



Comhairle Contae  
Ros Comáin  
Roscommon  
County Council



# MANAGEMENT REPORT



**March 2024**

**QUARTER 1**

**Roscommon County Council**

**Revenue Account Income & Expenditure Summary by Service Division**

**Management Accounts Summary to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024**

	EXPENDITURE		INCOME		NET
	Expenditure Incurred up to 31/03/2024	Adopted Full Year Budget	Income Receivable up to 31/03/2024	Adopted Full year Budget	Actual Overall Surplus/ (Deficit)
	€	€	€	€	€
Housing & Building	1,939,759	9,258,906	2,849,613	9,531,863	909,854
Road Transport & Safety	3,218,501	30,288,360	1,226,275	23,103,509	(1,992,226)
Water Services	1,089,235	6,235,843	1,070,582	6,115,112	(18,653)
Development Management	1,269,145	9,938,335	630,775	3,010,228	(638,370)
Environmental Services	1,270,124	8,105,044	100,431	2,097,373	(1,169,693)
Recreation & Amenity	861,493	5,228,935	229,442	663,076	(632,051)
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	83,223	774,889	24,025	278,967	(59,198)
Miscellaneous Services	959,918	5,600,805	499,002	5,373,288	(460,916)
Central Management Charges	3,245,262	0	187,412	0	(3,057,850)
Local Government Fund/General Purpose Grant	0	0	2,094,917	12,534,000	2,094,917
Pension Levy	0	0	0	0	0
Rates	0	0	3,117,295	12,723,700	3,117,295
	<b>13,936,660</b>	<b>75,431,117</b>	<b>12,029,769</b>	<b>75,431,117</b>	<b>(1,906,890)</b>

**Note 1;**

The Central Management Charge is allocated one month in arrears. The costs included in the Central Management Charge are distributed among Divisions A-H and include costs from Area Offices, Corporate Affairs, Corporate buildings, Finance, Human Resources, IT Print & Post Room Services, Pension & Lump Sums.

**Summary of Major Collections as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024**

<b>Debt Type</b>	<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>Accrued</b>	<b>Vacant Property Adjustments</b>	<b>Write Off/Waivers</b>	<b>Total for Collection</b>	<b>Collected</b>	<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>Specific Doubtful Arrears</b>	<b>% Collection</b>	<b>% Collection Previous Year</b>
<b>Commercial Rates</b>	1,466,294	12,469,078	225,759	29,323	13,680,290	3,123,412	10,556,878	28,511	23%	24%
<b>Rents &amp; Annuities</b>	647,010	1,562,058	-	(3,434)	2,212,502	1,507,884	704,618	-	68%	72%
<b>Housing Loans</b>	131,912	39,113	-	-	171,025	140,252	30,773	-	82%	41%

**Recourse to Overdraft;**

There has been no recourse to overdraft during the month of March 2024

# PLANNING DEPARTMENT

## Forward Planning

The statutory public consultation on the *Draft Roscommon Town Local Area Plan (LAP) 2024-2030*, (which commenced on December 15<sup>th</sup> 2023), continued throughout January. As part of this, a public consultation drop in event took place in the Abbey Hotel on Thursday January 18<sup>th</sup>, while the public consultation concluded on February 5<sup>th</sup>. A total of 67 submissions were received. Following the close of the public consultation period, the *Chief Executive's Report on the Submissions received on the Draft Roscommon Town LAP* was prepared and issued to Members on March 15<sup>th</sup> 2024.

In respect of the pre-draft phase of the *Athlone Joint Urban Area Plan*, a non-statutory public consultation on the *Strategic Issues Paper* commenced in December 2023 and ran throughout January 2024. A public consultation drop in event took place in Athlone Civic Centre on Thursday January 25<sup>th</sup>. The event attracted participants from both the County Roscommon and County Westmeath areas of Athlone.

Collaborative work undertaken by the Forward Planning Team and Roscommon County Council's GIS Officer led to the publication of the Draft Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT) Maps for 2025 on February 1<sup>st</sup> 2024. The maps identify land that the Local Authority considers to be in scope for the tax (identified in accordance with the criteria set out in the *Residential Zoned Land Tax – Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (June 2022)). The public consultation on the Draft RZLT Maps ran throughout February and March, with submissions required to be received by April 1<sup>st</sup> 2024

## Development Management and Planning Enforcement Activity

The table below summarises Development Management activity in Q1. A total of 138 valid planning applications were received, which was broadly similar to the number received in the preceding quarter (136). Decisions issued on 108 planning applications, of which 92 were grants of permission.

### Development Management Statistics

Period	Activity	Roscommon North	Roscommon South	Totals
Q1 2024	Valid Applications	71	67	138
	Invalid Applications	17	26	43
	Extension of Duration	0	0	0
	DED	30	12	42
	Pre-planning meeting	39	21	60

### Enforcement Activity

Period	Activity	Countywide Totals
Q1 2024	New enforcement case	19
	General letter	13
	Warning letter	13
	Enforcement notice	4
	Closed case	5
	Legal proceedings	2

### **Unfinished Housing Developments (UHD)**

Development activity continued at 8 sites around the county during the quarter. Contractors engaged by Roscommon County Council were at work in six developments (of which five were in the Athlone MD and the sixth was in the Boyle MD). Developers were also on-site undertaking agreed site resolution works in two developments, at one development in Monksland and the other in Boyle.

Two contracts were awarded for minor site resolution works, at developments in Tarmonbarry and Castlerea during Q1.

Schedules issued to Uisce Éireann in relation to three developments as part of the preparatory work on the taking in charge process. One development is in the Boyle Municipal District and the other two are in the Athlone Municipal District.

# ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT PROMOTION

## Local Enterprise Office:

- **Trading On Line Vouchers (TOVs):**

5 TOVS have been approved in total for January, February & March 2024. Remote Trading Online Voucher Information Seminars are held regularly, with bookings accepted via the LEO website. A Seminar took place on January 25<sup>th</sup> 2024 & March 7<sup>th</sup>. The next Remote Trading Online Voucher Information Seminar is on May 9<sup>th</sup> 2024.

- **Evaluation & Approvals Meeting:**

The Evaluation Committee Meeting took place on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024. Two Measure 1 Grants were assessed and funding was approved totalling €64,998.

The next Evaluation Committee meeting is scheduled for 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

- **Green for Micro Scheme:**

The Green for Business helps small businesses become more environmentally friendly and sustainable by providing advice and technical support covering topics such as resource efficiency, understanding carbon footprint and implementing an environmental management system. Clients that have completed the Green for Business can now apply for the new Energy Efficiency Grant. 6 Green for Business applications have been approved as of March 2024.

- **Digital for Business Scheme:**

Digital for Business is an initiative from the Local Enterprise Office designed to help businesses prepare and implement a plan for the adoption of digital tools and techniques across the business. LEO has processed 1 application for the Digital for Business in March 2024.

- **Technical Assistance for MicroExporters:**

Helps small businesses expand into export markets by assisting with the costs of exhibiting at international trade shows. To, date, LEO Roscommon has processed 3 applications.

- **Microfinance:**

2 application was received and sent to MFI this year. 1 application was declined, 1 pending. Work continues on the promotion of this source of finance on social Media and via mentoring clinics.

- **Training:**

The first tranche of training to support the business community is underway and places are in demand and training is well attended. A total of 491 participants have been facilitated in total for January, February & March 2024.

- **Local Enterprise Week:**

Took place between 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of March 2024. A schedule of 11 local events & 1 Regional took place, included training, mentoring and networking events in County Roscommon as well as 2 National Spotlight events at national level. There were a total of 287 attendees across 14 events. Record number.

- **Remote Mentoring:**  
6 Business Advice Clinics have been held so far this year with 51 clients attending the clinics. All bookings were taken via the LEO website online booking system. 21 clients in total are being facilitated through One to One Mentoring sessions in 2024.
- **Enquiries:**  
Appropriate support provided on an ongoing basis. 140 enquires were logged in January, February & March 2024.
- **Student Enterprise Programme:**  
The County final took place on Tuesday March 12th in the Athlone Springs Hotel. Roscommon Community College team GM Engineering were chosen as the overall winners and will now represent Roscommon at the national SEP final in Mullingar Park Hotel on May 9<sup>th</sup>.
- **National Enterprise Awards:**  
The County Enterprise Awards Ceremony took place on Thursday March 7<sup>th</sup> 2024.
- **Promotion:**  
All LEO supports were promoted on the LEO website and on various social media platforms.
- **EI:**  
LW continues to work with Meabh Conaghan, the new West Region Manager and Noeleen Hussey.
- **IDA:**  
LW is keeping the line of communication open between IDA, CE & Senior Management of RCC in the hope of encouraging FDI to Roscommon.

# COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## LEADER Programme

- Project Claims up to date from 2014 -2020 programme (7 payments made in March).
- Service Level Agreement in place pending signature early April for new LEADER Programme 2023-2027

## Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) and LECP

- **LCDC Meeting** was scheduled for 20.03.24. However, this was brought forward to the 14.03.24 for 2 reasons;
  - (i) LEADER documents were required to be reviewed by the LCDC prior to them being submitted to the Department
  - (ii) LECP (Local Enhancement Programme) – Project approval required
- **LCDC Member** – Department of Social Protection representative - Eoin Power was ratified at the Council Meeting of 25.03.24. He replaces Patricia Gilbride following her resignation from the Committee.
- **LECP** - The Local Economic and Community Development Plan 2023-2029 is being prepared for printing

## Healthy Ireland

- The A/Healthy Ireland Coordinator hosted a demo Connect Café with nine community groups facilitated by a representative from Mental Health. The local Connect Cafés, supported by Healthy Ireland, will kick off in April
- The Coordinator hosted the Health and Wellbeing Subcommittee meeting 21<sup>st</sup> March with focus on funding request proposals. Due to lack of quorum an extra meeting is scheduled for 8<sup>th</sup> April to allow vote on progressing proposals.
- The Coordinator participated in a number of Men's Health week planning calls led by the HSE.

## SICAP

- Pobal held training for all IRIS users on 05/03/24 for new IRIS system.
- There was a SICAP Sub-Committee meeting held in Aras an Chontae on 11/03/24 to look at the 'End of Year Review 2023' and 'Annual Plan 2024'. It was agreed to present the 'End of Year Review 2023' to LCDC on 14/03/24 for approval and follow up comments were sent to LEADER for clarification on the 'Annual Plan 2024'
- The signed SICAP and NEW ARRIVALS Q2 2024 Drawdown Requests were sent to Pobal on 13/03/24
- The 'End of Year Review 2023' was approved at the LCDC meeting on 14/03/24 and the year was closed out on IRIS.

## Local Enhancement Programme 2024

- The LCDC Grants Subcommittee met in March to assess the applications and make recommendations for the funding to the community groups. These recommendations were considered and approved at the full LCDC meeting in March.
- The Return was sent to the Department for approval. We are awaiting confirmation of same.

