



Monthly Management Report for Elected Members

November 2024

This Monthly Management Report is prepared in accordance with Section 136(2) of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended by the Local Government Reform Act, 2014, and provided to the Elected Members for consideration and information.

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Introduction by the Chief Executive

To Members,

This Monthly Management Report gives an overview of the on-going governance of Meath County Council and is being provided for your information and consideration.

The report covers the following:

Directorate for Corporate Affairs and Governance, HR Management and Emergency Services

Corporate Affairs and Governance

Directorate for Housing and Integration

Housing Services

Directorate for Transportation, Urban Regeneration & Asset Management

Transportation

Directorate for Planning & Strategic Projects

Planning and Development

Directorate for Financial Services and Information Systems

Finance Services

Directorate for Climate Action, Culture, Community & Gaeltacht Affairs

Climate Action and Environment

Library Services

Community Development

Directorate for Economic Development, Rural Regeneration & EU Affairs

Economic Development

Tourism

Thank You,

Kieran Kehoe

Chief Executive

Corporate Affairs and Governance



Corporate Affairs

Communities in Bloom Awards

On Saturday, October 19th Trim was crowned international winner at the 30th Communities in Bloom Awards held in Charlottetown, Canada. The first award came on Friday evening at the Community Showcase where Trim was announced as winner for an outstanding achievement award for community involvement. On Saturday evening, the hard work and dedication of the volunteers and staff in Trim was recognised internationally when Trim was announced overall winner at the 2024 Community in Blooms Awards Ceremony.



Best Community Engagement Award

Meath County Council won the Best Community Engagement Award at the Public Sector Digital Transformation Awards for their groundbreaking concept to livestream the local election count from Simonstown Count Centre, allowing all Meath citizens access to real-time information regardless of whether they were physically present.



Togra Céad Mile Fáilte - I gcomhoibriú le Conradh na Gaeilge

Tá an togra Céad Mile Fáilte ag eagrú ranganna Gaeilge do bhail nua ar an Uaimh ar feadh 5-7 seachtain san ionad acmhainní St. Anne's. I gcomhpháirt le hIonad na nImirceach *Cultúr* san Uaimh, Conradh na Gaeilge agus Chomhairle Chontae na Mí, beidh na ranganna seo ag tosnú ar an 23 Deireadh Fómhair. Tá an Oifigeach Gaeilge ag tabhairt tacaíocht don togra seo tríd áisitheoir oiriúnach a fháil a bheidh in ann imeacht a chur ar fáil trí Ghaeilge le linn na ranganna seo, scéalaí, rinceoir, nó amhránaí mar shampla. Seo deis don phobal nua rud éigin a fhoghlaim faoin Ghaeilge agus cultúr na hÉireann. Faoi lathair tá an Oifigeach Gaeilge ag tabhairt cuidiú do Chonradh na Gaeilge chun teagascóir a fháil le haghaidh na ranganna seo a mhúineadh. Beidh an teagascóir seo á mhaoiniú go hiomlán faoin gciste Conradh na Gaeilge.

Céad Mile Fáilte Initiative – In cooperation with Conradh na Gaeilge

The Céad míle Fáilte – A Hundred Thousand Welcomes initiative is organising Irish language classes for members of the New Community in Navan for 5-7 weeks in the St. Anne's Resource Centre. In partnership with the *Cultúr* Migrants Centre Navan, Conradh na Gaeilge and Meath County Council, these classes will be starting on 23rd October. The Irish Language Officer is supporting this initiative by finding a suitable facilitator who will be able to provide an event through Irish during these classes, a storyteller, dancer, or singer for example. This is an opportunity for the new community to learn something about the Irish language and Irish culture. The Irish Language Officer is currently assisting Conradh na Gaeilge in finding a tutor to teach these classes. This tutor will be fully funded under the Conradh na Gaeilge budget.

Scoláireachtaí Gaeltachta 2025

Tá sé socraithe tús a chur le fógraíocht a dhéanamh ar scéim scoláireachtaí Gaeltachta 2025 I mí Eanáir 2025; agus go mbeidh an searmanas bronnta ar siúl le linn Fhéile Seachtain na Gaeilge i mí an Mhárta.

