

IRD Dubhallow

PROGRESS REPORT | 2016 - 2017



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

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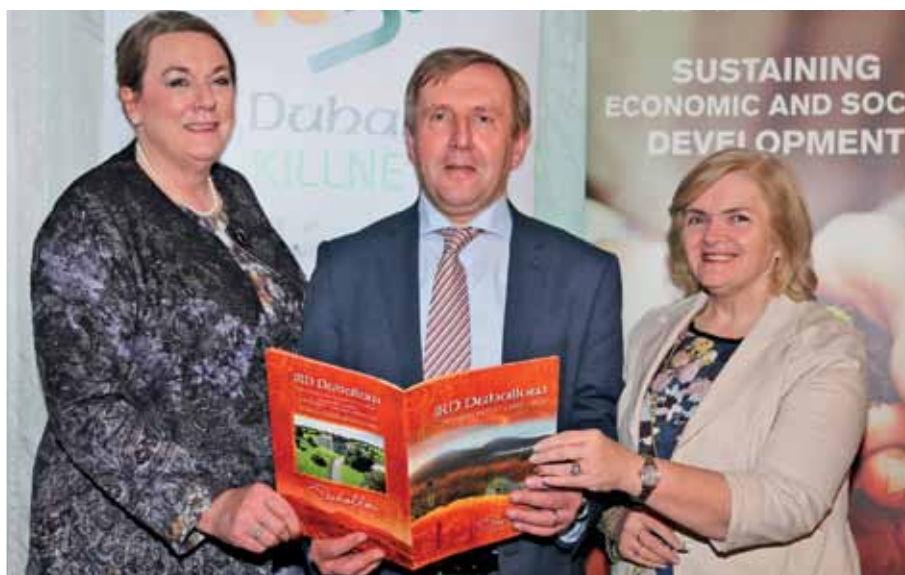
Designed by: Sheila Carroll Creative Republic

Printed by: Kanturk Printers

Photographs by: Sheila Fitzgerald and Justin Black

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IRD Duhallow CEO Maura Walsh, Michael Creed, TD, Minister for Agriculture, Food & the Marine and IRD Duhallow Chairperson Anne Maria Bourke

Chairperson's Address

Mid way through my term as Chairperson, I wish to take the opportunity to acknowledge the commitment of the Board Members and Staff, who work tirelessly for the good of the Duhallow area. Local Action Groups like IRD Duhallow are owned and driven by the communities in which they operate. They form a local governance structure, which not only represents but acts on the needs of the region and develops strategies to improve the quality of life for the people of our Duhallow.

We are especially delighted to welcome new board members Cllrs Gearoid Murphy, Gobnait Moynihan and Billy Dennehy. They bring with them a valuable skill mix. I want to acknowledge the work of retiring Board members Batt Casey and Aileen Magner for their contributions to the Board throughout their time.

The Chairs of the Working Groups and former Chairs have continued to work tirelessly on behalf of their communities. They play a pivotal role in identifying what is relevant and needed in the community and putting in place evidence based measures to support our region. The various working groups are tackling social exclusion through developing social economy enterprises and helping those who are marginalised. Through supporting projects like DCFS and the Community Laundry a great start has been made in employment and inclusion.

Well done to all the community members for what you have achieved in your own areas over the past year, you who lead by example in embracing change looking and planning the future and together we can empower, educate and affect positive change for the benefit of future generations.

Our role as Local Action Group (LAG) for the planning, animation and implementation LEADER has been lost to the Local Community Development Committees of the three Local Authority Divisions. IRD Duhallow is merely an Implementing Partner, trying to make the most of what has been handed down to us. In the context of LEADER we have been handed a rule book of biblical proportions that has choked the system.

It is over a year since the LEADER contracts were signed yet no Implementing Partner in Cork has been able to bring a single project for approval, such is the quagmire of rules that have been devised. To further look at LEADER in context, IRD Duhallow has successfully implemented four LEADER Programmes. One year into the last programme we had €2,150,767 Committed and €779,879 paid out. So it would be remiss of me to ignore the absolute frustration of communities, businesses, elected representatives, board members and staff in trying to get badly needed funds to economic, community and environment projects. There are huge challenges in ensuring a better LEADER programme the next time round. As we approach what should be the mid-way point of the current programme, its progress has been totally hampered by red tape and regulation. In 2017 we are in a drastically different place than the preceding LEADER 07-13, but we do have a promise, we welcome our previous Minister Humphrey's commitment to review the programme. We need to guard against any reputational damage that a toxic LEADER regime could inflict on a bottom up community based group like IRD Duhallow. We call on the Minister to reinstate IRD Duhallow's LAG status at the mid-term review. Lobbying on behalf of the people of Duhallow both nationally and in Europe is a huge part of the work of the CEO and Board Members. We are focusing our efforts on achieving policy changes from the highest level to try to make LEADER operational and relevant and the vital support to rural communities and businesses that it had been right from the start.

While it is important to be mindful of European funding and how it influences the company, we must not be side-tracked from the bigger picture at home. The census results show that Duhallow has returned to a situation of out migration and population decrease, which is a cause of great concern. There needs to be a review of this worrying trend of allocating funding to a region based on per head of capita instead of giving supports to the areas that need it most. The Board is troubled that if this were to continue, we will be set to expect even less support going forward in the future.

Then of course there is the additional threat of CREXIT. The extending of the Cork City boundaries will have a significant negative impact on us while rural



Cork adjusts to its new reality of a low rates base. Although the proposed extended super rich county of Cork city and environs has taken on a 10 year commitment to transfer funds, a reducing Council budget for rural Cork is of great worry to all our communities and the Board, especially as our council HQ will now be in the city.

We need to continually strive to encourage and develop businesses in our area. Funding from all sources is a badly needed stimulus for our rural economy. Agriculture is our biggest industry. However, with the delay in Glas payments and rising cost of inputs, the farming community is finding itself under increasing pressure. The Board was disappointed to note that the long awaited Locally Led Hen Harrier scheme only engaged with 2 farmers in Duhallow this year and only 2 nationally.

The company that is IRD Duhallow is complex of necessity and there is a wide range of programmes intertwined, each dependent on each other and supported and led by very able, capable and dedicated staff and working committees. These report to the main Board, which meets monthly. An annual think-tank and Board training is organised to discuss the long and short term goals of the company in line with the vision for the Duhallow area and its mission statement.

Both the strategic planning and the day to day working of the company is led, driven and overseen by our CEO Maura Walsh. The people of Duhallow are greatly indebted to her for her courage and wisdom in steering us forward.

Much was achieved in the past 12 months, and there is much to celebrate. I was delighted to welcome Minister Michael Creed to our business awards, which was a sparkling night for the new and established enterprises of the region. During the year certificates were presented by the various Chairs of our working groups to the young and old as they completed the many courses organised in-house across our wide range of programmes from Job Seekers, Retired Groups and businesses alike.

The Sisters of St. Joseph held a wonderful day here when they met from all corners of the world to celebrate and remember with friends and family and to launch the book 'Letters Under the Pillow' with guest speaker Mary Kennedy of RTE; Maura Walsh marked 25 years in the company; the pitch & putt course, agri vintage machinery display and the courtyard grew and developed in the best practice of conservation and regard for the environment. Our community garden has expanded and we welcome our first hive of pollinators. Thanks to Andy Burke and Pat Keane for overseeing them.

We offer our sincerest sympathies to the families of Donal Murphy, Mossie Archdeacon and Tús participant Denis Collins, who passed away this year. Donal Murphy was a man of great vision. He was the inspiration behind the establishment of the James O'Keeffe Institute as a home for Rural Development and Education. In his many visits here I believe he was well pleased with developments. Mossie Archdeacon was a founder member of the James O'Keeffe Foundation and was Chair of our Agriculture Committee for over 10 years and served on the board of IRD Duhallow for more than one term. As a fellow board member I found him to be a complete gentleman, always good humoured and willing and able to take on any work that needed doing. His widow Maura serves on our Women's Forum.

It has been challenging to remain some way positive and adjust our sails against hostile winds in order to move forward. However, we as a Board have been entrusted with the responsibility to point out what is going right and put measures in place to help out when something is going wrong.

A group becomes a team when each member is sure enough of himself to praise the skills of others. As Abraham Lincoln said; "If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself".

Go neirín an t-ádh libh don bhliain seo chugainn. Guím cabhair Dé oraibh uilig.

Anne Maria Bourke
CHAIRPERSON

Manager's Report

In reviewing the operations of the company over the past 12 months the challenges of the utterly changed context in which we operate, must be taken into account and the Chairperson has dealt with the changes to LEADER.

We can report record performances in other programmes in the past year. Our LIFE Raptor programme under the expert project management of Eileen Linehan has seen over 20 farmers sign up to conservation measures, which are designed to enhance the habitat of the rare Hen Harrier and Merlin, Salmon and Lamprey while enabling agriculture to continue.

We have joined with NPWS to satellite tag young birds so we can track their progress or try to identify barriers to their successful development. The threat of yet another huge wind farm looms over the community as well as the birds. Our LIFE Raptor team has fenced 19 kilometres of river bank, removed 80 kilometres of Himalayan Balsam and treated 25 kilometres of the dreaded Japanese Knotweed. An even more spectacular outcome of this as well as our previous LIFE programme saw our participating schools at primary and post primary level sweep the boards once again at the BT Young Scientist Exhibition and bring home the coveted Best School Award to Colaiste Treasa, Kanturk. One of the team Michael Sheehan is a grandson of the founder and former chair of IRD Duhallow Jerry Sheehan. Scoil Mhuire Kanturk won 'European honours when they scooped Global Youth Water Air and Food Awards. Both schools were honoured by the Board on their return. My thanks to Eileen, Ilse, John, Nuala and the Tús & RSS teams on the Raptor LIFE Project as well as the invaluable advice and support of Neil Wilkie of NEEMO and Tommy Sejersen and Laszlo Becsy of DG Environment and Pat Martin of the Department of Housing and Environment.

Our Skillnet Programme has gone from strength to strength with the number trained in the past year almost trebling to 685 trainees and 245 rural business have now joined our network, which is successfully managed by Louise Bourke. I want to acknowledge the support of Trish Breen and Tracy Donnelly of Skillnets.

IRD Duhallow's Warmer Homes Programme now has the tender for an extended area of North Cork and all County Kerry. Our teams also carry out insulation work to community buildings with thirty-two community halls completed in the past five years' credit to Colm Crowley and his team carrying out the Warmer Homes work. Our thanks also to SEAI and the National Forum for their ongoing support.

IRD Duhallow believes that community enterprise, through the development and support of a vibrant social economy is the way forward for rural areas. Essential services that are not economically viable due to sparse populations and economies of scale, while meeting international standards and regulations can best be delivered through community organisations that have the capacity to meet these standards and regulations. The Company has supported communities to develop such enterprises at local level where appropriate. Duhallow's eight community crèches are an excellent example as are the sheltered housing projects thriving across the region. More centralised responses are sometimes appropriate and projects like Warmer Homes, Furniture Revamp, Rural Meals Service, are best operated at a central specialised centre but made accessible to all rural dwellers in the wider Duhallow region.

Duhallow Revamp has two equally important objectives of reducing the quantity of waste going to land fill or even worse fly tipping, while at the same time making affordable furniture available to our target groups. In the past year 40.7 tonnes of furniture has been taken in, with 32.4 tonnes revamped and sold back, 4.1 tonnes in stock ready to sell while the remaining 3.5 tonnes is broken down and recycled thus greatly reducing the tonnage being dumped annually. Colm O'Connor and Jessica Baron lead out that enterprise and I acknowledge with thanks the support of SMILE in Macroom and in particular Michelle Greene.

Our Community Laundry provides an essential service to carers, the elderly and low income families. In the past year our customer base grew to 758 and we collect and deliver the laundry to those who have mobility issues. Many thanks to Marie Fleming who as supervisor has overseen the development of the service and to the staff who diligently operate it.

DCFS is operated by a separate company structure and is one of the most established community enterprises supported by IRD Duhallow. It grew its business base to just over 36,500 meals delivered in the past year. It services the wider Duhallow region and all customers are facilitated regardless of remoteness. Well done to Orlaith Tomkins and her dedicated team for an excellence service and to its dedicated Board, ably led by Breeda Moynihan Cronin.



A new community care service has been piloted and expanded over the past few years. Its aim is to assist people remain living independently for as long as possible. The Public Health nurses and our local Sargent approached IRD Duhallow for assistance in carrying out our essential and urgent repairs and refurbishment to homes of the elderly and sick. Mick Corcoran, Joe Pierce and Sheila O'Keeffe do a tremendous job leading out the excellent Tús and RSS participants that carry out this difficult work. We have also established and grown another community enterprise focused on revamping old farm machinery and implements. Coupled with our community garden has possibilities for catering for more rural isolated men.

Our environment working group has had another busy productive year, overseeing a number of established projects. Thanks to their ongoing work Duhallow has the most 'swift friendly' buildings in Ireland. Thanks to Don Murphy and Con O'Sullivan for their work in the development of the old buildings

in a nature friendly manner. The committee also established a demonstration beehive to promote knowledge and respect for pollinators and it supports a vibrant GY group and a Horticulture LTI as well as continuing our promotion of community involvement in the preservation of our rivers and streams in line with the water framework directive. My thanks to Katie Crowley, Rachel Budd and Jacinta O'Carroll for their work and support. We were delighted to be awarded a PEIL Gender Equality Programme, which along with our Social Enterprises and training initiatives underpin our SICAP Social Inclusion work. My thanks to the Women's Forum and Education and Training Working Group resourced by Mary Creedon and Triona Murphy.

The variety scale and impact of the company's work is well outlined in the pages of this year's progress report. The work is the culmination of the vision and courage of our voluntary Board under the excellent stewardship of our Chairperson Anne Maria Bourke who has been a tower of strength, positivity and tenacity over the past year. The Company strategy is actioned through our working groups whose chairs keep their work focused and relevant, and act as a beacon for me during dark times. Thanks to our Vice Chair Brian Kelly for his huge contribution and experience he brings to the board.

The team of workers that I am privileged to lead have overcome all the obstacles and frustration thrown at them through the avalanche of programme rules and yet they have remained loyal and dedicated, flexible and focused on the needs of our communities and target groups. This year more than ever they have gone far above the call of duty to deliver excellent outcomes. I must pay tribute in particular to our Assistant CEO Eileen Linehan who has been blessed with the birth of a baby boy. Eileen continues to operate with professional ease and skill and has shown wisdom, strength and courage, without which my job would be impossible. My thanks also to Helen O'Sullivan who is Team Leader for Community Services and is just back from maternity leave after become a first time mom, and Triona Murphy who is the co-ordinating Supervisor for our Tús and RSS schemes and through her exemplary leadership, precision and persistence that underpins so much of the work that IRD Duhallow and our communities do. Both have taken on extra duties and responsibilities in the past six months above and beyond what would normally be expected.

The impact of Tús, RSS and CE on communities of the region is well documented, but what must also be recognised is the positive impact of participating in these work placement programmes on the participant. Thanks to you all for your contribution to the development of the region. The input of Tús to voluntary groups like Newmarket Pitch & Putt is invaluable, thank you to Tom Twomey and his team for an excellent job.

Thank you to our administration and accounts staff who ensure we remain solvent and compliant, user friendly and on schedule. To Derval, Jennifer, Margaret, Kasia and Sheila Roche and your staff. Well done.

Finally thank you to Louise Bourke who coordinated the production of this progress report again this year.

I am greatly encouraged by the welcome and support we are getting in the new Mid Cork area in which we operate. Over the coming year we expect to be able to do much more for the communities there as well as throughout Duhallow.

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 an active member of the 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 Senior 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.



Breeda Moynihan Cronin

Breeda re-joined the Board in 2014 to represent Duhallow's Social Enterprises. Breeda 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. Breeda 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 na Feirme, 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.



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.



Billy Dennehy

Billy Dennehy was newly elected to the Board of IRD Duhallow in May 2017 as a community representative for the Western Duhallow region. He is an active member of the Kiskeam Community and volunteers with many community groups. He is the current Development Officer of the Kiskeam Development Association and PRO of Kiskeam GAA Club whilst also being a member of the Kiskeam Senior Football team. He is working as an Engineer with Cork County Council. Billy is married to Emily and they have two children.



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 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 N.S. 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 An Taisce litter watch.



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 children and 7 grandchildren. Breda worked in the Adult Learning Centre in Macroom for 7 years, and also did voluntary tutoring there. She 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 is its current PRO. She is very involved in Community Alert, and is 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. They have ambitious plans to develop the community infrastructure in the coming years. Aongus works in Fexco Killorglin and is 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 28 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 Chairperson.



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, and currently holds the position of Chairperson of Banteer Lyre and Districts Community Council.



IRD Duhallow Board Members

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 Guilds and a member of Kiskeam Guild. She has also served as Vice Chairperson of IRD Duhallow for three years.



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. 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 in the EU Life+ Programme and the development of the Duhallow Angling Centre of Excellence.



Cllr Maura Healy Rae

26 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 Killarney Municipal District Strategic Twinning Committee, and Killarney Arts Working Group. He is a Board Member of St. Bridget's Secondary School, the Joint Policing Committee, HSE Health Forum South 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.



Cllr Gobnait Moynihan

Cllr Gobnait Moynihan joined the Board of IRD Duhallow in June 2017. Gobnait is a member of Cork County Council representing the Blarney/Macroom Municipal District. Gobnait was co-opted onto Cork County Council following her brother Aindrias Moynihan's election to Dail Eireann. The IRD Duhallow region was expanded last year to incorporate the greater Macroom, Inchigeelagh, Rylane area. Gobnait will continue to build stronger bonds between IRD Duhallow's existing networks and the local communities in her own constituency.



Cllr Gearóid Murphy

Gearóid is a barrister from Dromtariffe. Gearóid was co-opted to replace the late Councillor Dan Joe Fitzgerald, in April 2017, who was a former member of the Board of IRD Duhallow. Gearóid sits on the Council's Economic Development SPC, Housing SPC, Library Committee and Joint Policing Committee. He is fluent in German and was educated at CBC Cork, UCD, King's Inns and the University of Heidelberg. He is active in his local community and has a special interest in the economic and social development of rural areas. He joined the Board of IRD Duhallow in June 2017.



IRD Duhallow CLG. Company Structure

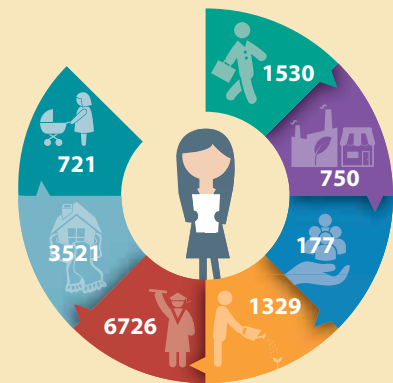
IRD Duhallow is a Community based Rural Development Company established in 1989. It is a Company Limited by Guarantee without share capital. It has charitable status and our directors are voluntary and receive no remuneration for their services. The Board of IRD Duhallow adopted the Governance Code Principles Statement in 2013 and is listed on the Register of Compliance. The Constitution reflects best practice and is 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 attained the Excellence Through People Standard, Ireland's standard for Human Resource Management which is now administered by the National Standards Authority of Ireland and have achieved ISO9001 (Quality), ISO14001 (Environmental) and OHSAS 18001 (Safety).

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED SINCE 1989:

1530	Jobs Created
750	Businesses Supported
177	Community Groups Supported
1329	Community Work Placements Supported
6726	Training Places Created
3521	Homes Insulated
721	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 has worked with the company for 16 years and is the Assistant Manager with responsibility for the Enterprise team, which includes the Raptor Life, Skillnets, Community Employment, 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. She also sits on Pobal's Pension Board.



HELEN O'SULLIVAN, B.Soc.Sc., M.Soc.Sc, Dip Com,
Leadership & Mgt, Cert in Agri. Training Delivery & Evaluation (QQI L6)

With over 12 years' experience in Community & Enterprise Development, Helen is the Community Services Team Leader with responsibility for the management and development of social enterprises including the Warmer Homes Scheme and Newmarket Afterschools and manages the Community Services Programme. She is the Designated Child Protection Officer for the company. Helen works closely with community, youth and voluntary groups in South and North Eastern Duhalow to support their vision for improving their communities and develop their capacity under both the LEADER and SICAP programmes. She is also the co-ordinator of the North Cork Childcare Network and works in partnership with Tusla in the development of child & family support services for the region.