### **Joint Policing Committee (JPC)**

- **JPC Meeting** – JPC Meeting took place on 11th March 2024.
- **Property Marking Machine** is being held at the Garda Barracks in Roscommon Town. A sign in/sign out book would be in operation for community groups to avail of this equipment
- All Ireland Community Safety Network had its inaugural meeting in Drogheda and was attended by two members of staff. In November 2022 Longford Local Community Safety Partnership, Newry Mourne and Down Policing and Community Safety Partnership and Drogheda Implementation Board collaborated on the hosting of the Beyond Borders: All Ireland Community Safety Conference. The high numbers of attendees at this event, coupled with the very positive feedback received from attendees strongly indicated a desire for more opportunities to share learning and gain insights into best practice in Community Safety across the island of Ireland.

### **Comhairle Na nÓg**

- A Comhairle na nÓg Steering Committee meeting was held in The Castle Suite, Aras an Chontae on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024. There was a great turnout at the meeting, the main topics discussed were mental health and school stress.

### **Community Recognition Fund 2023 (CRF)**

- Total funding allocation - €689,057. CRF 2023 - Department Returns Complete - A total sum of €294,694.25 has been drawn down.
- The team are consistently working closely with community groups to assist them in progressing their projects. A Return will be sent to the Department by the end of April.

### **Community Recognition Fund 2024 (CRF)**

- Minister Heather Humphreys TD and Minister Joe O'Brien TD announced a funding allocation of €50 million funding under Community Recognition Fund 2024. The Community Recognition Fund was first introduced in 2023 to recognise the huge efforts made by communities in welcoming and supporting people coming to Ireland This allocation builds on the previous allocation of €50 million provided in 2023. County Roscommon has been allocated €1,002,434.00. Following the guidelines issued by the Department, the Community Department will now issue a series of communications to the Community.

### **Citizen Rural Project**

- Meeting took place 20.03.24. This research project is now ending.

### **Age Friendly**

- The Age Friendly Programme Manager attended the 'Memory Café' in Lough Key Forest Park on 20/03/24. This is a monthly event organised by Roscommon Dementia Alliance with music and inclusivity to the core.
- A meeting of the OPN (Older Person's Network) was held in the Leader Offices on the 27/03/24. This meeting began with chair yoga and mindfulness, which cleared the heads for an excellent meeting.

## Social Inclusion Unit

- A meeting with HSE regarding the organisation of events for Men's Health Week in June and there were many stakeholders in attendance.
- Roscommon Women's Network meet with the Social Inclusion Officer regarding funding for their Intercultural Art Project which they hope to launch in May 24.
- The Social Inclusion Officer and the Creative Producer of Roscommon Arts Centre hope to collaborate on inclusivity and promoting the Arts in Roscommon.

## PPN

- Facilitated a PPN Information Roadshow providing community groups with the opportunity to engage and meet with the PPN at four locations across the county (Roscommon Town, Ballaghaderreen, Boyle and Curraghboy)
- Supported community groups to access various funding streams with Roscommon County Council incl. Tidy Town and Amenity Grants & EU Just Transition Funding workshops
- Continued roll-out of 2024 PPN Community Training Collaboration with groups
- 2023 Annual PPN Returns were submitted to DRCD
- The PPN collaborated with the Irish Environmental Network to progress PPN environmental pillar applications associated with Kiltewan Tidy Towns, Native Woodland Trust (Lecarrow Branch) and Cloontuskert Tidy Towns
- Continued increase in PPN registrations during March. Total membership at the end of March was 360.

## **HERITAGE**

**Royal Sites of Ireland UNESCO Bid** – Royal Sites Working Group met on 11/03/2024, to review the draft Memorandum of Understanding with the National Monuments Service.

**County Roscommon Heritage Forum:** No meeting this month

**New County Roscommon Heritage Plan:** 130 online submissions. Analysis indicates that heritage is of value to people for many reasons. Heritage as a value for wellbeing is an area that lags behind the others and as such would benefit from further work. The strategic areas which should be prioritized are conservation & caring for heritage sites (monuments, protected buildings, historic graveyards, natural heritage areas etc); Raising awareness and communicating about our heritage; Promote and celebrate local heritage for e.g. vernacular buildings, oral history, field names, local heritage collections; Engaging, working with and supporting communities to care for our heritage and Recording Roscommon's heritage through research, audit and inventory. Funding for heritage and the Irish Language emerged as other suggested strategic themes to be considered. Lack of awareness, lack of funding emerged as the biggest challenges facing heritage. There is good interest in taking part in a community heritage project or heritage training. There is a lack of awareness of heritage funding.

County Roscommon Heritage Forum will now work in preparing the draft Heritage Plan with a target of the Q3 SPC meeting.

**Built Heritage Investment Scheme:** 18 x projects have been allocated €104,169.00 from DHLGH. Letters of offer have been sent out.

**Historic Structures Fund:** 4 x projects have been allocated €104,937 from DHLGH. Letters of offer have been sent out and confirmation of acceptance of offers has been submitted to DHLGH.

**County Heritage Plan Fund:** 2 x projects have been awarded €57,000 from The Heritage Council.

- **Community Archaeology Funding Stream: Rathcroghan Heritage Farming Project (RHFP) Community Archaeology Project** – The Heritage Council commented that: *This is a very worthwhile scheme, building on a previous successful EIP-Agri project. Continuity would ensure that the community of care built up around Rathcroghan over the 5 years of the EIP remains engaged. Application is well supported.* This project has to go to tender now. Now that funding has been awarded, this project must go through procurement.
- **County Heritage Plan Work Programme:** now that funding has been awarded, work can commence on delivery of the programme:
  - A Survey of the Heritage of Holy Wells in Co. Roscommon – Phase 2 & exhibition
  - National Biodiversity Week/National Heritage Week outreach & engagement
  - Co. Roscommon Folklore and Oral History Collection Consolidation Phase 1
  - Roscommon Field Names Project
  - Historic Graveyard Recording Project
  - Historic Graveyards Seminar (as requested at a plenary meeting last autumn).
  - ‘Know Your Locality’ online heritage course – course now completed.
  - 100 Roscommon Graveyards – concept development
  - County Roscommon Heritage Plan 2024-2028: This allows for consultancy advice/translation/graphic design/print & the launch of the new county heritage plan.

**Local Biodiversity Action Fund:** 6 x applications were submitted to the DHLG&H. Still waiting on confirmation of funding.

- County Actions for Biodiversity & Pollinators
- Recording Irish mayfly – establishing conservation status in association with Dr Jan-Robert Baars (UCD/AQUENS Ltd, Dublin).
- Invasive Alien Species Control including Cotoneaster Control @ Castlesampson in association with NPWS
- St. Johns Wood Local Provenance Nursery and Community Ancient native woodland expansion project in association with the Native Woodland Trust, Lecarrow
- The Uí Maine Kingdom grassland survey of the Karst landscape of south Roscommon in association with The Uí Maine Kingdom, Karst Farmers Group.
- Pilot Biodiversity and Climate Action Initiatives at Loughnaneane Park, in association with RCC Climate Team

**Community Monuments Fund:** 8 x applications were put forward to the National Monuments Service of the DHLG&H for consideration. Still awaiting the outcome.

**Community Heritage Grant Scheme from The Heritage Council:** Letters of support were provided to 8 x community group applicants.

**Owen O’Conor Mausoleum Conservation Project:** Project is progressing well.

**The Heritage Council Heritage Training & Development Programme:** Attended training 06/03.2024.

**Roscommon County Council Civic Memorials Policy:** Inputted into the preparation of this new policy document.

**Heritage Office News:** 21 emails circulated so far in 2024.

**Social Media Posts:** 7 posts so far in 2024

Scheme	Grant applied for	
BHIS – DHLG&H	€104,169	Confirmed
HSF – DHLG&H	<b>€104,937</b>	Confirmed
Community Archaeology – The Heritage Council	€20,000	Confirmed
County Heritage Plan – The Heritage Council	€37,500	Confirmed
LBAF – NPWS/DHLG&H	€88,000	Awaiting Response
CMF – NMS/DHLG&H	€490,000	Awaiting Response
RSOI UNESCO Bid	€30,000	RCC Budget
Heritage Plan implementation	€39,000	RCC Budget
Conservation Projects	€40,000	RCC Budget
Creative Ireland	€5,000	RCC Budget
Heritage Office Budget	<b>€958,606</b>	

## ARTS OFFICE

### Arts Participation Programme

- **CARE: Creative Ageing in Roscommon - Artist Residencies Programme** in HSE Nursing Homes 2023 ongoing.
- Planning for **Roscommon Bealtaine Festival** – month of May.

**Roscommon County Youth Theatre** weekly workshops at Roscommon Arts Centre – preparations for production ‘Open Your Mouth’ 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

### **Literary Development Programme**

- Roscommon New Writing Awards & Chapbook Award – Call for Entries
- Lunchtime Leaves @ Roscommon Arts Centre, monthly Jan to April, finishing on Ireland Poetry Day, April 25th

**POP** (Planning for Outdoor Performance) – preparations for World Circus Day at Somers Park 20<sup>th</sup> April.

**Creative Places** – ongoing – working with Artist Researchers and **Ballaghaderreen** Steering Group & Communities incl community and artist workshops/gatherings/walks.

### **Public Art Programme** in collaboration with Regeneration

- Roscommon Town URDF Sculpture on the Square & Living Laneways commission installations
- Mote Park ORIS
- Early stages of N5

Ongoing development and delivery of the **Creative Ireland** Programme, liaising with artists, creatives, communities and coordinating the work of the internal **Culture Team** comprising Arts, Heritage, Tourism, Library, Community, LEO, Social Inclusion, Climate. Working with the national Creative Ireland Office in the Department of Tourism Culture Arts Gaeltacht Sports & Media. Guided by Roscommon County Council **Culture and Creativity Strategy 2023-2027**.

- Percy French 170 Celebration Event planning with Strokestown Park House & Famine Museum, May 1st

- Preparations for Cruinniú na nÓg, June 15th – Main events at Strokestown Park House, Arts Centre & King House
- Creative Heartlands Film Bursary – Call for proposals
- Commemorations Programme

### **Roscommon Arts Centre**

Monthly programme contributes to an inclusive and vibrant arts space for artists and audiences through Performance; Gallery; Outreach & Engagement; Artist Supports.

**Recruitment** in process for Arts & Venue Manager, Box Office Assistant, Events Assistant casual panel

Planning for **Roscommon International Chamber Music Festival** 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> June - partnership with Peter Regan, Arts Office, Arts Centre, King House.

**Unusual Gestures Exhibition & Talks**, finishes April 28th  
 Planning for **Caring for Creativity Exhibition** Opening, May 1<sup>st</sup>  
**Equality, Diversity, Inclusion** Training & Policy development.

### **King House**

Exhibitions & Energy upgrades nearing completion

Ongoing tour bookings, events, meetings

House Opens for walk-in tours, May 1st

**Recruitment** in process for

- Arts & Venue Manager (King House, An Ríoga and Douglas Hyde Centre)
- Cultural Assistant casual panel

### **An Ríoga**

Negotiating with artist collective as tenants for Exhibition Space.

