Woodturning

The lathe has been in use since ancient times and over the millennia there have been many changes in the craft of Woodturning. As part of our activities for National Tree Week and to celebrate this ancient craft we organised a practical workshop in the LEADER funded Brogeen Crafts with Jeremiah Dennehy, on the art of Woodturning. This workshop was very well attended and Jeremiah's knowledge, skill and ideal demonstration area provided the perfect backdrop for the event.

Bumble Bee and Butterfly Monitoring

Monitoring Bumblebee and Butterfly populations is an important means of measuring change in the environment as well as the state of habitats for biodiversity. It is also a useful way that both professional ecologists and volunteers can contribute to the conservation of insects. Tomás Murray of the National Biodiversity Data Centre visited IRD Duhallow during the year and introduced the biology and the species of Irish bumblebees and butterflies. He provided training to over twenty individuals on how to monitor both groups of pollinators according to international standards. The outdoor activities on the grounds of the James O'Keeffe enabled each participant to put their identification skills into practice and these individuals are now equipped with the necessary skills to become a recorder for the National Biodiversity Data Centre's Butterfly and Bumble Bee Monitoring Scheme.



A large crowd participated in the Bumblebee and Butterfly Monitoring Workshop facilitated by Tomás Murray of the National Biodiversity Centre.

Swift's In Duhallow

One of the most iconic and intriguing of our bird species, the Swift Apus Apus, is a summer migrant that breeds throughout Europe and much of Asia and winters in southern Africa. Approximately 15,000 Swifts come to breed in Ireland but this number has declined by over 40% in the last 15 years. The Swift is now an amber listed bird of conservation concern in Ireland due to the decline in the breeding population.

Swifts prefer to nest in high buildings, usually old buildings where they can get under the eaves or fascia. They are at risk of losing many nesting sites because when old buildings are renovated the new building techniques and materials used, prevent the birds from accessing traditional nest sites. As buildings are replaced and renovated, Swifts find themselves excluded from nest sites and as a result their population is in decline. However, in Newmarket the opposite is the case, due to the roll out of our Swift Management project, 24 Swift boxes have been built into the upper walls of the outbuildings in the James O'Keeffe Institute, 44 entrances have been made to facilitate Swifts in the old Presbyterian Church and 14 boxes can be found around the town of Newmarket.



As part of the Duhallow Swift Project, Swift boxes have been installed into the upper walls of the outbuilding in the James O'Keeffe Institute.

A large crowd attend a seminar on "The Amazing Swift" delivered by Lynda Huxley GMIT Mayo Green Campus Co-ordinator.



Tourism in Duhallow

Tourism is a growing market throughout the whole of Ireland with the CSO reporting a 17% increase in the number of visitors to the country in the first quarter of 2016. Duhallow targets niche markets and has in recent years seen a large influx of emigrants returning to the area to visit relatives.



David McNulty and James Chilton from Tourism Ireland meeting with Paul Curtin from O'Carroll Fitzgerald, Maura Walsh (IRD Duhallow), Louise Bourke (IRD Duhallow) and John Fuller (Cork PPN Secretariat) regarding the REDZ Feasibility study.

REDZ

The establishment of Rural Economic Development Zones (REDZ) was first mooted in Pat Spillane's CEDRA report and these are defined as functional rather than administrative geographic areas that reflect the spatial patterns of local economic activities and development processes, i.e. they are the sub-county zones within which most people live and work. Minister of Rural Affairs at the time Ann Phelan, put aside five million euro of LEADER to run a pilot initiative accepting local community applications to develop REDZ projects.



Pat Spillane from CEDRA met with IRD Duhallow staff members at the ploughing where he discussed the announcement of the REDZ Pilot initiative.

The Kanturk Newmarket REDZ Steering Group was successful in its application to conduct a feasibility study into tourism projects in the area. The feasibility study had three elements to it: The first was the development of a Community Owned Hostel to combat the local accommodation shortage; the second, a Greenway along the old railway line between Kanturk and Newmarket, which would attract additional visitors to the area and link the two towns and the third, was to provide additional car parking spaces within Newmarket, which would act as a trail head for the new greenway and boost economic activity in the town centre.

Consultants O'Carroll Fitzgerald and Tourism Development Ireland were engaged to undertake the study and it is hoped that when the full programme of REDZ funding is announced that we can look at further developing these projects.

Duhallow Hill Walkers

The Duhallow Hill Walkers meet fortnightly and boasts 23 active members. The group was established to develop walking guides throughout the Duhallow area. These qualified trail leaders can lead visitors across the many loop walks and trails that have been in Duhallow and further afield. IRD Duhallow through LEADER and the walks scheme, has developed a long distance trail (part of the European E8 Walk) and five looped walks, which are maintained by participants of the RSS and Tús programmes.



Hill Walkers Paola O'Connell, Derry Sheehan and Jimmy Moore en route to the peak of Hungry Hill.



And they're off! The Duhallow Cycling Sportive 2015 saw 140 cyclists from around the country partaking in the Duhallow leg of the Skoda Series.

Duhallow Cycling Sportive

The Duhallow Cycling Sportive was held in July 2015 and saw over 140 cyclists partaking in the route which travelled to all the extremes of Duhallow taking in Meelin, Banteer and Rathmore. The Duhallow leg was part of the National Skoda cycle series, which was co-ordinated by Independent News and Media and we worked locally with the Corkman.



Giving the thumbs up to cycling in Duhallow! Local politicians Michael Moynihan TD and Mayor of Cork County Cllr John Paul O'Shea with local cycling enthusiasts Denis O'Leary and Trevor Osborne.

Newmarket Pitch and Putt

Following on from last year's re opening of Newmarket Pitch and Putt course, progress to date can only be described as very successful. Operated through a locally led committee which was elected at the first AGM and with word spreading of the fantastic facility, people are coming from near and far to experience this top class course.



A picturesque course, the Newmarket Pitch and Putt is maintained by Tús staff under the careful guidance of supervisor Gerald O'Connell.

We currently hold two weekly competitions for our members which are well attended by both the young and not so young alike. Teams are drawn at random resulting in social interaction between players that might otherwise never get to play together.

Since opening, a number of local GAA clubs have hosted Pitch & Putt classics in an effort to raise much needed funds for their clubs. The Pitch & Putt motto is "A game for all the family" and this is very much the case in Newmarket with a number of families availing of our family membership deals.

Following on from the success of last year's summer camp the club will be hosting a week long summer camp again this year for juveniles wishing to learn the skills and rules of the game. These camps are supported by the Pitch & Putt Union of Ireland and supervised by their development officer. The club is also hosting a number of coaching sessions for local primary school pupils. This year the Kerry County Board Match Play Competition will be held in Newmarket. To be awarded this competition is acknowledgement to the highly rated LEADER funded course we have in our locality.



Since it opened, the Newmarket Pitch and Putt course has attracted visitors from all around Munster. John Murphy and John Kelly from the Deerepark Club in Killarney tackle the 2nd hole of the Newmarket Pitch and Putt Course.

Culture and Heritage

The past 12 months has been particularly significant in remembering Ireland's fight for freedom from 1916-1921. Duhallow played a key role in that battle for independence, with many local men and women fighting and dying for the cause of freedom.



The cast of Patrick. Written and directed by Aidan O'Connor, it told the life story of the martyr Patrick O'Connor (inset), who died in 1916.

1916 Events

In anticipation for the events celebrating 1916 IRD Duhallow established a commemoration committee, which met on a monthly basis for the full year beforehand. Initial preparations involved cleaning and upkeep of the 30 monuments throughout Duhallow which were erected over the years in memory of the troubles of 1916-1921. Tús and RSS participants cleaned the monuments, power-washed the stones, sprayed weed killer and under took light ground works to each of the monuments in preparation for the many wreath laying ceremonies which took place throughout the Easter period.



The Duhallow Choral Society performing at the 1916 Commemoration Concert in the Edel Quinn Hall.

Communities each held their own events celebrating 1916. These ranged from Parades, to Proclamation readings and re-enactments, to wreath laying ceremonies. Rathmore Community ran a musical drama, based on the life and death of Captain Patrick O'Connor from Rathmore, who was gunned down in Dublin during the 1916 Rising. Written and directed by local journalist Aidan O'Connor, the Rathmore cast performed four sell out shows in Rathmore Community Centre, and went on for a special performance in the INEC.



Culture and Heritage Maura Walsh speaking at the unveiling of the Pádraig Pearse Memorial Plaque in Millstreet.

Duhallow Street and Urban Survey Project

Chartered Surveyor and Architectural Historian, Frank Keohane delivered a public seminar on 'The Buildings of Cork' in July of 2015. He presented the findings of a survey commissioned by the 'Buildings of Ireland Charitable Trust' which was published in 2015. Frank officially launched the Duhallow Street and Urban survey project, which involved asking communities to participate in street and public space recording. Streetscapes, street furniture, buildings and associated background and folklore is information which may be recorded and made accessible for future generations.

Heritage Week

Duhallow's Heritage Week celebrations ran from the 22nd to the 30th of August 2015. An extensive programme was put in place celebrating the theme of "Ireland's Industrial and Design Heritage" as part of our Day of the Regions programme.



Frank Barry ties a rag on the remembrance tree at Dromtariffe Well as part of the Pattern Day traditions.

National Heritage Week is a part of European Heritage Days which is celebrated in over 40 countries across Europe.

As part of the celebrations, IRD Duhallow hosted an agri-vintage open day in the James O'Keefe Institute on Sunday the 23rd of August. As well as an extensive exhibition of agricultural machinery which has been carefully restored by Tús participants, we also had many traditional craft workers showcasing the old skills and crafts of the years gone by, which included a blacksmith and a thatcher, weaver and spinner. Native author and historian Alice Taylor formally opened the LEADER funded vintage machinery display at the James O'Keefe Institute on the day.

Sliabh Luachra Cultural Trail

IRD Duhallow's Sliabh Luachra Cultural Trail was launched on August 30th as part of National Heritage Week. The cultural trail travels the highways and by-ways of the Sliabh Luachra countryside, visiting various points of cultural, historical and archaeological interest en route. Finger post signs direct visitors around the trail and information panels are erected at each of the sites. The route is 130 km in length traversing through Western Duhallow and the Sliabh Luachra Region. A booklet has been produced which is available throughout the region and from IRD Duhallow. IRD Duhallow also launched a dedicated Sliabh Luachra Cultural Trail website where tourists can find out more information. Visit www.sliabhluachra.com for further details. A bus trip for over 50 people was organised taking visitors around the route of the Sliabh Luachra trail.



Bus Tour participants gathered around the Holy Well at An Cathair Cubh Dearg near Shrone, Rathmore, Co. Kerry, which is one of the stops on the Sliabh Luachra Cultural Trail.

A key date in many young musicians calendars, is the Sliabh Luachra Music Camp in Bruach na Carraige, where keen and promising young musicians are passed on the skills and traditions of music, song and dance of the Sliabh Luachra area.

IRD Duhallow continues to support the six culture and heritage centres around the region, providing RSS, Tús and CE caretakers as well as the support of our development officers.



The official opening of the LEADER funded Dr. Croke's House by Maura Walsh (IRD Duhallow), IRD Duhallow Chairperson Anne Maria Bourke and County Mayor Cllr John Paul O'Shea with member of Kilbrin Community Council. This is renowned as a significant piece of architectural conservation and local historical significance.

Enterprise

Starting A Business

Starting a business on your own is a huge risk and venture. In fact, statistics prove that over 80% of start-ups fail in their first year. IRD Duhallow's Enterprise Working Group has put in place targeted initiatives to ensure that Duhallow businesses get started with the best possible supports, making them more likely to succeed, while established enterprises are supported to expand and grow.



Duhallow Skillnet's Project Support Manager, Trish Breen, presenting the award for Best Woman Led Business to Claire Scribowski of the Hair Studio at the Duhallow Business Awards.



Young Entrepreneur Brian Cotter established his new business with the support of Enterprise Officer Louise Bourke and Martina O'Connor of the DSP.

Those in receipt of Job Seekers Benefit and Job Seekers allowance are supported by the Enterprise Officer from IRD Duhallow, in making an application for the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance and Short Term Enterprise Allowance. This ensures that people can start a new business with the security of continuing to receive their full welfare payment for the first 12 months, and 75% of their payment for the second 12 months. They are also eligible to apply for the Enterprise Support Grant which can amount to €2,500.

A number of Start Your Own Business Courses have been delivered through SICAP in the past 12 months. This provides a great foundational training for anyone thinking of starting their own business, covering the fundamentals of Company Structure, Finance, Marketing, Sales and Business Planning.

LEADER

Since 1989 LEADER in Duhallow has supported 720 companies through Capital funding, training and mentoring resulting in supporting over 1500 jobs locally. The new programme under the Local Authorities is to be rolled out to be rolled out the end of 2016.

Mentoring

Funded 100% by SICAP the IRD Duhallow Mentoring Programme offers one to one supports for start-up businesses. We have a wide panel of mentors and business advisors ensuring that entrepreneurs can get sound advice across a variety of expertise. In the past six months alone over 20 individuals have accessed support from the mentoring programme in the development of their business. Enterprises can avail of up to 10 hours of this training, and it can be used across a variety of mentors depending on the needs of the business.



Aedamur Kelly met with mentor Ruth Cosgrave to explore the possibility of starting her own business.

Duhallow Business Awards

This year was the third time IRD Duhallow and the Corkman hosted these prestigious awards. In November, over 180 people came together for a gala banquet, catered for by DCFs, which was a fitting celebration of the many success stories of local Duhallow businesses. It was heartening to see the number of business cards that were exchanged throughout the night, which acted as a fantastic networking opportunity for local enterprises.



Breeda Nagle established Sliabh Luachra flowers with the support of LDSIP in the early 90s, the business has now grown to now support four employees. Breeda was a shortlisted finalist in the Duhallow Business Awards 2015.



Staff of the Corkman and IRD Duhallow at the third Annual Duhallow Business Awards which was funded by Skillnets.

All 19 shortlisted finalists featured in a special supplement in the Corkman and with such a high standard, the judges had no easy job in choosing a winner in each category.