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

Margaret is the Senior Accounts Administrator and has been employed by IRD Duhalow for twenty 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 and compiles monthly financial reports for the 3 Local Authority LEADER LAGs.



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 Duhalow 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: Duhalow Bird Watch Group, Duhalow's GIY Group and the Duhalow Beekeeper Association. She assists individuals with LEADER and SICAP grant applications and is also the staff resource to the Agriculture and Environment Working Groups.



MARY CREEDON, B.B.S., Postgrad Dip in Rural Dev, Mkt & Co-ops.
Dip in Community Dev. IMCV Professional Mgr Award. Cert in Career Needs Assessment,
Planning and Support for Work; QQI L6 in Training Delivery & Evaluation

Mary joined IRD Duhalow in 2006 and is responsible for 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. She is the Assistant Coordinator of the Horticulture Local Training Initiative (LTI) and also jointly coordinates the Gender Equality Programme. She manages the Digital Skills for Citizens Grant Scheme and is the staff resource to the Duhalow Women's Forum, Employment and Training Working Group and Equality Working Group.



LOUISE BOURKE, B.C.L., Masters in Criminal Justice, Masters in
Management, Cert in Agri., IMCV Professional Manager Award;
Training Delivery & Evaluation (QQI L6)

Louise joined the IRD Duhalow 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 SME's Louise implements the skillnet programme in the region. She is the appointed, staff liaison for the Enterprise Working Group, Business Mentoring Programme, the Duhalow Carers Group, the Lone Parents group, the SAOI Network, Duhalow Hill Walkers, Duhalow Befriending Network and the Literacy Support Programme. She also oversees the day-to-day operations of the Newmarket Afterschools, and the Domestic Violence Helpline.



DR. ILSE CORKERY,
PhD in Ecology, BSc Science; QQI L6 in Training Delivery & Evaluation

Ilse joined IRD Duhalow in April 2016 as Project Scientist for the EU funded RaptorLIFE Project. 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 Raptor LIFE Strategic Plan, National Hen Harrier Threat Response Plan and new Locally Led Hen Harrier Agri-environment Scheme. Ilse reports directly to the Project Manager.



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

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



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 Payroll on a weekly basis and she prepares financial reports for the Social Economy and Finance meetings and the reports for the Main Board. She assists in the production of financial returns to the 3 Local Authority LAGs.



DERVAL CORBETT,
ECDL, Cert in Supervisory Management

Derval is employed as a clerical officer with IRD Duhalow and has over 18 service with the company. 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 Duhalow. She is the liaison person with the National Vetting Bureau and on behalf of the LDCs that manage Tús and RSS Programmes.



JACINTA CARROLL,
Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), Geography and English;
Training Delivery & Evaluation (QQI L6)

Jacinta joined IRD Duhalow in April 2016 and works with the Employment and Training Team. She offers employment and support services to the unemployed through the Jobs Centre. She is also responsible for assisting with the co-ordination of the PEIL Gender Equality Programme as well as many projects through the SICAP and LEADER Programme. Jacinta supports the work of the Equality, Duhalow Women's Forum and the Youth & Education Working Groups.



JENNIFER DRUM,
BA in Information Systems Management with Web Technologies

Jennifer joined IRD Duhalow in 2016 and works full time in the Front Office and supports the other staff in the organisation. She is the first point of contact on the company reception desk and deals with general queries and company administration. She is also responsible for the co-ordination of various events for IRD Duhalow, and assists with Community events throughout the region. She provides top class customer service supports dealing with enquiries from participants on training programmes and other service users.



LOUISE DINEEN,
BA in Early Childhood Studies

Louise joined IRD Duhalow in 2017 as coordinator of the Newmarket After-Schools Service. She is responsible for the management, development and daily running of the service throughout the year. Louise supports the Community Development team through the SICAP Programme, while also assisting the Front Office administration responsibilities.



Details of Staff



TRIONA MURPHY, MBS Cooperative and Social Enterprise, B.Sc Public Health & Health Promotion, IMCV Professional Manager Award, Training Delivery & Evaluation (QQI L6)

Triona is the Tús and RSS Coordinating Supervisor with special responsibility for those under 25 years. She oversees the RSS and Tús Programmes to ensure good planning, participant deployment, monitoring of outcomes/reporting and quality assurance. Triona coordinates the Dormant Accounts Fund Youth project and is the employer liaison for work placements. Triona is the coordinator of the Towards Occupation Programme and oversees Duhalloy REVAMP and the Employment, Training and Equality briefs. She works with communities in Western Duhalloy and supports the work of both the Community and Youth and Education Working Groups.



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

Marie is Senior Administrator with special responsibility for the participants on the Rural Social Scheme and the Community Laundry. Marie provides administrative support to the Board and Social Economy Working Group which oversees the Tús and RSS Schemes. She is secretary of the Health and Safety Committee and coordinates staff training and development and oversees the Company's IT and contract phone systems making it available to all Tús and RSS Participants. She ensures we are compliant with national bodies such as the Charities and Lobbying Regulator and the Standards in Public Office and Data Protection.



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

Colm joined IRD Duhalloy 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. He has responsibility for preparing and submitting tenders and implementing the work programmes across the expanded region. 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. He is a master craftsman and stonemason and trains participants on the LTI, T.O and other in house programmes.



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

Sheila joined IRD Duhalloy 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 wages and timesheets, Updating and maintaining the Pabal One View records management system, reports and accounts. She is responsible for participants based in Newmarket Projects. Sheila oversees the administrative demands of the busy JOK training and meeting centre.



MICHAEL CORCORAN

Michael worked in the sugar factory as a supervisor until its closure in 2006. He secured employment with IRD Duhalloy through the CSP Programme in 2009 and worked on our Warmer Homes Scheme and in July 2014 when he 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 Duhalloy region. He has taken the lead on the Community Care project work assisting in the homes of vulnerable adults and older people where the house fails to meet basic standards of warmth and safety. Michael also oversees a maintenance works across the James O'Keeffe complex.



THOMAS TWOMEY, Supervisory Management (QQI L6), Project Supervisor Construction Stage Level (QQI L6)

Thomas joined our Warmer Homes team in August 2013 working on the new ventilation specifications of the scheme. He was appointed Tús Supervisor in August 2016 with responsibility for coordinating and supervising participants placed in a number of settings in communities in the eastern Duhalloy area including the maintenance and development of Newmarket Pitch & Putt course with a focus on the inclusion of youth. Thomas also looks after the Transport Portfolio in the company and coordinates the maintenance of our fleet of vehicles.



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

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



PADDY O'CONNOR

Paddy has been the IRD Duhalloy CE Supervisor for sixteen years and has responsibility for Health and Safety within the company. As Health & Safety Officer he has been instrumental in developing policies and procedures in line with best practice. Paddy supports the participants on the CE 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. He supports each participant in developing a tailored progression plan. Paddy liaises with community organisations and groups to ensure quality placements for his participants.



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. In 2016 he completed a Manual Handling Instructors course.



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 Duhalloy in 2013 as a Tús Supervisor. 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 has allowed him to lead teams of Tús participants to complete "Community Care" project work to support older and more vulnerable adults to maintain successful independent living. Joe and his team of 20 participants aim to ensure that older people who leave hospital are not discharged to unsafe, cold, unsuitable homes. Joe also assists communities in their voluntary efforts for village renewal projects.



NUALA RIORDAN, Supervisory Management (QQI L6)

Nuala joined IRD Duhalloy in 2008 as an administrator. She became part of the Warmer Homes team and was their BER Assessor. She joined the IRD Duhalloy LIFE Project team in 2012, as administrator and field officer. In 2016 she was appointed Tús supervisor with special responsibility for the participants working on the IRD Duhalloy LIFE Programme. Nuala supports participants to access training and upskill throughout their placement on the LIFE project. She is responsible for implementing our schools' environment programme in conjunction with school Principals.



RACHEL BUDD, B.A. Hons Sociology, Cert in Training and Development, Cert in Community Development, Cert in Therapeutic Horticulture; Training Delivery & Evaluation (QQI L6)

Rachel joined IRD Duhalloy 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 Duhalloy Community Gardens. In March 2016, she became the Co-ordinator for the Local Training Initiative in Horticulture, which is currently in its 2nd year at IRD Duhalloy. She also works closely with the local GIY group, which meet monthly at the James O'Keeffe Institute and oversees the Community Garden which hosts a group from COPE Foundation weekly.

RaptorLIFE

IRD Duhallow's RaptorLIFE project is a four and a half year programme (2015-19). The project aims to improve the habitat for Hen Harrier, Merlin and other upland species in the Stacks to Mullaghareirk Mountains, West Limerick Hills and Mount Eagle Special Protection Area (SPA). RaptorLIFE is also implementing a range of actions to improve awareness and restore habitat for Atlantic Salmon, Brook Lamprey and other freshwater species in the Upper Blackwater River (Munster) Special Area of Conservation (SAC).



IRD Duhallow
RaptorLIFE



Large Japanese knotweed stand on the Upper Blackwater River.

Integral to this project is the involvement of local landowners in implementing sustainable land management, species-specific conservation measures, and the monitoring of our native wildlife.

The main issues that threaten Ireland's upland and freshwater species are habitat loss and degradation. RaptorLIFE is implementing a range of actions to improve awareness and restore habitat. The project's objective is to bring local communities together to better manage upland and freshwater habitats within the Duhallow area. RaptorLIFE is an ambitious project in terms of scale (large project area joining two Natura 2000 sites). For this reason, the project has concentrated on building effective partnerships with the local community and relevant Statutory Authorities.



Tom Siekaniec and Elizabeth Hobbs provide cover while Ilse Corkery is on maternity leave.

Stakeholder Engagement

The project has many aspects and stakeholder input is always welcome and indeed vital to the success of the project.

Farming community

The development of a management plan for raptors (with an emphasis on Hen Harrier) is in the early stages of development. The plan is being informed by a survey conducted to assess farming perspectives on Hen Harrier conservation in Duhallow. The results from this survey are complemented by data kindly supplied by BirdWatch Ireland, who undertook similar research at a national scale.



Statutory Authorities

As part of a wider national study with National Parks and Wildlife Service, ten satellite tags were deployed in 2016 on individual Hen Harrier chicks. RaptorLIFE deployed four of these, and plan to deploy a further four in 2017. The blog henharrietracker.blogspot.ie/, is tracking the progress of these birds.

Jodie Asselin, Associate Professor of Anthropology from Canada collaborating with RaptorLIFE on the socioeconomic aspects of the project.



Dr. Ilse Corkery, RaptorLIFE scientist sampling aquatic insect larvae to assess the health of Duhallow rivers.

Along with riverbank invasive weed 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 Cork Nature Network.

Links with Colleges

RaptorLIFE regularly hosts third level students on work placement who both provide valuable assistance to our staff, and gain experience and insights into the implementation of an applied conservation programme. We currently have one student from Tralee IT, one from UCC, and one student all the way from Belgium assisting with various aspects of the project. RaptorLIFE also mentored secondary school students Michael Sheehan and Jack Murphy, who went on to win the best group award for the biological and ecological science category, culminating in an overall second place at the BT Young Scientist Competition. Lastly, both primary and secondary school students within Duhallow have benefited from RaptorLIFE's "Nature Detective Programme", which encourages them to take an active part in the recording of wildlife in their locality which is later captured in an online map. You can view our online Wildlife Species Recording map at www.duhallowLIFE.com.



Recording the measurements of a bank vole, an important prey for raptors.



Mulching brash as part of blanket bog restoration.

Habitat Restoration

Over the last year there has been great progress made on the habitat restoration component of the project with six project farms participating as well as Coillte's Cooperation.

Riparian protection

To date, over 10km of riverbank has been fenced to exclude livestock with 17 cattle drinkers installed. Once a section of river is fenced and cattle drinkers installed, the eroding bends are planted with willow and alder to help protect the banks from excessive erosion. This reduces the amount of silt getting into the river. Siltation of the riverbed is one of the major pollutants in this part of the catchment, affecting important species like Freshwater Pearl Mussel, Atlantic Salmon, Brook Lamprey, and Brown Trout. All of this work is carried out at no cost to landowners. RaptorLIFE is also undertaking fish, macroinvertebrate and sediment monitoring to assess the health of the Upper Blackwater and Owentarglin rivers.

RaptorLIFE



Tús and RSS participants managing heather to increase the amount of prey for raptors.

Invasive weed species

RaptorLIFE has put a lot of effort into raising awareness as well as the control of Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam in the Duhallow area. To date, we have treated Japanese knotweed with glyphosate



RaptorLIFE staff discussing heather management techniques with Ciaran Nugent from the Forest Service.

using a towed sprayer on over 100km of road network. We have used glyphosate approved for use near water to treat a 10km stretch of the upper Blackwater, and a 15km stretch of the Owentaraglin using the direct injection method. We have also controlled Himalayan balsam along 80km of riverbank on the same rivers. This work is ongoing, as it may take up to five years before these weeds are eradicated and carried out by trained Tús and RSS participants.

Creation of a riparian foraging corridor to connect an SAC and SPA

RaptorLIFE are collaborating with Coillte to open up a 50m wide wildlife corridor along the upper reaches of the Blackwater River to provide nesting and foraging habitat for Hen Harrier and Merlin. This work links up the conservation efforts of two important EU designated sites, and is the first time that the conservation of two Natura 2000 sites (SPA and SAC) has been integrated in this way. The first part of the project is complete with an upper section of plantation forest felled, with brash removed and native trees planted along the edge of the corridor.



Nuala Riordan and Maura Walsh of IRD Duhallow LIFE at the Conference in Brussels.

Project farms

A number of project farms are being used to trial conservation actions. The actions being trialled included heather management, hedgerow improvement, invasive weed control, and blanket bog rehabilitation through the removal of wilding conifers.



Species Monitoring

In order to assess the outcomes of RaptorLIFE's conservation actions, it is essential to monitor the projects target species and their potential prey

Tommy Sejersen, Maura Walsh at the UK IE LIFE National Platform Meeting, Cambridge.



BT Young Scientist winners, Michael Sheehan and Jack Murphy from Colaiste Treasa with their teachers Derry O'Donovan and Veronica Walsh. IRD Duhallow were delighted to support the pair to undertake their research.

throughout the project. If prey abundance and raptor numbers increase at sites where we have carried our restoration work, then we can confidently say the project has been a success.

Raptors are birds of prey and Duhallow 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 our SPA in recent years. 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 Duhallow and to promote and improve their habitat.

RaptorLIFE are working with expert ornithologists Tony Nagle and Alan Mee, Birdwatch Ireland, and the Duhallow Birdwatch Group and volunteers are currently surveying and monitoring Hen Harrier, Merlin and Peregrine Falcons. RaptorLIFE has been identifying and monitoring potential Hen Harrier breeding sites and winter roost sites, and will have satellite tagged up to eight chicks by the end of the 2017 breeding season. Furthermore, RaptorLIFE have installed and are monitoring nest baskets for Merlin, and are identifying the availability of prey species with small mammal trapping and small bird surveys



Pat Martin of the Department of Environment, Laszlo Becsy of DG Environment and IRD Duhallow's Nuala Riordan at the UK IE LIFE National Platform Meeting, Cambridge.



Angelo Salsi of DG Environment with Maura Walsh and Nuala O'Riordan of IRD Duhallow Raptor LIFE at EU Green Week.

Project Monitoring

Pobal is an associated beneficiary of the project as it holds the payroll function for our Tús and RSS Schemes. NEEMO has been contract by DG Environment to monitor the implementation of our LIFE Raptor Plan and Mr Neil Wilkie is our monitor for Raptor as well as SAM OK. IRD Duhallow has attended a number of workshops and events organised by the commission and NEEMO in order to enhance our delivery of the project.

Fencing off rivers to exclude livestock helps protect water quality.



IRD Duhallow AfterLIFE Plan



The IRD DuhallowLIFE project was a major EU LIFE funded conservation project that targeted the upper reaches of the River Blackwater in Duhallow. Many of the conservation actions focused on the River Allow, an important Atlantic salmon and Freshwater pearl mussel river. A range of actions were carried out throughout the project in Duhallow. Innovations and best practice techniques were developed with the local farming community and stakeholders to address issues affecting the conservation of the Natura 2000 site

and to ensure the protection of the habitats of the Pearl Mussel, Atlantic Salmon, Otter and Kingfisher.

The AfterLIFE Conservation Plan

IRD Duhallow is committed to maintaining the actions delivered by our DuhallowLIFE project for a further five years beyond the project end date, which was June 2015. The main objective is to ensure the maintenance of the measures delivered during the project from 2010 to 2015 and the continued input from the River Allow Catchment Management Group, involving many relevant stakeholders.



Project Manager Eileen Linehan oversees the work of the LIFE Project.

Rural Social Scheme and Tús participants are on hand to manage infestations of Himalayan Balsam along the Allow, Dalua, Brogeen Rivers and the Rampart Stream. 35km of riverside and drains were systematically cleared over the course of the project. This 35km is regularly checked and walked over to ensure no re-infestation of this invasive plant.

National Recognition of the LIFE Work

The National Biodiversity Data Centre recently profiled ten conservation initiatives, which were deemed by Biodiversity Ireland, to have been very successful in the delivery of conservation objectives. IRD DuhallowLIFE project is listed for the eradication of Himalayan Balsam in the Upper Blackwater catchment and the work in conserving the Pearl Mussel, Atlantic Salmon, Otters and Kingfishers.



Before & After: Himalayan Balsam has been eradicated from many river banks due to the hard work of RSS and Tús participants as well as volunteers. Natural vegetation has since thrived since the removal of the invasive balsam.

Continuing to Support Duhallow's Endangered Species

The project installed an artificial sand martin-nesting wall on the banks of the River Dalua. This was placed near to a natural nesting site that regularly becomes flooded after heavy rain leading to the complete loss of all chicks every year. Despite using playback calls this year to lure new birds to the wall we have still had only limited success. Sand martins have been observed flying over and investigating the site, but pairs have not yet



RSS participants and landowners continue to maintain solar nose pumps to keep cattle from drinking in the rivers. This mitigates siltation and river bank erosion.

set up residence there. This reveals the necessity of long term conservation investment; it may be several years before wildlife can colonise new areas.

To limit bank erosion, the After LIFE project oversees fencing, cattle nose pumps, solar pumps and silt traps, which were all installed as part of the project and continue to be maintained. Through hampering bank erosion, the amount of silt entering into the riverbeds has been reduced, conserving the wildlife habitat, as this silt was suffocating the endangered pearl mussel. The ongoing maintenance is being organised in conjunction with the local landowners, and an application for funding under the EIPs has been made to ensure



Farmers on the Allow, Brigid and Charles Daly with their daughter Teresa, who is this year's Chicago Rose. Brigid and Charles have worked closely with the LIFE Project since its inception.



Nuala Riordan continues to educate young people about the species and habitats preserved through LIFE SAMOK.

long term improvements to the rivers of the Upper Blackwater.

Stakeholder Involvement

The DuhallowLIFE project provided an excellent example of active stakeholder engagement for habitat and environmental management of a river catchment Special

Area of Conservation. Without the involvement of landowners, anglers, State agencies and the general public, many of the project actions could not have been achieved. The project, with many of its innovative measures in protecting rivers while maintaining landowners' properties, has built on the foundation of trust between the agriculture communities and environmental projects, which IRD Duhallow built up over 25 years of bottom up development. The trusting relationship forged over the

duration of the Project is being strengthened through the AfterLIFE programme. Having RSS and Tús participants working on the ground to maintain many of the works conducted during the LIFE project and continually supporting the River Allow Catchment Management Group will ensure that landowners and other stakeholders will be engaged and invested in the long-term process of protecting the Upper Blackwater and its tributaries.



Installing a playback system at the Sand martin wall.

Environment



The amazing swift!



Goldfinches, a colourful visitor to our fields and gardens.