# REGENERATION UNIT

## Urban Regeneration Development Fund

### Roscommon Public Realm Enhancement Project:

- Construction Works on Covered Civic Space was completed in Qtr 1 2024 with an Official Launch scheduled for 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024.
- Artists appointed for laneway enhanced to both Hynes & Chapel Lane along with Sculptor piece for Market Square with poetry displays on Chapel Lane to be launched on the 25<sup>th</sup> of April. All remaining commissions to be completed by Q3 2024.

### Putting the Spokes back into the Wheel URDF

- Detailed design works for Roscommon Town Centre East remain ongoing to include ongoing liaison with Utility Providers.
- Site Investigation works completed in Q1 2024
- Part 8 for Roscommon Town Centre West Project scheduled for publication in May 2024.

### URDF Call 3 Revolving Fund

- RCC received approval from URDF to add 2 further sites to the approved list for activation under the scheme and initial communications have been issued to respective owners.
- RCC are in the process of seeking approval for a further additional site to be added to the approved programme.

## Rural Regeneration Development Fund

### C1 Castlerea Food Hub:

- Construction works have been completed in Qtr 1 2024 with a formal launch planned for May 2024.

### C1 Monksland Life Sciences Hub

- Construction works approaching completion with expected completion date of Q2 2024 and formal launch to follow.

### C2 Ballaghaderreen Public Realm

- Construction Contract Awarded and construction works to commence on site in early April 2024 with an estimated 16-month delivery programme.

### C1 Energising Boyle Town Centre and King House

- Conservation Works to Doors & Windows of King House, along with upgrade of Mechanical & Electrical infrastructure within King House is complete.
- Construction works on Boyle Public Realm Scheme are ongoing with expected completion date of Q3 2024.

### C2 Putting the Heart into Monksland

- Preliminary design works are continuing on the Putting the Heart in to Monksland project with a further public consultation event scheduled for 2024. Subject to progress a Part 8 planning application is scheduled for Q3/Q4 2024.

### C2 Strokestown Bawn St Public Realm Project

- Part 8 Planning Consent has been secured with detailed design & preparation of construction tender pack phase ongoing.
- C1 RRDF Construction Funding Application has been submitted for the project and awaiting a funding decision in 2024.

### C1 2022 Boyle Community Library

- Detailed design & preparation of construction tender pack are ongoing with Site Investigation works recently completed. The current programme plans propose to publish construction tender by Q3/Q4 2024.

## **Town and Village 2021**

### Monksland

- Tenders for the construction of Monksland Park have been received and are being assessed with a view to awarding the contract and commencing works in Qtr 2 2024.

### Ballintubber

- Construction Works are substantially complete with a planned completion date of Q2 2024

## **Town and Village 2022**

### Argina

- Construction works to enhance Argina Village were completed in Qtr 1 2024.
- The construction tender for the public sports park has been published. Subject to responses it is hoped to award the construction contract in Qtr 2 2024.

### Cootehall

- Construction contract for the upgrade of the existing outbuilding on site has been awarded with works to commence in Qtr 2 2024.
- Submission received on the Part8 planning application are currently being considered with the Chief Executive report to be presented to the elected members for consideration in Qtr 2 2024.

### Athleague

- Construction works ongoing with planned completion date of Q2 2024
- Public Art Element has been installed.

### Ballinagare

- Preliminary Design & Consultation Complete with Planning Application for Scheme to be lodged on behalf of Local Community in Q2 2024

## **Outdoor Recreation 2020**

### Measure 3 Mote Park

- Promotional branding and signage to be completed in conjunction with 2022 scheme. Meeting Next week to clarify. Expected to be completed Q3 2024.

## **Outdoor Recreation 2021**

### Ballyleague

- RCC element of project fully complete
- Works by Access for all group are also complete.

### Ballintubber/Ballymoe Waterway and Looped Cycleway

- Construction Contract Awarded & Ballintubber Slipway element complete, works scheduled to re-commence on Ballymoe element in Q2 2024 with a scheduled completion date of Q3 2024

### Arigna Energy Inclusive Park and Miner's Trail

- Construction works commenced in late Q1 2024 with a scheduled completion date of Q3 2024.

## **Outdoor Recreation 2022**

### Measure 2 North Roscommon Accessible for all Water Launch Systems

- Construction works are substantially complete with an overall scheduled completion date of Q3 2024

### Measure 2 Mote Park Outdoor Recreation Sensory Sculpture and Natural Play Trail Experience

- Construction Contract for Sculptures pieces along with Play & sensory trail elements is currently at Tender selection. Tenderers to be appointed May 2024 with 5 month construction period.
- Current scheduled completion date for project is Q4 2024

### Measure 3 Rathcroghan Archaeological Looped Trails.

- Construction Contract has been awarded by the Rathcroghan Visitor Centre Group who are delivering partner for the project.
- Construction works scheduled to commence in Q2/Q3 2024

## **Outdoor Recreation 2023**

### Project Development Measures

- 2 Projects Approved - Athleague Looped Walk & Castlerea Riverside Boardwalk
- Funding agreements executed with the two Community Groups with ongoing support from Roscommon County Council to progress the projects.

#### Clár 2022

- 9 project with 7 complete & 2 ongoing with scheduled completion dates of Q2 2024

#### Clár 2023

- 15 project has been approved funding.
- Funding agreements executed with respective community groups/organisations with most projects underway.

# LIBRARY SERVICES

## Library Events and Activities

- In Q1 2024, **23,582** people visited library service points across the county, to borrow **26,305** items (27/03/24). There were **42** visits to branch libraries from national schools and **10** from/to Early Learning Centres. The library NOAC returns for 2023 showed an increase of 19% of visits from the previous year and an increase of 15% of items loaned.
- In line with the LGMA's wish for a greater focus on Adult Literacy, detailed in the new 5-Year National Library strategy, and in regard to regular events, Roscommon County Library now has:
- c. 40 Saturday Storytimes per quarter
  - 5 Creative Writing Groups
  - 2 Adult Book Clubs
  - 2 Social inclusion groups
  - 3 Irish language groups

**'Bond with a Book'**

**Reader Group for Adults**

Meet new people at our relaxed reader group for adults

**Next Meeting:**  
Wednesday  
31st January 2024  
2.30pm - 4.00pm

Meets last Wednesday of every month in Roscommon Library

If you are interested in joining the group contact:  
090-6637277  
library@roscommoncoco.ie

Or find out more at the desk!

**Craobh de hÍde**

**Every Wednesday**  
**Gach Céadaoin**  
**3-4pm**

Cleachtadh a dhéanann máistireacht

Beatha teanga í a labhairt

Castlereah Library  
Leabharlann an Chaisleáin Riabhaigh

Conradh na Gaeltige  
094 962 0745  
Castlereahlibrary@roscommoncoco.ie

**imeacht nua!**

**Am Scéalaíochta ar an Satharn**  
**Leabharlann Bhealach an Doirín**

**12i.n.**

**Saor in aisce**

090-6637277  
library@roscommoncoco.ie

**Hands up who would like to join a JUNIOR BOOK CLUB**  
**in Roscommon Library?**

**NEW**

If you're between the ages of 7 and 11 and love all things books, we'd love to see you for lots of book chat and fun!

**BOOK CLUB**

Contact Roscommon Library:  
090-6637277  
library@roscommoncoco.ie

## **Ballaghaderreen Library**

The Temporary Library in Ballaghaderreen opened to the public on February 16<sup>th</sup>. This also marked the end of the weekly Mobile Library service during the library closure. It will remain at this location, adjacent to Duffy's SuperValu for the duration of renovation works to Dillon House.

The contract for Small Scale Capital Works to Dillon House, including the installation of Roscommon's first 'My Open Library' Service, open to the public from 8am – 10pm 365 days of the year, was awarded to Mountain View Construction and works commenced in the last week of March. The library service would like to acknowledge the considerable support we received to get this project up and running from our colleagues in Assets & Energy and in International Protection, Colm Kennelly, Senior Executive Engineer and Lorcan Flynn, Executive Engineer.



## Healthy Ireland

### **Chair Yoga at Roscommon Library**

Roscommon Library teamed up with Roscommon Sports Partnership to deliver two 4-week blocks of Chair Yoga as part of the Healthy Ireland at Your Library Programme. Participants were able to connect socially and experience the benefits of chair-based yoga; enhanced strength, mobility and balance and reduced stress through breath work and meditation.

### Sense-Ability

Roscommon Branch marked World Down Syndrome Day with an afternoon of fun and games.

Children, parents and families had a very enjoyable afternoon, highlighting the valuable and important contribution of Down Syndrome Ireland, Roscommon members.

That sense of joy is captured in these images from the event which was addressed by Chief Executive, Shane Tiernan.

The theme of this year's event was 'End the Stereotypes' celebrating the achievements of persons in the fields of employment, education and self-advocacy. The library staff were delighted to decorate the building with 'odd socks' banners, a symbol of World Down Syndrome day. A selection of games from our Sense-Ability sensory toy collection were set up and the children have a wonderful time, also enjoying some delicious treats, courtesy of the Aras Canteen staff.



## Right to Read

### Ireland Reads Day

Ireland Reads, a national celebration of reading, encouraged everyone to pledge to 'Get lost in a good book' throughout the month of February. On Ireland Reads Day, Saturday February 24, Roscommon Libraries held events for both adults and children. Local author, Breda Lohan Hanley, visited Castlerea Library and read from her new colourful children's book, 'Bowey Land'. Boyle Library hosted poet Amy Abdullah Barry, who read from her debut poetry collection, "Flirting with Tigers". Children and families in Roscommon and Strokestown Libraries enjoyed stories and songs with Dee-Dee.

### Spring into Storytime

As part of the library's annual *Right to Read Spring into Storytime (SiS)* will take place throughout the month of April. Along with weekly Storytimes, 10 special Storytime, Arts and Crafts will take place for children aged 0-10 yrs, with artist Fiona Dowling and new local author Lucy Kelly Desmond.

### St. Brigid's Day

All our branch libraries held art and writing competitions for juvenile library patrons, in honour of the 1500 year anniversary. Plans are already underway for a special commemoration in Boyle Library next year.



## Seachtain na Gaeilge

This year Roscommon Library hosted the Tomás Ó Máille 'Saol agus Saothar' Exhibition on loan from the University of Galway, 1-28 March. It was accompanied by a talk on the topic held at the end of March. Seachtain na Gaeilge also saw a new Irish language learner/conversational group get underway at Castlerea Library, Craobh De hÍde, it meets every Wednesday and has c. 18 members. The week was also accompanied by a social media campaign, highlighting Irish language resources held by the local history collection of the library, and a place names series, on the origins of Roscommon placenames.



## Siarscéal 2024

The Siarscéal Literary Festival was under the direction for many years of Gwen McNamara Bond, but the new Creative Coordinator is teacher and poet Mary Branley. Mary was previously a contributor, workshop facilitator and adjudicator of the Hannah Greally Competition as part of the festival, but is keen now to take a fresh approach to the festival, since taking up the new role last year.