The Winners were:

- **Best Start Up Business:** Cherry Blossoms Pre-Schools and Afterschools
- **Best Established Business:** Boherbue Co-Operative
- **Best Business Started through the BTWEA/STEA:** ICU Security
- **Creative Industry Award:** Killarney Candle Makers
- **Women Led Business:** The Hair Studio
- **Community Enterprise:** Banteer Community Childcare



Banteer Community Childcare were worthy overall winners of the Best Duhallow Business of 2015.

ILDN Business Awards

Following on from the Duhallow Business Awards, the Irish Local Development Network organised business awards highlighting the support given to start-up businesses by Local Development Companies. Duhallow was well represented in the Southern Regional Finals by Denis McAuliffe of ICU Security.



Denis McAuliffe from ICU Security won the Best Start Up Business with the support of the BTWEA/STEA. Pictured here with Louise Bourke (IRD Duhallow); Billy Mangan (The Corkman); Eileen Linehan (IRD Duhallow); Ciara Browne; Cllr Melissa Mullane (IRD Duhallow); Mary Wallace (IRD Duhallow); and Marie Herlihy (The Corkman).

Ploughing

The National Ploughing Championships were held in Ratheniska, Co. Laois last September. IRD Duhallow and DCFs took a stand in the LEADER funded Go Kerry Tent, promoting LEADER, social enterprise and rural development of the Kerry and Duhallow area to the 300,000 attendees.

Duhallow – A great place to do Business Highlighting Boherbue Co-op

The Co-op was the worthy winner of the Best Established Business at the Duhallow Business Awards. Nestled in the heart of rural Western Duhallow, Boherbue co-op is a service provider for the local area. The Cooperative was established in 1910 and over the years has evolved and expanded to meet the needs of the community. Under the careful guidance of CEO Declan O'Keeffe and Chairperson Patrick Murphy, Boherbue Co-op now has an annual turnover of over €20 million, employs 43 staff and has 160 shareholders. As well as being the key milk supplier for Mondelez International, the Co-op operates 3 main divisions: a large Super Valu Store, Farm Store and ARRO Home & Garden Centre. Not one to stand still, the Board of the co-op has big plans for the future and over the next few years will continue to grow and develop to meet the needs of farming community in their area.

Skillnets' Senior Programme Manager, Carl Blake presenting the Best Established Business Award to Boherbue Co-op Chairman Pat Murphy and CEO Declan O'Keeffe.



The Duhallow Skillnet



Brian Collieran (Management Works), Brian Kelly (IRD Duhallow Skillnet Chair), Dan Twomey (Waterpower Engineering), Dermot O'Driscoll (AIB) and Eddie Walsh (Business Consulting Ireland) at the Management Works Breakfast Networking Meeting hosted by the Duhallow Skillnet.

The Duhallow Skillnet was first established in May 2015. A geographic based Skillnet, its aim is to provide relevant, affordable training to businesses and their employees in the Duhallow area. It was identified that local businesses were only carrying out minimal training as the costs on time and travel were simply too high. An enterprise led programme, the Duhallow Skillnet undertook an in-depth Training Needs Analysis to ascertain what training was required locally. A comprehensive training programme was put in place with its Key Achievements as follows:



Key Achievements 2015-2016

Employed Trainees	232
Unemployed Trainees	49
Employed Training Days	1,454
Unemployed Training Days	407
Non-Formal Events	3



Banteer Community Childcare was presented with the Best Overall Duhallow Business Award 2015.

Unemployed Trainees

A key part of the Skillnet is the work undertaken with Job Seekers, or those in receipt of welfare payments. There are limited number of free places for Job seekers on each of the Skillnet training programmes. All the Skillnet training is industry led, meaning that job seekers have relevant qualifications that are needed by local employers, placing them in a better position to get employment. 49 job seekers were offered free training places in 2015 - 2016.

Our Trainers

Where possible, and in line with best practice procurement guidelines, we try to use local trainers to deliver our training keeping the investment within the Duhallow Area. The Skillnet used a number of local trainers and also ran a Train the Trainer programme (QQI Level 6); to support training providers locally and give them the best possible platform to win contracts.



Build Your Own Website Participants with tutor Clive Hooper from Simply Social Media and Network Co-ordinator Louise Bourke.

Responding to Local Needs

ACCOUNTING & BOOK KEEPING

It was identified that many small businesses could do a lot more of their own bookkeeping and payroll, which would allow businesses to be more efficient and do more in house instead of undergoing the expense of outsourcing. Through the Skillnet in 2016 we delivered Sage Computerised Accounting, Big Red Book Training and Thesaurus Payroll.



Graduates of the QQI Level 5 Care of the Older Person course with IRD Duhallow Chairperson Anne Maria Bourke.

HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING

Health and Safety is paramount in today's workplace to ensure that best practice policies and procedures are followed. A number of training programmes were delivered focusing on Health and Safety practices: Occupational First Aid; Abrasive Wheel Training; Driver Awareness; Manual Handling Instructor Training; Forklift and Chainsaw Training.

IT SKILLS

Technology can offer huge savings and efficiencies to businesses. There is a high demand for IT Training from Duhallow businesses and in answer to this, the Skillnet ran training courses such as Excel (Beginners, Intermediate and Advanced); ECDL and Phone Apps for Farmers.

HEALTH CARE SUPPORT WORKER

Duhallow has an ageing population and there is high demand for Health Care Support Workers in the area. We have run a number of minor award QQI Level Five programmes, with over 20 people close to achieving their major award. Modules covered include: Care of the Elderly; Infection Prevention and Control; Care Skills and Patient Manual Handling.

MARKETING AND SOCIAL MEDIA

A good marketing strategy can see a huge return on the investment for the business. With the digital era and the new social media platforms online marketing is the way of the future. The Duhallow Skillnet ran two training courses focusing on Marketing: Build Your Own Website and Digital Marketing and Social Media Training to support business owners to carry out effective online marketing campaigns.



Members of the Digital Marketing programme with course tutor Marie Collins of Digipulse, launching #DuhallowDM.



Brian Collieran from Skillnets provided an overview of the Management Works Professional Development programme to attendees of the Networking Breakfast.

Networking Events

Duhallow Skillnet recognises that to succeed in business it is important to make connections. Networking events form a key part of the work undertaken by our Skillnet. In February we hosted a Management Works Breakfast Meeting, where Brian Collieran from Skillnets gave a presentation on the Management Works Programme, and businesses were offered the opportunity to network and meet over a cooked breakfast.

Graduation Ceremony

In April of this year the Duhallow Skillnet held its first graduation ceremony, recognising the achievements of the many trainees who took part in training programmes. Over 200 certs were presented on the night, and the event also acted as a great networking opportunity for local businesses.



IRD Duhallow Chairperson Anne Maria Bourke presenting Mairead O'Doherty of Super Valu, Boherbue with her certificate in Primary Food Safety and HACCP Level 2.

The Future

In April 2016 the Skillnet was awarded a funding extension of an additional €112,500 from May – December 2016. We are currently in the process of developing online booking system and a comprehensive prospectus for all our upcoming courses and we hope to expand our services in the region.

Community Development

Empowering Positive Change Makers

Community development is all about positive change and ranges from consultation to engagement, volunteering to action and ownership to governance. In Duhallow our 37 communities have progressed through the various stages through the work of our LEADER animation and Social Inclusion funded staff over the past 26 years.



Richard Dennehy, Batt Casey, IRD Duhallow Board Member, Tom Dennehy, Michael Moynihan TD, John P Murphy, Nellie Lehané taking part in the 1916 community commemorations in Kiskeam.

GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The governance of all of Duhallow's Social Enterprises is in the safe hands of local volunteers, many of whom previously served on the Board or working groups of IRD Duhallow. They give generously of their time and expertise and regularly attend our workshops on management and governance. They ensure that nothing goes wrong because they have ownership and pride in the service they provide their own communities. They save the State millions of euro each year and provide a sustainable model of service provision.



Kathleen Linehan, Theresa Vaughan, Joan O'Callaghan, Jerry Long, Kieran Crowley, Neily Mahony and John McCarthy of Rathmore Credit Union who were winners in the Best Social Enterprise Category of the Duhallow Business Awards 2014.

Community enterprise has a strong and growing presence in Duhallow, building on the deep rooted culture of self-help and entrepreneurial spirit for social innovation. Ballydesmond-born Nora Herlihy famously pioneered the Credit Union movement in the late 1950's and therefore historically, there is an ethos of collective problem solving and change-making in Duhallow where communities work together to develop new strategies, ideas and concepts to solve any of their un-met social and environmental needs in a cost effective manner. From the outset IRD Duhallow has nurtured those in the community that see big opportunities where others see big problems.

IRD Duhallow has lead the way in the field of community and social enterprise by developing a sustainable model of best practice for community care that addresses the needs of an ageing [Picture 8] population while encouraging more families to live in Duhallow. The Rural Meals Service, Warmer Homes Scheme,

Banteer Community Childcare, winners of Best Community Enterprise and Best Duhallow Business 2015. This social enterprise employs 30 staff.



Jane Chilcott, wife of the UK Ambassador John Chilcott organised the International Charities Bazaar. Irene McGrane International Charities Bazaar, the Lord Mayor of Dublin Criona Ní Dhálaigh and Italian ambassador Giovanni Adorni Braccesi presented Maura Walsh, CEO, IRD Duhallow, Eileen Linehan, Helen O'Sullivan and Triona Murphy with a cheque for our REVAMP Project.

Furniture REVAMP, Community Laundry, Care and Repair all provide vital community services and give employment to over 300 people. There has been considerable interest from other regions in Ireland and further afield in Europe to replicate this integrated community care infrastructure in their own areas. IRD Duhallow is dedicated to growing the social enterprise movement and does not aim to "reinvent the wheel" but, rather, encourage the development of new models that work. Just like the private sector, a really vibrant social enterprise sector requires a range of supports to help it flourish. IRD Duhallow's Social Economy and Community Development Working Groups provide a combined driving force and advisory panel of experienced experts from different backgrounds that help communities grow their social enterprise project from an idea into reality on the ground with assistance with sourcing and accessing funds, mentoring, training, governance, branding and networking.



Triona Murphy and Helen O'Sullivan, IRD Duhallow with students from Mary Immaculate College who enjoyed a field visit to IRD Duhallow to see first hand the array of social economy activity in Duhallow.

The employment statistics give the community enterprise sector legitimacy in that in Duhallow employ over 300 people. In addition, it is estimated that for every one person employed at least one other person works on a voluntary basis. Social enterprises attract passionate people, and many of those who give up their time to lend a hand, wish to do so as a way of giving back to their community.

The high number of applicants in the Social Enterprise category of the Duhallow Business Awards over the past 3 years is a good indicator of the surge in interest in social innovation. Banteer Community Childcare were awarded best Community Enterprise 2015. They also went home with the overall prize of the Best Duhallow Business 2015 on the night. This local enterprise showcase has helped to raise the profile of community enterprise in Duhallow.



Community Development

PUTTING SMALL COMMUNITIES ON THE MAP



Billy Dennehy, Area Engineer, Cork County Council discussing the locations for the new LEADER funded community signage in Glash with local volunteers Mossie Fitzpatrick, Tadhie Collins and Ted Fitzpatrick.

Crossroads & The Future of LEADER

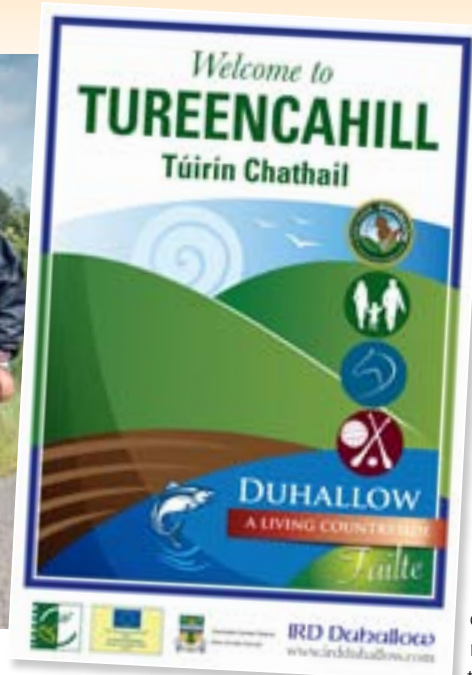
Over the past two years, the Community Development Working Group has explored the issues and priorities highlighted by the communities of Duhallow in preparation for the new local development strategies which are now split between the three county borders of Cork and Kerry with the addition of IRD Duhallow's expanded area in Mid Cork. There was a particular focus on assisting those people who traditionally have difficulty being heard; groups such as young and older people, people with a disability, people from a multicultural background, and low income families to play a greater role in expressing their needs. Having engaged with and listened to the people, communities and stakeholders of the region, IRD Duhallow contributed effectively to three separate local development strategies which collectively represent the vision of Duhallow 2016-2020, despite the greatly reduced budget available. It is hoped that more funding will become available through LEADER and/or other sources as the current allocation for LEADER in Duhallow and its extended territory is not adequate enough to realise and achieve the aspirations of rural communities e.g. upgrading of community facilities including halls, parks, cultural centres, outdoor and indoor recreational facilities etc.



Open Air Crossroad Dancing in Laham.

IRD Duhallow now serving Mid Cork

IRD Duhallow was appointed by Cork South County LCDC to be one of its Implementing Partners for the next LEADER programme 2014 - 2020 and will now be extending its services to serve the Mid Cork Region of Macroom and surrounding areas including: Carriganimmy, Ballinagree, Rylane, Aghabullogue, Tooms, Kilbarry, Inchigeelagh, Clondrohid, Rusheen and Bealnamorive. Representatives from community groups and organisations, businesses, individuals, the farming community,



environment and tourism interests, youth and actively retired attended a community consultation meeting organised by IRD Duhallow in Macroom in November 2015. This allowed staff and board members an opportunity to meet with members of the local community-based clubs and voluntary organisations and discuss potential project ideas and key environmental considerations. Notwithstanding the limited budget available through LEADER 2016-2020, IRD Duhallow is encouraging and supporting project development that is led and managed by the communities themselves. IRD Duhallow will

therefore seek to work closely with these new community stakeholders in focusing upon overcoming the major funding shortfalls. Two new members have joined the board of IRD Duhallow to represent the new region in Mid Cork and we look forward to meeting the communities when LEADER is rolled out.



Maura Walsh saying a few words at Sundays Well, Fermoy, Banteer where mass was celebrated for the first time since Catholic emancipation a few hundred years ago. The clean-up of the well was carried out by Tús and RSS Workers.