Duhallow's natural environment and its resources have great intrinsic worth. IRD Duhallow's Environment Working Group initiates projects to help people and their communities' value and protect these resources in order to provide for current and future generations. A clean, ecologically functional environment is a critical component for a good quality of life, with clean air and water two of our most basic human needs. A diverse and abundant wildlife, coupled with a healthy and productive soil are other aspects of our natural environment that are essential for ensuring the production of top quality milk and beef, which underpins our economy. In accordance with IRD Duhallow's Environment Strategic Objectives our actions primarily focus on: Environment Awareness, Sustainable Land Use, Hedgerow Management, Protection of Habitats and Ecosystems and safeguarding Endangered Species. The Environment Working Group are delighted to have secured two LIFE programmes.

Duhallow Bird Watch Group

The Duhallow Bird Watch Group consists of amateur birders as well as professional conservationists with hundreds of years' experience between them. The members bring a wealth of knowledge with some having gleaned experience with birdwatching groups in Europe and beyond. During the year various workshops, fieldtrips and information seminars were organised, including both dawn and dusk chorus' in the Island Wood in Newmarket, and a trip to Wales to see a variety of birds and habitats, with the highlight being the huge number of red kites observed at a feeding station. Furthermore, a recording of sand martin song was installed at the artificial sand martin colony put in place by our LIFE SAMOK Project. It is hoped the recording will attract birds to the artificial colony, as the natural nesting site is located in an eroding riverbank that is prone to flooding. For the last 2 years, not a single chick has fledged successfully due to the flooding.



Members of the Duhallow Bird Watch Group during the dawn chorus at Island Wood.



Long-standing members of Duhallow Bird Watch Group, Joe O'Connell, Susan Hickey, Bridget Colfer, Kay Deedy and Brin McDonnell taking a "sos beag" during a recent Bird Watch Outing.

Swifts in Duhallow

One of the most iconic and intriguing of our bird species, the swift 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 every year 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.



Nicholas Forde, Maura Walsh and MEP Liadh Ni Riada taking animated environment measures in the Geegaragh.

Swifts prefer to nest in older high buildings, where they can get under the eaves or fascia. They are losing many nesting sites because when old buildings are renovated the new building materials and techniques used, prevent the birds from accessing their traditional nest sites. In response to this situation Duhallow Bird Watch Group headed up by Dr. Brin McDonnell, initiated a swift conservation project in Newmarket, resulting in 24 swift boxes being built into the upper walls of the outbuildings in the James O'Keeffe Institute, while 44 entrances have been made to facilitate swifts in the old Presbyterian Church, and 14 other boxes can be found in various locations around Newmarket. Lynda Huxley of the "Save Our Swifts" Project also delivered a seminar called "The amazing swift", which promoted the installation of nest boxes, surveying of urban areas to map buildings being used by swifts, raising awareness with communities, and liaising with councils in relation to swift conservation.



Local Bee Keeping enthusiasts Pat Keane and Andy Bourke continue to work tirelessly on behalf of the Duhallow Bee Keepers.



Plant sale time at the T.O. Community Garden.

IRD Duhallow Community Gardens

IRD Duhallow Community Garden were first established in 2011 with the creation of a Therapeutic garden by the Towards Occupation Programme, which aims to help adults who have suffered from mental illness, depression and rural isolation. Five years later the gardens are constantly expanding and flourishing, and are used as a base by several community groups including a Local Training Initiative, the local Grow It Yourself Group, participants from the T.O programme, volunteers from COPE and children from the local After Schools Club and Summer Camps.

The horticultural programme at IRD Duhallow aims to support, demonstrate and educate people in the methods of growing their own food in an organic, sustainable and biodiverse way. The two food producing gardens are designed with different needs in mind. The T.O. garden is designed to be easy to work and is an attractive space to rest. The Kitchen garden is more intensive and uses traditional layout and methods to produce food, with the ethos of both to work with and be a part of nature and the world around us. These gardens are part of a larger estate, which includes an apple orchard planted within a semi wild meadow, landscaping based on sustainable wildlife friendly planting schemes and wildlife ponds and an amenity walk surrounded by mature trees and hedgerows.

Agriculture

The Agriculture Industry is the cornerstone of Duhallow's economy. Our area has levels of dependency on agriculture that are more than twice the North Cork average and three times the national average. IRD Duhallow's Agriculture Working Group places a keen emphasis on the provision of supports to farmers to promote sustainable farming, improving efficiencies and upskilling in line with best practice.

GLAS: (Green Low-Carbon Agri Environment Scheme)

Green Low- Carbon Agri Environment Scheme is the new EU co funded Agri-Environment programme following on from REPS and AEOS. GLAS



The Duhallow Agri Museum displayed their vintage pieces at a number of events this year including the Mallow Home and Garden Festival and Charleville Show.

is an ambitious scheme aiming to enhance the rural environment focusing in particular on the preservation of various habitats and species, mitigating climate change and improving water quality. Approximately 50,000 farmers have signed up for GLAS nationally

with 2,500 farmers still awaiting payment. Lack of flexibility in the scheme, with amendments not being accepted, is leading to farmers not being able to comply with requirements in some cases; some farmers are so frustrated that they have withdrawn from the scheme. The ongoing hold up in GLAS payments to farmers has reached tipping point and it is now incumbent on the Minister and the Department to issue payments to all compliant farmers.

Succession & Wills

In response to increasing bureaucracy and regulations in relation to farming, IRD Duhallow's Agriculture Working Group organised a conference on Succession and Wills. Specialist knowledge is required to fully appreciate the problems that farmers face today, as many decisions carry legal, tax and practical implications. Farmers and landowners who keep abreast of current laws and regulations will be empowered to make better decisions for their farming business. Karen Walsh, solicitor with Walsh and Partners, was the guest speaker at a conference hosted by the Agriculture Working Group on Succession and Wills, where Karen covered key topics such as farm transfer, inheritance, the importance of wills and succession planning.



John Linehan, Chairperson of IRD Duhallow's Agriculture Working Group with Karen Walsh Solicitor and Katie Crowley IRD Duhallow at the Farm Succession, Wills and Transfers Conference.

Duhallow Bee Keepers

The Duhallow Bee-keepers group held a series of five Lectures and Workshops in early spring, commencing with a talk on The Manipulation

of a Colony of Honeybees from Dr Padraig Whelan, and continuing to cover topics such as How to produce Bees and Honey, storing frames, Pests and Diseases. The series ended with a talk on the working year in an Apiary by Irene Power of the South Tipperary Bee Keepers Association and a practical outdoor demonstration. Our hive of bees located at the James O'Keeffe Institute is thriving and has developed into a strong colony.

Grow it Yourself

This year the GIY group has focused on unusual cultural and food preservation methods, hosting a talk on growing mushrooms, followed by a full day workshop on food fermentation. In May a practical session on planting a medicinal herb bed was led by Niamh Ni Dhuill of Transition Kerry. Summer outings included a visit to two organic farms in Tralee.



A group of Farmers from Duhallow who participated in E-feirm training delivered by tutor Joan McGuire, enabling them become more familiar with and avail of new technologies to support improved farm efficiencies.

Brexit One Year On

It is feared that Brexit will have a detrimental effect on Irish Agriculture and food producers. It is envisaged that Brexit will require the re-introduction of Border controls including the land border with Northern Ireland. If UK and the EU fail to maintain free trade markets, this is likely to have a detrimental result on the agri-export industry. Brexit in whatever shape it takes, will affect the beef sector, and not for the better. Half of our beef goes into the UK market and beef is not the only sector likely to be affected, as a hard Brexit would threaten the rapid progress of the Irish dairy sector. Unless the UK and the EU are able to develop a free trade agreement, more than a billion litres of Irish milk destined for the British cheese market will face steep tariffs.



Sowing beans in Duhallow: Farmers in Duhallow grow beans and sugar beet for fodder for cattle for the winter.

Women & Agriculture

The role of women on farms is celebrated today through Irish Country Living's annual conference. Delegates travelled across the country for the annual Women & Agriculture conference, which was in its ninth year. Last year's conference took place in the Radisson Blu Hotel in Sligo Town.



International Miss Macra Sinead Guiney visited the IRD Duhallow stand at the ploughing.

Tourism in Duhallow

LEADER 07-13 invested heavily in developing local tourism products. Duhallow continues to retain its niche markets as an outdoor tourist destination with a wide range of activities such as Walks, the Kanturk Cycling Velodrome and Angling.



IRD Duhallow staff Louise Bourke, Mary Creedon, Jacinta Carroll and Helen O'Sullivan with Ollie O'Sullivan and Peter Stockbrough of Failte Ireland at a meeting discussing the development of Self Catering Accommodation.

Accommodation

The Duhallow Region has a very evident gap in local accommodation. The region does not host a hotel, with few B&Bs and Self Catering Accommodations in the locality. The current LEADER programme has prioritised to fund individual projects to a maximum of €25,000 towards the development of Self Catering Accommodations within this region.



Emmet Place in Newmarket; a Self Catering Accommodation funded through the LEADER 07-13 Programme.

Walkers

The IRD Duhallow Walking group has trained walking leaders to lead visitors around the six walks developed by IRD Duhallow throughout the region. The group meets once a month to refresh their leading skills and has partaken in training developing new walking leaders and map reading refresher training for existing walk leaders.



Mike Murphy participating in the Map Reading Refresher Course, which was given by Mountain Steward Maureen O'Brien.

Clan Gatherings

There has been a significant rise in the level of interest in people tracing their Irish roots and ancestry. Building on this, many overseas visitors are encouraged to visit the Duhallow area to research their family history. Clan gatherings in the region are growing as many people from families of the region such as the McAuliffes and the O'Keeffes come together to celebrate their family history and heritage. The James O'Keeffe Institute was delighted to welcome the O'Keeffe clan in September where the group took tours of the James O'Keeffe Building led by IRD Duhallow CEO Maura Walsh and had afternoon tea served by Duhallow Community Food Service.



Members of Ceoltoiri Sliabh Luachra, Rockchapel, with the Massachusetts Brass Band.

Ballyhass Lakes new Wakeboarding Park is drawing visitors from far and wide.



Newmarket Pitch and Putt

Newmarket Pitch and Putt Club is now in its third year since the major capital investment. The plan for the year ahead is to continue to grow the membership and have adults and juveniles representing the Club in competitions around the country. The course attracts visiting players from all across Munster due to the impressive design of the course making it a challenge to play for even the most experienced player. Two weekly competitions have been put in place for our juveniles since the start of May resulting in social interaction between kids that might otherwise never get to play together.



The Juvenile Members hold a weekly competition. Pictured: Adam Birtley, Brian O'Connor, Michael Browne, Andrew Murphy, Rory Sheehan, Conor Sheehan, Ben Newman and Padraig O'Flynn.

The Adult Members weekly competitions have seen great success and attracted large

numbers and similar to the juvenile group consisting of three major competitions throughout the summer. Last summer we organised our second weeklong summer camp for juveniles. This provided an opportunity for young people who have an interest in the sport to get a taste of it before committing to an Annual membership. Plans are underway for another such camp this August. A qualified coach from the Pitch and Putt Union of Ireland oversaw this competition and provided hands on training to participants each day teaching them the rules of the game and how to perfect their techniques.



Students from Newmarket Boys NS learning the skills of Pitch & Putt.

Cultural Tourism

Duhallow is home to the Sliabh Luachra Culture and its attractions draws people from far and near. This is evidenced in the voluntary run Sliabh Luachra Centre of Excellence in Rockchapel where Irish music, culture and traditions may be celebrated, expressed and shared authentically in the Sliabh Luachra style. Bruach na Carraige has linked up with Celtic Horizon Tours bringing a number of groups from America to experience the Sliabh Luachra Culture and Heritage in Rockchapel. Many of these

visiting groups have musical links to the region ranging from choirs to a brass band from Massachusetts.

Duhallow Angling Centre of Excellence

Since its inception five years ago, the Duhallow Angling Centre of Excellence continues to grow the angling tourism market for the Duhallow region. The Kanturk Angling Club under the leadership of Michael Twohig recognised the potential to develop a local amenity previously untapped in Duhallow and the idea of an angling centre of excellence was born.

The Duhallow region is fast becoming a place to visit for anglers who want to pit their skills against the wily brown trout in the local rivers. Fáilte Ireland's Publication Tourism Facts for 2016 notes that Angling was responsible for 3% of all visitors to Ireland accounting for 131,000 visitors to the area. Fly fishing anglers like nothing better than to hook a wild brown trout feeding on natural insects in its own environment. Such is the quality of trout fishing in Duhallow that we are now experiencing regular repeat visitors. To date in 2017 we have welcomed visiting anglers from Australia, South Africa, Spain, North America and the United Kingdom as well as domestic anglers.



Ryan McNamara Colorado USA with a nice salmon from the Blackwater.



Summer Angling Camp with Tom Ankettell and Denis Cronin.

The Angling Centre of Excellence and local district and trout angling clubs regularly organise groups of volunteers to go out and maintain river banks and access points to the rivers by cutting back large branches and pathways.



Easter Angling Camp.

Education and Training

Introducing local people both young and old to angling is so very important to the future survival of the sport and it increases an awareness among the local communities on the importance of conservation of fish stocks and maintaining the local environment.

The angling camps for children during both Easter and summer continue to be well supported and good

numbers are attending. The angling centre offers coaching to adults of all ages at all times. We can supply all the equipment required and classes are freely available. Following on in the steps of Eoin Curtin we have two graduates of the angling centres first summer camp, travelling to the world youth championships. The two lads travelling are Alan Barrow and Arron McCann.

The Duhallow angling centre of excellence is on a firm footing and achieving all the goals it set for itself from day one. The numbers of visiting anglers are increasing and this will have a good effect on the local economy. We look forward to a successful future.

Chris Higgins from South Africa on a visit to Kanturk for a couple of days fishing.

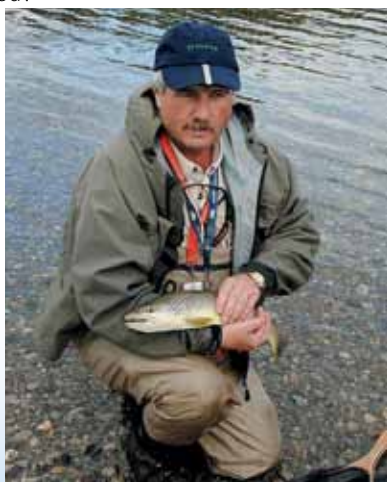


Michael Nicholas from Madrid enjoying the trout fishing in Duhallow

Maintaining Duhallow's Rivers

It is very important to manage our fisheries properly and help maintain the large head of wild brown trout we are so fortunate to have. To this end, we have a strict catch and release policy for visitors and we encourage local anglers to also practice catch and release. Our motto is "a fish caught and released is your gift to another angler and may have been another angler's gift to you".

Pollution is the single biggest threat to our fisheries and several incidents over the past year are of serious concern to the future welfare of our waterways. Rivers are not just about fish. Animals and birds as well invertebrates are dependent on clean water for survival. Water is life and we need to be constantly vigilant to maintain pollution free rivers and lakes.



Tom Ankettell
Duhallow Angling Centre Coordinator



Culture and Heritage



Duhallow Choral Society pictured with Deputy Michael Moynihan who invited them to perform at Dail Eireann this year.

The richness of the heritage and culture of the Duhallow region was celebrated and promoted in various forms over the last 12 months and it is the contribution which local community groups make to this field which guarantees that it is possible for all of us to enjoy our unique heritage.

Heritage Week

IRD Duhallow has actively taken part in National Heritage week every August to celebrate and promote the culture and heritage of the region. The theme of the 2016 heritage week was "One Hundred Years of Heritage".



Michelle Mirtschink Tús Participant and Diane Carton of Sáille Baskets Lyre showcasing the art of weaving and basket making as part of National Heritage Week.

Here in Newmarket we organised 3 workshops covering an array of aspects of the built and natural heritage on the James O'Keeffe grounds. Workshops included a full day traditional stone building workshop and a workshop on traditional smoking methods including smoking fish, meat and cheese. This workshop was delivered by PJ Cronin CE participant who works on this project and it proved very popular. Our third workshop was delivered by Rachel Budd Horticulturist, on Heritage Gardening, which covered traditional horticultural practices and vegetable growing.

An open day was also held in the Vintage Agri Machinery Yard in the James O'Keeffe Institute, showcasing the work of basket makers, weavers, blacksmiths and Newmarket Vintage Club, this proved a very enjoyable



day for all ages.

Locals enjoying a demonstration on traditional smoking methods from PJ Cremin at the James O'Keeffe Smokehouse.

Traditional Heritage Centres

Thanks to our previous LEADER Programme, Duhallow is fortunate to have 6 vibrant community heritage centres spread across the region ensuring that our heritage, culture and traditions are preserved for future generations and celebrated in various styles and formats in the current day. Bruach na Carraige in Rockchapel is home to Ceoltoiri Sliabh Luachra and traditionally hosts a summer programme of events in July and August of weekly seisiuns, shows and sean nos dance classes. Complimenting this is Freemount Heritage Centre which run seisiuns weekly, Laharn Heritage Centre which has crossroad dancing every Sunday night during the Summer as well as a number of other events taking place such as talks and classes in Aubane Heritage Centre, Gneeveguilla Teach Fáilte and Foil Old School.



Laharn Cross Road Dancing



Participants on the Dry Stone Wall Workshop learned the history and construction of Dry Stone Walls from Stonemason Don Murphy IRD Duhallow.

Local Diaspora and Historic Homesteads Project

Over the last number of years IRD Duhallow was delighted to successfully rollout an historic graves project with over 50 locals trained and involved in the project. Nationally, 700 historic graveyards, 70,000 headstones and over 120,000 historic people have been recorded to the web geolocating genealogical datasets which have resulted in increased tourism as well as a lot of positive local engagement. Through the Local Diaspora Fund 2016 a sister project involving the mapping and publication of the unoccupied pre-1916 historic homesteads, humble and great of parishes in Duhallow has commenced called 'The Memory Trail'. The aim of this is to aid tourists of Irish Ancestry (100m) to trace the homes of their past generations. This has involved communities coming on board to build this memory trail of homesteads from which emigrating families left for foreign shores. This has taken the format of a survey and publication system where the local community, IRD Duhallow and the local authority collaborate. John Tracey of Eachtra Archaeological Services undertook this work with communities who in turn have their own webpage with a map of their historic homesteads, associated geological datasets and keys stories about the community. To date Kiskeam, Boherbue, Freemount, Tullylease, Banteer, Lyre, Lombardstown and Bweeng have all taken part and the project is still continuing. It is also hoped as the project develops each community in the region will take part and also have similar results including their own webpage.



The tradition of Sugán chair making was on show as part of National Heritage Week.

IRD Duhallow was delighted to support a number of community events through the Local Diaspora Fund which promoted diaspora engagement across Duhallow. Kanturk Wild Boar Festival, Tureencahill Family Day, the launch of 'The Letter Under the Pillow' a book by the Sisters of St Joseph as well as seisiuns and workshops were all supported through this fund.



Storyteller Ray O'Sullivan with local school children who took part in the Eamon Kelly Seanchai Weekend, which is hosted by Gneeveguilla, Teach Fáilte.

Eamon Kelly Seanchai

October saw Gneeveguilla Teach Fáilte Committee host the Eamon Kelly Seanchai weekend for the second year in a row which commemorates the work of this renowned seanchai, actor and dramatist from Gneeveguilla. For 2016, IRD Duhallow was delighted to assist the community source funding through the National Arts Council for the weekend of festivities and to help grow the initiative to incorporate the local children through storytelling workshops in the schools. This ensured that local children learned the art of delivery of a story, styles of speech and hand gestures resulting in the children presenting their finished story during the weekend. The art of storytelling is unique to rural Ireland and it is initiatives such as these that will help to guarantee it for the future and to help its revival also. Chairman of Dublin's Abbey Theatre, Dr Bryan MacMahon was in attendance at the weekend event along with Eamon Kelly's sister Brid Sugrue and his son Eoin Kelly.



Maura Walsh IRD Duhallow addressing the audience at the Eamon Kelly Seanchai Weekend Gneeveguilla.

Enterprise

Relative to Cork County, North Cork has a lower level of participation in the workforce and a higher level of unemployment. To combat this, IRD Duhallow Working Group continues to put in place initiatives to support the small, medium and micro-enterprise sector, the social enterprise sector and entrepreneurship.