The general thrust is to change the festival from an adult-focused one, in the direction of exploring creativity with young people (13 yrs +), through open-ended writing workshops and away from competitions. In her own words:

*My vision Siarscéal 2024 and years to follow, would be to see Siarscéal grow to encompass of other creative opportunities for young people, as well as writing, animation, music, etc. with online and public performances, and publications. However I can only do this with the ongoing*

*support of Creative Ireland, arts officers and librarian support in the three counties, through funding, advertising, and promoting. In my first year, we agreed on a series of workshops with young people who expressed an interest in writing, rather than whole class groups, in Roscommon, Leitrim and Sligo. The Hannah Greally Literary competition went ahead, for adults only, with reduced prize money, leaving out the children and young people. Our festival day in October was a celebration of young people’s creative writing, with our workshop participants reading their short stories from their Siarscéal notebooks, and recorded on the day by ROS FM. The HG prizes were also awarded to the poetry and short story winners. ROS FM broadcast went out on November 23 and I heard back from the young people that they were really delighted and looking forward to Siarscéal 2024.*

There are still a few details to finalize, but the plan for this year is to have:

1. The festival run between May and September 2024
2. A newly-designed Siarscéal website
3. **5** creative workshops in Roscommon Library, **2** in Sligo Library, and **2** in Ballinamore Library, Leitrim – to include creative writing, illustration and online publishing.
4. No competition for participants, but a ‘Hannah Greally Festival Day’ with readings and music.
5. An e-zine online publication for all participants

### **Mobile Library**

With the opening of the new, Ballaghaderreen Library (Temporary), the routes taken by our Mobile Library services has altered to address any gaps countywide. The Mobile now visits Elphin every Wednesday, and makes stops in Monksland fortnightly. Keadue, Ballyfarnon, Rooskey and Tarmonbarry are the other monthly stops. In Q1, 7 visits were made to national schools and 4 to preschools.



The advertisement features a blue background with a white header. In the top left corner is the Roscommon County Council logo. In the top center is the Lexia Core5 Reading logo, which includes a globe icon and the text 'Lexia CORE5 READING'. In the top right corner is the Libraries Ireland logo with the tagline 'Make Every Library Your Local Library'. Below the header, a yellow starburst contains the word 'New!'. The main title 'Lexia® Core5® Reading Software for Primary Schools' is written in orange and white. Below the title, the text 'Accelerate reading skills in all ages & abilities' is displayed in white. On the left, a tablet shows the software interface with a colorful underwater scene. To the right of the tablet is a list of six reading skills, each preceded by a red checkmark: Phonological Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary, Comprehension, and SPAG. On the far right is a photograph of a smiling young girl with curly hair wearing a black leather jacket. At the bottom left, the text 'For more information, please email: literacy@roscommoncoco.ie' is written in white.

Roscommon Library Service has recently acquired Lexia, a new online literacy programme suitable for both children and adults.

**Lexia Core5** Reading is suitable for primary school children and is an adaptive blended learning program that accelerates the development of literacy skills for students of all abilities, helping them make that critical shift from learning to read to reading to learn. It provides a systematic and structured approach to six critical areas of reading:

- Phonological Awareness
- Phonics
- Structural Analysis
- Automaticity/Fluency
- Vocabulary
- Comprehension

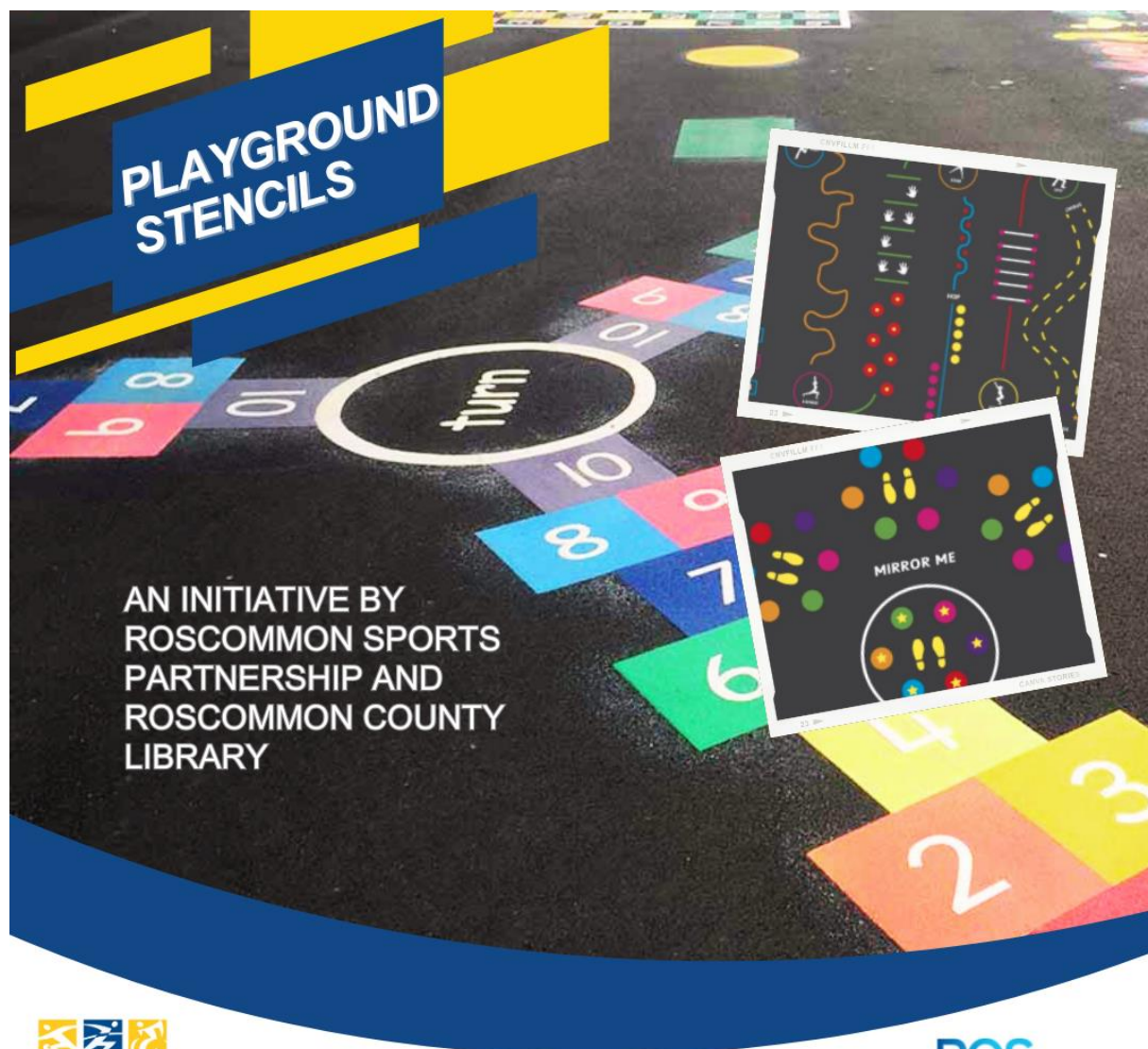
**Lexia PowerUp Literacy** is suitable for post-primary children and adults. It accelerates basic reading abilities, as well as developing the higher order strategies required to comprehend increasingly complex texts. This online programme aims to enhance English Language instruction and drive the academic success of users. Lexia PowerUp Literacy offers personalised instruction in the following areas: Word Study, Grammar and Comprehension.

Roscommon Library Service will provide licences to teachers and individuals who require additional support in developing the literacy needs of their students. This new online literacy service complements the already highly successful TTRS service on offer to schools and individuals and is being rolled out in line with the new national library strategy that aims to increase literacy among adults in Ireland. Lexia will be rolled-out via local media and social media as schools return in the New Year.

## Roscommon Sports Partnership Collaboration

In addition to the 'Activator Poles' which are available through our libraries to the elderly or infirm to help support a project initiated by Roscommon Sports Partnership and also lending some of their 'Boccia' accessible bowling equipment the library service has also collaborated with RSP to lend Playground Stencils to schools and service users in the County.

This has now been rolled out and with an improvement in weather, schools have started to book and borrow the stencils to mark their playgrounds.



# HOUSING BUSINESS UNIT

## 1.0 Homelessness & Housing Allocations

### 1.1 Homelessness

A range of responses to homelessness in accordance with the West Framework Homelessness Action Plan are in place. The Western Region Homeless Action Plan 2019-2022 is being reviewed by the lead Council (Galway City Council) with input from the other authorities in the region.

**30** = homeless cases presented in Q1, 2024

**9** = cases required short-term accommodation in Q1, 2024

Breakdown Homeless figures Q1 2024				
Presentations	Individuals	Families	Totals Households	Breakdown of Family unit
January	3	3	3	1A & 3C 1A & 1C 1A & 1C
February	8	6	6	2A & 2C 2A & 1C 1A & 4C 2A & 1C 2A 1A & 3C
March	7	3	3	2A & 1C 1A & 4C 1A & 2C

Accommodated	Individuals	Families	Totals Households	Breakdown of Family unit
January	2	0	0	N/A
February	1	2	2	2A & 2C - EA 2A & 1C - EA
March	4	2	2	2A & 1C - RAS 1A & 2C - RAS

Galway Simon is contracted to provide Housing First services to the Western Region. Resources to support six Housing First applicants over a three-year period will be made available to County Roscommon under the Housing First programme. A Homeless Action Team (HAT) facilitates the co-ordination of Housing First and Housing-Led support services.

To date, nine referrals have been forwarded to the HAT for consideration. Four referrals have been accepted for Housing-Led services and four referrals have been accepted for Housing First Services. At present, there are three Housing First Tenancies and three Housing-Led tenancies. Other units of accommodation are currently being identified for the creation of further Housing First tenancies and Housing-Led tenancies. One referral was submitted to the HAT in Q3, 2023 for consideration and was accepted for Housing First Services. A property was identified and a support package will be agreed with the case worker. Tenant signed up his Housing First tenancy on 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2023.

## 1.2 Housing Assessments & Allocations

307	applicants (excluding transfers) on the approved housing list at end of Q4, 2023
110	applicants are currently in private rented accommodation with no housing support
49	offers of accommodation made in Q4, 2023
3	nominations made to AHB
18	new tenants appointed/allocated in Q4, 2023 to LA dwellings
2	AHB Tenants appointed in Q4, 2023
5	refusals recorded in Q4, 2023 (2 AHB Houses refused)

## 2.0 Social Housing Rental Accommodation Market

### 2.1 Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS)

Financial support continues via the RAS Scheme for those applicants who have a long-term housing need. As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, there are 329 households receiving support (218 private rented and 111 in voluntary housing).

### 2.2 Housing Assistance Payment (HAP):

Roscommon County Council is working closely with the Community Welfare Officers in the Department of Social Protection to continue the transfer of Rent Supplement recipients to the HAP Scheme. 10 HAP tenancies were opened in Q1 and 16 were closed in the same period. As of 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2024, there were 405 social housing applicants in receipt of HAP. The National Rent Supplement Section (NRSS) in the Department of Social Protection are working on a new project with RCC with a view to transferring eligible Rent Supplement customers to the HAP scheme.