Cultural Centres play an important role in the Duhallow Community.
1. Bruach na Carraige, Rockchapel; 2. The Glen Theatre Banteer;
3. Teach Failte Gneeveguilla, 4. Freemount Heritage Centre.

LEADER

The implementation of LEADER in Ireland has undergone a radical change in the last 2 years, with the Government preparing for the rollout of the fifth LEADER Programme. With the County Councils as financial partners, the LCDC's are the new Local Action Groups and decision makers for LEADER 2014-2020. Minister Humphries has launched the programme and contracts have been signed albeit with reservations about a number of aspects.



Board and Staff Members from Päijänne-Leader, a LAG based in Finland, visited IRD Duhallow offices in April. We have developed many links with other European countries through our LEADER work.

To compound matters even further the Department is insisting that the €2.6m be stretched over five years. This is despite the strongly expressed wishes of the new LAG which decided unanimously that the programme should be condensed to two years. What this mean in real terms is relatively small amounts of funding per annum under each heading, for which communities must compete.

A further disappointment to the programme, is the massive reduction to the budget. Nationally, LEADER has taken a 50% cut however the western seaboard counties including Cork and Kerry have been hit with a 70% cut. IRD Duhallow is now in a position where we have to work as Implementing Partner rather than LAG across three LCDC areas. North Cork LCDC for the majority of the Cork part of Duhallow, Kerry LCDC for the Kerry region of Duhallow, and South Cork LCDC for Donoughmore and the expanded Macroom area. The budgets for each of these areas is outlined in the table and as you can see, Duhallow has been hit with a substantial cut.

	Total Budget 14 - 20	Duhallow portion	Value Previous Programme 07-13	%
North Cork LCDC	€5,091,845	€2,036,768		40%
South Cork LCDC	€3,831,303	€183,000		5%
Kerry LCDC	€10,219,868	€400,000		4%
Total	€1,914,3016	€2,619,768		14%
Duhallow		€2,619,768	€12,747,863	-79%

Much of the latter half of 2015 and indeed the beginning of 2016 was spent preparing our three LEADER plans for the LCDC areas in conjunction with the three LCDC's North and East Kerry Development and South Kerry Development Partnership in Kerry, Avondhu Blackwater and Ballyhoura Development in North Cork and Avondhu Blackwater, South and East Cork Area Development and Údarás na Gaeltachta in South Cork. Although there have been three different plans developed, the themes and actions under which the programme will be developed are the same.



Maura Walsh, CEO IRD Duhallow, with members of ELARD, the European LEADER Network, at their General Assembly in Brussels.

- Theme 1:** Economic / Enterprise & Job Development. This theme will cover rural tourism, enterprise development, rural towns and broadband.
- Theme 2:** Social Inclusion will cover basic services and rural youth.
- Theme 3:** Rural Environment will cover water resources, biodiversity and renewable energy.

The operating rules for the programme have just been finalised by the Department, and the application process has changed radically from the last four successful LEADER programmes. Promoters will now have to complete and Expression of Interest form in advance of applying for grant aid and these will have to go through a selection process by the LCDC. Once the LCDC choose the project to go forward for full application, all paper work including planning permissions, ownership, evidence of matching funding etc will have to be in place in advance of lodging a full application. At least 40% of the funding will be allocated using a call for proposals system, something which has never been done in the past, as it can hinder bottom up approach and favour those communities that are ready to move, while disadvantaging communities that need extra support to develop their projects. The LCDC will decide what project receives funding. With a much reduced pot, we expect demand to be greater resulting in fierce competition and many communities will be disappointed given the huge lack of resources and the bureaucratic application system, which will no doubt favour the progressed projects.

However, despite these drawbacks, IRD Duhallow is committed to supporting all of our communities in a developmental way, and to try to promote the enhancement and betterment of Duhallow for all of its people through bottom up approach, and by supporting communities to access the LEADER fund. We expect to be in a position to accept Expressions of Interest in late autumn and therefore applications by January 2017 and we are looking forward to working with the three LCDC's in our area to endeavour to deliver a LEADER programme that can mirror the success of the four previous LEADER Programmes in Duhallow.



Eileen Linehan and Louise Bourke, IRD Duhallow, with Denis McAuliffe and Ciara Browne of ICU security at the ILDN South Enterprise Awards, where ICU Security was a finalist.

Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme
FUNDS COMMITTED TO PROJECTS APRIL TO DECEMBER 2015

SICAP is the new Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme. It aims to tackle poverty, social exclusion and long-term unemployment through local engagement and partnership between disadvantaged individuals, community organisations and public sector agencies.

It was rolled out on 1st April 2015 and will run until December 2017. IRD Duhallow administers SICAP in Cork though North Cork LCDC and in Kerry through Kerry LCDC. The budget is extremely curtailed on what was available in the past however we continue to support our Job Centre, Mental Health, Communities of Interest including SAOI Network, Carers, Lone Parents, Children with learning difficulties, business startups as well as IRD Duhallow's monthly newsletter.

ACTION	PROMOTER	CORK	KERRY	TOTAL
Action 1 Stakeholder Engagement Newsletter		3,992.91 3,992.91	1,063.78 1,063.78	5,056.69 5,056.69
Action 2 Empowerment of Disadvantaged Communities Phones for Bereavement, Domestic Violence and Emotional Support Meetings and Postage for Carers, Pal, Bereavement, Domestic Violence & Emotional Support	Equality Working Group	495.35 342.56 152.79	173.69 120.43 53.26	669.04 462.99 206.05
Action 3 Collaborative Networks Old Skills & Crafts Day Diabetes Seminar Financial Wellness Seminar Meetings for Saoi, Womens Forum and the Environment Working Group	Saoi Network Women's Forum Women's Forum	942.04 264.47 114.88 56.56 506.13	232.62 92.92 40.37 19.87 79.46	1,174.66 357.39 155.25 76.43 585.59
Action 4 Integration of New Communities Multicultural Christmas Days 2015 Meetings for the Employment and Equality Working Group	Equality Working Group	618.95 617.17 1.78	423.45 422.83 0.62	1,042.40 1,040.00 2.40
Total Goal 1 Budget		5,432.08	1,470.71	6,902.79
Action 5 Community Education & Training Recognition of Learning Ceremony 2015 Stress Management Training Upcycling / Recycling Course Basic Sign Language Training Career Options Seminar for Students Crime Prevention Seminar What is Alternative Health Workshop Membership Fees to National Networks	Employment and Training Working Group Employment and Training Working Group Employment and Training Working Group Equality Working Group Youth and Education Working Group Saoi Network Employment and Training Working Group	5,151.30 456.71 1,398.77 944.88 1,186.18 355.16 136.20 599.40 74.00	1,785.47 160.47 491.45 331.98 392.34 124.78 47.85 210.60 26.00	6,936.77 617.18 1,890.22 1,276.86 1,578.52 479.94 184.05 810.00 100.00
Action 6 Preventing Early School Leaving Laugh & Learn Summer Camp Literacy Classes for Children with Dyslexia / Dyspraxia Careers and Employment Exhibition 2015 Scoil Phobail Homework Support	Youth and Education Working Group Youth and Education Working Group Youth and Education Working Group Youth and Education Working Group	3,798.23 718.22 2,300.00 780.01	1,299.99 155.99 1,144.00	5,098.22 718.22 2,300.00 936.00 1,144.00
Action 7 Pre Support Engagement Transport for Towards Occupation Programme Participants Towards Occupation Art & Craft Workshops Kerry Towards Occupation	Equality Working Group Equality Working Group Equality Working Group	1,639.91 1,500.00 139.91	590.00 590.00	2,229.91 1,500.00 139.91 590.00
Action 8 Empowerment of Active Citizenship Cost of Meetings for the Community Development Working Group North Star Choir Public Speaking Competition Boundary of the Three Counties PAL Christmas Outing	Community Development Working Group Cullen Community Council Youth and Education Working Group Community Development Working Group Equality Working Group	1,730.93 65.20 146.93 718.00 566.00 300.00	645.57 65.20 230.07 252.00 98.30	2,376.50 65.20 377.00 970.00 664.30 300.00
Total Goal 2 Budget		12,320.37	4,321.03	16,641.40
Action 9 Community & Social enterprise Laundry Supplies & Materials Hot Boxes for DCFS Warmer Homes Scheme	The Saoi Network Duhallow Community Food Service Duhallow Warmer Homes	1,387.27 780.97 606.3	1,012.85 19.15 843.7 150.00	2,400.12 800.12 1450 150
Action 10 Labour Market Activation Labour Market Activation Workshop for 15-24 Year Olds Refresher 1st Aid Classes Seminar on styling for an Interview Safe Pass Training for Unemployed Participants	Employment and Training Working Group Employment and Training Working Group Employment and Training Working Group Employment and Training Working Group	3,852.30 2,791.28 594.11 88.80 378.11	1,342.55 980.72 208.74 31.20 121.89	5,194.85 3,772.00 802.85 120.00 500.00
Action 11 Job Centre Newspapers Labour Market Activation Workshop for those aged 24yrs +	Employment and Training Working Group Employment and Training Working Group	2,293.36 176.37 2,116.99	805.78 61.97 743.81	3,099.14 238.34 2,860.80
Action 12 Self Employment Mentoring Start Your Own Business Training Presentation Skills Training Boom Sprayer Training Cost of Meetings for the Enterprise Working Group	Enterprise Development Working Group Enterprise Development Working Group Enterprise Development Working Group Enterprise Development Working Group	4,752.86 910.00 1,600.00 243.00 1,934.63 65.23	1,429.67 90.00 27.00 1,289.76 22.91	6,182.53 1,000.00 1,600.00 270.00 3,224.39 88.14
Total Goal 3 Budget		12,285.79	4,590.85	16,876.64

Equality and Social Inclusion

Equality and Social Inclusion

Building and supporting sustainable inclusive communities is of upmost importance to IRD Duhallow and our Equality Working Group specifically focuses its attention on individuals and groups within Duhallow who are subject to severe disadvantage. We assist them to counter inequalities thus building a culture of respect for human rights, equality and intercultural understanding across Duhallow and beyond. Despite the staggering budgetary cuts in 2015 the Working Group continues to implement initiatives focused on preventing and reducing poverty and social exclusion thus promoting greater social inclusion and social cohesion in collaboration with other stakeholders.



Lorraine Gallagher of Ahead, The Association for Higher Education Access and Disability who was a guest speaker at a Career Decisions Workshop organised by IRD Duhallow.

Supporting Integration

IRD Duhallow was successful in its application for funding through the IPB's Community Engagement Fund 2015. IPB launched a nationwide community programme, aimed at strengthening local communities by increasing participation and promoting social inclusion through the stimulation and support of local organisations and initiatives. Our application focused on directly supporting Asylum Seekers resident in Drishane Castle Accommodation Centre Millstreet. The overall aim of our project was to increase their opportunity of access to recreational and cultural activities. To date we have organised five very successful workshops including: a five-week Stress Management Course with tutor Sheila O'Keeffe, a five week course on Baby Massage and information on General Health and Wellbeing by Patricia Murphy of Baby Toes to Big Toes Cork, an introductory course to Photography with Justin Black of Just Born Photography, Art Classes with Jessica Barron Artist, and Irish Dancing Classes with Kathleen O'Connor. A Multicultural Art and Photography Exhibition was organised as a grand finale event to showcase the wonderful array of work completed by the trainees and a great night was had by all.



Caroline Iwuagwa enjoying the art classes in Drishane, "Art is not what you see but what you make others see."



A large crowd travelled from Drishane to Newmarket for a Multicultural Photography & Art exhibition also included are Jessica Barron Artist, Justin Black Photographer and Mike Riordan outreach worker.

Ireland says yes to Same Sex Marriage

The Equality Working Group were very pleased with the result on the Same-sex marriage Referendum towards the end of last year. Same sex marriage is now legal in Ireland since the 16th November 2015. A referendum on the 22nd of May amended the Constitution of Ireland to provide that marriage is recognised irrespective of the sex of the partners. The measure was signed into law by the President of Ireland as the Thirty-fourth Amendment of the Constitution of Ireland on the 29th of August 2015.



Esther Mobalaj enjoying her night at the Multicultural event in the James O'Keeffe Institute.

Alzheimer's Tea Morning

IRD Duhallow held its annual tea morning in aid of the Alzheimer's Society of Ireland. Fundraisers such as these are a vital source of funding for the Alzheimer Society of Ireland and the funds raised are used to provide important services to support people with dementia and their families. Dementia presents one of the greatest population health challenges both here in Ireland and globally. It affects almost 48,000 people and touches the lives of 50,000 carers. The Alzheimer's Society in turn, offers hope as well as much needed practical supports to people with dementia and their families.



A large crowd supported our annual Alzheimer's fund raising Tea Morning raising vital funds for the Alzheimer Society.

Sign Language

An introduction to Basic Sign Language was organised to provide an opportunity to individuals who wish to develop skills in Irish Sign Language for effective communication with deaf and hard of hearing relatives, employees and customers in a variety of situations. The course was delivered over an eight-week period, two hours per evening. Irish Sign Language is the first and or preferred language of 5000 Deaf people in Ireland and approximately 40,000 people in general communicate using ISL. Ten individuals successfully completed the training.



Learners practice the fundamental skills of Basic Sign Language.

Equality and Social Inclusion



"It's the most wonderful time of the year" children enjoying the annual Christmas Fair in Kanturk.

Multi-Cultural Christmas Day

Two Multicultural Christmas events were held in Kanturk and Rathmore which gave adults and children the opportunity to experience international Christmas traditions and cultures. Over one hundred children and their families participated. The event would not have been possible only for the support of the RSS and Tús participants who assisted with the coordination of events and in bringing Santa and Mrs Claus.



Members of the Carers group went to West Cork as part of their summer outing. Its important for carers to get out and meet others in similar caring roles.

Duhallow Carers

The Duhallow Carers group meets on the first Thursday of each month in the James O'Keeffe Institute. The purpose of the group is to provide a confidential environment for carers to come together and receive support from one another. Caring for a loved one is a stressful job, especially if you have no background or professional training in healthcare. The peer support offered by the group helps to combat both the isolation and the high stress levels experienced by Carers. The group acts as a voice for local carers in bringing about awareness and advocating for change on the issues experienced and challenges faced by carers in Duhallow.