Duhallow Business Awards

Now, in their fourth year, the annual IRD Duhallow Business Awards held in conjunction with the Corkman the event featured noted dignitaries such as John Scanlon of Flextronics and Minister for Agriculture Michael Creed present on the night. The purpose of these awards is to celebrate the excellence in local Duhallow business. On the night 170 people attended and the judges Siobhan Murphy (Kerryman), John Piersie (Former CEO of SKDP) and James McAuley (McCarthy Insurance Group) had no easy task to pick the worthy winners amongst the 21 shortlisted finalists.



The Duhallow Business Awards are jointly coordinated by IRD Duhallow and the Corkman. Pictured here Maura Walsh (IRD Duhallow), Maria Herlihy (The Corkman), Laura Curtin (Flextronics), Anne Maria Bourke (IRD Duhallow), John Moylan (Flextronics), John Scanlan (Flextronics) and Minister for Agriculture Michael Creed.

- Best Start Up:** Anne McEnry – Sliabh Luachra Framers
- Best Established:** Ayrton Group
- Best Young Entrepreneur:** JJ O'Sullivan – JJ's Appliances
- Creative Industry Award:** Buckley Ironworks
- Women Led Business:** Noirins Boutique
- Community Enterprise:** Clann Aire
- Great Place to Work Award:** North Cork Co-op
- Best Duhallow Business 2017:** Ayrton Group



Maura Walsh (IRD Duhallow), Siobhan Murphy (The Kerryman), Kevin Hughes (The Kerryman), Pat O'Neill (Ayrton), and Minister for Agriculture Michael Creed, presenting the Overall Best Duhallow Business Award for 2016 to Kieran and Helen Linehan of the Ayrton Group.

Irish industry. Ayrton is one of Ireland's largest practices, with over 90 professional and administration staff. In January 2016, they opened their second training centre, at Ayrton Road, Tallaght, Dublin 24, running the same services as Newmarket. Now rebranded as the Ayrton Group, the company's headquarters remains in Newmarket.

This year's awards were fortunate to have such a prestigious keynote speaker at the event. John Scanlan is Vice President of Operations for Flex Global Services and Solutions. Flextronics is a \$24.5B, industry-leading, Fortune Global 500 end-to-end supply chain solutions company with a global workforce of 200,000 and operations in over 30 countries. John himself coming from rural Kilkee in Clare had insightful and inspiring words on the challenges and triumphs of owning and running a business in rural Ireland as well as operating at a global level.

SICAP

Under the limited budget available in Goal 3 of SICAP, IRD Duhallow's Enterprise Working Group offers a number of targeted supports to those starting in local businesses. Two start your own business training programmes were delivered whereby 26 people received training. The Start Your Own Business Course covers the fundamentals of all you need to know to before you commence trading from market research and business planning, to company registration and an introduction to marketing and book keeping.



IRD Duhallow Staff Eileen Linehan, Louise Bourke, Katie Crowley and Triona Murphy support enterprises and social enterprises through capital supports, training and mentoring.



Ann McEnry of Sliabh Luachra Framers, Rathmore, won the Best Start Up Business at the 2016 Duhallow Business Awards.

Mentoring

Often times business owners need a fresh pair of eyes and the knowledge and experience of a mentor to give them the best possible start in business. 34 individuals received mentoring through the IRD Duhallow Mentoring Programme in the past 12 months. A mentor helps develop important business skills, supports business owners in making important decisions and puts them in touch with useful business contacts. Our mentoring programme has a pool of highly qualified mentors from a wide range of backgrounds who provide advice and guidance to start-up businesses.

Back To Work Education Allowance / Short Term Enterprise Allowance

IRD Duhallow collaborates with the Department of Social Protection in supporting those who are unemployed into self-employment. The BTWEA is an initiative whereby an approved client can continue to receive their welfare payment for the first 12 months of business and 75% of the payment for the second 12 months. Recipients will also be eligible for fuel allowance; back to school footwear and clothing, rent and mortgage supplement and diet supplement. A number of individuals have been supported into self-employment through this scheme in 16-17.



Claire O'Keeffe successfully completed a Start Your Own Business programme with SICAP. She has since gone on to complete the Train the Trainer QQI Level 6 with IRD Duhallow and started her own business teaching Art.

LEADER

A targeted call was issued for LEADER project applications in Kerry in October and in North Cork in February under three measures Enterprise, Rural Towns and Broadband. Twenty EOIs were submitted under Enterprise



Development and 19 under Rural Tourism. These are now progressing through the 19 stages of application, which is taking in excess of 40 weeks.

Catherine Corkery and Michelle Green of Smile Resource Exchange. Smile was shortlisted in the Social Enterprise Category of the Duhallow Business Awards.

Skillnet

The IRD Duhallow Skillnet was established in May of 2015. The concept behind it was to deliver training locally, thereby reducing the cost, and travel time for local businesses. In turn, enabling local businesses to upskill employees affordably in a locally accessible location. Since then, the network has grown from strength to strength and our Key Performance Indicators to date show that the Skillnet has supported the delivery of 5097 training days for employed individuals and 1160 for unemployed.



IRD Duhallow Skillnet is part of a Skillnet Cluster, pictured here launching the Skillnets Statement of Strategy are cluster members: - Dermot O'Neill, Innovation & Lean Sigma Skillnet - Susan Costello, PharmaChem Skillnet - Bridie Corrigan Matthews, Taste4Success Skillnet - Paul Healy, Skillnets - Mark Skinner, FDI Skillnet - Louise Bourke, IRD Duhallow Skillnet - Pauline O'Flanagan, Irish MedTech Skillnet and Trish Breen, Skillnets.

The training plan delivered by IRD Duhallow Skillnet is in line with the actions recommended under the Action Plan for Jobs for the South West Region 2015-2017 that aims to:

- Double the workforce training and development activity and investment by enterprise;
- make full use of the facilities of the Education and Training Boards and Skillnets in the region to increase the employment prospects of the unemployed to meet enterprise needs and for in-company training;
- Exploit opportunities for increased Homeworking by rolling out a range of initiatives within the region i.e. in our case through clustering of sectors and support of micro enterprises in the region.

May 2015 - May 2017

Member Companies	340
Employed Trainees	717
Unemployed Trainees	152
Employed Trainee Days	5097
Unemployed Trainee Days	1160

Skillnets Statement of Strategy 2016-2019 was released in July of last year and this identifies that Skillnets nationally has three main principles.

1. Model of training Excellence
2. Supplying Future Skills
3. Increasing Employer Participation

The Duhallow Skillnet has incorporated and implemented these principles as key pillars for the network.

Model of Training Excellence

To ensure a model of training excellence all our courses are run in consultation with member companies to address identified skill gaps and are underpinned by a training needs analysis conducted with member companies. We have placed a keen emphasis on delivering accredited training and 40% of our training is QQI or equivalent accreditation. Accredited training has a number of advantages for employers in that it ensures employees have acquired the knowledge and have proven to achieve their learner outcomes. For employees it increases their employability and the



Did you know that social media marketing has a 100% higher lead-to-close rate than outbound marketing? Pictured here are the participants of the Social Media Marketing Class held in Macroom E Centre with their tutor Marie Collins of Digipulse Marketing.

mobility of learners through formal accreditation. This is especially important for the jobseekers supported through the programme. Certified training increases the likelihood of them to achieve employment and the National Skills Strategy highlights that certified individual will remain a priority given the link between skills and employment.



Michael Twohig of IRD Duhallow presents a QQI Level 6 cert in Manual Handling Instructor Training to Jerry Barrett of Avondhu Blackwater.



Networking is a key part of all the training programmes delivered. The network focuses on bringing together businesses and generates business networking opportunities through networking events.

Dan Buckley of FRS demonstrating the correct maintenance of a chainsaw to participants of the QQI Level 4 Horticulture Course. This course was delivered through the Skillnet programme.

Increasing Employer Participation: Supporting SMEs

A key focus for our network is supporting the local SMEs. The Duhallow Skillnet places a keen emphasis on upskilling sole traders; interestingly 71% of the businesses trained so far would be classified as Micro Enterprises. To facilitate sole traders many of the skillnet training courses run at night or on Saturdays so that our member companies do not have to "shut shop" to upskill.



Louise Bourke (IRD Duhallow) and Dan Twomey of the LEADER funded Waterpower Engineering at a Kanturk Breakfast Networking event hosted by Dan in Corkey's Bar.

Regional Sector Networks

The IRD Duhallow Skillnet identifies the need and potential for the development of Regional Sector Networks within the Skillnet. These sub groups of the Skillnet are supported to access various training programmes as well as the development of regular networking meetings amongst the group. We have already trialled this model with the Childcare Services in the area establishing the North Cork Childcare Network, which has brought together managers of childcare facilities as well as Tusla, and the Cork County Childcare Committee. This has proven to be hugely beneficial for the network members by promoting peer support and contacts in a highly regulated and rapidly changing industry. The NCCN organised Mini Me Yoga Training in March of 2017, which allowed for Childcare Services to offer enhanced service to their customers by having staff trained in the delivery of yoga.

Supplying Future Skills

In 2017 the IRD Duhallow Skillnet was awarded our first Job Seekers Support Programme (JSSP). 100% funded, this programme provides training for job seekers in areas where there are identified skills gaps.



The Skillnet has plans to address locally identified skills shortage for Construction Workers and Book Keepers. This training will be delivered in Autumn of 2017.

Angela Sheehan received a place on the TNP Job Seekers QQI Level 6 Training Delivery and Evaluation Programme. She has since gone on to gain employment in interior design.

Community Development



Kevin Hughes of The Kerryman, Siobhan Griffin & Niamh O'Sullivan Kerry County Council, Triona Murphy, Breeda Moynihan Cronin, Brian Kelly, Maura Walsh, IRD Duhallow, Siobhan Murphy The Kerryman at The 2017 Kerry Community & Voluntary Awards celebrating community efforts to improve our social, economic, cultural and environmental quality of life.

Community Elections

May 2017 was the turn of Western Duhallow to hold its community Fora elections for the board of IRD Duhallow. Existing board member Batt Casey of Kiskeam gave three years' service to the board and chose to step aside to allow new representation from the region. Billy Dennehy of Kiskeam was elected on the night and will serve alongside existing community representative and board member Brian Kelly of Rathmore who was re-elected to serve another term. We thank Batt Casey for his service and the work he undertook in advocating for the needs relating to agriculture and rural development.



CEO, Maura Walsh outlining the Article 48 checklist at a public information session in January.

LEADER Programme

The bottom up approach to rural development which IRD Duhallow has advocated for the last 25 years is ever present with community groups actively engaging with us on the ground to improve the quality of life for families in their own communities. Staff have worked closely with communities animating them to identify assets in their community as well as recognising the local need and potential for development. During the last LEADER programme, communities across Duhallow were engaged to improve their area which resulted in significant developments in communities with playgrounds, astroturfs, multi-use areas, walks, community halls, and recreational amenities all developed. Villages who had limited facilities in 2007 rose to the challenge and now have significantly better resources than ever before with thanks to the LEADER 07-13 programme and its approach to rural development. Thankfully a great deal was achieved when the last LEADER programme as the significant cuts and changes. The LEADER Programme 2014-2020 has much less budget meaning fewer projects can be supported. However, we are currently supporting communities through the onerous application process. A public meeting was held in the James O'Keeffe Institute in January with over 40 Community groups represented on the night to gain the most important up to date information on this Rural Development Programme. Since this, development officers' are actively supporting community groups through the EOI and application process.



Development Officers Katie Crowley and Jacinta Carroll who facilitated a workshop on Rural Tourism at the LEADER 2014-2020 information session in January 2016.

Procurement Training

With public procurement a requirement for many public funding programmes including the LEADER programme, IRD Duhallow recognised the extra pressures community groups are under to comply fully with such procurement protocols correctly. In an effort to answer the many questions community groups have in relation to procurement and especially "e-tendering" we facilitated a three hour workshop delivered by Achilles Procurement in Newmarket. This gave Community groups and IRD Duhallow staff who will be engaging in the process an introduction to the requirements.

Running alongside the LEADER Rural Development Programme are a number of 'grant schemes' which are aiding communities to undertake small and large development works. Staff are actively supporting communities with suitable projects to access funding and are working closely with local authority municipal officers in helping to identify suitable projects for programmes such as CLAR, Urban and Village Renewal.



Community reps and Staff of IRD Duhallow who completed Procurement Training in preparation for the LEADER application process.

Day of the Regions

"Discover Duhallow- A Day of the Region" was a LEADER funded transnational co-operation initiative which IRD Duhallow and Dumfries and Galloway developed and delivered across communities in Duhallow from 2012-2014. The concept was to celebrate regional identity and rural life. Following on from the success of the programme-IRD Duhallow is currently working with all communities in the hope of delivering an advanced Day of the Region initiative for 2018-2020 with animation ongoing with communities. A Public Information seminar was held in June with great representation on the night from our communities. Similarly this project is also underway in Scotland, Poland, Germany and Romania. We will also be linking up with our neighbours Údaras na Gaeltachta for the Muscraí area of Mid Cork.



The multi award winning young social entrepreneurs of Rathmore Social Action Group receiving their Kerry Community award from Bernadette Randles of the Randles Court Hotel.

Community Development



Breeda Moynihan Cronin, Eileen Linehan and Maura Walsh IRD Duhallow with The Marie Keating Foundation whose Mobile Information Unit visited the grounds of the James O'Keeffe Institute to provide free information on the various forms of cancer, prevention and early detection.

Rural Vibrancy Surveys

IRD Duhallow is currently in the process of conducting a Rural Vibrancy Survey across our Duhallow and Mid Cork region to obtain the views of locals on the vibrancy of their communities. This piece of research is being compiled by Dr Brendan O'Keeffe of May Immaculate College with Professor Ryan Gibson of investment of University of Guelph, Canada. The survey will help to examine what public and commercial services are available to the people of Duhallow, how vibrant they feel their community is and aims to identify how such vital local services can be sustained and developed.

Surveys are being distributed across the region by local community representatives without whom it would not be possible. People are actively engaging in this process as they recognise the importance of this research in helping to identify specific issues and areas that are in need of improvement and will help to provide a platform to address these issues.



Newmarket Summer Festival's An Enchanted Evening took place in the James O'Keeffe Institute with the Delta String Trio performing on the night to a full house.

Citizens Information Outreach Clinic

IRD Duhallow has long advocated for the need for a Duhallow based Citizens Information Centre for the region. Thankfully May 2017 saw the start of this process with a weekly clinic commencing every Tuesday morning in the James O'Keeffe Institute with CIC Information officer Nuala O'Sullivan providing this outreach service from the Mallow branch. Through the various programmes and services we provide to families in Duhallow we can see the need for such a service in the region and it complements the outreach MABS clinic already facilitated here on a weekly basis. For individuals and families who are more isolated with little or no access to transport or the Internet, the provision of such a service is essential for the region.



CIC Information officer Nuala O'Sullivan providing this outreach service from the Mallow branch in the James O'Keeffe Institute Newmarket.

Pride of Place Awards

The Pride of Place Awards is an all island competition which acknowledges the work that communities are doing all over the island of Ireland. In the more recent past the communities of Freemount and Donoughmore were finalists in this programme showcasing what their respective communities have to offer and have achieved. 2017 saw Glash Community take part in the Pride of Place Awards and were shortlisted at the awards ceremony in Belfast for the 'Reaching out to the Community' category.



IRD Duhallow was delighted to host the Newmarket Summer Festival Teddy Bears Picnic & Enchanted Fairy Trail on the grounds of the James O'Keeffe Institute.



Community Reps from Glash: Ted Fitzpatrick, Ger Roche, Timothy Collins, Cllr Bernard Moynihan, Mossie Fitzpatrick at the Pride of Place Awards which were held in Belfast in November 2016.

Community Enterprise

Community and Social Enterprises are an important component of a vibrant rural economy and IRD Duhallow has developed a sustainable model of best practice in the area of community care of our elderly which also encourages more families to live in the region. Our existing Social enterprise; Duhallow Warmer Homes, Duhallow Laundry, Care and Repair and Furniture Revamp provide an important service to our more vulnerable community while also providing employment to those



Inibong Usanga of Love & Care for People sits on the Social Inclusion and Community SPC of Cork County Council and the PPN.



Sean O'Keeffe completed his summer work placement in IRD Duhallow.

distanced from mainstream employment. The 2016 Duhallow Business Awards saw Clondrohid Community Creche win the Social Enterprise Award Category. This is a category that gathers a great amount of interest, showcasing the level of interest in social innovation in a rural context. With seven community childcare facilities along with Duhallow Community Food Services and Rathmore SAG all providing a social enterprise respectively, this sector of the economy is a significant player in the Duhallow economy with over 300 jobs supported. The social element of these



Local photography enthusiast Sean Radley is on hand to capture the moment at many community events.

LEADER 2014 - 2020

WHY IT IS TAKING SO LONG!

STAGE	IRD DUHALLOW	CO CO LAG MANAGER	POBAL ARTICLE 48
Create New Project Enter basic details including Promoter, Indicative Budget, Project Name and Description onto a live online system	✓		
01. EOI Submitted Enter the Local Objective Statement. Submitted to LCDC LAG.	✓		
02. EOI Eligible Complete Cross Agency Check, planning, tax compliance, procurement etc & scan all documents	✓		
03. Application Submitted Progress the project to "04 Application Public Procurement Checklist"	✓		
04. Application Public Procurement Checklist Answer the Public Procurement checklist. Check the file and sign off on completeness	✓		
05. Application IRD Manager Sign Off Public Procurement questions signed off by IRD Manager. Progress to Application LAG Manager Approval	✓		
06. Application LAG(CO CO) Manager Approval The project is approved by the LAG Manager		✓	
07. Application Evaluation Eligibility Checklist The Evaluation Committee to appraise project	✓		
08. Application Article 48 User Check Pobal Article 48 – 60 Questions.			✓
09. Application Article 48 Manager Verification Article 48 Verification by Pobal to review the file.			✓
10. Application Decision LCDC decision. Project sent to the LCDC LAG for appraisal	✓	✓	
11. Final LAG or IP User Check Final Approval Checklist complete by IRD & sent to LCDC for another check.	✓	✓	
12. Final LAG Manager Approval Final Approval Checklist by LCDC LAG Manager & another Article 48 Check – 60 Questions		✓	
13. Final Article 48 User Check File sent to Pobal for another Article 48 Check.			✓
14. Final Article 48 Manager Verification Pobal Article 48 undertaken on file by Pobal			✓
15. Final Project Approved Project finally approved!! Letter of Offer & Contract issue.	✓		
16. Contract Signed & Returned Project can now commence	✓		
17. Project Underway! Work with promoter to complete project & paperwork including invoices, receipts, etc submitted and uploaded.	✓		



Sean Kelly MEP welcomes Anne Maria Bourke and Maura Walsh of IRD Duhallow to the European Parliament.



ELARD Meeting in Brussels. ELARD now has 24 member states affiliated.



North Cork LCDC/LAG members.



Representatives from the European Leader Association for Rural Development visit Duhallow.



Liadh Ní Riada MEP visiting the IRD Duhallow stand in the Go Kerry Tent at the National Ploughing Championship with Orlaith Tomkins DCFS & Maura Walsh IRD Duhallow.

Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme 2018-2020

The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme will conclude at the end of 2017 and the Department of Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government has committed to funding a successor programme. While a large scale re-design of SICAP is not envisaged, rather a fine tuning of the current programme, the Department has undertaken to consult with a broad range of stakeholders on the design of the next programme. IRD Duhallow is actively engaging in the consultation process to contribute to the design and shape of the next programme. This included interviews with the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) and Quality Matters. Staff and management have strongly stressed that SICAP is complementary to the existing range of programmes and does not stand alone or could not stand alone given the limited budget available for Duhallow in both Cork and Kerry. There needs to be further expansion of the range of target groups eligible for social inclusion support and the programme should re introduce the community development activity of previous social inclusion programmes. It was highlighted that the Department should allow for local level determination of priority goals and budget allocations in line with local area needs analysis and existing provision. At a recent information session, the Department confirmed that there will still be a very strong focus on activation. While supporting individuals to access education, training and the labour market is an essential component of any social inclusion programme; supporting people to access information, social and cultural supports etc. is equally important. IRD Duhallow is cognisant that it is very difficult for an individual to access the labour market when other, wider factors are at play, for example, lack of self-confidence and motivation, poor mental or physical health, poverty and debt, social isolation, lack of social networks, lack of information, transport and local services.

