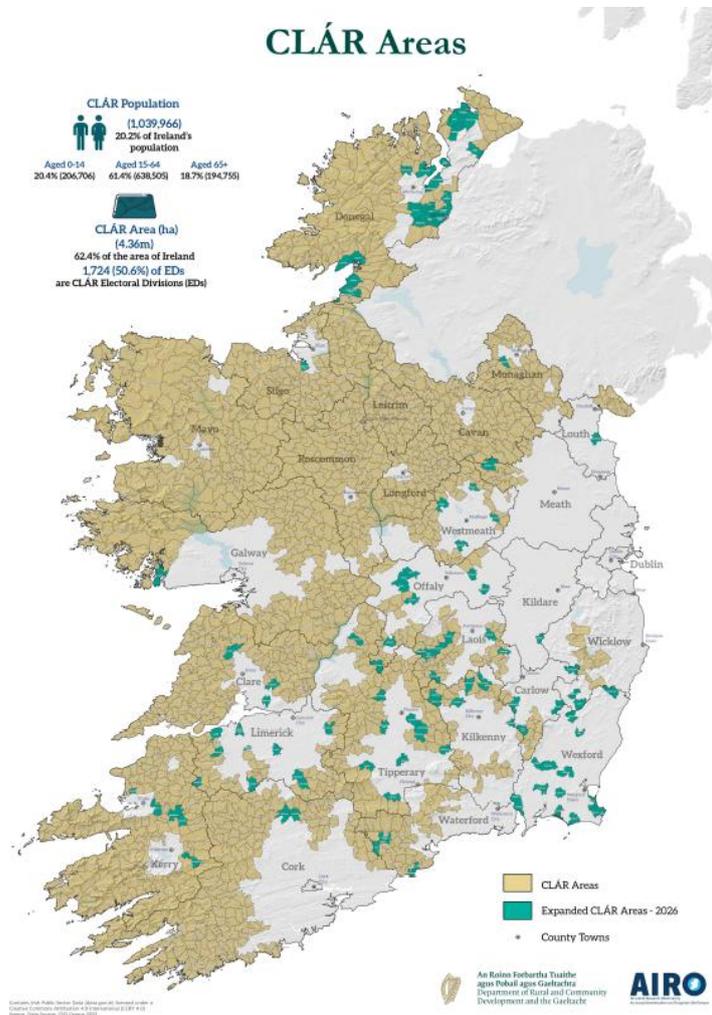




# CLÁR 2026



## Scheme Outline

### Measure 2

**Mobility, Cancer Care,  
Community First Responder  
& Meals on Wheels Transport**

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# 1. Overview of the 2026 Scheme

## **Background**

CLÁR (Ceantair Laga Árd-Riachtanais) is a targeted investment programme for rural areas that aims to provide funding for small infrastructural projects in designated rural areas that have experienced significant levels of de-population and/or socio-economic disadvantage and geographic remoteness. The programme is delivered by the Department of Rural & Community Development & the Gaeltacht (DRCDG) and the funding assists in building the resilience of these rural communities.

## **CLAR Programme for 2026**

The CLAR Programme allocation has increased from €11 million to €12 million in 2026. The 2026 programme will be delivered through three separate Measures as follows:

Measure 1:                Developing Community Facilities & Amenities

Measure 2:                Mobility, Cancer Care, Community First Responder and Meals on Wheels  
Transport

Measure 3:                'Our Living Islands'

This Scheme outline refers to Measure 2: Mobility, Cancer Care, Community First Responder and Meals on Wheels Transport, which is delivered via direct application to the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht.

## 2.2026 Application Process

### **All applicants must apply for this funding directly to the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht**

Recognising the critical role that these organisations play in the provision of vital services to vulnerable sectors of the community. CLAR 2026 will provide funding for mobility, cancer care, first responder and meals on wheels transport support.

This measure will be operated directly by the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht (hereafter “the Department”) and is open to established organisations/groups that operate on a voluntary basis and provide:

- transport to/from day care/other medical/therapy/respite services for those with significant mobility issues including requiring specialised wheelchair accessible vehicles; or
- transport to/from designated cancer treatment hospitals/centres under the National Cancer Care Programme; or
- Community First Response Support/Search and Recovery organisations.
- Meals on Wheels services

Each group is limited to a maximum of one application. Where applicant groups are members of a regional/national organisation, all regional/national group applications must be submitted centrally by the parent organisation with an indication of their prioritisation of applications. In this context, the funding to such applications may be limited to €200,000, or less per organisation.