As well as the monthly meetings the carers group also organise regular outings and trips to encourage peer networking. Last summer we visited West Cork, held a Carers BBQ and also hosted our Annual Carers Mass in November, where we especially remembered past members of the group and those who were cared for by group members who are sadly no longer with us.



Sarah Lennon (Social Inclusion Ireland); Eileen Murphy (Duhallow Carers) and Louise Bourke (IRD Duhallow). Sarah gave a presentation on Wills and Trusts for Family and Voluntary Carers. With the new Mental Capacity Act enacted into law, there are many changes planned in relation to guardianship and trusts for those caring for people with intellectual disabilities.

Dormant Accounts

In January 2016 the Duhallow Carers Group successfully applied for and received funding through the Dormant Accounts fund to organise training to support family and voluntary carers. The purpose of this fund was to upskill carers to provide the best care possible, to reduce the risk of injury to the carer and to help them cope with the emotional and psychological aspects of their role. The group has organised a number of training seminars across a wide range of topics including: Autism Awareness in conjunction with Autism Ireland; Care Skills (QQI Level 5); Wills & Trusts with Advocacy officer of Social Inclusion Ireland Sara Lennon. A Rights and Entitlements seminar was held in conjunction with Family Carers Ireland; parents of children with special needs partook in a Managing Challenging Behaviour course (QQI Level 5) and four classes of Emergency CPR were all organised through the Dormant Accounts Fund. There is an extensive programme in place for the remainder of 2016, which focuses on equipping carers with the skills to be more confident in their caring role and meet other carers with similar experiences.



Selena Osborne from Barrow Training delivered a QQI Level 5 course on Managing Challenging Behaviour. This was attended primarily by family and voluntary carers who are looking after children with special needs.



Breda Buckley from Duhallow Carers with Marion Mahon from Family Carers Ireland. Marion presented a seminar on Rights and Entitlements for Family and Voluntary Carers as part of the Dormant Accounts Training initiative.

PAL

The PAL group offers a support network to lone parents. Those living in lone parent households continue to experience the highest rates of deprivation with almost 60% of individuals from these households experiencing one or more forms of deprivation. Duhallow has a proportionately high number of lone parents (17.7%) in comparison to the rest of Cork County. With the support of SICAP, the PAL group organises regular meetings for lone parents as well as feeding into policy making and lobbying on local issues. Peer support is vital and the group offers a closed group facebook page where people can all keep in touch. The PAL group organises regular outings for members and their families. For the children it is hugely beneficial to meet other children who don't have two parents living together and some great friendships have been formed by Parents and Children alike through the group. Many lone parents have also accessed free training places through the Skillnet programme and are partaking in upskilling and personal development.



The PAL group made a special trip to see Santa in Crag Caves, Castleisland last December.

Domestic Violence

The statistics are frightening and show that 1 in every 3 women experience severe psychological violence and 1 in every 4 experience physical and sexual violence. The statistics for men experiencing domestic violence is growing all the time but it is well recognised that there is widespread under reporting so men are especially welcome in our group. IRD Duhallow started a local domestic violence support service through the support of SICAP and is manned by volunteers within the community. The phone operates on a daily basis and offers a listening and support service to clients. There is no such thing as a typical victim of domestic violence and users of the service vary considerably in age, occupation and education levels.

Employment and Training

Ireland has just experienced a deep economic recession, with severe labour market consequences and widespread cuts to public expenditure. The Employment and Training Working Group has witnessed first-hand the consequences of this recession for individuals and their families in Duhallow. Whilst almost all of us have been affected in some way, unfortunately some have been more susceptible than others. Figures from the Newmarket DSP office from December 2015 indicate that persons on the live register stands at 1,394, this is an increase of over 16% when Nationally the figures are falling. When out migration is factored in, this figure would be considerably higher.



Michael Doyle IRD Duhallow and Deirdre Clune MEP for Ireland South participating in a Communicating Europe Initiative in Kanturk.

IRD Duhallow is particularly cognisant of the high levels of youths not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) according to the National Youth Strategy (2014), it was reported that about 74,000 15-24 year-olds in Ireland (16.7%) were in this category compared to the OECD average of 12.6%. According to the Newmarket figures, 134 (10%), were in NEETs. These statistics signify the need to provide supports to this cohort through SICAP and complimentary programmes. Our main aim is to engage with marginalised target groups and individuals who are unemployed and work with all stakeholders to ensure our objectives are met.



A large crowd attended the Career Options Programme information night, with guest speakers Roisin Kelleher Career Guidance Counsellor & Lorraine Gallagher Ahead.

Youth Inactivity and Unemployment

The transition period straddling education and employment is simply not working for a high proportion of young people in Duhallow. The international evidence suggests that this transition period is crucial, and that youth unemployment is often lowest in those countries that get it right. For the minority of privileged young people in Duhallow, it is a transition which is clear and well-managed: a clear academic route often consisting of the Leaving Certificate to University or high-quality vocational education, to 'white collar' professional jobs, more often outside of Duhallow. By contrast, for a high percentage of young people they are frequently heading towards years of unemployment or inactivity, often with backgrounds of generational unemployment and this transition can be extremely difficult or non-existent. Unfortunately, there are not sufficient supports available locally for the 'forgotten' young people who are not heading down the route of further education. Many leave education early because they are motivated to earn a wage and support themselves, but with very few skills or qualifications and little or no work experience, they find it impossible to get a job in a peripheral underdeveloped rural area.



Liadh Ni Riada MEP & Sean Kelly MEP together with Michael Twohig & Mary Creedon IRD Duhallow at the Communicating Europe Initiative in Kanturk.

Dormant Accounts Youth – Tackling the “Catch 22”

In response to the Youth Unemployment situation IRD Duhallow is currently implementing a Dormant Accounts funded project tackling these issues. This is a joint project in conjunction with Ballyhoura Development specifically targeting 16-25 year old NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) young people. Youth Engagement Officers have been appointed and have been meeting with these disadvantaged and often vulnerable young people and providing them with: one to one employability options, planning and guidance supports as well as providing clear signposting to related support provision. We are offering tailored training and work placement opportunities which will assist them in carving out new pathways and overcome the various challenges whilst seeking employment. For example, the cost of obtaining a driver's licence has been identified as one such barrier in securing employment when living in rural Duhallow.



Declan Murphy who was a participant on the Youth Labour Market Activation programme and has progressed to full time employment

Job Centre

IRD Duhallow's SICAP funded Job Centre offers a free and confidential Employment and Training service to individuals who are seeking employment, our services include: professional CV writing, assisting individuals to create impactful CVs, helping them get noticed and land more interviews and one to one Interview Coaching which has proven to enhance performance at job interviews. Our holistic approach is important and enables individuals overcome barriers and help build self confidence in order to rejoin the labour force as this can often be a very daunting experience. During the year the Job Centre delivered a specific four-day workshop entitled "Career Decision Making" which comprised of induction and career decision making and Interview Skills. This workshop centered on the individual's career path plans, psychometric assessment and value mapping, CV Preparation and compilation, simulated interviewing and career coaching.



Marie Ridout of "Gwella Clinic" with participants on the Alternative Health Course which focused on homeopathy, bio-energy, aromatherapy and hypnotherapy.

Employment and Training



IRD Duhallow Work Experience Students Siobhan Lehane, Vincent O'Donnell, Katie Herlihy, Mairead Enright and Jennifer Drumm.

Community Education and Training

Goal two Action five of the SICAP Programme focuses on the delivery of Community Education and Training initiatives. The main aim of this goal is to support eligible individuals and marginalised groups experiencing educational disadvantage so they can participate fully, engage with and progress through lifelong learning opportunities through the use of community development approaches. Training courses delivered during the past twelve months included: Stress Management; Upcycling and Recycling; Basic Sign Language; Basic First Aid and Alternative Health. These courses focused on confidence building, personal development, social and communication skills. Four Recognition of Learning Ceremonies were delivered in order to present individuals with accreditation and attendance certificates. An Education and Training Exhibition took place in the Edel Quinn Hall Kanturk which focused on



Bertha O'Connor learns the art of upcycling and recycling.



Selfie..... Sinead Murphy and Clive Hooper both participants on the Digital Marketing Essentials Course with Marie Collins Tutor.

BenefIT Digital Skills Training

The Benefit IIII Programme is a Government grant initiative providing funding to third sector and not-for-profit organisations for the provision of digital literacy training. IRD Duhallow received funding through a

Communicating Europe across Duhallow. Students from Scoil Phobail Sliabh Luachra & Millstreet Secondary School together with Deirdre Clune MEP, Derry Morley Deputy Principal Millstreet Community School & Michael Doyle, Triona Murphy & Mary Creedon IRD Duhallow.



Participants on the intermediate computer training which was organised as part of the Benefit computer training.



Angela Linehan Trainer gives a lending hand to Moire O'Keeffe during the Benefit smartphone & tablet training.

consortium application. The scheme is funded through the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources. The main objective is to encourage more people online – focusing in particular on harder to reach groups. Since the beginning of last year we have supported 204 individuals through the Benefit programme. Since the programmes inception in 2013 we have provided basic computer training to over 500 people from all over Duhallow helping people to learn skills, use the Internet and access online resources. This year we delivered three Smartphone and Tablet training courses and secured 47 places for our Target group on Skillnets Programmes.

Communicating Europe

IRD Duhallow was successful in its application for funding through the Communicating Europe Initiative (CEI), the main objective of which is to improve the quality and accessibility of public information on European issues and promote a greater understanding and awareness of the European Union and was administered by the Department of an Taoiseach. The focus of our work was the five local secondary schools in Duhallow. We delivered two workshops to Transition Year students on "What Does Europe Mean To You" as an Irish citizen. IRD Duhallow worked collaboratively with the MEPs from the Southern Constituency including Sean Kelly, Deirdre Clune and Liada Ni Riada. Unfortunately, MEP Brian Crowley was unavailable due to health reasons.



Maura Walsh, CEO of IRD Duhallow, graduated with a masters in Management and Leadership from ICHAS.

Youth and Education

Literacy Support Programme

The IRD Duhallow Literacy Support Programme provides targeted supports to children with dyslexia and dyspraxia. Many of these children are at a high risk of early school leaving and through the provision of additional supports are equipped with the skills to continue to pursue their education. Many of the graduates of our programmes have surpassed all expected goals and targets with a very high percentage going on to graduate from third level institutions.

Our programme is funded through SICAP and has a two prong approach offering Literacy Support Workshops and the TTRS (Touch Type Read and Spell) programme.

Literacy Support Workshops

These are structured lessons, which focus on reading, writing, spelling, memory work and sequencing, which are the key problem areas for children with Dyslexia or Dyspraxia. Our class sizes are kept to a maximum of five children allowing our tutors to provide individual support to students. The tutors meet regularly with parents to keep them informed about their child's progress and provide useful tips that can be followed at home.

TTRS

A specially devised computer programme TTRS combines literacy work with touch typing lessons, teaching children valuable life skills and working on their spellings and reading.

At the end of each school year we host a special awards night highlighting the achievements and dedication of every child. In the summer months a summer camp centering around literacy is hosted by our tutors. The Laugh and Learn summer camp is hugely popular combining fun, structured, playtime activities with literacy work.



Our Laugh and Learn Summer Camp is hugely popular, providing additional literacy supports to children during the summer.

The Literacy Support Programme received funding from the ESB for Generations fund, which is a corporate social responsibility programme, investing in individuals and communities right across the country. This has meant that we are able to provide our literacy classes at a hugely discounted rate.



Youth and Education Working Group Chairperson Eimear Guiney presents Kym Leigh Farrissey with her certificate for Excellence in Literacy.



Schools out for the Summer! Children from the literacy support programme proudly displaying their certs and trophies at the Awards Night.



Students from Colaiste Treasa who attended IRD Duhallow's Career Exhibition in the Edel Quinn Hall, Kanturk.

Careers Exhibition

Close to 500 Secondary School students from all around Duhallow descended upon the Edel Quinn Hall in Kanturk last October for the annual Careers Exhibition. The exhibition which has been in running for the last 13 years provides students with an excellent opportunity to meet with representatives from Local, National and International Universities, Institutes of Technologies, PLC Colleges and Agricultural Colleges, to discuss requirements for courses which they may wish to pursue after school. This event is essential for Fifth and Sixth Year students who are in the process of making their final choices in relation to further education and training options. Over 25 Universities, Third Level Colleges and Training Institutes both from Ireland and the United Kingdom attended this year alongside An Garda Síochána and the Defence Forces. A Guidance Counsellor was also in attendance on the day and was available to offer supplementary guidance and advice to the students in attendance.



A member of the Defence Forces answering questions for students at IRD Duhallow's Career Exhibition.

Career Guidance

A recent report by the Institute of Guidance Counsellors found that due to cutbacks teenagers making important decisions on their future careers could be relying on mentors who may not have the necessary expertise. This has led to some students making misinformed and misguided career choices. In response to this issue, IRD Duhallow's Youth and Education Working group decided to hold a Career Guidance Information Session. The Information session, presented by Roisín Kelleher Career Guidance Counsellor, provided students and their parents with practical information regarding the procedures involved in course and career planning and invaluable information on CAO and QQI applications. The information session left attendees with the knowledge to make more informed and confident decisions regarding their choice of courses.

Youth and Education



IRD Duhallow Board Member Cllr. Melissa Mullane presents Liscarroll National School with IRD Duhallow's Public Speaking inaugural cup.

Afterschool Homework Clubs

Supporting the prevention of Early School Leaving is one of the major priorities of IRD Duhallow. Afterschools Homework Clubs offer a supportive environment for students who experience difficulty in undertaking their studies outside of school hours. Through SICAP Funding, IRD Duhallow continues to support Scoil Phobail Sliaibh Luachra, Rathmore in the facilitation of an Afterschools Homework Club help to develop the students' independent study skills as well as providing additional supports for those who are struggling in particular subject areas.



The Tullylease NS public speaking team of Catherine Walsh, Ciara Aherne, Shauna Aherne and Roisin Daly were runners up in the Public Speaking Competition.

Public Speaking

Speaking in public is a major fear that many people face in their lives, yet interestingly, if it is introduced early on in a child's life, it is a fear that the child will never be aware of. Public Speaking allows a child to acquire the skills and confidence to be able to speak and present themselves to a large crowd of people. IRD Duhallow's Youth and Education Working Group recognise the importance of these skills and for the 8th year running, a Primary School Public Speaking Competition has been facilitated. The competition allows each child to acquire communication, research, presentation and delivery skills, all attributes which will last a lifetime if they are cultivated correctly. This year Liscarroll National School were the overall winners of the competition. Irene Kellegher was awarded best speaker on the night.