FUNDS COMMITTED TO PROJECTS 2016

ACTION	PROMOTER	CORK	KERRY	TOTAL
Action 1 Stakeholder Engagement Newsletter		4,651.97 4,651.97	1,653.08 1,653.08	6,305.05 6,305.05
Action 2 Empowerment of Disadvantaged Communities Bereavement, Domestic Violence and Emotional Support Befriending Network Training Supports for Carers, Pal, Bereavement, Domestic Violence and Emotional Support	Equality Working Group Saoi Network	973.23 427.37 349.50 196.36	569.66 150.86 349.79 69.01	1,542.89 578.23 699.29 265.37
Action 3 Collaborative Networks Dawn Chorus Alzheimers Tea Morning Dusk Chorus Supports for Saoi, Womens Forum and the Environment Working Group	Saoi Network Women's Forum Environment WG	635.43 222.00 88.80 111.00 213.63	367.97 78.00 31.20 39.00 219.77	1,003.40 300.00 120.00 150.00 433.40
Action 4 Integration of New Communities Multicultural Christmas Days 2015 Drishane Asylum Seekers Workshops Supports for the Employment and Equality Working Groups	Equality Working Group Equality Working Group	997.39 884.29 107.40 5.70	350.46 310.70 37.74 2.02	1,347.85 1,194.99 145.14 7.72
Total Goal 1 Budget		7,258.02	2,941.17	10,199.19
Action 5 Community Education & Training Career Guidance information Seminar The Therapeutic Potential of Art Upcycling / Recycling Course Finding My Way Recovery Alternative Health Workshop LGBT Workshops and Information Meetings Swift Information Night Childcare Workshops Heritage Week GIY Outing Basic Sign Language Art Classes for Beginners	Employment and Training Working Group Employment and Training Working Group Employment and Training Working Group Employment and Training Working Group Employment and Training Working Group Youth and Education Working Group Environment Working Group The Women's Forum Community Development Working Group Environment Working Group Equality Working Group Employment and Training Working Group	8,006.51 100.08 1,098.00 1,246.00 222.73 980.00 736.30 111.00 1,229.88 413.35 244.20 1,015.35 609.62	1,615.92 35.16 0 78.27 252.80 39.00 432.12 145.24 85.80 333.34 214.19	9,622.43 135.24 1,098.00 1,246.00 301.00 980.00 989.10 150.00 1,662.00 558.59 330.00 1,348.69 823.81
Action 6 Preventing Early School Leaving Scoil Phobail Homework Support Literacy & Numeracy Classes for Children with Dyslexia / Dyspraxia Careers Exhibition	Youth and Education Working Group Youth and Education Working Group Youth and Education Working Group	3,875.22 3,114.50 760.72	2,593.70 2,296.00 30.42 267.28	6,468.92 2,296.00 3,144.92 1,028.00
Action 7 Pre Support Engagement Transport for Towards Occupation Programme Participants Towards Occupation Workshops Shine Phrenz Support	Equality Working Group Equality Working Group Equality Working Group	2,282.51 296.00 1,908.55 77.96	801.97 104.00 670.58 27.39	3,084.48 400.00 2,579.13 105.35
Action 8 Empowerment of Active Citizenship Active Citizenship Workshops Girl Guides Boherbue Estate Management Training Programme Pubic Speaking Competition & Workshops Rockchapel Community Calendar Community Development Meetings	Community Development Working Group Boherbue Girl Guides Youth and Education Working Group Youth and Education Working Group Rockchapel Community Development Community Development Working Group	2,811.37 367.50 500.00 1,143.96 682.00 117.91	962.00 125.70 836.30	3,773.37 493.20 500.00 836.30 1,143.96 682.00 117.91
Total Goal 2 Budget		16,975.61	5,973.59	22,949.20
Action 9 Community & Social Enterprise Duhallow Revamp Marketing & Publicity 123 Magic "Managing Challenging Behaviour" Duhallow Community Food Service - Labelling Machine	Social Economy Working Group Community Development Working Group Social Economy Working Group	1,233.19 268.16 584.03 381	1,763.65 94.65	2,996.84 362.81 584.03 2050
Action 10 Labour Market Activation Group Career Guidance Workshop Computer Classes Intermediate Site Dumper Training Forklift Training Theory Test Preparation Workshops Jobseekers Journey Workshop Angela Sheehan - Labour Market Activation Grant	Employment and Training Working Group Employment and Training Working Group Employment and Training Working Group Employment and Training Working Group Employment and Training Working Group Employment and Training Working Group Employment and Training Working Group	7,966.86 333.00 813.17 1,019.00 4,594.00 273.81 933.88	1,790.47 117.00 510.14 559.00 96.21 328.12 180.00	9,757.33 450.00 1,323.31 1,019.00 5,153.00 370.02 1,262.00 180.00
Action 11 Job Centre Education & Training Exhibition 2016 Resources & Subscriptions Meeting Costs for Employment & Training Working Group Recognition of Learning Ceremony	Employment and Training Working Group Employment and Training Working Group Employment and Training Working Group Employment and Training Working Group	975.81 396.96 236.72 120.13 222.00	342.75 139.47 83.21 42.07 78.00	1,318.56 536.43 319.93 162.20 300.00
Action 12 Self Employment Mentoring Start Your Own Business Training Efeirm Training Women in Agriculture Conference Farm Family Seminar Supports for the Enterprise & Ag Working Groups	Enterprise Development Working Group Enterprise Development Working Group Agriculture Working Group Agriculture Working Group Agriculture Working Group	6,452.72 2,310.00 2,721.00 900.58 296.00 178.20 46.94	1,932.70 915.00 429.00 316.42 104.00 151.80 16.48	8,385.42 3,225.00 3,150.00 1,217.00 400.00 330.00 63.42
Total Goal 3 Budget		16,628.58	5,829.57	22,458.15

Equality and Social Inclusion

Equality and Social Inclusion

IRD Duhallow's Equality Working group continues to work towards a more equal and inclusive Duhallow, having a strong commitment to promoting equality and inclusion. Over the years, IRD Duhallow has had a wealth of experience in dealing with migrants where advocacy for individuals is to the forefront and many years have been spent on working to counter disadvantage and promote equality and social inclusion in the Duhallow region. Despite staggering cuts to budgets several different initiatives were funded by IRD Duhallow to encourage and support integration, equality and social inclusion within the local region over the past year.

Tackling Barriers to Integration

The Irish Government have introduced the Migrant Integration Strategy (2017-2020) which provides a framework for a range of actions to support the integration process. The strategy which is welcomed by the Equality Working group, outlines that communities play a crucial role in making those living within them feel at home and it is important that initiatives are introduced to facilitate integration. The demographic of migrants in the Duhallow region is well above the national average. Millstreet has the highest proportion of foreign nationals of any small town in Ireland and has experienced a complete overhaul of its demographic. Non-Irish nationals accounted for 21.4% of Millstreet's population, which is much higher than the national average of 12%. Trojan work has been carried out by the Equality Working group to create a more equal and inclusive Duhallow.



Children from Rathmore receiving their gifts from Santa and Mrs. Clause at the annual Multi-Cultural Christmas Day event in Teach Iosagain, Rathmore.



Mahwish Rauf of Drishane Castle Accommodation Centre who is currently gaining experience with IRD Duhallow offering administrative support to the accounts department.

Supporting Integration

The Equality Working Group recognise that it is vitally important to build links between migrants, asylum seekers and the local community. Therefore, support is offered through the SICAP Programme for a range of initiatives including, the recent Autumn Garden Fete, which was organised



The Multi-Cultural Christmas Day event continues to be a fun filled Christmas event, which gives children an opportunity to come along and meet Santa and Mrs Clause.

by the residents of the Drishane Castle. This Garden Fete gave the local Millstreet community an opportunity to come into the centre and meet the residents as well as sampling the food from the BBQ and viewing the arts and crafts produce on display. An Autumn camp was also organised for the children in Drishane and activities included cookery, arts and craft and upholstery.



Cllr. Melissa Mullane presenting Mary O'Riordan with her Certificate in Basic Sign Language Skills.

Two Multi-cultural Christmas events were held in Rathmore and Kanturk. Over 100 children and their families participated in these events where they were given the opportunity to come along and meet Santa and Mrs Clause and to find out more about the international Christmas traditions and customs. We once again are grateful to the RSS participants both current and retired who provided Santa and Mrs. Claus each night. These events continue to be successful in supporting common ground between the migrants and the local community.



Kanturk native David Roche passed away this year, we especially remember him for the work he did on behalf of the LGBT community. David was a regular speaker and contributor at IRD Duhallow events and seminars.

LGBT Workshops for Secondary Schools

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 four Secondary Schools in the region participated in awareness workshops presented by the late David Roche, a native of Kanturk, and Manager of the Cork Gay Project. David spoke to each group of students openly on the grounds of equality surrounding LGBT Youths as well as encouraging the self-acceptance of LGBT young people.



Participants of the Basic Sign Language Class developed and learned sign language skills.

Equality and Social Inclusion



*Speakers at the Domestic Violence Awareness Evening
Garda Katherine Canty, Domestic Violence Campaigner Maria
Dempsey, Margaret O'Flaherty of IRD Duhallow
Domestic Violence Support service and Sgt Dan Murphy.*

IRD Duhallow Domestic Violence

The IRD Duhallow Domestic Violence Service is manned by volunteers, who provide a listening and support service for people experiencing domestic abuse. In the past 12 months there have been 14 service users amounting to many calls and support sessions to the Domestic Violence Helpline. IRD Duhallow is one of the few domestic violence support services in the country that offer supports to both men and women and almost half our callers in the past year have been male.

Callers are experiencing all forms of domestic abuse: physical, emotional, financial and sexual and this is in line with National statistics evidenced in a survey conducted by Safe Ireland showing that Nationally 90% of domestic abuse victims had suffered physical abuse, 43% sexual abuse, 98% emotional / verbal abuse and 78% had received threats on their life. 1 in 5 women will experience domestic violence at some point in their life time.

In April a seminar themed "Supporting the Victims of Domestic Violence" was held in conjunction with Sgt Dan Murphy and Community Garda Kathryn Canty. Local mother, Maria Dempsey was the keynote speaker at the event and she spoke eloquently about the tragic loss of her daughter who lost her life to domestic violence.

The taboo nature of not discussing issues of domestic violence situations is thankfully in decline, in spite of this, IRD Duhallow has regretfully learnt that the forthcoming legislation, the Domestic Violence Bill, 2017, will not make abuse of a partner or spouse a specific offence. In 2014, a cross-party committee recommended the creation of a specific offence of domestic abuse, which would include both physical and psychological abuse within a relationship. The victims of domestic violence deserve to have the crimes perpetrated against them specifically identified.



*Michael Twohig Presenting a QQI Level 5 certificate in
Managing Challenging Behaviour to carer Clare Murphy.*

Duhallow Carers Group

The Duhallow Carers meet in the James O'Keeffe Institute on the first Thursday of every month. The purpose of the group is to provide a safe space, peer support and friendship amongst family and voluntary carers. The ages range from young carers to those caring for a spouse or partner late in life. The group partakes in advocacy, training and social outings for Carers. Each year we host a Summer outing, which in 2016 went to Clare and to the Bunratty Banquet, and we also have a Christmas dinner in December. In August we host a BBQ

and those who we are caring for are also invited to attend. These social activities are funded in part by the HSE and SICAP.

Dormant Accounts

Funding was secured through a rigorous application to Dormant Accounts to deliver training relating to Carers and their families throughout 2016. The purpose of which was to increase the standard of caring and improve the mental health of carers by empowering them with the knowledge and skill to access services and carry out their caring role. In the 12 months of the programme 246 individual participant places were created and 188 individual carers were supported to access training locally here in the James O'Keeffe Institute. Twenty-three of these individuals were male, and whilst male carers still represent a small percentage of those partaking in the programme overall, it is a large increase on the male participants in the number in previous Dormant Accounts programme, which ran in 2010.



*Carer Owen Gubbins practices the Recovery
Position on the Occupational First Aid course
delivered through Dormant Accounts.*



*Residents of Drishane Castle who performed a Traditional Dance Routine as part of the
Autumn Garden Fete held in August 2016.*

The Duhallow Carers Group has acknowledged at their meetings the great work being completed by a number of locally led initiatives and how through the support of services such as the laundry, rural meals, care and repair, befriending and furniture revamp, the challenge of the daily lives of carers has been eased significantly.



*A mural painted by the residents of Drishane Castle Accommodation Centre. Drishane Residents
are now part of the KASI / TIRC Kerry Inclusion Initiative Funded through PEIL.*

Employment and Training



Youth Employment Initiative Participants with Course Tutor Ailbe Coffey.

Figures from the CSO indicate that in the Newmarket DSP region there were 878 people on the Live Register in May 2017, down nearly 50% from the same quarter in 2010. Seventy-Six of these were under 25 years of age. This unemployment data may mask the real extent of economic hardship that people encounter. There are still a number of challenges, including the outward migration from Duhallow to more urban areas, unemployment levels for people with lower secondary or less education, under 25s and former construction workers. In addition, there is a high turnover rate in some occupations including care workers, sales workers and other elementary occupations such as catering assistants and security workers. Therefore, low incomes are problematic, not just for unemployed, but in some cases more so, for those in part time employment in vulnerable sectors. The Working Group has supported a number of measures and actions to try to reverse these trends and allow people the opportunity to seek meaningful employment.



Jason Sheahan Youth Employment Initiative participant working with Joan Cashman in a Styling for an Interview Workshop.

Youth Unemployment

In response to the Youth Unemployment situation, IRD Duhallow in conjunction with Ballyhoura Development was approved an 18 month Dormant Accounts joint project specifically targeting 16-25 year old NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) young people. Traditionally in Duhallow, there was always a proportion of young people who left school early opting to work or train in the workplace instead of doing their Leaving Certificate. However, for that generation of school leavers there were far more options for unskilled work in construction and manufacturing and large numbers of apprenticeships, which allowed them to learn a skill on the job. Unfortunately, the number of these opportunities has greatly reduced.



Stephen Barry was offered full time employment having secured a work placement through IRD Duhallow's Youth Employment Initiative.

IRD Duhallow has successfully engaged with 49 young people utilising a strengths based approach to overcome the barriers which affect participation i.e. health, social, educational, employability. The part time programme has included: one to one employability options, planning and guidance supports as well as providing clear signposting to related support provision. Participants have availed of tailored training including: Manual Handling, Health and Safety in the Workplace, Digital Skills Training, Personal Development, Apprenticeship information, CV building/CV cover letter preparation, interview techniques, job search strategies and continuous one to one mentoring. A driver's licence is one of the most common requirements for employment but obtaining a drivers licence is often out of reach for many youths due to the high cost involved in obtaining the obligatory lessons. This has a knock on effect on confidence and motivation levels to find a job. Drive2Success core skills training workshops were incorporated into the programme whereby nine young people were assisted to apply for their driver theory test and thereafter their learner permit. Four young people were supported to complete their driving lessons with a qualified driving instructor.



Youth Employment Initiative Participant Rebecca Duggan with her work placement Mentor and Manager of Broadford Community Childcare Margaret River and Youth Engagement Officer Triona Murphy.

Work experience gives young people an insight into working life and enables them to learn by doing. Fundamentally, it provides practical 'hands on' experience. Eleven work placements in the areas of Admin, Retail, Childcare, Hospitality, Outdoor Pursuits and Healthcare have been coordinated in conjunction with the Department of Social Protection's 'First Steps' intern programme which provides a top up on the young person's social welfare payment. Through this, two young people were offered full time jobs and three have extended their work placements a further 3 months. One participant is commencing Childcare QQI level 6 in September following her placement in a community crèche.

Labour Market Activation

In terms of labour market activation, the Working Group is trying to ensure that the supply side of the labour market is supportive of employment growth. Skills specific training has been delivered through a range of courses including Site Dumper Experienced and Inexperienced, Forklift for both Inexperienced and Experienced trainees, I.T. Training, Theory Test Preparation Workshop and Styling for An Interview sessions. In addition, we have delivered a Customer Service and Complaint Handling training course.



Leo O' Connor, facilitator, with Philip O' Callaghan participating in the Forklift Inexperienced Operators training programme funded through the Labour Market Activation Measure of SICAP.

Employment and Training

Job Centre

Through SICAP Goal Three, the working group provides a Job Centre service with the aim of moving individuals closer to the labour market and improving their work readiness. The service includes professional CV and cover letter writing, employment search strategies, Interview skills including techniques, questions and tips and Mock Interview preparation. The mentoring support provided by the Job Centre coordinator enhances the service provision and focuses on the individual's strengths, resources and ability to seek employment in the face of life's inevitable challenges. The coordinator also actively works with employers and recognises the fact that recruitment, upskilling and maintaining staff can take up more and more time for employers. For this reason, the Job Centre assists employers with recruiting and promoting the best people to serve the current and future employment needs.



Thomas Barrett receives his Certificate of Attendance from Melissa Mullane Chairperson of the Employment and Training Working Group.



Millinery course participants enjoying the process of learning a variety of basic millinery techniques required to complete their own bespoke piece.

workshops including Early Child Development and Building Your Child's Self Esteem; Improvers Upcycling/Recycling training; a Parenting Skills course and an Introductory Millinery course.



What is Alternative Health? A series of workshops were delivered by Marie Ridout of "Gwella Clinic". These workshops took place on an outreach capacity in Teach Failte, Gneeveguilla.



Karen Sommerville delivered a Customer Service and Complaint Handling Training course funded through Labour Market Activation.

Community Education and Training

The Employment and Training Working group is fully committed to promoting the right of adults in Duhallow to access quality learning throughout their lives, and promotes the value and benefits of lifelong learning. Many learners continue to remain isolated from training and a recurring theme that arises from individuals is how daunting it can be to return to learning as an adult, especially for those that had a negative experience of formal education first time around. Many learners recount the fantastic support they experience in returning to lifelong learning, they and how essential that support is to them in completing the course. Through these positive experiences, individuals are forging new career paths and learning new skills. However, the benefits are not only confined to jobs and skills, they are far wider and can include increased confidence, being able to help their children with their homework and improve their mental health.

SICAP funding has been utilised through Goal 2 – Community Education and Training to train over a 100 adults in the last year in a variety of courses including Art Classes for Beginners and Improvers; Learning how to Grow Your Own Fruit and Vegetables; What is Alternative Health? Series of Workshops on Holistic-ways to improve your health; Childcare



Due to demand, an Improvers Upcycling/Recycling training course was facilitated through the Community Education and Training measure of SICAP.

Digital Skills for Citizens Scheme in Duhallow

IRD Duhallow through a Consortium bid with Age Action are rolling out the Digital Skills for Citizens Scheme in Duhallow. This Scheme is a follow on scheme from Benefit Training and is funded from the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment under their Digital Skills for Citizens Programme. It is designed to provide citizens who have never used the internet with the confidence, motivation and skills to reap the benefits of participating in today's digital world. The Employment and Training Working Group has for a long time invested in providing digital skills training for citizens who have never used the internet in Duhallow and since the inception of Benefit funding in 2012 we have trained over 500 people. To date this year six training courses have been delivered. We are now also providing training in Ipad/Iphones and Tablets and Smartphones to ensure that people have the confidence to move online and enjoy all that the internet offers.



Aisling McAuliffe, Certified Play Therapist, facilitated a Parenting Skills workshop in the Community Centre in Tureencahill focusing on promoting healthy families through the development of simple, strategic and more positive parenting techniques.



Tús participant Pamela Kowalczak works with Noreen O' Regan to improve her understanding and skills on How to use a Smartphone.