### 2.3 Repair & Lease Scheme (RLS)

99	applications were received and were assessed since the scheme was rolled out in Q1, 2017; the majority of the applications related to properties outside areas of need/demand or were remote rural dwellings in poor condition – One application under review in Roscommon Town
4	number of lease agreements RCC has entered into under the RLS (2-1 bed apartments, a 3 bed ground floor apartment and a 4-bed town-house in Roscommon Town)

## 2.4 Leasing- Long-term Leasing and RAS-Type leases

- As of 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2024, Roscommon County Council has 4 long-term leases: 3 in Boyle Town and 1 in Roscommon Town.
- As of 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2024 Roscommon County Council has 75 active RAS Type leases throughout the county. As part of Housing for All Programme, only 200 RAS Type leases nationally are available. RCC was approved for 22 RAS Type Leases.
- As of 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2024, there were 20 active Mortgage to Rent Scheme Leases in place (5 with AHB's & 15 with HFL). The Mortgage to Rent Scheme is a government scheme to help homeowners who were at risk of losing their homes due to mortgage arrears. Since the MTR Scheme was rolled out, one MTR tenant brought back their property.

## 3.0 Provision of Additional Social Housing Units

### 3.1 LA Build (including turnkeys & PPP):

- 10 units at Windmill Rd., Elphin – Contractor Appointed, works commenced October 2022. Estimated completion Q2 2024
- 12 units at Lisnamult, Ardnanagh, Roscommon – Works commenced in Q1 2023. Estimated completion Q2 2024
- 27 units at Esker Lawns, Monksland – 25 units completed in Q4 2023. Final 2 units to complete in Q1 2024
- 4 Units at Cortober, Carrick on Shannon – Project is at Tender Stage. Works expected to commence in Q2 2024
- 16 Units at Curlew View, Boyle – Project is at Tender Stage. Works expected to commence in Q2 2024
- 51 units at Sli an Choiste, Monksland – Design ongoing. Planning process expected to commence in Q2 2023. Construction expected to commence in 2024.
- 1 Unit at Pound St., Ballaghaderreen – Contractor on site. Construction to complete in Q3 2024.
- 3 Units at Elphin Street, Strokestown – Project is at Tender Stage. Works expected to commence in Q2 2024
- 10 Units at Castle Street Apartments - Contractor on site. Construction to complete in Q2 2024

### 3.2 Housing Association Activity:

- Tuath Housing Association are working with a developer on a turnkey project under the Capital Advance Leasing Facility (CALF) model to deliver 10 units in Roscommon Town. The expected delivery date will be early Q1, 2024.
- Peter McVerry Trust proposed to deliver 10 units in Castlerea town under the Leasing Programme. Unfortunately, cash flow issues arose in Qtr. 4 of 2023 for Peter McVerry Trust and they have now withdrawn from this project. RCC are currently liaising with another AHB to progress this project.

- RCC liaising with Co-operative Housing Ireland (CHI) for the delivery of 4 units in Boyle area.
- RCC liaising with Sophia Housing to deliver 4 units under the Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) in the Castlerea area

### **3.3 LA Acquisitions (including Buy & Renew)**

#### **3.3.1 Buy & Renew Scheme**

The focus under the Buy and Renew is on older stock in urban areas with a view to tackling dereliction and improving streetscapes in urban areas of Roscommon, Castlerea, Boyle, Ballaghaderreen, Elphin or Strokestown.

Since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023, 6 properties have been acquired as part of Buy & Renew Scheme in Ballaghaderreen (2), Boyle (3), Elphin (1). Plans to develop these properties will proceed through the four stage process. In March 2024, a property in need of total refurbishment was acquired in Strokestown and this will now proceed through single stage construction process.

#### **3.3.2 Acquisition Programme**

As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, Roscommon County Council acquired 6 houses under the acquisition programme. Houses acquired for the following reasons:

- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| ▪ Tenants in-Situ      | 4 |
| ▪ Risk of Homelessness | 1 |
| ▪ Specific Need        | 1 |

The Department established the Cost Rental Tenant In-Situ (CRTIS) Scheme, which commenced on a temporary administrative basis from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, prior to any legislative enactments or further funding negotiations required to formally establish a longer-term cost rental scheme. The tenants are assessed by the LA's and if they are eligible for CRTIS i.e. net income less than €53,000, the LA will refer the details to the Housing Agency. On 18<sup>th</sup> July last, the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage, set new limits to net income less than €59,000.

During this quarter, RCC has received no applications under the CRTIS Scheme.

#### **3.3.3 Derelict Sites and Dangerous Structures**

The Housing Department took over the function of Derelict Sites and Dangerous Structures and Places in late February / March 2022.

Currently there are 34 properties on the Derelict Sites Register, 7 sites were removed during 2023 with a further 3 removed in Q1 2024 as a result of works being carried out to make the property non-derelict. A valuation report has been received for the majority of properties on the DS register. These valuations issued to the owners under Section 22 of the Derelict Sites Act, in December. Owners will have 28 days to appeal this valuation. Owners will also be notified that the derelict site levy of 7% of the market value applies to those properties on the register and located within a prescribed Urban Area and demand letters will issue in January 2024. Notices continue to be issued to owners of properties that are currently in a state of dereliction. Derelict Sites Levy Demand Notices were issued to 25 sites in April 2024, the total amount levied was €140,700.

### **3.4 Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024**

- Cluain Airne, Killeeney – Two 2 beds will no longer satisfy the need for the families on this site. A new Stage 1 application for 5 no. four bedroom units was submitted for approval to the Department in Q1 2024.
- Torpan Beg, Ballyforan - 3 extensions to existing units. Contractor to commence in Q1 2024

### 3.5 Tenant Purchase:

The Tenant Incremental Purchase Scheme was published under the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014. As at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023, tenant purchase statistics were as follows:

296	applications received to date (17 received in Q1)
166	offers made to date (9 offers made in Q1)
108	offers accepted to date (2 offers accepted in Q1)
71	sales completed to date (0 houses sold in Q1)

There were no proceeds from sales during Q1 2024

### 4.0 Private Rented Accommodation Standards

Inspections of private rented dwellings are carried out under the Housing (Standards for Private Rented Houses) Regulations 2019.

- The inspection target for Roscommon in 2024 is 600 tenancies
- 240 inspections were carried out in Q1 2024, 29 of which were follow-up inspections required to address issues arising from previous inspections.

### 5.0 Housing Stock

#### 5.1 Energy Efficiency Programme (retrofitting existing stock)

In accordance with Circular 22/2023, Roscommon County Council were provided with an allocation of 45 units going forward under the 2023 ERP scheme. All works under the 2023 ERP allocation of 45 units have now been completed. The final claim is now with the department.

Under Circular 07/2024, Roscommon County Council have been requested to deliver 38 units under the ERP scheme for 2024. Properties have been selected for the 2024 programme and an obligated party has issued their first draft of design specifications for review.

Roscommon County Council's 2024 ERP programme tender is planned to go live at the start of Q2, 2024.

#### 5.2 Voids Programme:

Roscommon County Council will complete 26 voids under the 2024 voids programme.

#### 5.3 Planned Maintenance Programme:

Roscommon County Council works under the 2024 planned maintenance programme will commence in Q2.

#### 5.4 Casual Vacancy Works (pre-letting works)

A total of 14 houses were refurbished due to normal turn-over of properties in Q1, 2024, to date 9 have been approved for payment to a total of €134,458.81. The remaining 5 properties are awaiting costs from the contractor.

## 5.5 Housing Maintenance

RCC Housing received 311 maintenance calls in Q1, 2024, billed expenditure on maintenance works during the same period was €213,935.22

## 5.6 Housing Grants (Private Grants and LA Grants)

In 2023, RCC received a budget allocation of €1,446,375 for private house grants (80% Department funded and 20% Roscommon County Council funded). To-date, RCC has not received the budget allocation figure for 2024, but it is expected to be similar to last year's allocation.

RCC continues to receive a large volume of grant applications and the process of validating applications for 2024 is ongoing. To-date, RCC has issued grant approvals to the value of €1,300,000 over the three schemes.

In 2023, RCC received a budget allocation of €406,481 for Disabled Persons Grants Scheme including Improvement Works in Lieu (IWILs). To-date, RCC has not received the budget allocation figure for 2024, but it is expected to be similar to last year's allocation. To-date, RCC has approved works for adaptations to council houses including one IWILs to the value of €201,600.

## 5.7 Croí Cónaithe Fund

The Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant provides grant funding to support the refurbishment of vacant properties in town and villages for residential use. The scheme has also been revised to include properties for the rental market. A grant of up to a maximum of €50,000 will be available for the refurbishment of vacant properties.

Where the refurbishment costs are expected to exceed the standard grant of up to €50,000, a maximum top-up grant amount of up to €20,000 will be available where the property is confirmed by the applicant to be derelict (i.e. structurally unsound and dangerous) bringing the total grant available for a derelict property up to a maximum of €70,000. In the case of a top-up grant in respect of a derelict property, an independent report prepared by an appropriately qualified professional (e.g. quantity surveyor, engineer etc.) is required to be submitted along with the application confirming that the property is derelict (i.e. structurally unsound and dangerous).

In respect of rental properties, all landlords are required by law to comply with the standards for rental housing and ensure that their properties are fully compliant with fire safety and minimum standards regulations for rental properties. As part of the declaration to be signed in the application form, all applicants must agree to meet and comply with these standards.

An applicant can apply for a maximum of one grant for residential use and a maximum of one grant for rental use.

Applications Received since the scheme launched	Awaiting further information	Refused	Withdrawn	Approved in principle	Approved	Grant Funding Issued
272	108	10 Does not meet criteria of scheme	5	71	70	8

## **INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION/UKRAINE**

### **Offer a Home**

Scheme was launched on the 24<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023. Applications can be made via Offer a Home website and this will be followed up with inspections to determine the suitability of the property. Advertisements of the scheme have been placed on line (RCC website and Social media) and in the local newspapers. The Offer a Home Programme has now been extended to March, 2025 and we are in the process of renewing all of the contracts in agreement with the owners and the occupants.

To-date

- 240 properties have been offered in Co. Roscommon.
- 162 properties have been allocated to Ukrainian families. (511 persons)
- 3 are in the process of being offered

There are approximately 1545 Ukrainians in the County that we are aware of. There are 556 in Serviced accommodation, 511 in Offer a Home and 91 accommodation by other organisations Therefore, there appears to be cohort living in accommodation that we are not aware of. There are 13 accommodation Service Providers, one of which is under contract with Roscommon County Council and the remaining are under contract with IPAS.

### **Local Authority Integration Team (LAIT)**

- A Local Authority Integration Team is being set up in every Local Authority. The primary role of the Local Authority Integration Team (LAIT) is to provide ongoing integration supports to International Protection (IP) applicants, Programme Refugees and Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (BOTP) to enable them to live independently in the community. Roscommon County Council are currently in the process of recruiting staff.