Duhallow Boxing Club member Modesta Raudyte was crowned the 2016 Munster Champion.

Duhallow Boxing Club

The Duhallow Boxing Club was established by animation work undertaken by development officers of IRD Duhallow and the equipment was provided through the Youth and Education Working Group making an application to LEADER and putting

up the match funding. Since then, the club has grown from strength to strength and IRD Duhallow is still represented on the committee. The aim of providing meaningful activities for young people in the area, particularly young boys, has certainly been achieved, with over 60 individuals training in the boxing club three nights a week. The club has produced talented boxers in its short few years of existence including aspiring young athlete Modesta Raudyte who won the Munster Championships in Spring of this year.



Boherbue Girl Guides and their leaders who received SICAP funding towards the purchase of tents and cooking equipment.

Youthclubs

Youthclubs provide students with a safe and enjoyable environment for its members and help to reduce isolation, exclusion and boredom. Youth clubs help members to acquire new skills which they can then apply in the own local community. IRD Duhallow continues to support a number of Youth Clubs in the Duhallow region through SICAP funding. Boherbue Girlguides received funding for tents through SICAP to help them in the preparation for the IGGNITE International Camp which will take place in July 2017 in Tipperary and will consist of activities which will incorporate sustainable development goals.

LGBT Workshops

In recent years Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender young people are 'coming-out' about their identities in greater numbers, but there is still a lack of awareness and a level of stigma associated with this in rural areas in particular. A recent study found that '67% of all students have witnessed homophobic or sexuality-based bullying in school'. Because of this lack of awareness, a large number of LGBT Young People are experiencing Mental Health difficulties. In response to this IRD Duhallow's Youth and Education Working Group this year took action in order to raise awareness of the issues surrounding LGBT Youths in Duhallow. All five Secondary Schools in the region participated in workshops presented by David Roche, a native of Kanturk, and Manager of the Cork Gay Project. David spoke to each group of students on the grounds of equality surrounding LGBT Youths and he encouraged the self-acceptance of LGBT young people.

The importance of Culture and Young People



Jimmy Reidy from C103s Around the Fireside with Eimear Curtin, Michael Thornton, Cian Broderick.

Mental Health and Towards Occupation Programme

The past number of years have seen Mental Health Services grapple with the challenge of re-orientating from a hospital and bed based focus to developing the structures and processes required for community based services in line with national policy as laid out in A Vision for Change (Department of Health & Children, 2006). IRD Duhallow welcomes the appointment of Helen McEntee as Minister of State with special responsibility for mental health.

REVAMP Tutors Jessica Baron and Colm O'Connor teaching painting skills to Shauna McGowan and Eileen Kerins from COPE Foundation in Malloy.



MENTAL HEALTH IN IRELAND – THE NUMBERS

- 1 in 7 adults in Ireland will have experienced a mental health difficulty in the last year.
- 15.4 % of children aged 11-13 and 19.5% of young adults aged 19 -24 have had a mental health disorder and 75% of mental health difficulties arise before age 25.
- Ireland has one of the highest rates of male suicide in Europe.
- People with a mental health disability are 9 times more likely to be outside the labour force. (Mental Health Reform, 2015)
- On the 31st of May 2016, the Central Statistics Office released provisional figures for deaths by suicide in 2015. According to these figures, there were 451 deaths by suicide (9.7 per 100,000 of the population). Of which 375 were male suicides (16.4 per 100,000 of the population) and 76 female suicides (3.2 per 100,000).
- Rural isolation and lack of services locally must be tackled.

Towards Occupation Programme

The Towards Occupation Programme is an innovative community based initiative which was first piloted in 2005. The programme is dedicated to enabling those who are unemployed as a result of mental ill health to develop the skills and confidence to move into employment, education, training, voluntary work or other directions. The initiative is currently delivered by five Local Development Companies in Cork and Limerick including IRD Duhallow, where it was piloted. Funding is received through the Department of Social Protection (DSP) under the Activation and Family Support Programme and IRD Duhallow's Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme. Cork Education and Training Board (ETB) provide tutor hours for the delivery of QQI modules.



Annemaria Bourke, Chairperson, Jessica Baron, Duhallow REVAMP and Triona Murphy, TO Coordinator with participants of the TO Programme at the Recognition of Learning Ceremony 2015.

The recovery based approach specifically targets people who are feeling isolated and lacking confidence and supports them to connect or reconnect with their community in an innovative way. Participants receive a combination of positive person centred one to one outcomes based supports including: career guidance, soft skills training and follow up services. The programme allows participants gradually increase levels of responsibility for directing their own support and recovery, introducing appropriate levels of choice so that they can set their own goals and decide how they work towards them. The part-time modular and flexible programme includes training opportunities in the areas of: Personal Development, Life Skills, Computers, Craft Skills – Sewing and Upholstery, Furniture Recycling, Horticulture and Cookery. All participants on the programme must be in receipt of a social welfare payment and participating on the programme does not affect or alter these payments.



TO participant, Kay O'Brien concentrating on her stitch.



TO participant, Julia O'Keeffe reupholstering a chair in the furniture REVAMP workshop



TO participant Josiah Dempsey sanding the frame of a chair as part of his training.

'At Your Own Pace'

Pressure continues in relation to the identification of suitable progression routes for TO participants who are all in receipt of a social welfare payment. Progression for these participants does not always come in the shape of mainstream employment. The primary goal for the majority of participants is gaining greater control of their lives and regaining valued roles in their own communities. IRD Duhallow encourages participants to move at a pace which is conducive to their own recovery journey. The challenge of sourcing adequate funding to provide support to these men and women is ongoing.

Mental Health and Towards Occupation Programme



Tutor Gerry Rafferty, Personal Milestones who delivered a Personal Development course to participants on the TO programme.

Whilst we appreciate that the DSP and ETB have targets to achieve in terms of progression to mainstream employment, self employment and higher level education – these are not realistic options for people with a psychiatric disability and for the most part, people with serious mental illnesses are likely to remain unemployed. The 2012 Review of HSE Personal Support Services for Adults with Disabilities describes a commitment to a phased transfer of funding and responsibility to relevant agencies and organisations who are providing a social model of provision and recognition of the right of people with disabilities to community inclusion and active citizenship.



Participants on the Towards Occupation Programme enjoying their Summer day out to Muckross House and Gardens, Killarney.

Community Emotional Support Service

IRD Duhallow continues to respond to the growing and changing emotional needs of the individuals, couples, families and communities it serves. Very often people with lower incomes cannot afford counselling fees and therefore go without. To ensure accessibility, Aoife Douglas and Kate Bourke, Students of Counselling and Psychotherapy with the Irish College of Applied Humanitarian Studies provide a weekly community

based Emotional Support Service in IRD Duhallow as part of their accreditation process. This includes telephone listening and one to one integrative counselling.



Kate Bourke and Aoife Douglas, who volunteer their time to the Community Emotional Support Service.

Self Help Support Group - SHINE

Many people go through periods of mental distress and it can be very disorientating. It can be difficult to find a way forward while taking on board everything that is needed to experience a quality of life unique to each of us. With the assistance of Shine, an eight week programme entitled Finding My Way was delivered. This was aimed to assist people in getting to a better place by supporting empowerment to embark on that journey of recovery. Themes included: Finding My Way in Recovery, Ownership and Empowerment of My Recovery, Overcoming self-stigma, Equality, Rights and Entitlements, Self-Advocacy, Effective Communication, 'Enhancing My Life' - Occupational Development/ Career Planning and Building Resilience. Shine is an organisation funded through the HSE which supports people affected by mental ill health. Following on from this training a Self Help Support Group has been established by IRD Duhallow. Sharing experiences with others can be a great way of learning new coping skills, and growing a support network. The group is peer facilitated in the James O'Keeffe Institute and supported by the SHINE Regional Development Officer.



Fionnuala Manning and Tim O'Connor, of the SHINE Recovery programme - Finding My Way with Miriam Murphy Regional Development Officer SHINE, HSE Southern Area.

The Grieving Journey – Bereavement and Loss Support

Grieving is a natural process and is normally helped by the support and understanding of family and friends. Sometimes a bereaved person may need the support of a skilled person who is external to their circle of family and friends to help them journey through their loss in a positive way. Strong feelings such as anger, guilt and fear are quite normal but need to be expressed, cried over and put into perspective. IRD Duhallow's Bereavement and Loss Support Group provides a voluntary and confidential service to people who have experienced a loss through death, separation, divorce, employment etc. The service is offered to individuals at a time and place suitable to both, which helps to overcome the common obstacle of 'no transport'. Our trained volunteers listen with understanding and empathy. They accept those suffering loss as they are and support them for as long as they need.



Towards Occupation Programme Participants Christmas Crafts Sale 2015 featuring hand crafted items produced by participants through the TO Training.

Equality for Women and Childcare

Women's Forum

IRD Duhallow Women's Forum has almost twenty years experience of being an active voice for women in the Duhallow. The Forum has links with 17 women's groups from the Duhallow Region who come together to share information, exchange ideas and undertake joint projects. Our mission is to be a catalyst for change in achieving Equality for Women.



Guest Speakers Helena Farrell, Founder and Clinical Director of Diabetes Insight and Lorraine Kelly Community Dietitian who were guest speakers at a Seminar organised by Duhallow Women's Forum together with Judy O'Leary Chairperson of Duhallow Women's Forum and development officer Mary Creedon.

The Duhallow Women's Forum organised three very successful information seminars throughout the year addressing issues such as Diabetes, Financial Wellness and Crime Prevention in rural areas.

After Schools

The IRD Duhallow After schools operates under the Community Childcare Subvention and ASCC Subvention Programmes providing after school and out of school care. Through this subvention scheme significant discounts for childcare can be offered to parents in receipt of a welfare payment or to those who are medical card holders. In the past 12 months the afterschools has provided childcare support for 20 families in the Duhallow area. Offering a complete service, the children are collected from their school gate, and brought to the afterschools where they are provided with a nutritious dinner by DCFS. The afterschools co-ordinator Stephanie Barrett then supports the children as they complete their homework, after which they have structured play activities.

In 2016 the Afterschools earned its 4th Green Flag, and this year's theme was Travel. This recognises that by promoting sustainable transport modes we can all live healthier lives.



Hard at it! Dylan O'Shea concentrating on his studies! Children are supported by the afterschools' staff to do their homework each evening.



The bus collects the children from local National Schools and delivers them to the afterschools.

Camps

Throughout the school holidays the Afterschools offers a camp service. Each camp has a different theme ranging from our Eggstastic Easter Camp to the Halloween Scare Fest. Throughout the summer we offered Pitch and Putt Camps, Angling Camps, Little Chefs and Little Gardeners as well as the Laugh and Learn Literacy Support Camp. Staff for our camps are supplemented by Work Experience students.



Duhallow's own Nature Detectives studying fish on the Nature Summer Camp.



Helen O'Sullivan (IRD Duhallow) with members of the North Cork Childcare Network.

Childcare Managers Network

Established by IRD Duhallow, the North Cork Childcare Managers Network provides a forum for managers of community and voluntary crèches. Through the network, managers can share experiences, learn from each other and feed into policy development and proposals of organisations such as Tusla and Cork County Childcare Committee. 26 Managers are represented on the Network from across the North Cork region as well as representatives from both Tús and the Cork County Childcare Committee. A highly regulated sector, the group actively partakes in knowledge sharing and influencing policy on behalf of Childcare facilities in the region.

Childcare Directors' Network

Childcare Centres are managed by voluntary boards, that have huge responsibility for staff and child welfare operating in a sector, which is subject to increasing governance requirements and regulation. IRD Duhallow has established a Childcare Directors' Network, which held its first meeting in the James O'Keeffe Institute in Newmarket in May of 2016. Its function is to create a collaborative knowledge and resource sharing forum for voluntary board members. Upskilling is going to be a key focus for our network and it is intended to run training in the coming months.



Participants of the 123 Magic Training, which was held in the James O'Keeffe Institute.

123 Magic Training

Our North Cork Childcare Network successfully applied for and were granted funding from Cork County Childcare Committee for training for the managers and staff of community crèches to participate in a Challenging Behaviour Programme called '123 Magic'. Aimed at childcare professionals, the programme covers the fundamentals of Managing Undesirable Behaviour. Over 30 people attended the course which ran across six Thursday nights in the James O'Keeffe Institute, and the feedback forms were very positive stating that the course got across many useful and practical tips that could be applied in the workplace in order to better equip staff in their daily role.

Child and Family Support Network

IRD Duhallow has linked in with Tusla representative Cariosa Lynch on the possibility of establishing a Tusla Child & Family Support Network. The idea is that this would be based in Duhallow and through this, additional supports would be offered to children and their families. The working group is very vocal about the fact that there is a strong need for this in the area as there is a lack of supports such as counselling, and parental guidance and supports in this peripheral rural area.

Princess Sarah Pigott plays board games as part of the free play in the afterschools.



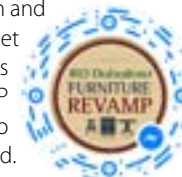
Duhallow Furniture REVAMP

Duhallow REVAMP is a demand deficient furniture recycling and reuse social enterprise which is managed by IRD Duhallow to provide safe, clean, pre-loved and affordable furniture and household items to disadvantaged individuals including the elderly and low income households and to help

reduce the tonnes of furniture ending up in land fill or worse - on remote rural road sides. Reusable community donated furniture and household items including chairs, tables, lockers, chests of drawers, mirrors, wardrobes, shelving, kitchens, curtains, beds etc. are collected directly from the public. The items are then inspected and screened before restoration and repair by the REVAMP team to ensure that they meet health and safety and cleanliness standards. Items that do not meet these requirements are dismantled and their materials and components are re-used. Duhallow REVAMP also provides a refurbishment service for those who wish to have their old pieces upcycled and revived. Discounts are available for students, old age pensioners, low income households or for anyone in receipt of a means tested social welfare payment.



Colm O'Connor, Tom O'Donovan and Jessica Baron, Duhallow REVAMP CSP Staff.



Duhallow Furniture REVAMP Facebook Messenger Code - just scan to connect.