Youth and Education

Careers Exhibition

Recent research has shown that 1 in 6 college students in Ireland drop out of their course before the end of their first year. Therefore, it is important that students choose the correct subjects and career path as it is a decision which will have a large impact on their future career. IRD Duhallow's Career Exhibition continues to be an important event helping second level students to access information on their future career choices. The 14th Annual Careers Exhibition took place on Tuesday 4th October 2016 with over 450 Senior Cycle students from the Duhallow region in attendance. The exhibition was largely attended by local, National and U.K. Universities, Institutes of Technology, PLC Training Colleges and Agricultural colleges. The exhibitors were available on the day to discuss and answer specific queries in relation to the many courses that they have on offer. Roisín Kelleher, Career Guidance Counsellor was in attendance to meet students on a one to one basis to offer additional support and advice in relation to subject and course choices.



A member of the Defence forces providing demonstrations and speaking to students about recruitment at the IRD Duhallow Careers Exhibition.



Students from Coláiste Treasa, Kanturk enjoying their day at the IRD Duhallow Careers Exhibition.



Cork Education and Training Board in attendance at the annual IRD Duhallow Careers Exhibition.

Primary School Public Speaking Competition

The ability to speak confidently in front of a large group of people is an important life skill. Public speaking builds a child's confidence, leadership and presentation skills as well as improving their communication,



Cllr Melissa Mullane, Chairperson of the Youth and Education Working Group, presenting Boherbue N.S. with the winner's trophy at the final of the Public Speaking Competition.

planning and persuasion skills. 10 teams participated in IRD Duhallow's 9th annual Youth and Primary Schools Public Speaking Competition in 2016. Boherbue National School were the overall winners on the night with Liscarroll Team A and Kanturk Team A finishing in second place and as runners up. Ciara Greene Linehan was awarded Best Speaker on the night. The high standard of Public Speaking on display on all nights of the competition is a credit to the students, teachers and parent/guardians who put in numerous hours of preparation for this competition.



Ciara Green Linehan of Kanturk National School was awarded with the Best Speaker Award by Cllr. Melissa Mullane, at IRD Duhallow's Public Speaking Final 2016.



IRD Duhallow's Coderdojo mentors Sandra O'Sullivan, Peter Ryan & Tom Gilles who have given their time voluntarily over the last number of months to help with the establishment of the Coderdojo Club.

IRD Duhallow Coderdojo Club

Coding is fast becoming one of the world's most widely used languages and is a newer type of literacy. It is a skill that is useful in everyday life, especially in today's highly digital world. As there is no Coderdojo Club in the Duhallow Region, many parents are having to travel further afield with their children to learn this important skill. In response to this, the Youth and Education Working Group decided to establish the IRD Duhallow Coderdojo Club. The club, which is volunteer led, meets fortnightly in the Afterschools building of the James O'Keeffe Institute. Through this club, children learn basic programming and web development skills in a sociable, creative and student led environment. These skills will allow them to build their own websites, apps and games. There has already been a huge interest in the club with over 40 kids (8-13 years) registered to attend the sessions. The Youth and Education Working Group hope to develop this initiative further in the coming months.



Tom Gilles assisting an attendee with the use of the Scratch programme during one of the Coderdojo sessions.

Rathmore Afterschools

Supporting the prevention of Early School Leaving is one of the major priorities of the Youth and Education working group. Afterschools Homework Clubs offer a supportive environment for students who experience difficulty in undertaking their studies outside of school hours. IRD Duhallow continues to support Scoil Phobail Sliabh Luachra, Rathmore in the facilitation of an Afterschools Homework Club, to help the students to develop their independent study skills as well as providing additional supports for those who are struggling in particular subject areas. 52 students attended in 2016 and 77 students are currently attending in 2017. Unfortunately, due to the significant budget curtailments we are unable to assist with SICAP funding in providing this invaluable initiative in the 4 Secondary Schools in Cork. This was highlighted during the recent ESRI evaluation of the SICAP Programme.



Michael Doyle, Chairman of IRD Duhallow's Environment Working Group making a presentation to the Staff and Students of Colaiste Treasa recognising their great achievements in the Young Scientist Competition, winning overall best school.

Youth and Education



Touch Type Read and Spell (TTRS) is a computer led programme, where students learn how to touch type based on the alpha and omega spelling method.

Literacy Support

The Dyslexia Association of Ireland in their 2015 report noted that the average annual family cost associated with dyslexia assessment, tuition and assistive technology is €1,229. For many families it is much higher. 66% of families' report that these costs have created significant financial stress. 62% of parents report being unable to access appropriate supports for their children due to lack of funds. The SICAP Programme has allowed IRD Duhallow to provide affordable supports to children with dyslexia and dyspraxia for the past 10 years. Through targeted interventions, we can help prevent early school leaving, build children's confidence and self-esteem and equip them with the tools to best progress their education.



Some of the award winners at the IRD Duhallow Literacy Awards night with their teachers Sinead Guiney, Noirin Murphy and Brid O'Riordan, with Helen O'Sullivan of IRD Duhallow and Chair of IRD Duhallow's Youth and Education Working Group Eimear Guiney.

We currently have 18 children enrolled on our literacy programme, which focuses on offering supports to children with Dyslexia and Dyspraxia and it has two strands: TTRS – (Touch Type Read and Spell); which teaches children how to touch type using spelling methods based on the alpha and omega learning styles recommended for children with learning difficulties. Our second option is the literacy workshops whereby our three tutors Sinead Guiney, Noirin Murphy and Brid O'Riordan take small groups of a maximum of five children and deliver structured supports relating to Reading, Writing, Spelling, Memory Work and Sequencing.



Members of the Youth and Education Working Group which is Chaired by Board Member Eimear Guiney and supported by staff members Helen O'Sullivan and Triona Murphy.



The students of Kanturk Girls National School were presented with a plaque by Environment Working Group Chairman Michael Doyle in recognition of their outstanding achievement in the Global Youth Water Air and Food Awards

Last September we introduced a numeracy programme as feedback from parents showed that many children were struggling with numeracy issues as well as literacy. Teachers Brid and Sinead deliver the numeracy classes, which similar to the literacy workshops have a teacher student ratio of 1:5.

Youth & Family Support Services

IRD Duhallow has partnered with Tusla, the National Child & Family Agency to help develop additional youth and family support services in the region in line with the outcomes of the National Policy Framework for Children 'Better Outcomes



Helen O'Sullivan, IRD Duhallow and Cariosa Lynch, Tusla, assessing the needs of families in the Duhallow area to collaboratively tackle local issues.

Brighter Futures'. As part of this we are currently involved in an initial research project with Cork Children & Young Peoples Services Committee (CYPSE) which involves an audit of services for child and young people in the area and is being undertaken by independent researcher Dr Caroline Crowley. This audit is currently underway with results anticipated in the Autumn. This piece of research along with other planned research for the area will form the basis for the development of additional services for the region in the future. IRD Duhallow is cognisant of the fact that there is a severe lack of certain supports across the region with vulnerable families and young people having to travel a distance to Mallow or Cork city to avail of vital supports. Over the years IRD Duhallow itself has developed a number of initiatives to help fill this gap such as our early school leaving programmes, social and personal development initiatives, an emotional support programme and various training programmes and workshops. However it is imperative that a rural region like Duhallow is no longer left bereft of such important services relying on limited funds from other programmes to fill this gap. For many disadvantaged families the lack of personal transport is an issue thus the provision of services at a local level will reach out to this cohort of people with IRD Duhallow ideally placed in the region to help roll out such initiatives as we already support families from a wide array of backgrounds and circumstances.

Towards Occupation Programme and Mental Health

According to the World Health Organisation, mental disorders are responsible for about 12 - 15 % of the world's total disability – which is more than Cardiovascular Diseases, and twice as much as Cancer. Mental disorders affect the functioning of the individual, resulting in not only enormous emotional suffering and a diminished quality of life, but also alienation, stigma and discrimination. This burden extends further into the community, having far-reaching economic and social consequences. The Recovery paradigm, which permeates A Vision for Change, relies almost entirely for its implementation on supports to be found in the local community. Recovery is something distinct from reducing symptoms; it includes developing skills in managing one's condition as well as being able to participate in valued activities and achieving valued roles in one's community e.g. volunteering. Recovery in this sense is possible even when symptoms continue as long as those symptoms do not inordinately interfere with a person's daily life. IRD Duhallow's Equality Working Group strive to educate people of all ages about mental health and how the community can be open to mental diversity and supportive of emotional health.



TO participant John Fitzgerald using the sewing machine in the Upholstery Class.



The COPE group took on a special project this summer recycling disused scaffolding planks and transforming them into garden furniture.

result of mental ill health to develop the skills and confidence to move into employment, education, training, voluntary work or other directions. The project is delivered through a partnership approach with four other Local Development Companies in Cork and Limerick. Support has been received from the Department of Social Protection under the Activation and Family Support Programme and funding is also received through IRD Duhallow's Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) and the HSE. It is hoped that a collaborative approach will result in the HSE expanding their role in supporting Towards Occupation as part of their commitment to ongoing change from a medical model to a social model of support for clients with mental ill health, delivered from within their own communities. The Steering Committee has submitted a business case to the HSE.



Supervisor Sheila Roche delivering the Digital Skills Training to T.O. participants.

The Towards Occupation Programme is an innovative community based initiative which was first piloted in 2005 because a growing cohort of rurally isolated people experiencing mental health difficulties were unable, or unwilling to access mainstream services. The training programme is dedicated to enabling those who are unemployed as a



Louise Pomeroy who progressed from the Towards Occupation Programme onto IRD Duhallow's Horticulture Local Training Initiative QQI Level 4.

The Towards Occupation specifically targets people who are feeling isolated and lacking confidence and supports them to explore a range of new skills and set achievable goals/aspirations whilst also focusing on confidence building, communication skills and increasing self-belief. Participants receive a combination of flexible one to one support, career guidance, training and follow up services, allowing them to identify their own personal occupation requirements and the pathways to achieving suitable progression routes where possible. 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, Art, Ceramics, Horticulture and Cookery. A large number of the participants are referred from HSE sources, such as GPs, Day Hospitals and Mental Health Services and a high percentage of those participating are receiving Disability Allowance.



TO participants Julie Lehan and Josiah Dempsey admiring their Ceramics which are now displayed in the Therapeutic Gardens on the grounds of the James O'Keeffe Institute, Newmarket.

Towards Occupation Programme and Mental Health



Ballydesmond National School receiving their new Buddy Bench from Duhallow REVAMP. From top left: Emma Jane Morrissey, Yvonne Murphy, Eileen Kerins and Shaunna McGowan, COPE Mallow, Colm O'Connor and Jessica Baron, Duhallow REVAMP, Deirdre O'Sullivan, Ballydesmond Parents Council, Norita Hedigan COPE, Mary O'Riordan, Ballydesmond Parents Council and children from Ballydesmond National School.

Some of the men and women on the Towards Occupation Programme who remain mentally ill do not leave the one-year programme but instead return year on year and benefit by merely regaining function. Progression for these participants does not come in the shape of mainstream employment. The primary goal of the programme for the people with a psychiatric disability is gaining greater control of their lives and assisting them in regaining valued roles in their communities. There is a distinct reluctance on the part of employers to employ those with mental ill health and therefore progression prospects are often very bleak.



Volunteer Counsellors for IRD Duhallow's Community Emotional Support and Counselling Service: Edel Kelleher, Joe O'Herlihy and Aoife Douglas.

Community Emotional Support and Counselling Service

IRD Duhallow's Emotional Support and Counselling Service is available by appointment to anyone impacted by challenging life experiences where their emotional health and wellbeing has been affected. The support service is completely confidential and designed to support the individual to develop self-help and self-care skills. Very often people with lower incomes cannot afford counselling fees and therefore go without. To ensure accessibility, Aoife Douglas, Registered Counsellor/ Psychotherapist and students Edel Kelleher and Joe O'Herlihy from Cork Institute of Technology provide a weekly community based service in IRD Duhallow as part of their accreditation process. This service offers one to one humanistic integrative counselling.

IRD Duhallow Phrenz Support Group

Following on from last year's Finding My Way programme which was co-produced by Shine, IRD Duhallow's Phrenz Self-Help support group was established. Sharing experiences with others can be therapeutic and a great way for people to learn new coping skills as well as growing

their support network and making new friends. The group, which is peer facilitated, continues to meet on the last Thursday of each month in the James O'Keeffe Institute.

Cork Connecting for Life

Connecting for Life is the national strategy for suicide prevention from 2015 to 2020. It sets out the Irish Government's vision for suicide prevention, the expected outcomes over the next five years and the actions that will be taken to prevent suicide and self-harm in Ireland. As part of this Cork Community Healthcare held a consultation meeting in the James O'Keeffe Institute in September 2016 to give members of the public an opportunity to have their say on the items to be included in the Cork Connecting for Life Action Plan. Martin Ryan, Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention for Cork City and County told attendees that "Suicide prevention is everyone's business and we all need to be aware of what we can do individually and as part of our community to promote mental health and reduce suicide".



Development Officer, Jacinta Carroll and Martin Ryan, Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention for Cork City and County at the community consultation meeting in September 2016.

Bereavement Support

Dealing with the death of someone you know can be a lonely and heart-breaking experience – feelings of overwhelming sadness and anger can take over. People going through bereavement often feel lonely, angry, sad, empty, afraid, heartbroken or as if their lives are destroyed. To combat this the Equality Working Group developed a Bereavement Support service. Callers to the Bereavement phone are supported through the volunteers of the IRD Duhallow Emotional Support and Counselling Service. Through one to one support people can begin to learn to cope with their loss and grief.



Ceramics Tutor Anne Byrne discussing his ceramics design with TO participant John Browne.

Equality for Women & Childcare

Since IRD Duhallow established the Women and Childcare Working group in 1997, it has continued to focus efforts on the issues that affect the lives of women in Duhallow and acts as a strong advocate for the positive development of women's rights and opportunities. The Working Group has played a pivotal role in improving women's access to education, training and personal development in preparation for employment, offering one to one support and guidance as well as supporting women who are undertaking entrepreneurial activity and supporting women's advancement in their employment.



Nóirín Twomey, Millstreet of Nóirín's Boutique who won in the Women Led Business category pictured with her fellow Boherbue natives Eileen Linehan and Triona Murphy of IRD Duhallow.

Duhallow Women's Forum- Celebrating 20 Years

Over the last 20 years since its establishment, the Duhallow Women's Forum have actively contributed to a huge range of conferences, seminars and events that have reached out to both men and women all across the Duhallow region. Through these actions the forum has identified, acknowledged and celebrated the role of women in Duhallow.

The Women's Forum, which is affiliated to the National Women's Council, represents 17 women's groups in Duhallow. These groups are managed by members to provide a safe place for women experiencing different forms of social exclusion to come and learn and share information and ideas as a collective, as well as to build links with other women. These collective actions have over the years helped to build confidence and empowered the members of the groups to engage as active and equal citizens. A huge credit must be given to Chairperson, Judy O'Leary and to the Working Group members for their contribution, time and commitment to the work of the forum over the past 20 years.



Judy O'Leary, Chairperson of Duhallow Women's Forum, delivering the opening address at the 'Outsmart Stress and Anxiety Seminar' as part of the launch night of the PEIL Gender Equality Programme.

The Women's Forum, who over the last number of years has supported the TORL (Turn Off Red Light) Campaign, have welcomed the recent passing and publication of The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act in March 2017 by Tánaiste Frances Fitzgerald. This is an essential piece of legislation that brings additional protections to some of the most vulnerable people in our community. The provisions of this Bill enhance and update laws to combat the sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children; child pornography and online grooming. In addition, provisions to criminalise the purchase of sex were introduced.

PEIL Gender Equality Programme

The Irish Government's 'Action Plan for Jobs 2016', outlined that "Women make up 63% of the inactive working age population", which shows us that there is a low level of participation, particularly among women in the labour force. 19.11% of women in Duhallow are engaged in family duties which is relatively higher than the national average of 17.52%.



Mary Creedon, IRD Duhallow, Marianne Wall of Smart Psychology, Judy O'Leary, Chairperson Duhallow Women's Forum, and Jacinta Carroll, IRD Duhallow pictured at the Launch Night of the PEIL Gender Equality Funding Programme.

To help to combat this, IRD Duhallow is delighted to have been successful in our application for funding through the Department of Justice and Equality for the ESF funded PEIL Gender Equality – Women Returning to the Workforce strand. This measure which is supported by the European Social Fund will engage with and support Women in returning to the workforce. This three year programme will provide an excellent opportunity to support women to develop their self-confidence and assertiveness skills through a series of flexible accredited and non-accredited training courses and workshops focusing on self-development and the development of work related skills such as confidence building, basic I.T. Skills, CV & Interview skills and a host of other training courses required for employment.

IRD Duhallow Women's Forum is delighted to hear that the IRD Duhallow Board has achieved a gender balance amongst its directors and has a female Chair and CEO.

As part of this a 'Career Guidance Information Seminar' was facilitated by Roisín Kelleher Career Guidance Counsellor. On May 3rd an 'Outsmart Stress and Anxiety' Seminar was presented by Marianne Wall, Psychologist with Smart Psychology. This seminar gave attendees a fresh insight into stress and anxiety and provided them with tips on how to outsmart it.



Members of the Duhallow Women's Forum celebrating 20 years in existence.

Equality for Women & Childcare



Afterschools Coordinator Louise Dineen supports children in the Afterschools to complete their homework.

child ensuring that all their homework is completed. Afterwards, the children engage in structured activities until it is time for their parents to collect them.



Fun and Games in the Afterschools. The children play all sorts of games, outdoor activities and baking once their homework is completed.

A tiered pricing structure is available through the CCS and subsidies are available for families in receipt of a social welfare payment or/and are in possession of a medical card. The service allows parents to be reassured that their children are in a safe and caring environment, giving them an opportunity to take up employment or education, which they otherwise may have not been in a position to afford.

IRD Duhallow Afterschools was the first afterschool facility in Ireland to be awarded An Taisce's Green

Exploring the bugs caught in a sweep net as part of the Easter Camp in IRD Duhallow Afterschools.



Afterschools

IRD Duhallow's Afterschool Service is funded through the Department of Children and Youth Affairs' Child Care Subvention Scheme (CCS) and is supported by Cork County Childcare Committee. This social enterprise offers a vital service to the Duhallow area fulfilling the need for affordable out of school and afterschool care for primary school children. With the support of Cork Local Link, the children are collected from their school gates, they are then provided with a home cooked nutritious dinner, which is freshly prepared by Duhallow Community Food Service each day. Our staff assist each

Flag. The children and staff of the afterschools are currently working towards their fourth green flag, which relates to biodiversity.

Camps

Additionally, the service continues throughout the school holidays, offering an out of school service for children in a variety of camps across Duhallow. The camps during Easter, summer and Halloween breaks offer educational activities including baking, arts and craft, computers, environmental activities and other educational activities. Each camp offers different themes,

such as the Eggstravaganza Easter camp for Easter and the Art attack camp which was held during mid-term. Meanwhile, during the summer, the camps that were held include Pitch and Putt, Little Chefs and Little Gardeners as well as the Laugh and Learn Literacy Support camp. All ensuring that parents can continue to work during the summer months.

North Cork Childcare Managers Network

The Network established and facilitated by IRD Duhallow meets every two months and provides an opportunity for managers, IRD Duhallow, Tusla and Cork County Childcare to network, discuss issues and challenges as well as identify opportunities such as training and workshops suitable for the staff in this sector. With changes coming to the national childcare sector including the New Affordable Childcare Programme, the Network provides a space for managers to discuss the impact of such changes and how best to manage and implement them in each of their facilities. Managers are afforded the opportunity to visit other childcare facilities in the region and to learn about the different management methods in each facility and gain helpful tips on activities and projects there. Currently a training plan is being put together for the sector in the autumn to focus on courses, which will help to upskill board, managers and staff alike. Community Childcare Facilities rely on the goodwill and expertise of their voluntary boards who take on the responsibility of managing such social enterprises. Good governance and accountability is pivotal to the effective running of such facilities and IRD Duhallow recognises the need to provide support and mentoring to such boards in the future where needed also.



Clann Aire Clondrohid

Above & left: Clann Aire Clondrohid were the winners in the Community Enterprise Category in the Duhallow Business Awards 2016.