**Applications must be submitted on the “Measure 2 - Mobility, Cancer Care, Community First Responders and Meals on Wheels Transport” application form.**

Applications should include supporting information requested in the application form including a detailed breakdown of all costs, evidence of match funding, letter of support and quotation/s.

**The Department may not be in a position to follow up regarding missing documentation or incomplete application forms. Incomplete application forms may not be considered.**

Applications should be submitted directly to the Department at [clar@drcdg.gov.ie](mailto:clar@drcdg.gov.ie) by **22<sup>nd</sup> May 2026**

If you do not receive acknowledgment of receipt of your application within 10 working days, please contact the Department at the email address above.

### **Project Timelines**

<b>Scheme launch</b>	09 March 2026
<b>Applications due into the Department</b>	22 May 2026
<b>Funding awarded (indicative)</b>	August 2026
<b>Projects completed and drawn down</b>	12 months after announcement date

### **Queries**

Any queries should be submitted to [clar@drcdg.gov.ie](mailto:clar@drcdg.gov.ie).

**On March 25<sup>th</sup>, Department officials will provide an online information session to support you in application preparation. In order to be included on this call, please email your details to; [clar@drcdg.gov.ie](mailto:clar@drcdg.gov.ie) before Monday March 23rd, 2026.**

### 3.Funding Available

#### Grant Funding and Rate of Aid

##### Rate of Aid

The scheme will provide funding as follows;

Organisation	Example of Vehicle	Maximum Grant	Rate of Aid Diesel/Petrol	Rate of Aid Hybrid/Electric
Mobility/Cancer Care	SUV/Minibus/Bus (Wheelchair Accessible if required)	SUV €50,000 Minibus/Bus €100,000	80%	90%
Community First Responder/Search & Rescue	4X4Vehicle/SUV/Ambulance/Van (Including Fit-Out)	€100,000	80%	90%
Meals on Wheels	Van only	€50,000	80%	90%

The examples given above are not exhaustive, and any alternative vehicle or vessel may be considered, subject to prior discussion with the Department. This may include ribs or other boats used by search and rescue organisations that can be purchased alongside or in place of a road vehicle.

In addition to the maximum grants outlined above, additional funding of up to €20,000 is available for solar panels or EV charging points where the applicant has procured an electric vehicle.

A match funding contribution of 10% for hybrid/electric vehicles and 20% for petrol/diesel vehicles is required. Philanthropic contributions may be accepted as full or part of match funding costs. **Match funding must be in place and evident at the time of application.**

Match funding cannot come from any other Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht scheme or other public funds.

## 4. Eligible and Ineligible Projects

### Eligible Applicants

Support will be made available to all applicant groups/organisations that are formally established e.g. registered charity or not for profit etc. Support will not be made available to individuals or ad hoc groups for the purchase of cars or vehicles. It will be necessary to provide:

- information/certification regarding the formal establishment of the group/organisation e.g. Memoranda and Articles of Association, and
- letter/email in support of the application from, e.g. HSE/GP/ Public Health Nurse/ An Garda Síochána or other service provider.

### Cancer Care/ Medical/Therapy/Respite Transport Organisations

The measure is open to established organisations/groups that operate on a voluntary basis, and are involved in the provision of transport services, free of charge, or at a nominal fee, to persons requiring wheelchair accessible vehicles to access day care/other medical/therapy/respite services and/or those requiring transport to/from hospitals for treatments under the National Cancer Care Programme.

### Community First Response Support/Search and Recovery Organisations

Given the nature of the possible activities and the need to ensure that support is made available to organisations/groups that are acceptable as part of the wider emergency response systems, applications will only be considered from organisations that can fully demonstrate how they engage with and are part of the emergency response systems. In that regard it will be necessary to provide information/certification regarding the formal establishment of the group/organisation and that also demonstrates the status of the group/organisation from either An Garda Síochána or the HSE, in support of the application.