Amanda Keller, completes administration duties as part of her Tús placement in Duhallow REVAMP's new showroom.

Spreading the Word!

Similar to any start up enterprise Duhallow REVAMP has put great efforts into developing an effective online social media and marketing presence including a new Facebook page, Instagram, Twitter and Pinterest accounts. In addition, the service is advertised through IRD Duhallow's monthly newsletter which targets those who may not have a web presence. Through the SICAP Programme the staff of the social enterprise received training in social media and marketing from Marie Collins of Digipulse. Duhallow REVAMP has been a major addition to IRD Duhallow's existing social care package of third sector supports which are recognised and promoted as a model of best practice in the pursuit of independent living for older people.

Eco-Friendly

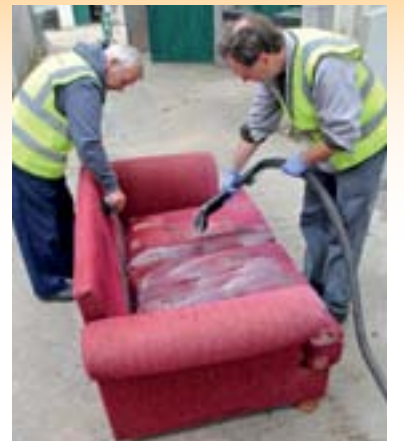
Duhallow REVAMP aims to promote a cleaner environment by reducing the volume of waste for disposal, offering a green alternative and assisting local authorities in both Cork and Kerry to meet recycling and diversion from landfill targets. To date, it is estimated that Duhallow REVAMP has diverted over six tons of waste in its first six months of operation, thereby contributing to a reduction in 'greenhouse' gas emissions and fly tipping. Other eco-friendly efforts include the creation of 'Green furniture' using recyclable materials such as pallets. This inexpensive and on trend alternative, offers endless possibilities for design.



Personalised REVAMP Toy Boxes are made to order with safety closing feature.

Providing Employment Opportunities

Another underlying social objective of Duhallow REVAMP is to employ people who are distant from the labour market. The sustainable business model is currently operating with staffing assistance from the Community Service Programme. IRD Duhallow has secured a 12-month contract for four full time equivalents including Craft and Upholstery Operatives, Stock Control/Sales and an Accounts Administrator. Unfortunately, the service was not approved a position for a Coordinator despite the grave need for an experienced dedicated manager to fully realise the potential and economic viability of the enterprise. We are hopeful that this will be reviewed in the future.



Tús participants Patrick Coakley and Daniel Demet cleaning a sofa for resale

Workshop and Showroom Space

Under the guidance of their Supervisors, Tús participants have assisted in the refurbishment of a new retail space and showroom on the grounds of the James O'Keeffe Institute where customers can view and purchase items for sale. There is a great selection of stock which changes and updates on a weekly basis - tables, chairs, bookcases, sofas etc! The space also offers participants an opportunity to display the results of their newly acquired skills. The showrooms are open for business Monday to Friday 9.00am - 5.30pm



Before and After picture of a restored sùgan chair that is over 100 years old

Training

Duhallow REVAMP offers workplace skills training and development for participants on Tús and Community Employment Schemes who wish to upskill or retrain in Woodworking and Upholstery in preparation for returning to the workforce. The idea is to provide people with a supportive environment to learn new skills, understand the world of work and enable sustainable employment opportunities. In addition, participants from the COPE foundation in Mallow and IRD Duhallow's Towards Occupation Programme also enjoy workshops in upholstery, sewing and carpentry. The vision is that everyone has a valuable contribution to make no matter how small or big.

PLEASE DONATE

REVAMP can collect FREE of CHARGE any furniture, large household items in good condition that can be sold to support the social enterprise. If you are thinking of getting rid of your unwanted furniture, please consider donating it to REVAMP! The money generated from the project is invested back into the social enterprise to cover the cost of overheads etc.



Shaunna McGowan, Eileen Kerins and John Singleton from COPE Foundation in Mallow sanding a pallet chair for their garden furniture project.

Duhallow Community Laundry

Duhallow Community Laundry has now been operating for just over two years. This service was established in response to issues raised by both the IRD Duhallow Carers Network and the SAOI Network both highlighting the need for this facility for our elderly, low income households and carers throughout the Duhallow region helping to lessen the pressure on families and those living alone of having clean linen, towels and clothes available at all times.



Marie Forrest collects her laundry from Louise Buckley in the Duhallow Community Laundry.

The laundry which primarily provides a much needed service also provides an important regular social interaction to our users and it is also a great way to update our clients of our other community based enterprises which likewise provide essential services such as the Warmer Homes Scheme, Duhallow Community Food Services and Duhallow Revamp.

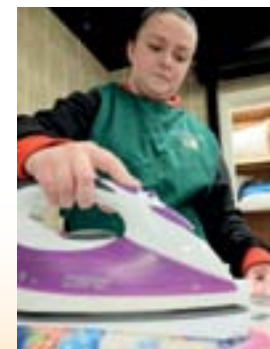


Tús participant Liz O'Loughlin makes sure the whites are whiter than white! Soaking and bleaching sheets are just another additional task for the many family and voluntary carers who are already stressed and hugely burdened. However, with the affordable service offered by the Duhallow Community Laundry many carers in the area are now using the service meaning they have one less job to face each day.

Having now operated for over two years we have a strong client base of a number of regular customers who use the laundry several times a week and it is clear to see that they find it hugely beneficial and that the facility is achieving what it set out to do. The laundry is primarily reaching out to older people and carers especially those who prior to our opening would not have been availing of a laundry service.

This service is assisting the most vulnerable in our society which is reflected in the diagram which highlights the users since it began two years

The laundry is staffed via the Tús, RSS and CE schemes. Louise Buckley on CE and Margaret Murphy on RSS are the two core staff who very capably ensure the smooth running of this service and are supported with 5 TUS participants. These staff operate to very high standards and procedures, providing a very courteous and professional service to all our clients. The staff also provide a free collection and delivery service to those who are unable to travel to the facility, this service provides a dual effect as it provides a regular contact point with our clients ensuring they are okay. For many older people using the laundry it is clear to see that they enjoy the social contact also when staff call to the house to collect or deliver laundry and this is an important element of the service too as many are very isolated and lonely.



You can avail of this service at the James O'Keeffe Institute Complex from Monday to Friday from 9.00am to 5.30pm.

Maggie Walshe carefully irons sheets for an elderly service user. The cleaning of sheets and duvets are hugely cumbersome for an older person to manage by themselves.

The Forfas Social Enterprise in Ireland document highlights that "Social enterprise is a small but growing part of the enterprise base and ecosystem that has potential to bring further job gains and deliver economic potential. There is both a demonstrated need, and a market for, social enterprise in Ireland. With the appropriate enabling and promotional effort, there appears to be scope for increasing jobs in the sector. Social Enterprises are business models set up to tackle social, economic or environmental issues. While they are driven primarily by social and/or environmental motives, they engage in trading or commercial activities to pursue these objectives and produce social and community gain. The Programme for Government 2011-2016 recognises the important role of Social Enterprise in the country and contains a commitment to promoting the development of a vibrant and effective social enterprise sector."

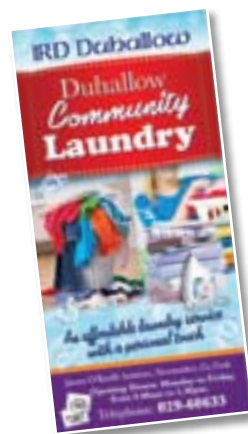


The laundry offers vital work placements and activation opportunities for those who are unemployed. Tús participant Sabina Repel has learned how to use many new machines since she began her placement.



A comprehensive collection and delivery service is operated so that people who might not drive or might not be in a position to deliver the laundry to the James O'Keeffe Institute can avail of this service.

Duhallow Community Laundry is a demand deficient enterprise. This means that there is need for the service, however the people who need it are not in a position to avail of it through existing commercial offerings. The result is they do not get the service. With this in mind, IRD Duhallow set up the community laundry to meet the unmet needs of the elderly and most vulnerable in our society. It is important to note that the service does not compete with any existing enterprise but rather meets the unmet needs of the community.



Tús participant Margaret Murphy keeps a close eye on each individual wash to make sure a top quality service is offered by the laundry. An older person finds it extremely difficult to bend down and fill and empty their washing machine.

Duhallow Community Laundry Services

Wash and Dry

- Wash Dry and Iron
- Wash Only
- Dry Only
- Dry and Iron
- Wash Dry and Iron Shirts
- Iron Shirt Only
- Wash and Dry Single/Double/King Size Duvet

Saoi - Network for Active Retired Groups

The Saoi Network is an umbrella group comprising of 19 Actively Retired Groups which we have established and are spread throughout the Duhallow area. Their motto is "Let your age go old .. but not your heart ...". These groups meet regularly on local issues effecting senior citizens and promote socialisation of those who may be isolated by organising many trips, outings and a wide variety of training programmes. Through the Saoi Network, older people are encouraged to embrace the spirit of volunteerism and people are empowered to become involved in their communities and put in place local solutions to identified problems.



Members and friends of the Duhallow Saoi Network who formally launched Bealtaine 2016 with a two-part series on Jimmy Reidy's Round the Fireside with local radio C103.

Bealtaine 2016

The theme of Bealtaine 2016 was "Ireland's Iconic Citizens" and indeed, it was a celebration of many of Duhallow's iconic citizens with a presentation of the life story of Hannah Sheehy Skeffington and a reflective reminiscence evening with Alice Taylor. Officially launched on Jimmy Reidy's C103 Around the Fireside, the opening ceremony was held at the Source of the Blackwater with a special mass and music by the Duhallow Choral Society. Throughout the month long celebration, there were 31 different events held all around the region, ranging from flower power of the '70s in Donoughmore to Castlemagner's Sinsir Talent Exhibition, Meelin ARA hosted a Fashion Show and Millstreet ARA held a very popular Tea Dance. Masses were held in Tureencahill and Dromtarriffe, which were complemented by a concert Bruach na Carraige, gramophone nights in Millstreet and Freemount, as well as Freemount's Ceili.



Alice Taylor with members and volunteers of Millstreet Day Care Centre who attended Alice's Reminiscence evening as part of our Bealtaine Festival.

For many, the highlight was Jack Roche's mystery tour, whereby the Saoi Network chairman organised a tour for three bus loads to a destination unknown. Everyone enjoyed a sociable day, as all the 126 members found themselves in St. John's Castle, Limerick and then onwards to have lunch with the monks of St. Joseph's Abbey, followed by a special mass in the monastery. The Sounds of Ireland interactive experience in Bru Boru show-cased the tradition of music in the history of Ireland and some even made the trip to visit the Rock of Cashel. After dinner, a great singsong and storytelling session ensued before the three weary buses made their way home to Duhallow.



The destination revealed. 126 people attended Jack's Famous Mystery Tour as part of Bealtaine, where one of the stops was the beautiful monastery Mount St. Joseph's Abbey.

Day Time Cinema

Throughout the year over 200 people attended daytime cinema showings in the James O'Keeffe Institute. Cinema goers enjoyed their dinner which was supplied by Duhallow Community Food Service, followed by a screening of old classic favourites of Darby O'Gill and the Little People and 7 Brides for 7 Brothers.



Groovy Chick 'Monica Kelleher' enjoying Donoughmore ARA's Flower Power social dance.

Befriending Network

Many people live in isolation, longing for someone to talk to and befriend. The Duhallow Befriending Network was established in April of 2016 with a vision "to provide companionship to people in their own homes and offer confidentiality and total respect for where the person is at in a non judgemental manner."



Sr. Maureen Cahill read the reflection at Bealtaine's Dawn Mass which was held at the snow covered Source of the Blackwater.

Befriending has been proven to improve people's mental and physical health and can be a source of reliable information and advice for older people.

16 Volunteers with our Duhallow Befriending Networks have all partaken in Communications and Awareness training with tutor Ailbe Coffey as well as signing up to the Volunteer Handbook and befriending network policies. All have been Garda Vetted. The network offers a volunteer befriending service that will call to visit once a week.



Saoi Network chairman Jack Roche, with guestmaster of Mount St. Joseph's Abbey Fr. Kevin.

The Duhallow Befriending Network complements our existing Friendly Phone Call service, which makes weekly phone calls to older people. Many have availed of this service for many years and have built up a great relationship with RSS participant Bridget Keating.



Millstreet ARA committee members who held their first tea dance in the Wallis Arms, and over 100 people attended.

Care & Repair

IRD Duhallow's Care & Repair programme provides a small repair service to persons over the age of 65. This service is carried out by volunteers and is provided free of charge. The client only pays for materials used. For jobs that require a professional tradesperson, such as electrical or plumbing work, a database of reliable trade's people is kept to refer clients requiring this service.

Warmer Homes Initiative



IRD Duhallow Warmer Homes Scheme Installers.

IRD Duhallow's Better Energy Warmer Homes Scheme (BEWHS) is funded by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) and the Community Services Programme (CSP). Our Warmer Homes Scheme is now in its eleventh year and at the end of 2015 we had insulated 3,251 houses. IRD Duhallow is one of 13 community based organisations (CBO'S) delivering Warmer Homes throughout the country, where the qualifying criteria has been expanded to include households in receipt of One Parent Family Payment. Other qualifying payments include Fuel Allowance or Family Income Supplement or Job Seekers Allowance (For more than 6 months and have a child under 7 years of age). Homes must be owner occupied and constructed before 2006 to be eligible for insulation. IRD Duhallow provides this service over a wide area which includes North Cork, South Limerick and all of County Kerry.



Tom Twomey and Tom Cambridge installing a roof vent in house that received attic insulation.

Better Energy Communities Programme (BEC)

IRD Duhallow received funding to complete energy efficiency upgrade works on five community buildings in 2015 through the BEC programme. This was delivered through EPS Ltd as the Lead Applicant and Enprova as the project coordinator. IRD Duhallow identified the community buildings for inclusion in the application and was subsequently sub-contracted to complete the insulation works. We have a further seven community buildings included in the 2016 application which was submitted to SEAI in February.