IRD Duhallow's Local Training Initiative

The first year of IRD Duhallow's Local Training Initiative in Horticulture concluded for learners in February 2017, with fourteen students successfully completing the programme. The full time programme, based in the grounds of the James O'Keeffe Institute was delivered through funding received from Cork Education and Training Board and we are particularly grateful for the kind assistance of their staff Patricia O'Mahony, Assistant Manager and Catherine Power, Development Officer. The Local Training Initiative provided vocational training opportunities in Horticulture, assisting participants to achieve a QQI Level 4 certification and develop their capacity to progress to further training, education and work in the Horticulture industry.



2017 New LTI Students, ready to start work

Programme Delivery

Fourteen students completed the programme, with 11 achieving the Major Award, consisting of all nine modules. One student received seven minor awards with two other students successfully completing individual minor awards. Participants undertook training in the following: Safe Horticultural Practice; Plant Identification, Care and Maintenance; Plant Propagation; Growing Vegetables; Hard Landscape Construction; Establishing Turfgrass; Information Technology, Personal Effectiveness and Work Experience. Throughout the year, trainees received the opportunity to participate in a number of non-elective modules based on their individual training needs analysis including: Safe Pass, Manual Handling, Occupational First Aid, Abrasive Wheel Training, Maintenance of Small Horticultural Tools and Equipment and Forklift training for inexperienced learners.



Willie John Buckley, Charlie Broderick and Brendan Heffernan preparing a bed for cuttings in November 2016.

The success of this programme is derived from a facilitative learning approach, project based learning, development of individual learning plans for each trainee, self-paced learning, individualised learning supports, work experience opportunities and the provision of high levels of support throughout the programme.



On the 15th of July the participants organised a garden open day, providing them with the opportunity to demonstrate their learnings thus far and showcase the work completed in the gardens. This event was open to the public with the learners taking full responsibility

Keith Reens and Enda Carroll weeding the herb bed in the Kitchen Garden.

LTI TESTIMONIAL: Brendan Heffernan

"The LTI Level 4 horticulture course was an informative and interesting course which has rekindled my interest in growing my own veg and has given me the confidence to go on to further training and education in organic horticulture. The friendly atmosphere and staff at IRD Duhallow made it easy to reengage with education and training after many years. I would encourage anyone with an interest in gardening and horticulture to take this course."

for organising every detail of the event including advertising, garden tours, composting demonstrations, vegetable and plant sales and music. This was a very successful day and provided the public the opportunity to visit the award winning Community Gardens.

Progression Opportunities

All 14 students undertook two weeks work experience placements in a variety of businesses, including two local golf courses, (Kanturk & Charleville) two organic farms, Millstreet Country Park, a local nursery and local garden centre. This experience was invaluable for our students and we are very grateful to the businesses that took them on. One student received the offer of employment in the summer as a result of his placement. We received fantastic feedback from all of the employers, who were very impressed with the ability and dedication of the students. In terms of progression on completion of the community education programme we have four individuals seeking to go on and complete further



2017 students Dermot Smith, Denis Collins and Robert Wall, working in the allotments.

QQI training, three individuals are now in full time employment and seven individuals have conducted a variety of interviews for various positions and are actively seeking employment.

New Application 2017/2018

IRD Duhallow has been successful in its renewal application to Cork Education and Training Board to administer the programme in 2017/2018. We are delighted to be able to offer this valuable training programme again and we have since commenced our second Local Training Initiative in Horticulture in April with nine learners participating in the programme. Our focus will be to address the identified training needs of the participants and raise their skills, knowledge and competence levels and with the ultimate aim of attaining consequent employment and/or progression prospects for learners. The learners will have the opportunity to complete a nationally recognised qualification, QQI level 4 Major Award in Horticulture.



LTI student Keith Reen practices the art of dry stone walling a flower bed. (Photo Louise Pomeroy).

The participants are so far enjoying all aspects of the programme and have the opportunity to participate in a range of activities in the Community Garden including working on the Kitchen Garden, Therapeutic Garden, Apple Orchard, three Polytunnels and Individual Allotment Plots.



Robert Wall, Dermot Smith, John Murphy and Denis Collins discussing how best to prune a young apple tree.



Anthony O'Connor, Tutor, demonstrating the operation of one of the mowers used on the Pitch and Putt course as part of the Establishing Turfgrass module.

Duhallow Furniture Revamp

In full operation since January 2016, Duhallow furniture REVAMP has been providing a range of in-demand services to the community and in particular to disadvantaged individuals. In addition to the wide offering of good quality second-hand furniture for sale, Duhallow REVAMP provides a collection and delivery service, therefore



The team standing proud by the REVAMP's shop and van.
Tom O'Donovan, Deborah Pearson, Julie O'Flaherty,
Jessica Baron and Colm O'Connor.

Providing Employment Opportunities

With the assistance of funding from the Community Service Programme, REVAMP currently operates with four full time equivalents. REVAMP/Warmer homes were awarded a 12-month contract for 2017 and a request has been made for additional staffing resources which is crucial in order to grow the enterprise. The current employees have availed of training opportunities through Skillnets in the fields of customer service, training delivery and evaluation, supervisory management and health and safety to name but a few.



REVAMP employee Deborah Pearson completes the weave on a sughan chair.

Training & Upskilling

Another underlying objective of the social enterprise is to provide valuable training to participants on Tús and Community Employment Schemes. Duhallow REVAMP provides a safe and positive teaching environment where participants can learn new skills in upholstery, woodwork, customer service etc. Furthermore, participants have availed of the range of training courses made available through Skillnets and SICAP e.g. Forklift, CPC training, Dumper Truck Operating, Safe Pass and Manual Handling.



Tús participant, Nicholas O'Flaherty, applying stain to a kitchen chair.

A Retail Destination in the Making

Duhallow REVAMP has been awarded funding through the Social Enterprise Dormant Accounts Funding 2016 to assist with the refurbishment costs to the showrooms. It will allow REVAMP to purchase specialised equipment including a walking foot sewing machine, two specialised saws, an embroidery sewing machine and an industrial vacuum cleaner. Continuous efforts are being put into merchandising and displaying items in a professional manner. The showroom is an important tool in promoting the recycled furniture. Despite online pictures, nothing beats seeing the unique upcycled furniture in situ. It gives the best chance possible for the customer to visualise in their minds what the product will look like in their own homes.



Tús participant Catherine Ahern is responsible for the store inventory.

Play Your Part and Donate

The REVAMP van is on the road five days per week and offers a collection service FREE OF CHARGE. We encourage people that have furniture that is surplus to requirement and in good condition, please consider helping a great cause and donating to REVAMP. The proceeds are reinvested back into the project.



Before and after: child's armchairs handmade by REVAMP.



Tom O'Donovan, employee at REVAMP, putting a fresh lick of paint on old dining chairs.

Reaching Out To Our Customers

Continuous efforts are made to spread the word about Duhallow REVAMP in the community and footfall has dramatically increased as a result. Social media outlets including Facebook and Twitter generate over half the custom and the passing trade is also growing consistently. The newly branded delivery van is a mobile advertisement for the enterprise and the publication in the monthly newsletter and posters in the community are all helping to raise awareness locally. Amongst others, the elderly has largely benefited from the refurbishment services. The older generation in particular are extremely keen in upcycling and reusing their existing furniture. An allocated window on Strand Street, Kanturk, kindly donated by IRD Duhallow Board Member Michael Twohig, has been made available to display some of the pieces of furniture and further promote the restoration and upcycling service available.

Recycling and upcycling

One of the principal aims of Duhallow REVAMP is to help divert waste from landfills by offering a green alternative. Not only has over 40.7 tons of furniture been diverted to date, an average of 2 tons per month, but of those, over 32.4 tons has already been repaired and redistributed to households in the community. As the capacity of the enterprise grows, so is the volume of recycled items. In collaboration with a number of local businesses, a large volume of material which would normally be disposed of has instead been recycled by REVAMP. These include pallets and scaffolding boards which have been used in projects involving participants from COPE foundation. The materials are given a new purpose and are used in the construction of garden benches, little armchairs and other small projects.



William O'Brien, Tús participant, working on garden benches.

Duhallow Community Laundry

Duhallow Community Laundry has now been operational for over three years. The idea for this social enterprise originated from lengthy consultations between IRD Duhallow's Saoi Network and the Duhallow Carers Network who highlighted the necessity for the provision of such a service primarily for the elderly, carers and low-income households in Duhallow.



Sean Flaherty collecting his laundry from Margaret Murphy.

The Saoi Network along with the Carers Network were visionary in setting the wheels in motion to establish this laundry, as according to Social Justice Ireland there will be one million over-65s in Ireland by 2031 and some 136,000 will be aged 85 or over. With Duhallow continuing to have an ageing population, the provision of such supports to independent older people and their families is vital in promoting independent living. Social Justice highlights their concern, for the lack of adequate funding being provided to address the ageing of the population, as



Louise Buckley with Marie Fleming Laundry co-ordinator planning the pick-ups and laundry routes for the week.

there will be a steady increase in older people accessing services. With an ageing population, the acute hospital system will be unable to operate effectively unless there is a greater shift towards primary and community services as a principal means of meeting patient needs. There has been a 17% reduction in the number of home help hours delivered since 2008 and this has left families struggling to cover the gaps in care for their elderly relatives. Social Justice Ireland stated that a commitment to supporting people at home is only aspirational if funding is not provided for home help services, day care centres and home care packages. These are the very areas which must be the subject of investment to address population ageing. Duhallow Community Laundry compliments the existing services of Warmer Homes and the Meals on Wheels, all of which support older people to live in their own homes longer.



Louise Buckley delivers laundry directly to the home of Mrs & Mr O'Halloran.



Duhallow Community Laundry is a demand deficient social enterprise, meaning there is a need for this service, however the people who need it were not in a position to avail of it previously through existing commercial offerings, thus it addresses the unmet needs of the elderly and most vulnerable in society.

All the laundry is carefully handled and pressed to ensure a quality service.



Sheila O'Keeffe heading off making house calls dropping off laundry to those that don't have access to transport.

A free collection and delivery service ensures that those who have limited or no means of transport are not isolated from using the service.

One of the reasons that Duhallow Community Laundry can provide a top quality affordable accessible service is due to the staffing support we receive from the Rural Social Scheme, Tús, and the Community Employment Scheme. The participants from these schemes provide an efficient service and have built trusting relationships with all of our clients. The participants are provided with an opportunity to gain invaluable experience in areas such as customer care, data entry, stock taking and the operating all of the equipment. Duhallow Community Laundry is hopeful that going forward it will receive a staffing grant to guarantee employment, as the turnover on schemes unfortunately can make it difficult to plan ahead for the future.



Margaret Murphy putting the finishing touches to ironing that is ready for collection.

In November of last year, Duhallow Community Laundry was delighted to be shortlisted in the 'Best Community Enterprise' category in the Duhallow Business Awards. Even though we did not win on the night, the accolade to be even considered in our second year of operation was wonderful. As a relatively new community enterprise, preparing our application provided a great opportunity to undertake a review to date, it helped us measure our success in that had we met our key objective, that we were actively engaging and developing with other agencies and social enterprises. This experience was an invaluable learning process. The staff of the laundry were delighted to attend the Awards on the night and Sheila Crowley, Chairperson of the Duhallow Carers Network accepted the runner up prize of a certificate which takes pride of place in the reception area of the laundry.



Sheila Crowley received a presentation on behalf of the Community Laundry. The laundry was a finalist in the community enterprise category of the Duhallow Business Awards 2016.

Saoi - Network for Active Retired Groups



Members of the Duhallow Saoi Network officially launching Bealtaine 2017 with Jimmy Reidy and guests on C103's Around the Fireside.

The Saoi Network comprises of 19 Actively Retired Groups spread throughout the Duhallow area. The Saoi Network allows for a platform where older people are encouraged to embrace the spirit of volunteerism and people are empowered to become involved in their communities, by putting in place local solutions to identified problems. The Network plays a valuable communication role acting as an information portal, promoting services available through agencies and especially through IRD Duhallow with initiatives such as Duhallow Revamp, Duhallow Rural Meals, the Community Laundry and the Warmer Homes Scheme.



Members of the Castlemagner Community Singers Sinsir Choir, who performed at the Sinsir Seniors Talent Exhibition.

A quick look at the recently released census 2016 preliminary data, clearly identifies the ageing population in this area. The CSO predicts that by 2031 the number of older people classed as over 65 in Ireland will have doubled. This poses a significant problem for this area which already has such an elderly population at present. These projections reinforce the important role to be played by the Saoi Network going forward.



The newest member of IRD Duhallow's Saoi Network Kilbrin ARA was established with the support of IRD Duhallow. The Clubs newly elected officers Chairperson Nora Mary O'Riordan, Secretary Phil Field and Treasurer Joan Buckley signed the club's constitution with the help of Anna O'Brien Active Retirement Ireland and Eleanor Moore of the HSE.

New Groups

The Saoi Network, in conjunction John Noel Cronin of Active Retirement Ireland and Kilbrin Community Council provided supports for the establishment of a new Active Retired Club in Kilbrin. Our next plan is to identify the potential development

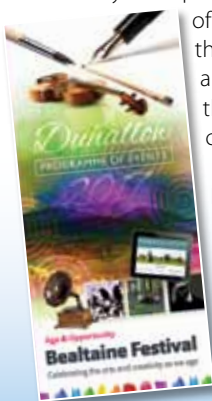
of more groups in the community with a specific focus on the new mid Cork communities.



Louise Bourke and Jack Roche of IRD Duhallow planning the mystery destination for Jack's renowned tour.

Bealtaine 2017

Bealtaine 2017 was a month long festival celebrating actively ageing in the community. There were 31 events organised across Duhallow.



Jack's Mystery Tour: one of the surprise elements was a boat trip through the Eco Wetlands of Tralee Bay!

Day Time Cinema

In the past 12 months over 200 people attended daytime cinema showings in the James O'Keefe Institute. Cinema goers enjoyed their dinner which was supplied by Duhallow Community Food Service, followed by a screening of old classic favourites such as The Sound of Music, Calamity Jane, How to defuse a Bomb and The Quiet Man.



Maureen Ambrose and Catherine Kelleher who attended the Saoi Network's Day Time Cinema showing of The Quiet Man.

Facebook Training

With the support of the Community Foundation of Ireland the Saoi Network received funding to deliver Facebook training for seniors. The purpose of this training is to allow older people connect with loved ones who may live abroad and develop an online community for those who live in isolated areas. Participants' eyes were opened to the wonders of the world wide web and how social media can be used to stay in touch with one another.

Befriending Network

Many people live in isolation, longing for someone to talk to and to simply have a friend. The Duhallow Befriending Network was established in April of 2016. The idea behind the network is to call and visit people in their own homes. Sixteen Volunteers with the Duhallow Befriending Networks have all partaken in Communications and Awareness training as well as signing up to our volunteer handbook and befriending network policies. All have been Garda Vetted. Volunteers currently call in pairs to 12 service users on a weekly basis. Referrals for service users come from Public Health Nurses, Family Members and Friends.

The Duhallow Befriending Network complements the 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 and friendly caller for this service, Bridget Keating.

Care & Repair

IRD Duhallow has a panel of volunteers that carry out small repair jobs in the homes of the elderly



Ellen O'Reilly, Joan Noonan and Eily Buckley enjoying their dinner at the day time cinema showing of How to Defuse a Bomb with Paddy Mulcahy.

This programme is delivered in conjunction with Age Action where jobs are carried out free of charge with the householder only paying for the materials used. We received 100 Carbon Monoxide detectors along with installation training from Age Action at the end of 2016. Our Warmer Homes installers are fitting these alarms in houses where they are carrying out insulation works.

Warmer Homes Initiative



Better Energy Warmer Homes Scheme (BEWHS)

The Better Energy Warmer Homes Scheme is funded by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) and Pobal through the Community Services Programme (CSP). To qualify for this scheme, you must be in receipt of Fuel Allowance or Family Income Supplement or Job Seekers Allowance (For more than 6 months and have a child under 7 years of age) or the One Parent Family Payment. Homes must also be owner occupied and constructed before 2006. IRD Duhallow is one of 12 community based organisations (CBO'S) delivering this scheme throughout the country. Our Warmer Homes Scheme is in operation since 2006 and at the end of 2016 we had insulated well in excess of 3,500 houses. Areas covered include North and Mid Cork, South Limerick and all of Kerry. At the beginning of 2017, SEAI issued a tender for the BEWHS for the 2017-2020 period. IRD Duhallow was successful in its tender for Lot D to deliver standard attic and cavity wall insulation.



Michael Enright presented with a framed photo on the occasion of his retirement in 2016. Michael worked in the WHS since 2008.

Kingspan Retrofit Home Incentive Scheme

In 2016, IRD Duhallow became a registered installer under the Kingspan Retrofit Home Incentive Scheme. This scheme is rolled out through our cavity wall certificate holder 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. To date, 48 houses received funding for insulation works through this scheme and it is proving very popular for those households not eligible for the Better Energy Warmer Homes Scheme.

Better Energy Communities Programme (BEC)

IRD Duhallow received funding for energy efficiency upgrade works on 5 community buildings in 2016 through the BEC programme. This was delivered through EPS Ltd as the Lead Applicant and Enprova, who are contracted to deliver the energy obligation for the Irish Oil Industry, as the project coordinator.



KSN Inspector Garrett Walsh on-site with Billy Browne at a recent quality assurance inspection. KSN are contracted by SEAI to oversee the quality assurance of the Better Energy Warmer Homes Scheme.

IRD Duhallow identified the community buildings for inclusion in the application and was subsequently sub-contracted the insulation works for Newmarket GAA, Derrinagree School, Mallow Day Care Centre, Kerry Parents and Friends Tralee and Ballygowan National School near Mallow.

Local Authority Energy Efficiency Retrofit Works

IRD Duhallow submitted a tender to the Local Government Operational Procurement Centre (LGOPC) to provide insulation works to local authority housing stock. The tender was successful and IRD Duhallow are added to the framework of contractors for Kerry County Council. Works will be awarded going forward following mini tenders amongst this panel.



Kerry Parents and Friends Association received insulation works to one of their properties in Tralee under SEAI's Better Energy Communities 2016. Pictured outside their Tralee premises is resident Michael and staff member Melissa Dennehy with some of the energy efficiency advice booklets supplied after the works were completed.



Cllr Maria O'Gorman welcomed the scheme in the Kerry area.

Employment

The Warmer Homes Scheme is staffed through a number of work labour schemes including the Rural Social Scheme (RSS), Community Employment (CE) and the Tús Scheme who supply participants to work with teams insulating attics and cavity walls. Our main staffing funding comes from the Community Services Programme (CSP) which enables us to employ a coordinator and 5 full time staff. We recently submitted a 3-year business plan for 2018-2020 and it is hoped that we will receive extra staff allocations to help us expand our service in Kerry to meet their need for the Better Energy Warmer Homes Scheme. Seventy percent of these positions must be filled by those who are distanced from mainstream employment.

Training

Training is an essential part of our business ensuring staff are kept up to date on industry standards. These include 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 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. KSN oversee the quality control for the BEWHS where their inspectors carry out random quality checks on houses completed by IRD Duhallow. In 2016, IRD Duhallow had a pass rate of 90% from these inspections. We continue to carry out internal quality control checks to ensure we maintain this high pass rate. IRD Duhallow has engaged with DQS Ireland to renew our ISO Certification for ISO9001 (Quality), ISO14001 (Environmental) and OHSAS 18001 (Safety).



Mallow Day Care Centre received attic and cavity wall insulation works through the Better Energy Communities Programme 2016. This was one of 5 community building to benefit from this programme in 2016.

IRD Duhallow Community Employment Scheme

IRD Duhallow's Community Employment Scheme aims to enhance the employability of disadvantaged and unemployed persons by providing good quality work experience and training opportunities for them within their communities. In addition, it helps long-term unemployed people to re-enter the active workforce by breaking their experience of unemployment through a return to work routine. Twenty-Two participants work across a variety of community and environmental placements including Caretaking, Furniture Restoration, Administration, Accounts, Community Laundry, Community Kitchen, Village Tidy Towns, Insulation Operatives and Counter Assistants. At present, the participants are based in the communities of Rathcoole, Boherbue, Ballydaly, Kilcorney, Dromtariffe, Lyre, Newmarket and Banteer.