Gaeltacht Scholarships 2025

It is agreed to start advertising the 2025 Gaeltacht scholarship scheme in January 2025; and that the awards ceremony will take place during the Seachtain na Gaeilge Festival in March.

Poster Campaign

Meath Joint Policing Committee Subcommittee on Community Safety and Crime Prevention teamed up with Meath Comhairle na nÓg and the North Eastern Regional Drugs & Alcohol Task Force (NERDATF) to create a poster campaign highlighting emergency crisis phone numbers and advice to young people on what to do in an emergency situation where a friend may have consumed too much alcohol or drugs. The communications team designed and promoted this poster.



Chief Executive, Kieran Kehoe approved several Part V Social Housing agreements totalling almost €22 million. These arrangements will provide much-needed housing accommodation for families in Ballivor, Ashbourne and Enfield.

BALLIVOR
Clos Na Croise
• x4 - 2 Bed Apartments

ASHBOURNE
Baltrasna & Milltown
• x18 - 2 Bed Apartments
• x8 - 3 Bed Homes
Milltown Manor
• x9 - 3 Bed Semi Detached Houses

ENFIELD
The Lane, Johnstown Demense
• x10 - 2 Bed Apartments
• x10 - 3 Bed Duplex

comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council

€22,000,000
ALLOCATED TO HOUSING
PROJECTS IN MEATH

www.meath.ie

Make Way Day

Service Users from Prosper Meath (Watergate Street) took to the streets of Navan for Make Way Day 2024. Make Way Day is an annual campaign to make way on our streets for people with disabilities and to raise public awareness about the problems caused by obstacles blocking footpaths.



Carranstown Environmental Projects Grant Scheme

32 local groups in East Meath were awarded over €298,000 in the Carranstown Environmental Projects Grant Scheme, sponsored by Indaver Ltd. and administered by Meath County Council.



Bulky Waste Days

The Communications team ran a social media campaign promoting the Halloween bulky waste days.

**Free Bulky Waste Drop Off Days
for Meath Householders
October 2024**

Navan Recycling Centre (C15 NX24) Monday, 21st October - Tuesday 22nd October	Trim Recycling Centre (A82 K23) Wednesday, 23rd October - Thursday, 24th October
Thorntons Recycling Centre, Dunboyne (C15 P568) Wednesday, 23rd October - Saturday, 26th October	Kells Recycling Centre (C15 FN73) Friday, 25th October - Saturday, 26th October

Domestic Customers Only. No Commercial Customers
Gate Fee €2 applies


 comhairle chontae na mí
 meath county council

Meath Careers Expo

The Communications team ran a social media campaign promoting the Meath Careers Expo.

County Meath

careers

exp

ardboyne hotel

navan

9.10.24
12-7PM

Check out the jobs on www.careersexpo.ie

END THE
COMMUTE

MEET THE
EMPLOYERS

LIVE & WORK
IN MEATH

ORGANISED BY

County Meath Chamber

SUPPORTED BY

comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council

Imctb

meath

Road Safety Week

The Communications team ran a social media video campaign throughout Road Safety Week. They created videos for each day highlighting the consequences of dangerous driving.



Féileacáin Wave of Light

Meath County Council joined in a national Wave of Light on 15th October to mark Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness month.



Corporate Governance

Meath County Council as a public body is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 2014, which allows for access to certain records held by the local authority subject to a number of exemptions.

The following are the number of requests received in Q3 2024:

FOI	Requests	Internal Reviews	Appeals to OIC
Q3 - 2024	35	0	0

The link to the Council's FOI Disclosure Log is: <https://www.meath.ie/council/your-council/your-data-and-access-to-information/freedom-of-information>

The following are the Q3 2024 statistics relating to Access to Information on the Environment (AIE) requests:

AIE	Requests	Internal Reviews	Appeals to OCEI
Q3 - 2024	15	2	0

The Council's Data Protection Unit (DPU) continues to carry out significant work across the organisation to ensure compliance with the GDPR and Data Protection Acts. The following are the Q3 2024 statistics relating to Data Subject Access Requests - DSAR's:

Subject Access Requests	SAR's
Q3 - 2024	8

Climate Action and Environment



Climate Action

SDG Week 2024

To celebrate the start of SDG Week, Meath County Council's Climate Action Team launched the Make A Pledge event on Friday 20th September 2024. We had a brilliant turn out with over 80 pledges made! Big thanks to everyone for getting involved and for pledging to work towards achieving the sustainable development goals.