Training & Quality Assurance

Training continues to be a vital element in the development of our service including manual handling, working at heights training, abrasive wheel training, mobile tower scaffold training, installer insulation training, Project Supervisor Construction Stage (PSCS) and Safe Pass. Our cavity wall teams have



Cavity Wall installer Liam Buicke drilling wall in preparation for insulation.

received training from Envirobead Insulation on surveying and insulation and are certified with the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) to deliver Bonded Bead Cavity Wall Insulation. IRD Duhallow achieved ISO Certification for our Integrated Management System. This system includes ISO9001 (Quality), ISO14001 (Environmental) and OHSAS 18001 (Safety). KSN oversees the quality control for the BEWHS where their inspectors carry out quality checks on randomly selected houses completed by IRD Duhallow. In 2015, IRD Duhallow had a pass rate of 97% from these inspections. We continue to carry out internal quality control checks to ensure we maintain our high standard.

Local Employment

IRD Duhallow receives staffing funding from the CSP, which allows us to employ one coordinator and five full time staff, enabling us to deliver the service. RSS, CE and Tús schemes' participants who work alongside CSP staff in teams insulating attics and cavity walls. Our CSP Business Plan for the period 2017-2019 was submitted to Pobal in April. We have included an application for a further six staff for the 2017-2019 period in this Business Plan.

Kingspan Retrofit Home Incentive Scheme

IRD Duhallow is now a registered installer under the Kingspan Retrofit Home Incentive Scheme. This scheme is rolled out through Envirobead and is available to householders whose properties were built prior to 2006. The grant amounts to €923 per house for attic and cavity wall insulation, regardless of house size. IRD Duhallow price the job, deduct the grant amount and the householder will pay the balance. A BER (Building Energy Rating) Certificate is generated for each completed house by an independent assessor.

EPS Group Better Energy Home Incentive Scheme

Enprova contracted IRD Duhallow to carry out energy efficient works to houses of EPS Ltd. employees under the Better Energy Home Scheme (BEHS). EPS, based in Mallow is a winner of the Ruban d'Honneur best in Europe business award. IRD Duhallow surveyed the homes and our installers carried out attic and cavity wall insulation to these ten properties spread across Cork and Limerick. We are now registered with SEAI as a BEHS contractor.



Insulating pipework and water tanks.



RSS participant Eileen Moyrihan provides administrative support to the Warmer Homes Scheme scheduling jobs for the coming weeks.



Niall Guiney fitting grill on Mechanical Extract Vent.



Michael Enright laying rolls of fiberglass insulation in attic.

IRD Duhallow Community Employment Scheme

The 2015/2016 scheme period saw the reduction in numbers allocated to the IRD Duhallow scheme from 28 to 22 due to the removal of childcare places. This was most disappointing and has negatively impacted the communities that access support for their villages and communities. There is ongoing demand for places on the scheme, and the type of work experience desired changes from year to year depending on the person coming forward seeking placement.



Tutor Dan Hickey instructing CE participant Patrick O'Sullivan on strimmer motor maintenance, as part of the QQI Level 4 Horticulture Equipment Course.

This year, five participants progressed onto employment having completed their time on the Community Employment Scheme.

Currently, our CE scheme services the communities of Rathcoole, Boherbue, Ballydaly, Kilcorney, Dromtariffe, Lyre, Newmarket, and Banteer covering roles of Caretaking, Park Assistants, Furniture Restoration, Administration, Accounts, Community Laundry, Community Kitchen, Village Tidy Towns and Counter Assistants. These jobs provide suitable work experience to participants in areas where job opportunities exist locally.



Patricia Twomey is on placement in Duhallow Community Food Services in Newmarket. She has completed training in Customer Service, Occupational First Aid and Food Allergens and Labelling.

We work closely with the Department of Social Protection in administering our CE scheme. Our new case officer, Ms. Elaine McDermott, is based out of Mallow DSP office and visits our project regularly. For those interested in coming on our CE scheme, they must contact their local Social Welfare Case Officer, who will decide if the scheme is suitable for the person.



CE Participant John Sheehan strimming grass around Handball Alley in Boherbue.



Krzysztof Mariniak completes his CE work placement in Duhallow Furniture REVAMP where he upcycles old furniture.

Participant Development through Training

Community Employment has always distinguished itself from other Social Welfare schemes with its focus on training and the development of participants while they are on the scheme, gaining work experience and training at the same time. Each participant's progress is monitored through the ILP system and this produces a personalised tailored road map for each individual. The provision of training through the scheme improves people's confidence and self-esteem and supports personal development and enhances each person's chance of securing employment. In recent times, funding for training has been cut back and now only support specific training courses which have a QQI, City and Guilds or other Certificate qualifications. Participants are expected to contribute towards the costs of their training also.



Supervisor Paddy O'Connor and participant Louise Buckley talking about her Individual Learning Plan which sets out her goals and targets for her CE Placement.

Training delivered over the past year included Child Health and Well Being, Child Development, Back to Education, Manual Handling, 2nd Year Accounting Technician, Bookkeeping, Interview skills courses. All of the courses undertaken by participants are certified through SOLAS, QQI or City and Guilds.



Participant Patrick A. O'Sullivan oversees the bookings for the Handball Alley in Dromtariffe, as well as the upkeep and maintenance of the Community Sports Hall.



Kathleen O'Connell sets up the teas and coffees in Banteer Hall where the Senior Citizens of the area gather once a week for their Wednesday activities and dinner.

Rural Social Scheme

Sustainable livelihoods

Since the establishment of the Rural Social Scheme (RSS) in 2004 the scheme has supported 127 farm families in Duhallow who are unable to make an adequate living from their farm holding alone, to earn a supplementary income through 19.5 hours of weekly employment provided by local community projects. The responsibility for the operation of the RSS rests with the Department of Social Protection and IRD Duhallow manages the scheme of 58 participants and 3 supervisors locally. The government aims to support farming communities like Duhallow for whom farming is a core economic activity through incentives and initiatives like the RSS that help sustain smaller scale farming activity and deliver multiple economic, social, environmental and territorial benefits.



RSS provides the matching contribution to EU Raptor LIFE – Angela Linehan provides admin support to the EU LIFE Project as part of her duties.

IRD Duhallow's RSS assists low income farmers, who face many ongoing challenges like ageing, social isolation, succession planning, access to finance/credit and land management. Peer-to-peer learning is facilitated for scheme participants in an environment that allows them to share and discuss their own different experiences and issues e.g. market volatility including milk prices and the increasing levels of administrative capacity required for farming i.e. the 'dreaded' farm inspections. Participation on the scheme increases the profitability of the farms for many as the farm families are in a more secure position to reinvest any profits back into their farm enterprises. Access to training through IRD Duhallow's Skillnet and SICAP programmes allows RSS participants to stay abreast and adapt to the new technological advancements and health and safety regulations e.g. phone apps training for farmers for registering their cattle on-line, checking the latest beef prices and maintaining and updating their record systems. Participants have also availed of Boom Sprayer and Handheld Pesticide training.

Family-farms

The vast majority of farms in Duhallow are operated as family-run businesses in which the farm is passed down from generation to generation and reliant on family labour including men, women and children. Whilst there is diversity in terms of size, production



RSS participant, Billy Curtin power-washing the goal posts in Rockchapel GAA sportsfield.



Christopher Sheahan, at home on the family farm feeding the cattle and as part of his RSS duties, completing conservation works in the listed building at the James O'Keeffe Institute.

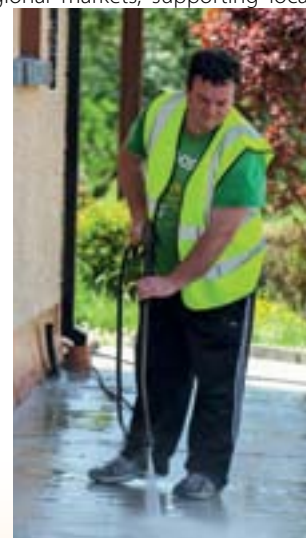
and management styles of these family enterprises it is important to highlight that smaller family farms play a significant role in preserving rural lifestyle and communities but also natural resources and biodiversity. These small farm holdings are the foundations on which the economy in Duhallow was built - as efficient producers of food; a source of income and a source of cultural values and agricultural know-how. In addition, smaller farms assist in maintaining the 'green' image which provides that all important catalyst for local agri and food artisan products to gain access to premium markets.

Preserving rural heritage and landscape

From a wider community perspective there is a recognition that small holders on the RSS play an important role in preserving, culture and rural landscape. They reflect a lifestyle based on beliefs and traditions about living and working the land. The scheme helps to ensure the sustainable management and balanced development of the territory and therefore the avoidance of further large afforestation. When considering land use, it is important to factor in the role and quality of life of those living and working on the land and the spin off effects on towns, villages and surrounding hinterland. RSS participants and their families spend their incomes mostly within local and regional markets, supporting local jobs and the economy. Any significant cut back in farming activity would in turn generate job losses in linked economic sectors - notably within the agri-food supply chain, which relies on the primary agricultural sector for high quality, competitive and reliable raw material inputs, as well as in non-food sectors. As well as an acceleration of depopulation, rural activities in Duhallow, from tourism, transport, to local and public services would also be affected. For all these reasons, it is necessary not only to promote and widely inform people and our politicians of the importance of the Rural Social Scheme, but, in addition, to establish long-term national policies to support the RSS for future generations and indeed the small, family run farm.



RSS participant, Maurice Reidy cleaning the War of Independence Monument in Meelin in preparation for the 1916 celebrations



Niall Burke, RSS Participant, power washing power washing the area surrounding the community centre in Aubane.

Rural Social Scheme

Continuing Cuts to Farm Assist:

The Government has made several cuts to farm assist payments over the past three or four years, most notably through the removal of the income disregard. Up to 2014, 70% of what a farmer earned was calculated for the purposes of assessing means for a farm assist payment. Over the past two years the Government removed that income disregard. Now, every euro a farm family earns is deducted directly from their farm assist payment, thus removing any incentive for production. Despite this, farm families across Duhallow continue to work hard, because that is their ethic and tradition. However, these cumulative cuts are placing increasing amounts of stress on farmers and farm families. The 2016 revised estimates for the Department of Social Protection provide for expenditure of almost €85 million on the Farm Assist Scheme, with approximately 8,800 individuals receiving a weekly payment. The changes to Farm Assist are yet another attack on rural Ireland regardless of the repeated echoes of the central role of the farming community in the recovery of the economy. The Department of Agriculture's Agri Vision 2015 Action Plan report states that 'The Government will continue to support low income farmers through the Farm Assist Scheme'. It does not, however, outline the changing eligibility requirements and the ramifications of same.



RSS provides the majority of drivers for DCFS. John O'Connell delivering a meal to D.J. Howard in Folloighig as part of his RSS duties with Duhallow Community Food Services.

Strengthening Community Efforts

The RSS directly supports the great work of volunteers in communities throughout Duhallow providing vital assistance for village renewal and maintenance works of community centres, sports facilities, schools, amenities, graveyards etc. Furthermore, participants contribute to services that enhance the independence and participation of older people to live in dignity and independence in their own homes and communities for as long as possible e.g. delivering meals through Duhallow Community Food Service and providing a friendly phone call service for older people who aren't in regular contact with others. The RSS has also provided assistance for older people who cannot be discharged

from hospital as their homes require renovation or improvement. RSS Supervisors carry out assessments of the houses and send the recommendations from this to the HSE and Community Welfare Officer, who support us in providing material costs of the work involved. The Furniture REVAMP project has been able to assist in providing furniture and other household items. The demand for this type of work is growing and there is a team in place to respond when requests are submitted.



RSS Participant, Eileen Murphy, who has served 10 years on RSS preparing healthy sandwiches for the Comprehensive School in Boherbue for student lunches.



Dermot Murphy power washing in preparation for the Graveyard Mass in Boherbue. RSS supports communities across Duhallow.

Protecting the Environment and Biodiversity

IRD Duhallow's RSS continues to support walking tourism in the region through the promotion and development of the National Trails Office accredited walks including Mt.Hilary, Mullaghareirk, the Source of the Blackwater and Claragh. In addition, IRD Duhallow administers the Walks Scheme for the Duhallow Way Walk which stretches 50 miles from Bweeng, Co.Cork to Clonkeen Church, Co. Kerry South of the Paps Mountains. RSS participants keep paths clear and ensure signage is in place.



Enjoying the RSS Guided Walk in the Island Wood as part of the Bealtaine Festivities 2016.

Tús Community Workplace Initiative



Tús participants, Breda O'Sullivan and Mary Bernadette Riordan sorting clothes for the St. Vincent de Paul where they are completing their placement.

The State has made significant progress in reforming labour market activation over the past several years including the introduction of the Tús Community Workplace Initiative in 2010. This relatively new activation model was put in place by the Department of Social Protection to help unemployed people stay in contact with the active labour market, maintain and update the currency of their work skills, and engage in meaningful occupational activity in the absence of paid open-labour market work opportunities. IRD Duhallow is the implementing body for Tús at a local level and we have eight schemes with 160 participants.

Eligibility

A person must be continuously unemployed for at least 12 months; and be in receipt of a Jobseeker payment. Tús Participants work 19.5 hours per week for a period of 52 weeks, while still retaining their existing secondary benefits e.g. rent allowance, medical card, fuel allowance etc. The majority of participants are randomly selected from the Live Register but there is also an option to "Self Refer" by contacting the Local Case Officer in your Social Welfare branch office.

Pathways to Work Strategy 2016-2020

Figures published by the Central Statistics Office confirm that the country is in recovery with more money being spent, more people at work and more jobs being created. While all of this national progress is greatly encouraging, it is important to highlight that Duhallow's unemployment rate remains stubbornly high as the urban centres have experienced significantly faster growth than rural areas and therefore the economic recovery is unevenly spread. Increasing the employment

focus of activation programmes and opportunities is one of the specific actions to be prioritised under the Government's Pathways to Work Strategy for the years 2016 to 2020. With the assistance of IRD Duhallow's suite of integrated programmes. We aim to provide an all-inclusive labour market activation regime which incorporates the provision of job-search assistance and training options not designed solely to address labour market issues per se but also informed by actions to improve the quality of life of the people on the scheme – and their families where possible.



Tús participant, Donagh Reardon working in the men's shed project in Millstreet.