Training and upskilling is a key focus for the CE Participants. Michael Buckland successfully completed QQI Level 4 in Horticulture Tools and Equipment.

Activation and Social Inclusion

Going forward it is proposed that all CE Schemes will be categorised into one of two strands, either activation, with a target progression rate set at 50%, or social inclusion, with a target progression rate set at 20%. This categorisation will be based primarily on the work experience element of the placement. In considering the outcomes achieved by a particular scheme, consideration will be given to local labour market conditions and other factors impacting on progression opportunities. The creation of two strands within CE recognises that a majority of places are not activation type places and therefore were never going to perform well under any analysis of performance as an activation intervention. This is not to say these places do not have a value to both participant and community, and society in general. Educational and employment status are strongly interlinked but there are unemployed people who have existing skills but find it difficult to secure work because of the exclusion facing their community; or they have a disability; or they are parenting alone; or they are long-term unemployed and gaining employment can be very challenging.



CE affords people the opportunity to learn new skills. Krztof Marciniak working on a stonewall.



Before and After: CE Participant Peter J. Cremin has carefully restored a horse drawn cart in IRD Duhallow's Traditional Skills Restoration Project.

Protecting the Future of Community Employment

Following the recent publication of an 'Analysis of the Community Employment Programme' by the Department of Social Protection new measures have been put in place to protect the future of the programme for both participants and communities. This includes widening the range of people who can take part by reducing the entry age to 21 years, giving a second opportunity to people who have already taken part and securing the number of participants at existing levels. There is a strong focus on social inclusion alongside the traditional purpose of helping people into the workforce. CE participants working towards a major award can seek to extend their participation by up to two years and those over 55 years of age will be allowed to remain on CE for three years. It will also be easier for previous participants to re-enter a scheme or get an extra year as the cut off year is now moved forward from 2000 to 2007. The new qualifying criteria will ensure a greater number of long term unemployed people are available to take up the places, gain valuable skills and experience and support vital community services. The Department are also planning to review the possibility of allowing older people stay on the scheme for longer.

Training Provision

The provision of training for participants on CE is extremely valuable for the purposes of progression and this is monitored through the Individual Learner Plan (ILP). The CE Supervisor provides mentoring and coaching so participants can gain the necessary skills and training to progress to employment. A major emphasis is placed on accreditation and the Department have this year part funded training courses for our scheme certified through SOLAS, QQI and City and Guilds including:



Edmond O'Brien and Helena Enright are upskilling and training in Accounting and Administration.



Timothy Tarrant doing his practical training for Beginners Forklift Course



Manual Handling, Driver Certificate of Professional Competency, Care of the Older Person, Interview Skills, Small Tools Maintenance, Training Delivery and Evaluation, Forklift and Abrasive Wheel training.

Marco Defrietas and Jerzy Chojnacki planning the orders for the meals deliveries in Duhallow Community Food Service.

Rural Social Scheme



Denis O'Mahony delivering meals for DCFS as part of his RSS duties and working on his farm.

Expansion of the Rural Social Scheme

Maintaining a healthy agricultural sector is vital to Duhallow, not just because the landscape relies on the accumulated knowledge of farming communities for its continued stewardship, but also because the social fabric of the countryside depends on a strong farming base. The Rural Social Scheme (RSS) supports low-income farmers who are unable to earn an adequate living from their farm holding whilst also providing vital support to countless community services, schools, community centres, sports facilities, amenities, graveyards and village renewal projects throughout the region. The then, Minister for Social Protection, Leo Varadkar announced 500 extra places on the RSS in the most recent Budget. This is the first expansion of the scheme in 11 years and the increase brings the total number of participants from 2,600 to 3,100 nationally. In line with other social protection payments, since March 2017 participants are receiving a €5/week increase, and a further €3.30/week for adult dependents. IRD Duhallow received 11 additional places and will now aim to support 69 low-income farmers to earn a supplementary income in return for 19.5 hours work per week. Confirmation given by Minister Varadkar that the RSS is an income support initiative for farmers is a welcome development as there have been attempts in the past by this Department to make it a job activation measure like other social employment schemes.



RSS participant Don Horgan working on the GAA pitch in Banteer.

Sustaining Vibrant Farming Communities

The viability of the family farm is no doubt a challenging issue for many low-income farmers. The RSS supports the close-knit communities in Duhallow because these farmers understand each other's lifestyle and share many similar values concerning their work ethic. When small farms thrive, main street businesses and local communities prosper in what has been termed the "local multiplier effect." Every time money changes hands within a community, it boosts income and economic activity, and fuels job creation. This is because locally owned businesses,

including small farm / family farm enterprises are more likely to re-spend their money locally. Equally important to the economic benefits of the RSS are the many personal, social, and environmental contributions participants make in their communities. Since the farm is tied to the land, farmers have a stake in the economic vibrancy, social well-being, and ecological health of their community. Communities that lose family farms lose exceptional experience and practical insight. They also lose a base of consumers and this can cause more businesses to shut their doors and ultimately leads to population loss and out migration.



John O'Flynn maintaining the approach road to Boherbue.

Farm Assist

Following the 2016 budget, farm income and other income from off-farm or self-employment will be assessed at 70%, down from 100%, for means-tested access to the scheme. There is an additional annual disregard of €254 for each of the first two children and €381 for the third and other children. This means the disregard for dependent children is applied first and 70% of the balance is assessed. The income from the previous 12 months is used to calculate any future earnings, however it is not automatically assumed that the farmer will repeat his/her earnings from the previous year and therefore the current climate or environmental factors are taken into account. The new qualifying criteria should increase the number of farmers qualifying for Farm Assist payments and therefore increase the number of farmers who would qualify for places on the RSS.



RSS participants Helen O'Connor and Eileen O'Riordan preparing desserts to be delivered to the elderly with Duhallow Community Food Services.

Rural Social Scheme



RSS participant Kathleen O'Connor providing invaluable assistance in the St. Vincent de Paul shop in Kanturk three days a week, outside of this she works on her farm in Paal Kanturk.



Recruitment

Following the Minister's announcement of additional RSS places, IRD Duhallow is actively recruiting for suitable candidates. In order to be deemed eligible to participate on the RSS, an individual must provide a copy of their application for the EU Basic Farm Payment for the current year, which includes a valid herd number together with a copy of the associated receipt (official proof of postage). Eligibility is confined to those in receipt of certain qualifying payments. A spouse, child or sibling can take up a place on the scheme in place of the original applicant if they wish. Eligibility for all new RSS entrants will be limited to those over 25 years. In addition, RSS eligibility for new RSS entrants will be limited to a duration of three years at a time and a total of six years in a lifetime. These conditions will not affect existing RSS participants and will apply to all new entrants only.

Community Care Committee

Poor housing has a profound effect on physical, psychological and social health, and hence on quality of life, and this is amplified when the individual is coping with disability or an addiction. Older people may be asset rich (i.e. own their homes) but income poor, with dwellings often their main form of wealth. Following repeated requests from concerned members of the community and IRD Duhallow's ongoing social inclusion work with the elderly and vulnerable individuals living in Duhallow, the local Gardai, Public Health Nurses and the Board of IRD Duhallow established a Community Care Committee in January 2017. The Community Care Committee aims to support older and more vulnerable adults to maintain successful independent living reduce the level of



admissions to hospital/residential care and increase the social reconnection of these people in their own communities. This steering group comprises of local Gardai, the Community

Brian Feehan working on the Community Care Project, making the home of an older person more accessible by installing hand rails.

Welfare Officer, Public Health Nurses, RSS/Tús Supervisors, Warmer Homes Scheme Coordinator, MABS, St.Vincent De Paul and Local Authority Staff. Tight public finances make partnership work across the community, health, social care, housing and the voluntary sector especially important for work like this.



RSS participants Billy Curtin and Pat Shanahan painting the interior of the sports hall in Meelin.

Some older people medically ready to leave hospital are unable to return to their homes unless adaptations and improvements are made to their houses. If individuals are discharged to unsafe, cold, unsuitable homes, they are more likely to return to hospital. Enabling older people to go home from hospital safely requires a cross agency support effort. By request of the local Public Health Nurses, housing assessments have been conducted by the RSS Supervisors. In some instances, the homes fail to meet basic standards of warmth and safety and therefore clean ups and alterations need to be made. Following the assessments, recommendations are sent to the HSE and Community Welfare Officer. Work usually involves general clean up, painting and repairs. Referrals to the Warmer Homes Scheme have been made and the Furniture



Walkers preparing for the RSS led walk on the Mullakereirk mountain.

REVAMP project has been able to assist in providing furniture and other household items. Since January, 12 houses have been identified and a huge amount of work has been completed to make them more comfortable for their inhabitants.

Protecting the Environment, Biodiversity and Rewarding Farmers

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. Funding is provided for 25 local private landowners maintain and upgrade their sections along the route. 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. Two years ago, an automatic visitor counter was



fitted at the entrance to The Duhallow Way/Claragh Loop in Millstreet. Data collected from October 2015 to September 2016 recorded that there were 8753 walkers on the route.

RSS participants taking part in a Trail Maintenance Course by Sport Ireland.

Tús Community Workplace Initiative

Increasing employment rates is a target of Europe 2020. The European Strategy aims to increase the employment rate for people aged 20 to 64 to 75% by 2020. To achieve this, the EU's employment guidelines highlight the importance of 'increasing labour market participation of women and men, reducing structural unemployment and promoting job quality'. They also emphasise that activation is key to increasing labour market participation. IRD Duhallow is determined to assist with the challenge at a local level. IRD Duhallow's Tús Community Activation Programme has directly assisted in reducing the number of people on the live register since 2011. This has been achieved through combining obligations and support measures to motivate and empower unemployed people through their 12 month work placements but also indirectly because a high number of people who have been called to participate on Tús prefer to leave unemployment and drop their unemployment claim instead of complying with the Tús programme requirements. Therefore, the processes underpinning the operation of Tús support the management of the Live Register.



Tús participants Denis Carroll and Peter Fenlon Planting broadleaves in part of the riparian buffer zone cleared by the RaptorLIFE project on the river Blackwater in the Special Protected Area.

and programmes such as Skillnets, LEADER and SICAP. With the assistance of IRD Duhallow's Skillnets Programme, IRD Duhallow has carried out a systematic screening of economic sectors that has allowed the Employment and Training working group to identify and monitor changing skills needs of the unemployed. Local Employers are engaged with on an ongoing basis and they kindly assist us in our efforts in identifying the current and future knowledge gaps.



Trinity well was cleaned and maintained by Tús participants.



Michael Judd, Daniel Sweeney and Joseph Coffey in Dromagh Church grounds building a dry stone wall.



Kathleen Linehan Human Resources Gleneagle Hotel visits members of IRD Duhallow's Job Centre & former Tús participants to inform them of career opportunities in the hospitality sector.

Supporting Rural Job Seekers

IRD Duhallow's Activation Strategy aims to encourage jobseekers to become more active in their efforts to find work and/or improve their employability. Rather than a 'job first' sole focus to activation, IRD Duhallow's Tús also focuses on skills development and training to assist



Douglas Ballantyne maintaining the greens on the pitch and putt course in Newmarket.

participants in securing sustainable employment. 'Wrap-around' supports are offered through IRD Duhallow whereby the traditional employment assistance is integrated with other support services available such as IRD Duhallow's Job Centre, Bereavement Support, labour market training including Skillnets and counsellor assistance where necessary etc. The activation strategy targets both the unemployed but also potential employers. IRD Duhallow has developed strong linkages with local employers through the Job Centre

I am unemployed – why should I consider Self Referring onto Tús?

Tús provides employment for individuals who have been unemployed for over a year, to help them get back into a regular working routine and regain a work focus. It also provides them with the opportunity to learn new skills, build self-confidence and assist with projects in their local community. They are part-time employed for 19.5 hours per week for a year and are also given the opportunity to engage in training to improve their existing skills or learn new skills that may help them to progress into employment. Over 860 individuals to date have benefitted from this programme throughout Duhallow.

How do I get on the scheme?

An individual cannot be considered for Tús unless they are referred by the Department of Social Protection. The Department randomly selects names from the live register of individuals unemployed for over a year. They make contact with those selected and forward their details to IRD Duhallow. Everyone on that list is invited to an initial one-to-one meeting to decide on a suitable placement which matches their skills. In 2015 the Department of Social Protection introduced an Assisted Self-Referral method, whereby a Social Protection Case Officer could also put an individual's name forward for the programme. Only 20% of the referrals in a year can be made in this way.



Bernadette McCarthy caretaking in the community hall in Boherbue.

Tús Community Workplace Initiative



A pony cart has been restored with the help of Tús participant Liam Sheehan.

Vintage Machinery Restoration

IRD Duhallow has renovated and preserved a large collection of vintage agricultural equipment and machinery, covering many aspects of farm life in times past. Tús, CE scheme participants, as well as volunteers are given the opportunity to learn a unique set of skills. Given that knowledge of traditional trades such as Blacksmiths, Wheelwrights, Cartmakers are now disappearing in the modern world; this vintage display has become a knowledge base within Munster where people can come and see working examples of machinery and get advice for renovations of their own. A dedicated workshop area funded through IRD Duhallow's LEADER 2007-2013 programme has facilitated a "hands on learning approach" to teaching and problem solving, to promote and preserve local rural farm heritage. With support from Tús and CE Supervisors, participants



get a real sense of pride and accomplishment in renovations from beginning to end; learning skills in a supportive environment and contributing their own knowledge. The Agri Museum is providing a unique social support structure which is helping to combat rural isolation.

John Kelleher and John Cremin built and filled the raised beds in Rathmore Teach Mhuire to enable the residents to grow their own vegetables.

Heritage & Traditional Skills Training

The diversity and range of Duhallow's unique built and natural heritage is one that is rooted in the community. The continued development of these heritage assets will greatly contribute to the tourism offering of



Supervisor Don Murphy guiding William O'Connell and Marek Tylczak in the restoration of the courtyard project.

region and the positive development of rural communities. Traditional renovation works have been undertaken in the courtyard buildings of the James O'Keeffe Institute. These out building are protected structures and therefore subject to Heritage Council building guidelines. The work involves very sensitive restoration ensuring that it is in keeping with the original structure and traditional building methods. Tús participants have gained new traditional and almost lost skills such as repairing and recrafting of old timber and frame work that is centuries old. In addition, stone and brickwork has been repaired using lime mortars and mixes.



Pio O'Connell sets up the Edel Quinn hall prior to an event taking place.

Youth Unemployment

The Youth Guarantee is a political commitment taken by all EU Member States to give every young person a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education. Particular focus has been provided to support regions where the youth unemployment rate is over 25%. Tús payments to under 25s are eligible expenditure to be submitted for ESF co-financing for the period 1st May 2015 to 31 December 2017. IRD Duhallow has one dedicated scheme for under 25's. Where possible positions are reserved in areas where the young person would obtain the most relevant experience with the best possibilities of obtaining employment after they leave the scheme.



Jacinta Carroll helping Natalia Kean prepare her CV during her year on Tús.



Supporting Migrant Workers

Since the inception of Tús, 112 Non-Irish individuals mainly from Eastern Europe have participated in a 12-month work placement across a variety of areas including construction, furniture restoration, food industry and community based work within the Duhallow region. This has helped to integrate these job seekers within the community and relationships and local contacts have been developed as a result.

Munjural Hoque working on the restoration of a stone wall as part of the courtyard project

TÚS TESTIMONIAL: Damian McGrath

"I completed a Tús work placement in my local community of Rathmore, Co.Kerry where I worked on the upkeep and maintenance of the 2 villages of Rathmore, the local community hall and play ground. Overall, it was a very positive experience and helped me refocus on getting a job. The training I received during my time on Tús which included Safe Pass and Manual Handling was extremely useful when I was sending out my CV to employers. Thankfully, I successfully secured employment with Alps Electric, Millstreet shortly after finishing on the scheme and I was most grateful for the reference provided by IRD Duhallow".



Duhallow Community Food Services



Orlaith Tomkins,
Manager of Duhallow
Community Food Services.

Orlaith Tomkins has been managing the operation at DCFS for the last 9 years. She graduated from GMIT with a degree in Hotel and Catering Management and she also attained the IMCV Professional Manager Award. 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 from both home and abroad.

A recent study of services in Ireland found that "the anticipated growth in the number of older adults, including many of whom are frail, homebound, and living alone, will likely increase the demand for nutritional and social services that enable seniors to remain residing in their own home". In the Duhallow area and beyond, Duhallow Community Food Services provide a meals service to the elderly and to those recovering from illness and not in a position to cook for themselves. As predicted for many years by the Saoi Network and indeed our Board, the demand for the service continues to



Dinny and Helen Mahony receive their meal each day from driver Paul O'Connor.

grow with 36,500 dinners produced and delivered last year alone and we currently operate 6 routes covering Duhallow, East Kerry, South Limerick and mid Cork areas.

DCFS has been operating for the last three years from our state of the art, purpose built food centre in Newmarket. This has allowed us to develop our capacity as demand for the

service is set to grow in the future due to the region's ageing population. The building acts as a great resource for the people of Newmarket.

DCFS conducted a survey of its clients late last year, which found that the benefits were in fact three fold and went beyond mere food delivery. There were obvious health and nutritional benefits, however socialisation and companionship and independent living benefits were also key advantages. The third finding was quite surprising, as it revealed that seniors initially felt slow to access the services as felt they were not entitled to the meal because they could cook for themselves and did have some access to transport. The meals service is available to all senior citizens and they are all welcome to access to the service for the short or long term whatever suits their requirements.

There are now three options for gaining access to the service: home delivery; the weekly-organised senior citizen gatherings at the community centres or the Community Dining Room located at the premises in Newmarket. The Community Dining Room is open Monday to Friday from 9.30am - 6.00pm and Saturday 10am - 4pm. All guests are welcome to dine from the extensive menu or indulge in the selection of homemade cakes and desserts or traditional afternoon tea. Our senior menu is available for just €6 for dinner and dessert each day from 12.30pm - 2.00pm.

Since its inception in 1994, DCFS has had to engage in commercial activity in order to subsidise the meal service. A demand deficient social enterprise a single meal costs

Restaurant Supervisor Trish Twomey always greets customers with a friendly smile.



The Senior Team in DCFS planning orders and deliveries for the week: Administrator Olive Casey, Kitchen Supervisor Marcio de Freitas, Deliveries and Logistics coordinator Neily O'Flynn and Manager, Orlaith Tomkins.

substantially more but only €6 is charged. While DCFS receives staffing funding from CSP and a smaller grant from the HSE, as the numbers using the service continually grows, it is becoming increasingly important to generate additional revenue to secure the future of the service.

DCFS supplies home baking to the local retail outlets. Healthy snacks and lunches are also supplied to the children and staff at Boherbue Comprehensive School. Outside catering also continues to be very important and ever popular.

Catering for Communion, Confirmation, Birthday Parties, Funerals or any occasion. Menu options can be designed to cater for all tastes and budgets. DCFS provides a huge range of both savoury and sweet food. DCFS has



John Browne and Aidan Creedon loading the van that was funded through the Dormant Accounts Funding Programme. The Hot Box was purchased with the support of the HSE Lottery Funding.

a great reputation for high quality home style cooking using the finest of local ingredients. Making the service happen on a daily basis is down to a dedicated team of staff. The staff are made up of participants on the Community Services Programme, the Rural Social Scheme, Tús Scheme and Community Employment scheme. DCFS is an outstanding example of how the various schemes integrate to provide a valuable service to the community. In doing so, we provide opportunities for learning and training to the scheme participants, some of whom would be distanced from the labour market for some time and employment opportunities are not plentiful locally. Many of our former Tús participants have found long-term employment in the restaurant and catering industry further to the experience and knowledge they gained during their time at DCFS.

The company is managed by a board of 18 voluntary directors. DCFS is indebted to the volunteers who give so generously of their time to assist with the production and delivery of meals.

DCFS can only continue to provide subsidised meals through the support of private catering. Jadwiga Gondek makes tarts and baked products, which are supplied locally to the bakery.



The restaurant in DCFS is busy every lunchtime with large numbers of senior citizens calling for dinner and the opportunity to meet and socialise with other people.

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
Bealnamorive
Inchigeelagh
Kilbarry
Macroon
Rusheen

IRD Duhallow Representatives

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