A daily quiz was run with questions about the Sustainable Development Goals. We had a brilliant response with over 70 entrants each day.



County Meath's Libraries supporting SDG Week 2024

The Library Service launched SDG week on Friday, September 20th with a visit from renowned Irish Author Oisín McGann, who facilitated workshops for two schools in Navan Library. Oisín took a lively and light-hearted look at the basics of climate change, breaking it down into simple principles, and spoke about how it related to our everyday lives. Students then had the opportunity to ask questions.



Throughout SDG Week, our libraries promoted the Sustainable Development Goals on social media but also raised awareness in their favourite way – through books! Book displays for adults and children offered library members and visitors a chance to learn more about how we can work towards the Goals in our day-to-day lives.

Mount Lucas Trip – NZEB Fundamental Awareness Course

On Monday 23rd September 2024, Meath County Council attended the NZEB Fundamental Awareness Course hosted in Mount Lucas, Co. Offaly.

Elected Members and staff of Meath County Council had the opportunity to learn about best practices and technologies used for developing energy efficient homes and Near Zero Energy Buildings (NZEB) and the training offered to all individuals to help make the change to a more sustainable construction industry.



We would like to thank all involved and those who attended, and we'd like to thank the Mount Lucas staff for an informative and memorable experience.

Meath Cares about Older People – Pillo Hotel - October 1st

The Climate Action Section operated a stall at this event to raise awareness of the HES Kits (Home Energy Saving Kits) that are available to loan from all Meath's Libraries. There was great interest in these kits and we answered a lot of queries on how to save energy in the home.



Grow your own food Event – Claremont Stadium - October 11th



Continuing on from our Eliminating Food Waste Workshop, Meath County Council's Climate Action Team launched the Train the Trainer Event—Sustain Food from Linear to Circular in Claremont Stadium on Friday, October 11th 2024. The training is the first in a series of events to train community mentors to grow food and pass this knowledge onto the community groups they work with, promoting awareness of eco-friendly food sourcing, composting, and creating sustainable gardens.