Upskilling or Retraining

IRD Duhallow assumes a supportive and remedial role by developing and steering training and work based experience to prevent the skills of these unemployed people from becoming obsolete or depreciated as a result of prolonged joblessness. Tús work placements provide eligible working age adults with an opportunity to retain and sharpen their existing skills base, in preparation for a return to full time employment. A high number of those who were made redundant from the construction sector have used their time on Tús to increase and broaden their skill sets with a view of their reintegration back into the workforce. The scheme supervisors encourage participants to devote time to job searching and, as part of the activation process, upskilling or retraining in areas relevant to their job aspirations. With a limited training budget through Tús nationally, participants are fortunate that they can avail of a wide variety of labour market focused training through IRD Duhallow's Skillnet and SICAP programmes. This training is devised based on the joint needs of employers and jobseekers in the region and therefore is at all times relevant for those seeking employment.



Supervisor Don Murphy offering guidance to Tús participants Owen Keller, Denis Twomey and John Flaherty working on boarding for forming a stable door.



Participants Michael Craske and Philip O'Keeffe assisting with community conservation works.



A picture of the restoration work completed at Sundays Well, Fermoy, Banteer.



Tús participants created a pathway at Fermoy so that people can easily access the site of the well.

Tús Community Workplace Initiative

Restoration of Vintage Machinery

The restoration of vintage farm machinery is a great example of an opportunity for skills acquisition through Tús. Participants have an opportunity to learn the art and skills involved in the restoration of old agricultural artefacts. A large collection of horse drawn farm machinery has been restored to original working order covering the four seasons from the cultivating to the harvest. Their work is on display on the grounds of the James O'Keeffe Institute illustrates the technological advances in machinery.



Tús participant, James O'Connor restoring a wheel of a horse cart.



Supervisor Don Murphy, Tom O'Donovan, REVAMP and Tús participant PJ Cremin exhibiting at Mallow Home and Garden show.

Employment Opportunities

Activation also encompasses working with employers both to support them in creating employment opportunities and to ensure that such employment opportunities that are created are made available to people who are unemployed and, in particular, to those who are long-term unemployed. Employers in Duhallow report that they continue to have difficulty finding the "right person" required for their varied job descriptions. They often attribute their difficulties in recruitment to a lack of appropriately experienced/qualified candidates. The modern day workplace now requires the continuous adaptation and flexibility of workers' skills to changing job demands e.g. new-skill acquisition in line with changing technologies. The provision of upskilling and retraining through Tús placements has helped to improve the match of job seekers' skills with those skills required by employers. In addition, the twelve-months experience in a variety of workplace settings can enhance employment prospects - even of those people who have



Tús participants, Paudie Cronin and William O'Sullivan working providing maintenance work for Teach an Chúraim, Rathmore, Co. Kerry.

been unemployed for a relatively long time. IRD Duhallow's Job Centre has successfully engaged with employers and assisted scheme participants who have exited the scheme to compete for such job vacancies. There has been a notable increase in the numbers of routine service jobs and skilled/unskilled manual jobs arising locally and many participants have availed of the reference provided to them at the end of their placement. In a recent survey conducted with past Tús participants 28 out of 106 people have gained employment (26%) in areas including Childcare, Construction, IT, Manufacturing, Retail etc.



Tús participant, Jack O'Riordan working on the village renewal project in Tureenahill, Co. Kerry.

Under 25's – Youth Guarantee

The European Commission is providing co-funding to Tús for participants under 25 years. The scheme is jointly backed by the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) and the European Social Fund (ESF) and Department of Social Protection on an equal funding basis. For the period 2015-2017 the allocation from each of the ESF and YEI is approximately €11.8million. IRD Duhallow is acutely aware of the inter-generational nature of unemployment and therefore has focused interventions on households affected to ensure that the cycle is interrupted. Those aged under-25 who had been receiving a reduced social welfare payment can receive the full weekly rate when participating on this programme. Following their 12 months on Tús, participants (many who never had any previous employment) learn the need to be punctual, reliable and presentable to secure and hold down a job. In addition, a number of those exiting the scheme have been referred onto the Dormant Accounts Youth Employment Options Programme where they are focusing on the key attributes and traits of a valuable employee in order to aid their timely progression onto the labour market.



Charlene McMullin gaining administration experience while on Tús Scheme for under 25's.

Tús Testimonial – FINOLA O'SULLIVAN

I commenced my Tús placement in 2014 with some trepidation, as it had been many years since I worked in an office environment; I was understandably apprehensive: What academic skills could assist me in a constantly changing technological world? My fears were soon confirmed when faced with Excel on day one, but with the guidance and help of my office colleagues and Tús Supervisors I became more confident and familiar with the daily challenges a busy office can offer. I particularly enjoyed being involved with teaching computer literacy, which is a wonderful service provided through Benefit 4 by IRD Duhallow. I have been fortunate enough to gain employment locally, with the assistance of IRD Duhallow's Job Centre. The practical skills I learned while working in IRD Duhallow have been of great benefit to my work in Health and Safety Services in Newmarket. Tús has been a positive experience, and has assisted me in the transition to fulltime work.



Finola O'Sullivan who exited from Tús to gain employment with HSS, Newmarket.

Duhallow Community Food Services



Orlaith Tomkins,
Manager of Duhallow
Community Food Services.

Orlaith Tomkins has been with DCFS since 2008. She graduated from GMIT with a degree in Hotel and Catering Management. Prior to joining the team at DCFS Orlaith worked in a broad range of companies with the hotel and catering industry and brings a wide variety of experience with her to the business from both home and abroad.

It has been a very exciting year in the history of Duhallow Community Food Services. The new premises in the James O'Keeffe Institute Newmarket is now fully operational and dealing with the additional demand for the meals services comfortably.

The demand for the service continues to grow year on year and 2015 was no exception with 32,032 meals produced and the addition of a sixth delivery route serving an expanded region. DCFS were fortunate to secure a grant from Dormant Accounts to purchase and refrigerate a new van to compliment the meals on wheels and catering service and meet the increasing demand for meal deliveries.

The principal activity remains the same; to support the elderly in independent living for as long as possible by providing them with a nutritious meal at a reduced cost on a daily basis. The aim is to improve the quality of life for the most vulnerable in our community.



DCFS Summer student Katrina O'Keeffe
serving County Mayor Cllr John Paul
O'Shea enjoying a 'cuppa' in the
community dining area.



Preparing the Mash!
John Daly assisting in the meals production kitchen.



Kitchen supervisor Marcio de Frietas, oversees the production of meals.

The meals production is at the heart of the operation every day. Staff are on duty at 6.30am to ensure that all food is freshly prepared and cooked for that day's deliveries. The first dinner route departs Newmarket at 11.15am each morning. All delivery vehicles are equipped with hot and cold holding units to ensure that all meals are delivered at the correct temperature and that all food hygiene legislation is adhered to. The logistics of deliveries is managed by Transport Supervisor Neily O'Flynn. While the HSE provides some funding towards the service, costs of production and deliveries are high and as a community enterprise operating under the community services programme rules we are obliged to break even at least, therefore commercial activity to ensure

that the meals remain at an affordable price. DCFS has undertaken commercial activity for as long as the service has been in operation, shops throughout Duhallow are supplied with fresh scones, breads and tarts and cakes on a daily basis. Outside catering for all family occasion can be ordered directly, collected at the premises, or delivered straight to your door. Advice is offered on menus and quantities of food required. Menus can be adapted to suit specific preferences. Over the years DCFS has built a reputation for excellent quality food and service in this field, having catered for many events large and small.

Catering for the Comprehensive school in Boherbue continues to operate from the Duhallow Community Food Premises in Boherbue. Mary O'Connell and her team look after the operations here providing the students with homemade baking and lunches daily.

The Community Dining Room has proved very popular with the people of Duhallow. Open from 9.30am – 6pm with a varied menu covering breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks and afternoon tea. We have a senior citizens special which is served each day, with dinner and dessert for €6.00. There is a choice of main course every day. It has also proved popular with senior citizens groups choosing to dine out on occasion and for senior citizens who would prefer to collect their meal rather than have it delivered. Several times a week DCFS supplies active retired groups with meals in their own community centres in conjunction with local volunteers.



Betty Twomey Sheill serves Mick and Catherine Lane in the
Community Dining Room facility. This facility acts as a great
social outing for many of the older people in the area.



Olive Casey and Neily Flynn setting out the
meal orders and deliveries schedule.

The company is very fortunate to have a dedicated team. The workforce is made up of participants on the Community Services Programme, the Rural Social Scheme and Tús together with a number of volunteers who dedicate some of their time to the provision of a very important service. DCFS is managed by its independent board of 19 voluntary directors all of whom have a wealth of experience and knowledge in the area of services to the community.

The continued success of the service is reliant on support and custom from the public and likewise we look to use local suppliers for the provision of meat, vegetables and other supplies. In 2015 approx. €200,000 was spent locally, contributing to economic growth and sustaining jobs in the local area.



Paul O'Connor delivering a meal to Connie Sheahan.

Community Groups in Duhallow

South Eastern Duhallow Communities

Aubane
Banteer
Bweeng
Derrinagree
Donoughmore & Stuake
Firmount
Kilcorney
Laharn
Lyre
Millstreet
Nadd
New Tipperary
Rathcoole

IRD Duhallow Representatives

John Kelleher & Celeste Buckley
Denis Withers & John Kirwan
Jeanette O'Connell & Sean Kelly
Tom Meaney & Charlie Drake
Patrick Buckley & Monica Kennedy
Margaret O'Donovan & Peter Cafferkey
Donie Howard & Neil O'Shea
Eileen Forde & Sheila Crowley
Billy Murphy & Richard Murphy
Noel Buckley & Veronica Perdisatt
Clodagh McSweeney & Paudie O'Shea
Mamie O'Shea & Tony Horgan
Eamonn Hurley & Liz Burns

Western Duhallow Communities

Ballinahulla
Ballydaly
Ballydesmond
Boherbue
Cullen
Foilogohig
Glash
Gneeveguilla
Kiskeam
Knockaclarig
Knocknaboul
Knocknagree
Meelin
Rathmore
Rockchapel
Shrone
Taur
Toureencahill

IRD Duhallow Representatives

Liam Doody & Betty Collins
Richie O' Connor & WJ Moynihan
Siobhan Moynihan & Dan O'Connor
Margaret Murphy & Marie Casey
Patsy Jones & Lorraine Singleton
Annette O'Reilly & Geraldine Cremin
Mossie Fitzpatrick & Timothy Collins
Cormac Collins & Yvonne Crean
Paddy Joe O'Leary & Batt Casey
June Walsh & Ide Fitzgerald
Maureen Fleming & Tim Fitzgerald
Geraldine O'Connor & Claire Fleming
Eileen Kelly & Denis McAuliffe
Brian Kelly & Marie O'Leary
Mike Allen & Breda O'Callaghan
Conor Creedon & Colette Carmody
Batt O'Callaghan & Jeremiah Murphy
Bertie O' Leary & Lil Fleming

North Eastern Duhallow Communities

Castlemagner
Cecilstown
Dromtariffe
Freemount
Kanturk
Kilbrin
Lismire
Newmarket
Tullylease

IRD Duhallow Representatives

James Twohig & Andy Bourke
Kieran Butler & Angela O'Herlihy
Donie Forde & Deirdre Forde
Caroline O'Carroll & Mike O'Regan
John Fuller & Tommy Mullane
Patrick Drumm & Patricia O'Leary
Colman Jones & Sheila Kearney
Eilish Hourigan & Ollie Dugdale
Angela Hannigan & Mary O'Connell

Mid Cork Communities

Carriganimmy & Clondrohid
Coachford, Aghabullogue & Rylane
Ballinagree
Macroon

IRD Duhallow Representatives

Breda Kelleher & Maurice Manning
Cal Healy & Peter Dineen
Pat O'Leary & Aonghus MacSuibhne
Breda McCarthy & Martin Coughlan

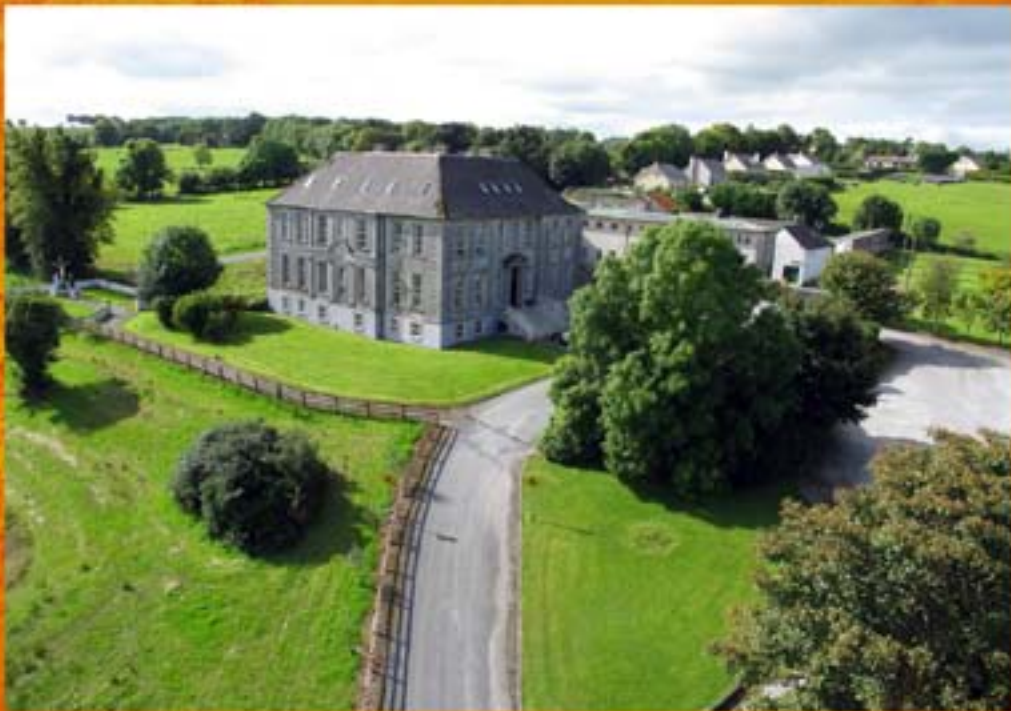
IRD Duhallo

James O'Keeffe Institute, Newmarket, Co. Cork, Ireland

Telephone: 00-353-29-60633

Fax: 00-353-29-60694 • Email: duhallo@irdduhallo.com

www.irdduhallo.com



Duhallo

THE SPIRIT OF RURAL IRELAND