### **Emergency Refurbishment Ukraine Project (ERUP)**

- 1 due for completion in May and 1 due for completion in August

# ASSETS, CLIMATE ACTION AND ENERGY MANAGEMENT

## FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

- The facilities in Áras an Chontae are being managed by Assets and Energy Management.
- Contract for sanding and varnishing of window sashes now concluded and works completed satisfactorily

## ASSETS

- PIR (Property Interest Register) Roscommon for all Building and Land Assets is managed on an ongoing basis. An update of Folios was received from PRA and has been submitted to OPW.
- Full listing of RCC Assets across all Sections prepared and issued for reconciliation of FAR and PIR Roscommon. Follow-up actions agreed with Finance Section.
- Ongoing administrative and technical involvement with Letting, Leases, Acquisitions and Disposals of RCC Assets.
- Property Condition Surveys Form developed and to be trialled using digital platform.

## ENERGY

- Roscommon County Council have commenced energy retrofit works on Dillon House, with Mountain View Construction the successful contractor. SEAI are interested in part funding this project under their Pathfinder programme.
- **Reduce Your Use**  
Energy Team are running the 'Reduce Your Use' national energy saving campaign across the organisation.
- **Energy Elephant Software**
  - Ongoing monitoring and review of significant energy usage in RCC Buildings. Expansion of energy monitoring from electrical and thermal fuel usage through Energy Elephant to include transport fuels.
- **Optimising Power @ Work Programme**
  - OP@W Mentor, Philip Connaughton, appointed and monthly meetings taking place in-person.
  - OP@W Mentor, Philip Connaughton, is advising on workplace energy saving programs and issues a Monthly Energy Report.
- **Energy Monitoring & Reporting (M&R) 2023**
  - Electricity Usage Data for 2023 submitted to SEAI.
  - Achieved 36% of targeted 50% energy efficiency improvement by 2022, based on 2023 NOAC energy usage figures.
  - The Energy Management Team have submitted Pathfinder project pipeline to the SEAI, who have now appointed Rogerson Reddan and Project Managers. The Project Managers will review and verify the energy efficiency works proposed.
  - The Energy Management Team are actively working with SEAI agents (Consulteco) to model the impact of Roscommon County Council's project pipeline on our gap-to-target model (GTT model). The gap-to-target model (GTT model) is a spreadsheet model for use by public bodies to evaluate their energy efficiency (EE) performance and energy-related

greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions over time, using data and methodologies from SEAI's Public Sector Monitoring & Reporting (M&R) system.

## **PUBLIC LIGHTING**

- Ongoing repair and maintenance of school warning lights.
- Section 85 Agreement signed with Mayo County Council for the National LED Retrofit Project (PLEEP). Roscommon County forms part of Region 3 of the National Project.
- Loan Approval for the National LED Retrofit Project placed before and approved by the Members of RCC at Plenary Meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2020.
- Updates to DeadSure Inventory and UMR Database in preparation for National LED Upgrade are ongoing.
- A tender for 'Connaught Public Lighting Maintenance, LED Retrofit, New Works & Associated Services' was prepared by Mayo County Council on behalf of six Connacht Local Authorities and is due to expire in October 2024. It is intended to take the same regional approach to the appointment of a new contractor for the period 2024 - 2028.
- The cost of the annual maintenance of public lighting has risen substantially due to the unavailability of replacement SOX lamps and associated cost of replacing SOX lamps with LED units.
- Taking-in-Charge of Estates (Public Lighting) is continuing in conjunction with Planning and Roads Sections. Updates are posted to RCC website.

## CORPORATE AFFAIRS

- **Register of Electors**

Referendums on the proposals contained in the Thirty-ninth Amendment of the Constitution (The Family) Bill 2023 and the Fortieth Amendment of the Constitution (Care) Bill 2023 were held on 8 March 2024. The total electorate for the referendum was:

Presidential Electors: 48,031

Postal & Special Voters: 606

- **Dermot Earley Bursary**

The Council has established an annual sports bursary in honour of the late Dermot Earley. The scholarships afford financial assistance to successful candidates from County Roscommon (one male and one female) with an accomplished background in sport who are attending their first year in third-level education. Successful applicants for the academic year 2023/2024 were Aisling Hanly and Cormac Rynn.

- **Visit to New York March 2024**

At the invitation of the County Roscommon Society of New York, the Cathaoirleach, accompanied by the Director of Services Mark Keaveney and A/Senior Executive Officer Una Ni Chuinn attended their annual dinner on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March. The Cathaoirleach accompanied by Director of Services Greg O'Donnell and Head of Enterprise Louise Ward attended the St. Patricks Day Parade on 16<sup>th</sup> March in New York. The delegations also held meetings with Enterprise Ireland, Tourism Ireland and IDA Ireland.

- **Northern & Western Regional Assembly (NWRA) Meetings**

Roscommon County Council hosted three NWRA meetings; three monthly meetings on 19<sup>th</sup> January, 16<sup>th</sup> February and 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

# ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE AND RURAL WATER UNIT

## Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI)

The RMCEI is an Environmental Inspection Plan detailing

- the framework of environmental inspection targets to be undertaken in order to achieve environmental priorities and outcomes during the coming year, and
- identifies the inspections undertaken and the achievement of National Environmental Priorities (NEP's) and outcomes in the previous year, by monitoring the performance against the targets

Roscommon County Council submitted their 2024 RMCEI Plan to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in February 2024. Roscommon County Council are continuing to carry out inspections in accordance with the plan, with a total of 4,549 inspections planned for 2024.

The EPA carried out an audit in Q3 2023 assessing progress under the annual RMCEI plan and a report was received in Q4. RCC submitted their response Report to the EPA in January 2024 and have received no further correspondence on the matter

## Complaints

The Environment Unit continues to investigate litter and pollution complaints on a daily basis. All complaints are recorded, assigned and investigated using a database. Quarterly reporting to the LGMA has also moved to an online portal called NEMIS; the examination of generating quarterly reports from NEMIS is ongoing by RCC/Environment with a view to providing suitable information in future management reports. There were 239 complaints received in Q1 2024, 185 complaints were inspected and 172 cases were closed. The majority of complaints relate to illegal dumping and littering.

## Environmental Awareness

The Environmental Education and Awareness Officer continues to engage with schools, community groups and individuals; providing talks, information sessions and support.

- Green Schools – 30 Schools applied to renew their Green Flags in 2023/2024. Renewal visit completed in February/March 2024. In total 94 Primary and Post Primary Schools are registered.
- Promotion and support to Schools for An Taisce GLOBE project “How Spongy is your School – Rainfall and Flood Resilience Observation Project”
  - St. Comans Wood Primary School received the Climate Action Award at the GLOBE conference of Europe and Eurasia.
- National Tree Week – Roscommon County Council provided 300 native trees to 21 community groups
- Adopt a Road/Adopt a Bring Bank – 20 applications approved for community groups to monitor and maintain a bring bank or roadside area
- Launch of National Spring Clean 2024

## Media Campaigns

A number of Social Media/Awareness Campaigns were organised during this period including:

- WEEE Ireland – E-Waste Campaigns (St. Patricks Day, Easter and Farm Fence Batteries) and Schools batteries competition
- Roadside Anti-Littering “Bin it or Bring it Home” Campaign promoted through newspaper article and advert. Stickers distributed to Schools.
- Anti Dumping Initiative – articles in Roscommon People and Irish Independent in relation to Roscommon County Council initiatives

- Continued promotion of awareness campaigns
  - o Management of Household Waste and Recycling
  - o Illegal Dumping
  - o Gov.ie Clean Air
  - o Waste Presentation Bylaws
- Promotion of Re-turn scheme

### **Waste Collection and Civic Amenity Sites**

Roscommon County Council operates four Civic Amenity Sites which are open to the public three days a week. Waste collected at all four sites is reflected in the National Waste Survey which was submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency. Waste collected at Roscommon and Ballaghaderreen sites is also reflected in the 2023 Environmental Performance Reporting (EPR) landfill returns which were submitted in February 2024.

### **Water, Wastewater, Air and Noise Pollution**

1. RCC continues to engage with Lough Forbes Pesticides Action group. This group looks at mechanisms to address pesticides exceedances within catchment area. No group meeting was held in Q1 2024 but monitoring programme is ongoing. Lough Forbes is continuing to present difficulties with the number of pesticides exceedance being recorded in the catchment. No pesticides exceedances have been recorded in 2023 from smaller water bodies (rivers) contributing to Lough Forbes from County Roscommon but the River Shannon is still associated with pesticide inputs. Next group meeting is on the 16 April 2024.
2. Water quality – protect and restore water bodies, (rivers, lakes etc.) to at least good status remains a function of local authorities and it is highlighted as key area for Ireland to achieve objectives under the Water Framework Directive. The EPA have instructed that a minimum of 41 inspection are conducted on farms under the Good Agricultural Practice Regulation 2021 as amended, this figure is to rise to 74 in 2025. Roscommon County Council has received sanction for the employment of an Assistant Scientist in Q1 under Agri- inspection programme. This post is undergoing approval process under Human Resource requirements.
3. Western ROC (regional operation committee) Water Framework Directive committee continue to meet and coordinate a number of national agencies in relation to implementation/progressing of water quality issues within the Western Region. Western ROC meeting held in February with a number of common water quality issued in the region under discussion. New Community Water Officer have been employed since start of the year covering Roscommon North and South, these CWO are shared with adjoining local authorities, Mayo and Galway.
4. National Inspection plan for DWWTS –Inspection of open historic advisory notices are continuing in Q1 into Q2. New grant scheme was announced by the Dept. Housing, Local Government and Heritage has led to a limited increase in engagement with householders under the NIP process. All person with outstanding Advisory Notices are due to be written to in Q2 to advise of the increase in grant levels available.
5. High Status Objective Catchment Area (HSOCA) grants – pubic interest in the grant scheme available has increase in Q1 mainly due to one company who supply domestic wastewater treatment system carry out a leaflet drop in HSOCA. This has place an increase burden of staff resources within the department under the grants scheme requirements.
6. Air Quality at monitoring station in Roscommon Town (adjacent to Aras an Chontae) remained at good quality for Q1.

7. Solid fuel regulation- enforcement action under this area are continuing based on the outcome of the sampling programme conducted in 2023.
8. A member of staff is sitting on the Agricultural Inspections Working Group with a view to developing a new framework for Local Authority inspections at a national level. Meetings of the working group are ongoing with two online meeting held in Q1. The group are at an advanced stage of producing new training manuals and resources for all local authority enforcement staff.

### **Closed Landfill Sites**

These landfill facilities have ceased accepting waste for landfill disposal but Waste Licences still remain in place for Ballaghaderreen and Roscommon Landfills and as per the conditions set out in the Licences, Roscommon County Council is obliged to continuously monitor environmental risks associated with the closed facilities (e.g., landfill gas, groundwater quality, surface water quality). Regular maintenance and servicing continues to take place.