### Meals on Wheels Organisations

The measure is open to support the provision of vehicles (vans only) for meals on wheels services. It is hoped that these vehicles will aid those people who are housebound, who have reduced mobility and otherwise isolated to avail of a hot meal.

### **Eligible CLAR Area**

In general, CLAR eligibility is based on being physically located within a designated CLAR DED. However, given the possible need to travel considerable distances to hospitals and other specialist facilities located in non-CLAR areas, eligibility for this Measure will be based on the 'catchment area' being served by the vehicles.

It will be necessary for applicants to demonstrate that over 80% of the area in which the service is provided is within CLAR areas. A listing of eligible CLAR DED's is available on the Department's website at the following [link](#). Evidence of the organisation's meeting this requirement at the time of application should be retained on file for a period of six years, where approved.

**Please note that additional DEDs are now eligible under CLAR 2026.**

## 5. Eligible Costs

The scheme will cover the cost of a vehicle and/or the fit out of a vehicle where necessary. The Department encourages the purchase of hybrid/electric vehicles where possible.

Applicants should provide full details regarding the costs associated with the purchase and/or fit out of proposed vehicles. Conditions for vehicles is as follows:

1. Any vehicle funded must be in good condition and not more than 5 years' old at the time of purchase.
2. Any vehicle funded is used solely for the activities outlined and not for any commercial transport routes.
3. The Department must be acknowledged with signage on the vehicle in accordance with the Department's Branding Guidelines. A visible, legible sticker on the side/back panel/s of the vehicle is sufficient as long as it follows the Department's branding guidelines acknowledging the CLAR funding. All signage must adhere to the Official Languages (amendment) Act 2021, therefore all signage must be in both Irish and English or Irish alone. Guidelines will be issued.
4. Only one vehicle per 'Branch' of regional/national organisation will be considered.
5. The Department must be advised of the main location of the vehicle (where it will be parked overnight) with the Eircode or XY coordinates provided.

In addition to the vehicle purchase and any required fit-out in the case of EV's, additional funding of up to €20,000 for solar panels or EV charging points will be considered.

The scheme will not cover any ongoing running costs such as insurance, maintenance, fuel etc. Applicant organisations will be required to outline how they will manage the ongoing operation of the vehicle.

## 6.DRCDG Assessment Criteria

It should be noted that, in assessing the applications received, a number of factors will be considered including the indicated order of priority (where applicable); the range, mix, quality and impact of proposed projects; previous funding provided and other relevant considerations.

The applicant must ensure that the application form is fully completed and complies with the 2026 Scheme Outline.

Successful applications will be concise and focussed. The quality and clarity of completed applications, in particular the need / rationale outlined in the application are important in the assessment process.

### **Procurement Requirement**

For the purposes of this application, groups must source **at least one written detailed quotation from a supplier in respect of the supply and/or fit out of a vehicle**. This will be used for the assessment of costs, but it is not sufficient if funding is approved.

As this grant involves the spending of public funds, it is essential that good value for money is derived from it. **If successful**, applicants are then required to comply with relevant [public procurement guidelines](#). Further information can be found on [www.etenders.gov.ie](http://www.etenders.gov.ie).

Guidance on this is available from the Office of Government Procurement (website: [www.OGP.gov.ie](http://www.OGP.gov.ie); email: [support@OGP.gov.ie](mailto:support@OGP.gov.ie)).

Please note that a penalty may apply if public procurement guidelines are not followed.

National Thresholds:

The threshold at which contracting authorities are required to advertise all contracts for goods and services on eTenders is now €50,000 (exclusive of VAT) and upwards on [www.etenders.gov.ie](http://www.etenders.gov.ie).

## 7. Project Delivery

It is the responsibility of the party entering into contract with the Department, as appropriate, to meet any shortfall arising out of any project non-compliance.

All projects must comply with the National Public Procurement Policy Framework published by the Office of Government Procurement. Please see [www.etenders.gov.ie](http://www.etenders.gov.ie) for more details. Failure to adhere to these requirements may result in the associated expenditure being deemed ineligible.

### Progression of Projects

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the project will be completed, and funding drawn down within the above timelines. Applicants will be asked to report on the progression of approved projects on an ongoing basis.