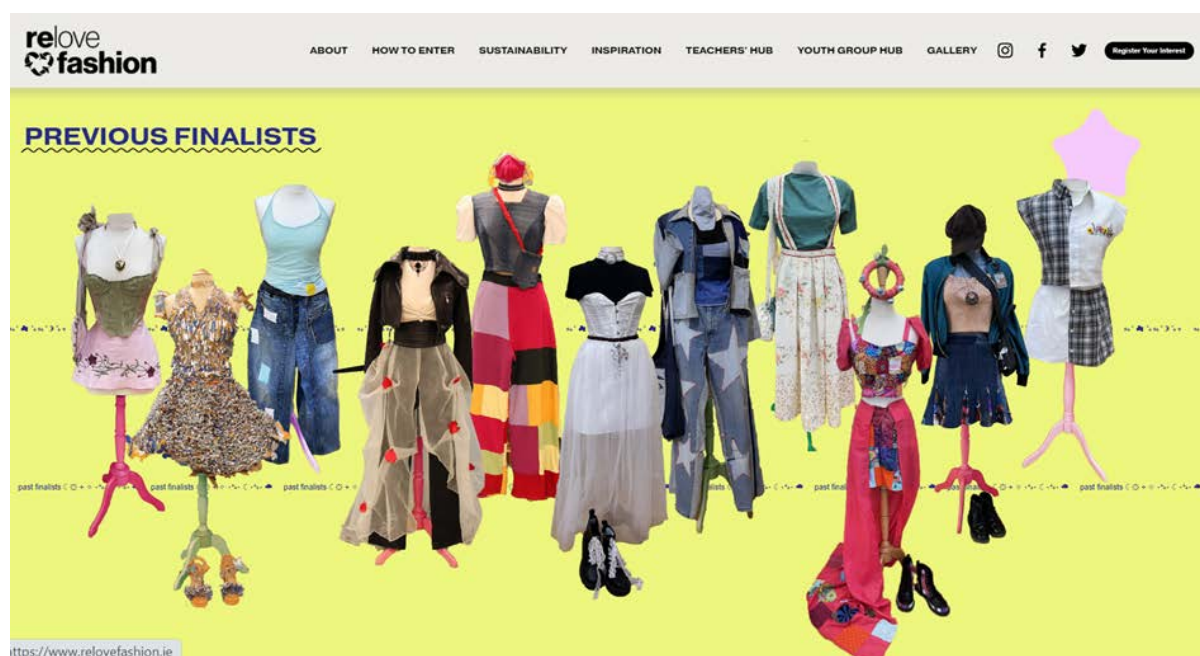
Environment

ReLove Fashion Competition & Circular Fashion Ireland Workshops

Seventeen Meath Secondary Schools have signed up for the National ReLove Fashion Competition, together with Circular Fashion Workshops.

The TY groups will learn to source and upcycle sustainable fashion, they will learn about the damage fast fashion does to the environment and to the health & well-being of those working in challenging conditions to produce cheap clothes.

Students will explore the impact that their fashion choices have in a local and global context. The final of the Competition will be held in Spring at a showcase event with all of the shortlisted entries in the Rediscovery Centre.



Halloween Safety Campaign

There is an extensive campaign in the lead up to Halloween, advising the public of the dangers of bonfires, with social media posts, radio interview and press advertising.

A Free Halloween Drop Off event will take place at four recycling centres in the preceding weeks.

Households are invited to drop their bulky waste for free and advised of the dangers of giving their waste to young people for Bonfires.



Meath County Council
on Saturday

Never give your household items for a Bonfire

Bonfires:

- 🔥 contain projectiles – which cause injury to the young people attending
- 🔥 contain accelerants – which cause burns
- 🔥 contain carcinogenic materials – which cause health difficulties to the local community, particularly elderly people or those with asthma

Responding to Bonfires takes emergency services away from more serious incidents – such as house fires or road collisions

If you have Bulky Household Waste, take it to the Halloween Bulky Waste Collection at your nearest recycling centre, full details at <https://bit.ly/BulkyWasteDropoff>

Queries to environment@meathcoco.ie

New ownership rules in relation to XL Bully type dogs

Regulations introduced on October 1st 2024 prohibit the importing, breeding, selling and re-homing of XL Bully type dogs. From February 1st 2025, it will be illegal to own an XL Bully type dog without a 'Certificate of Exemption' issued by the local authority in which the dog resides.

Owners that wish to keep their XL Bully type dog must apply for a Certificate of Exemption before 1st February 2025. The Certificate of Exemption allows them to keep their dog until the end of its natural life.

After the February 1st 2025 owners of an XL Bully type dog that have a Certificate of Exemption must continue to meet the relevant criteria required to obtain the Certificate of Exemption.

Animal Welfare charities and shelters with existing XL Bully dogs already in their facilities on October 1st are permitted to rehome or export these dogs until February 1st 2025.

As a cross of restricted breeds, XL Bully type dogs are subject to the existing additional controls. This means when in a public place, these dogs must be securely muzzled and kept on a strong chain or leash (maximum 2 metres in length) by a person over 16 years of age who is capable of controlling the dog.

Housing Services



Capital Programme

Summary Profile of Approved Direct Construction Projects

PROJECT NAME	NO. OF UNITS	ESTIMATED START DATE	ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE
PRELIMINARY DESIGN PHASE			
Archers Glen, Ashbourne	79	Q2 2025	Q1 2027
Church Street, Kells	3	Q4 2025	Q4 2026
Total	82		
SECTION 179A PLANNING PROCESS & DETAILED DESIGN			
Kells, Archdeaconry*	22	TBC	TBC
Carrick Street Regeneration, Kells*	47	TBC	TBC
COMBINED PLANNING STAGE & DETAILED DESIGN TOTAL	69		
TENDER FOR CONSTRUCTION			
Abbeylands, Navan	6	Q1 2025	Q1 2026
Church View, Rathmolyon	22	Q4 2024	Q4 2025
Haggard Street, Trim	4	Q2 2025	Q2 2026
Blackhill Crescent, Donacarney	2	Q1 2025	Q4 2025
Total	34		
CONSTRUCTION STAGE			
St. Francis Park, Navan	10	Q4 2022	Q4 2024
Castle Street, Ashbourne	74	Q4 2022	Q4 2024
Swan Lane, Navan	6	Q4 2023	Q4 2024
Gort na Glaise, Farganstown	84	Q1 2023	Q4 2024
Pitcher Lane, Kells	5	Q2 2024	Q2 2025
Brews Hill, Navan	12	Q1 2024	Q2 2025
Ratholdren Court, Navan	27	Q3 2024	Q4 2025