Both licenced sites were inspected by the EPA in March 2023 and inspection reports were received in Q2. The Agency carried out this site visits as part of the OEE annual site visit programme to evaluate the licensee's compliance with the requirements of the licence. Roscommon County Council was found to be in compliance with its licences and have commenced actions relating to improvement observations raised by the EPA for both sites – relating to maintenance of monitoring locations, power outages procedures, incident reporting and water quality trigger levels.

Department funding is available for the remediation of four non-licenced landfills, known as historic landfills, and some of this was drawn down for Castlerea Landfill in 2022. Further funding for 2024 is available and Certificate of Authorisation works at Castlerea historic landfill will be prioritised. Contracts for the prescribed works will need to be prepared when the additional staffing resources are filled. Lands cannot be transferred back to original owner until all RCC's site restoration obligations have been met, with the possible exception of monitoring. Access to lands will be required post transfer to facilitate any future monitoring requirements.

RCC continues to sample leachate, surface water and ground water as required from these closed landfill sites.

### **Laboratory Services**

The laboratory provides both a technical/analytical and sampling service and is accredited to ISO 17025 (one of only 6 Local Authority testing laboratories accredited to this standard). The laboratory provides a shared service to Local Authority's and LAWPRO in three provinces and continues to expand its customer base. Maintaining output is a primary concern. Laboratory accreditation audit by the Irish National Accreditation Board took place in Q3 2023. Enterococci was added to the scope of accreditation on this occasion.

### **Casual Trading**

The Roscommon County Council Casual Trading Bye-Laws 2022 were adopted in November 2022 and come into effect on 01/01/2023. 16 casual trading licences have been granted in Q1 2024 throughout the County. Compliance with the Casual Trading Bye-laws is being monitored by enforcement officers on an ongoing basis.

## **CLIMATE ACTION**

### **Climate Action Unit**

The process of appointing staff resources under the Environment, Climate and Rural Water business unit to lead climate action is complete with the climate action coordinator, climate action officer and community climate action officer positions filled.

### **Climate Action Team**

There was one meeting of the Climate Action Team in Q1 2024 to approve the final draft for onward transmission in advance of adoption. On adoption of the Plan, the terms of reference for the climate action team were amended to reflect the transition from the preparation phase to the five year implementation phase.

### **Climate Action Plan**

The Roscommon County Climate Action Plan (RCCAP) was adopted by Roscommon County Council on 22nd January 2024. This plan was prepared in accordance with Government guidance and contains wide-ranging actions under five themes to support climate initiatives over the next five years. The plan is adopted on a statutory basis and will remain in force from 2024 to 2029. The RCCAP will be officially launched in early Q2 2024 at a joint event in conjunction with the Local Economic and Community Plan and the Roscommon Leader Partnership Strategy. This will include a networking element for communities and individuals on all aspects of climate action and will showcase successes to date in the climate action arena. Locally sourced re-useable shopping bags made from recycled materials and keep-cups designed to reduce waste will be available on the night in support of climate-positive behavioural change. A number of actions are underway in support of this plan, including an Electric Vehicle demonstration event for Council staff that will take place in early Q2 2024 designed to promote behavioural change and uptake in the use of EVs.

The draft tree management strategy and guidelines on increasing biodiversity in public open spaces (prepared in association with UCD, Maynooth University and other Councils) are under consideration in the context of developing pilot projects to provide training, awareness and promote climate action. Proposals in these areas will be brought forward for approval over the course of 2024. The Climate Action unit continue to engage with the Climate Action Regional Office (CARO) and the Local Authority National Training Group (LASNTG) and Galway Roscommon Education and Training Board (GRETB) on the development of climate action training over the next programming period. Initiatives are ongoing across the organization to mainstream climate action in accordance with adopted actions. These include installing climate action as a standing item in internal meetings and the ongoing development of a council-wide tracking system to assess and monitor success in achieving objectives across statutory plans.

### **Community Climate Action Programme**

Following an extensive consultation period administered by the Community Climate Action Officer, 35 applications were submitted under the Community Climate Action Fund and are currently under consideration. Applications are divided into Small, Medium and Large scale grants, and a separate strand that addresses cross border collaboration, under which three applications were received.

### **Community Facilities Electric Vehicle Chargers Grant Scheme**

Roscommon County Council submitted 10 applications under this scheme for community EV chargers on public land. Administered by Pobal under the Just Transition Fund, these applications remain under consideration with Zero Emission Vehicle Ireland (ZEVl). Final decisions are anticipated over the course of Q2 2024.

**Sustainable Energy Communities**

The Climate Action Unit continues to engage with SEAI mentors to grow the SEC network in County Roscommon, with a particular focus on the Roscommon town Decarbonisation Zone, the Energy Master Plan is nearing completion and anticipated in early Q2.

# ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION

## Road Works Scheme 2024

The Road Works Scheme 2024 for the three Municipal Districts were adopted in March 2024. The 2024 allocations are outlined below at Table 1

**Table 1: County Roscommon National, Non-National and Non-Public Roads Allocations 2024**

Funding Source	2024 Allocation
Department of Transport	€ 21,299,500.00
Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)	€ 72,720,412.00
National Transport Authority - Active Travel Investment Programme	€ 3,550,000.00
Department of Rural and Community Development - Local Improvement Scheme	To be announced
Roscommon County Council – Own Resources	€ 2,398,600.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>€ 99,968,512.00</b>

**Table 2: the overall Road Works Scheme 2024 is summarised below**

Grant Description	National Primary	National Primary and National Secondary	National Secondary	Regional Roads	Local Roads	Low Cost Safety Measures	Contingencies	CIS	Bridge Rehabilitation	Drainage	Former National Roads	Specific Improvement Works	Climate Change Adaptation	Other Works	Total
Ordinary Maintenance	155,705		183,838												339,543
Winter Maintenance	105,066		113,179												218,245
Route Lighting	53,146		45,049												98,195
LA Eng. Support-Maintenance Schemes	57,300														57,300
Ordinary Maintenance - Discretionary Grant				750,000	1,904,800									285,000	2,939,800
Surface Dressing - Restoration Maintenance Grant				158,000	2,906,000										3,064,000
Winter Maintenance Grant-ex Discretionary Grant				221,200											221,200
Training Grant														69,000	69,000
Maintenance & Contingencies					1,362,900		30,000								1,392,900
Public Lighting														1,005,700	1,005,700
<b>TOTALS - MAINTENANCE WORKS</b>	<b>371,217</b>		<b>342,066</b>	<b>1,129,200</b>	<b>6,173,700</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>30,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,359,700</b>	<b>9,405,883</b>
Improvement Works	67,428,000		2,106,000												69,534,000
LA Eng. Support Improvement Schemes		2,473,129													2,473,129
Bridge Rehabilitation Grant									455,000						455,000
SR/RR - Restoration				3,080,000	8,825,000									45,000	11,950,000
PSCI: Survey Support					29,000										29,000
Low Cost Safety Improvement Grant						385,000									385,000
Drainage Grant										722,500					722,500
Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience Works													690,000		690,000
Former National Roads Rehabilitation											350,000				350,000
Specific Improvement Grant												265,000			265,000
Community Involvement Scheme (CIS)								139,050							139,050
<b>TOTALS - IMPROVEMENT WORKS</b>	<b>67,428,000</b>	<b>2,473,129</b>	<b>2,106,000</b>	<b>3,080,000</b>	<b>8,854,000</b>	<b>385,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>139,050</b>	<b>455,000</b>	<b>722,500</b>	<b>350,000</b>	<b>265,000</b>	<b>690,000</b>	<b>45,000</b>	<b>87,012,629</b>
<b>TOTALS - ALL WORKS</b>	<b>67,799,217</b>	<b>2,473,129</b>	<b>2,448,066</b>	<b>4,209,200</b>	<b>15,027,700</b>	<b>385,000</b>	<b>30,000</b>	<b>139,050</b>	<b>455,000</b>	<b>722,500</b>	<b>350,000</b>	<b>265,000</b>	<b>690,000</b>	<b>1,404,700</b>	<b>96,418,512</b>
<b>TII</b>	<b>Department of Transport</b>	<b>Own Resources</b>													
€ 72,720,412.00	€ 21,299,500.00	€ 2,398,600.00													€ 96,418,512.00

**N5 Ballaghaderreen–Scramoge:** The Ballaghaderreen to Scramoge Road Project is 33.4km in length and extends from the east tie-in point of the N5 Ballaghaderreen By-pass to Scramoge and bypasses Frenchpark, Bellanagare, Tulsk and Strokestown. The Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) was made on 11 December 2017. The application for Development Consent and for confirmation of the CPO and associated documentation was submitted to An Bord Pleanála (ABP) on 20 December 2017. Following an Oral Hearing in October 2018, ABP approved the scheme and confirmed the CPO in January 2019. CPO notices have been served on all persons listed in the approved CPO. Land and property acquisition continues. Various works and services contracts were undertaken in advance of the main construction contract including fencing, archaeology, topographical surveys, geotechnical investigations and the diversions of some Authority & Utility apparatus. Technical consultants were appointed to assist in progressing the project through the tender and construction stages. The main construction contract tender documents were issued on 22 July 2020 and the closing date for receipt of tenders was set for Tuesday 22 December 2020. Tenders received on or before the specified closing date were assessed. In accordance with the Public Spending Code, the updated Final Business Case together with a request to award the main construction contract was submitted to the Department of Transport on 14 April 2021. On 11 June 2021, the Department of Transport advised that Government approval as required under the Public Spending Code was given on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021 and granted approval to award the main construction contract under the direction of TII. TII approval to award of the main construction contract was received on 14 June 2021. The Main Construction Contract was awarded to Roadbridge Ltd. on 16 June 2021 and the Contract was formally executed on 06 October 2021. Following the appointment of a Receiver over certain assets of Roadbridge Ltd. on 11 March 2022, all work under the contract ceased. Roadbridge Ltd.’s contract was subsequently terminated on 04 April 2022. A contract notice to re-procure the main construction contract was published on eTenders on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2022 and on the OJEU on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2022. Pre-qualification submissions were received by the latest specified time and date for receipt of submissions (16.00 hrs on 27 May 2022). The main construction contract tender documents were issued to all pre-qualified candidates on 22 July 2022. The closing date for receipt of tenders was Friday 24 March 2023. Following the closing date for receipt of tenders, the tender assessment process was undertaken, and Roscommon County Council subsequently recommended the appointment of a contractor and sought the formal approval of TII to award the contract on 31 May 2023. In accordance with the Public Spending Code, Government consent is also required. The Final Business Case was updated and submitted to TII on 16 June 2023. Government approval to award the main construction contract was received on 27 September 2023 and TII approval on 28 September 2023. The contract was awarded to Wills Bros Ltd. on 25 October 2023. The site compound has been established, surveys are largely complete, environmental mitigation and safety measures have been installed and detailed design is progressing. Site Clearance is substantially complete and earthworks have commenced at a number of locations.