The Department may grant an extension under exceptional circumstances. Any extension request must be submitted in writing and **in advance of the contract end date** stating the reason for the extension and the new requested completion/drawdown dates. The Department reserves the right to allow or deny any extension request.

### Grant Payment Arrangements

**Groups should note that the payment of the grant will be in arrears on the basis of invoices marked as paid**, i.e. after the group has purchased the vehicle. Groups may need to arrange bridging funding to cover the amount of the grant while awaiting this payment from the Department. However, it should be noted that the Department generally finalises this payment within a matter of days where the drawdown request is in order.

**The vehicle must not be purchased prior to the announcement of successful applicants.**

Drawdown requests for payment must only be submitted by the applicant once they **have issued payment** and the purchase **has been completed**. It is not permissible to submit a drawdown request to the Department if invoices remain unpaid or where relevant works are not fully completed by the applicant.

## 8.Funding Conditions

**Non-compliance with the conditions of the scheme and/or and contract awarded and agreed may result in the requirement to refund part or all of the grant funding awarded.**

### Requirements

**1 Upon approval**, projects will be expected to commence without delay and be completed in line with the timelines set out in this Scheme Outline.

**2** Any project that has not commenced by the agreed completion date will automatically be de-committed, unless there has been ongoing engagement with the Department and the reasons for the delay have been accepted by the Department.

**3** The Department may de-commit funding allocated to projects under the scheme where the project is not completed within the time specified, and where the express agreement of the Department to extend the funding arrangement has not been agreed in advance.

**4** Funding may be drawn on completion of the purchase. Funding drawdown requests (Annex 4 Drawdown Request Form) must be signed by an authorised official within the organisation.

**5** Projects must be completed in full in order to drawdown the full grant amount. Where it is established that a project has not been completed, the Department may request the grantee to repay any funding received on the project. It is essential that any changes to the project elements, or reallocation of funding between elements, must be advised and agreed with the Department in advance of the change being implemented (Annex 7 – Change of Purpose); the Department will not retrospectively approve changes to projects. The Department reserves the right to approve or deny any requests.

**6** Where changes have been applied to an approved project without Departmental approval, the grant funding may be reduced to reflect the amended project.

**7** All appropriate financial, public procurement and accounting rules and regulations must be complied with, and each grantee will fully account for the funding received in a timely manner.

**8** If grant recipients are VAT registered, the VAT amount is not to be claimed as a project cost at drawdown.

**9** All projects may be subject to audit and inspection under standard Departmental processes. Full and accurate documentation to support all expenditure must be maintained

in the project file and accessible by Department officials for audit purposes at all times, for a period of five years from the date of completion of the project.

**10** Grantees will acknowledge the support of Project Ireland 2040 / Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht / Government of Ireland, and any other applicable sources of funding (as identified in the relevant Funding Agreement) in all public announcements, advertising and signage, as appropriate, relating to the project. In addition, the Department may seek to use the project in the broader promotion of its policies. Costs for the mandatory signage can be included in project costings at application stage.

**11** Signage must be in place on all CLAR funded vehicles. These signs must be in a prominent position, of durable quality, acknowledge the CLAR funding and be of sufficient size to be clearly visible to the public. These signs must follow the Department's Branding Guidelines. All signage must adhere to the Official Languages (amendment) Act 2021, therefore all signage must be in both Irish and English or Irish alone.

**12** Grantees will provide any reports and information relating to the project as may reasonably be requested by the Department from time to time.

**13** Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the project outputs and outcomes should take place in the context of assessing the impact of the project. Grantees will be expected to collect appropriate data to facilitate this learning on an on-going basis. On request, a brief report (1-2 pages) on the outputs and outcomes of the project funded should be completed and made available to the Department.

**14** Grantees will provide a contact point/points to the Department to facilitate payment and information requests. The Department should be updated on any changes to contact personnel in a timely manner.

**15** The Minister for Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht has the right to launch/open projects supported under the CLAR programme. The Department should be notified a minimum of six weeks in advance of the proposed date for such events.

**16** All procurement processes must be in line with EU Public Procurements Requirements (EU Directive 2014/24) and national procurement guidelines published by the Office of Government Procurement. Please refer to [www.etenders.gov.ie](http://www.etenders.gov.ie) and [www.constructionprocurement.gov.ie](http://www.constructionprocurement.gov.ie) for more details.