**N61 Ballymurray to Knockcroghery Road Project:** This project comprises the improvement of the N61 National Secondary Road between Ballymurray and Knockcroghery which will incorporate a bypass of Knockcroghery. The project was brought through to the completion of TII Phase 2 (Option Selection) by the appointed consultants Roughan & O’ Donovan-AECOM Alliance (ROD-A) in 2021. This project was suspended in 2021 by TII due to funding constraints. Some funding was allocated in 2022 under the TII Minors programme to develop an overall strategy to address the safety and related issues on the section of N61 between Roscommon town and Athlone pending the implementation of long-term solution(s). ROD-A were appointed in August 2022 to undertake this study. The study report was issued in December 2023 and was presented to the Elected Members of Roscommon County Council at its Plenary meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2023. The report identifies 15 priority interventions and TII funding has been sought in respect of five junction optimisation interventions. TII provided seed funding for 2 of the 5 junction optimisation schemes, namely St. Brigid’s Junction Moyvannan and St. John’s Junction Killighan & Gort. The procurement of technical consultants is being advanced with topographical surveys underway.

**N61 Tulsk to Clashaganny Road Project** involves the realignment of approximately 4km of the N61 National Secondary route from Tulsk village to Clashaganny. A planning application in accordance with Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations was published in October 2022 and the proposed development was approved to proceed in accordance with the recommendation of the Chief Executive's report at the Plenary Meeting of Roscommon County Council held in February 2023. That decision has been the subject of a judicial review brought before the High Court and Roscommon County Council has agreed to the setting aside of the decision reached in February 2023. The further development of the project is under review.

**N61 Tulsk to Gortnacranagh Road Project** involves the realignment and improvement of approximately 6km of the N61 National Secondary Road between Tulsk village and the new N5 crossing of the N61 at Gortnacranagh Townland. TII approved the appointment of Lead Technical Consultants and independent specialists to progress the project through the planning phases. Roughan & O' Donovan-AECOM Alliance (ROD-A) was appointed in July 2022. Phases 0 and 1 have been completed. Phase 2 Option Selection is nearing completion and it is anticipated that the Options Selection Report identifying the preferred route corridor will be finalised in Q2 2024. Phase 3 Design & Environmental Evaluation will be advanced subject to TII approval.

**National Road Pavement Projects:** Design and Contract documentation are being prepared for the pavement overlay projects included in the 2024 TII National Road Allocations. Contract documentation for N5 Ballinagare to Moneylea pavement project was completed in March 2024.

**N4 Carrick on Shannon to Dromod Project** involves the provision of a transport solution, which includes a new crossing of the River Shannon, to relieve the significant traffic congestion on the N4 through Carrick on Shannon / Cortober. A Section 85 Agreement under the Local Government Act is in place between Roscommon County Council and Leitrim County Council. Under the Section 85 Agreement Leitrim County Council is the Lead Authority. Leitrim County Council appointed Ove Arup & Partners Ireland Ltd. (ARUP) to progress the project through the planning process in March 2020. ARUP completed Phase 1 (Concept and Feasibility) in July 2020 and Phase 2 (Option Selection) in March 2023. Following TII approval to proceed to Phase 3 (Design and Environmental Evaluation) and considering the 2023 Grant Allocations to Local Authorities for National Roads, Leitrim County Council has prioritised the progression of the town bypass and associated traffic demand management and active travel measures through subsequent development phases. ARUP commenced Phase 3 (Design and Environmental Evaluation) of the project development in June 2023. Ground Investigation and Topographical surveys necessary to progress the project design commenced on site in 2023 and are anticipated to be completed in Q2 2024. Landowner and stakeholder consultation is being carried out as the design of the project progresses. Public Display No 4 was held in the Landmark Hotel in Carrick on Shannon on the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

## **GREENWAY PROJECTS**

**Athlone to Ballyleague/Lanesborough Greenway Project** involves the provision of a greenway which links into proposed Galway to Athlone cycleway scheme in the Athlone area. RPS has been appointed to progress project through Phase 0 Scope and Pre-Appraisal & Phase 1 Concept and Feasibility (TII Project Managers Manual for Greenway Projects). Phase 0 deliverables were completed in 2022. TII issued approval to proceed from Phase 0 to Phase 1 on 13/02/2023. Public Consultation No.1 took place in the Hodson Bay Hotel in Hodson Bay, Athlone on 22nd March 2023. Phase 1 deliverables were completed during Q4 2023 and the Phase 1 Gate Review Statement has been issued to TII.

### **Mid Shannon Greenway Project**

Mid Shannon Greenway is the adopted name for proposed greenway project in the area of Ballyleague/Lanesborough, Strokestown, Roosky and Termonbarry. This Greenway links into Athlone to Ballyleague/Lanesborough Greenway scheme. Ryan Hanley has been appointed to progress project through Phase 0 Scope and Pre-Appraisal & Phase 1 Concept and Feasibility (TII Project Managers Manual for Greenway Projects). Phase 0 deliverables were completed in 2022. TII issued approval to proceed from Phase 0 to Phase 1 on 20/01/2023. Public Consultation No.1 took place in the Percy French Hotel, Strokestown on 19th April 2023. Phase 1 deliverables were completed during Q4 2023. The Phase 1 Gate Review Statement was issued to TII in Q4 2023. Procurement of Technical Consultancy Services for Phases 2-4 of TII's Project Management Guidelines is ongoing.

**Lough Key to Carrick on Shannon Greenway Project** involves the provision of a greenway. Following a tender process, Roughan & O'Donovan Consulting Engineers have been appointed to progress the project through Phase 0 Scope and Pre-Appraisal & Phase 1 Concept and Feasibility (TII Project Managers Manual for Greenway Projects). The contract commenced in January 2023. Phase 0 deliverables were completed in Q3 2023. TII issued approval to proceed from Phase 0 to Phase 1 in July 2023. Public Consultation No.1 took place in the Lough Key Forest and Activity Park on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023. Phase 1 deliverables to be completed during Q2 2024.

### **ACTIVE TRAVEL PROJECTS**

Initial funding was provided by TII to initiate the following Active Travel projects: -

- AT N5 Bellanagare;
- AT N5 Frenchpark;
- AT N5 Strokestown;
- AT N5 Tulsk; and
- AT N5 Tulsk to Rathcroghan.

A single topographical survey contract (encompassing all 5 projects) was completed in June 2022. Archaeological assessment and investigation contracts (encompassing all 5 projects) were completed during Q4 2023.

The N5 AT Strokestown project is being progressed in-house by Roscommon NRRO. Various design service and survey contracts necessary to progress this project were completed in Q4 2023.

A Technical Consultant (Roughan & O'Donovan) was appointed in September 2023 to assist Roscommon County Council progress the other four projects through Phases 2-4 of TII's Project Management Guidelines.

AT N5 Tulsk to Rathcroghan is progressing through Phase 2 Options selection. The other four projects are progressing through Phase 3.

### **Local Improvement Scheme**

The Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) operates the Local Improvement Schemes for the improvement of local non-public roads. In December 2023, the Council advertised for expressions of interest for the Local Improvement Scheme 2024. Applications under the Scheme are currently being examined for eligibility. The Local Improvement Scheme will proceed on the same policy basis as last year, including the maximum 10% administration costs to be claimed by each local authority and the €1,200 cap on the local contribution per individual household/landholder. We are awaiting confirmation of this year's funding allocation from the Department.

### **Community Involvement Schemes**

The Department of Transport provides grant assistance which must be matched by a minimum 10% from the community for eligible works including general maintenance, drainage works, pavement works and footpaths on public roads. Roscommon County Council received an allocation of €159,000 in 2024.

### **Active Travel Investment Programme**

The *Programme for Government* published in June 2020 included significant and ambitious targets for the development of walking and cycling schemes. Roscommon County Council received an allocation of €3,550,000 for 2024. The funding for 2024 is for year 4 of a 5-year *Active Travel Investment Programme*, which will be transformative in the area of green sustainable transport options to those outside of large urban centres. The development of high quality walking and cycling facilities will encourage more people to switch to active travel and will contribute to tackling climate change. This funding will help towards connecting communities and making walking and cycling attractive, safe and accessible to everyone. A total of 21 Schemes have been completed to date in County Roscommon across the three Municipal Districts with a spend of €4,713,137.

In 2023 schemes were completed in Lecarrow, Cloonfad and Ballinlough Villages. A further 10 Projects are at planning/procurement stage at present. A contractor has been procured for a Scheme in Ballaghaderreen Town centre which is due to commence construction in Q1/Q2 2024. One Safe Routes to School Programme (SRTS) scheme is under construction at St. Paul's National School in Castlerea along with seven other school projects under the Safe Routes to School Programme in the planning stages.

### **Lough Funshinagh**

Lough Funshinagh water levels remain at record highs, exceeding 69.37 meters above ordinance datum. Floodwaters continue to threaten homes and roads in the Curraghboy/Rahara area.

Roscommon County Council Actions:

- Retaining and pumping floodwaters at Ballagh, Lisfelim and Coolnageer
- Exploring short-term solutions to reduce flood levels
- Commissioned Ryan Hanley to conduct baseline environmental surveys in advance of long-term solution.

Road Closures:

- R-362 Coolnageer
- L-2005 Ballagh
- L-20051 Ballagh
- L-7621 Ardmullen

### **CFRAM (Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management) Programme**

The objective of the *CFRAM Programme* is the identification and design of flood relief schemes to alleviate the risk of flooding. Under the programme, Athlone, Roscommon, Athleague, Castlerea, Boyle and Cortober were assessed for flood risk. Works are proposed for all the towns with the exception of Castlerea.

In 2021, the Council received an offer of funding from the Office of Public Works in the amount of €350,000 for a project to defend flooding in Bogganfin. Following extensive efforts by the council we have been unable to appoint a consultant to this project.

Leitrim County Council, the lead authority, in conjunction with Roscommon County Council and the Office of Public Works, are progressing the Carrick-on-Shannon Flood Relief Scheme. Carrick-on-Shannon and Cortober are prone to flooding from the River Shannon and its tributaries. Site investigation is now complete. Seasonal environmental surveys are complete and options are being assessed. The Hydraulic Modelling Report was reviewed by Leitrim County Council and OPW and is substantially complete.

### **Cemetery Maintenance and Improvement Grants**

Roscommon County Council allocated €65,000 in the 2024 budget for the maintenance of burial grounds in County Roscommon. The *Cemetery Improvement and Maintenance Scheme 2024* was advertised in the local media and on the Council's website. Application forms and details were also sent to all 2023 Cemetery Grant recipients. A total of 87 groups applied for funding under the Scheme. A report on the grant allocations will be presented to the April Plenary Meeting.

### **Road Opening Licences**

Excavations made in a public road or footpath require a Road Opening Licence. Applications for licences to open the public road are lodged through the central portal with the Road Management Office [www.rmo.ie](http://www.rmo.ie). The Roads Department processes the licences for County Roscommon from this portal and attaches conditions and fees to the licence. The number of new applications for Q1 2024 is 239.

### **Abnormal Load Permits**

Roscommon County Council operate a permit system for abnormal loads on all or part of journeys where specific weight and height conditions apply. The Roads Department issued 35 Abnormal Load Permits to the end of Q1 2024.