Newtown, Drumconrath	1	Q3 2024	Q3 2025
Connaught Grove	47	Q3 2024	Q1 2026
Total	266		
CONSTRUCTION SCHEMES COMPLETED			
Yellow Ford, Convent Lands, Kildalkey Road, Athboy	28	Q2 2023	15 August 2024
Total	28		
OVERALL TOTAL	479		

***Archdeaconry Glebe, Kells**

An application for the construction of 22 new residential units comprising 6 no. two-bed, single storey units, 6 no. two-bed, two-storey houses & 10 no. three-bed, two-storey houses at Archdeaconry Glebe, Kells, was lodged with An Bord Pleanála on the 22nd of November 2022 and was approved by the Bord on the 1st of February 2024.

The matter is now subject to Judicial Review brought by Kells Anglers Association and Ciaran O’Kelly -v- An Bord Pleanála and Uisce Éireann, and Meath County Council (Notice Party) High Court No 2024 440 JR. The matter was listed for mention in the High Court in the Planning and Environment List on Monday 13 May 2024 and then hearing is expected to be scheduled for December/January.

***Carrick Street, Kells**

An application for the construction of 36 new residential units, and refurbishment of 9 existing derelict units to provide 11 new units, giving a total of 47 residential units in Carrick Street in Kells was lodged with An Bord Pleanála on the 29th of July 2022 and was approved by the Bord on the 12th of February 2024.

The matter is now subject to Judicial Review brought by Kells Anglers Association and Ciaran O’Kelly -v- An Bord Pleanála and Uisce Éireann, and Meath County Council (Notice Party) High Court No 2024 484 JR. The matter was listed for mention in the High Court in the Planning and Environment List on Monday 13 May 2024 and then hearing is expected to be scheduled for December/January.

Meath County Council Approved Capital Assistance Scheme, Part V & Turnkey up to 9th October 2024

PROJECT NAME	PROJECT TYPE	NO. OF UNITS
Ashbourne	Part V	39
Ballivor	Part V	4
Bettystown	Part V	8
Carlanstown	Part V	2
Clonee	Part V	7
Donacarney	Part V	2
Duleek	Part V	14
Drogheda	Part V	34

Dunboyne	Part V	3
Dunshaughlin	Part V	38
Enfield	Part V	20
Julianstown	Part V	2
Kells	Part V	6
Navan	Part V	45
Rathmolyon	Part V	1
Ratoath	Part V	4
Slane	Part V	4
Stamullen	Part V	2
Summerhill	Part V	6
Trim	Part V	49
Ballivor	Turnkey	8
Bettystown	Turnkey	46
Clonee	Turnkey	66
Donacarney	Turnkey	16
Drogheda	Turnkey	30
Kells	Turnkey	1
Navan	Turnkey	14
Kilmoon	CAS	1
Navan	CAS	17
Trim	CAS	14
Oldcastle	CAS	5
Total		508

Meath County Council Approved Capital Assistance Scheme, Part V & Turnkey – Delivered as at the 9th October 2024.

PROJECT NAME	PROJECT TYPE	NO. OF UNITS
Athboy	Part V	8
Bettystown	Part V	1
Dunshaughlin	Part V	15
Enfield	Part V	5
Kells	Part V	5
Kilbride	Part V	2

Kilmessan	Part V	5
Longwood	Part V	3
Slane	Part V	2
Navan	Part V	13
Drogheda	Turnkey	30
Navan	Turnkey	4
Total		93

Affordable Housing

One 3 bed property for affordable purchase in Rowleys Lock, Navan has been allocated and should close shortly.

Six properties 3nr. 3 bed duplexes and 3nr. 2 bed duplexes in Beaufort, Boyne Village, Navan have been allocated. Delivery expected in March.

Expressions of Interest

The Housing Department continue to collaborate with Developers and Landowners to purchase land and or properties for the provision of social and affordable housing.

Refurbishment Projects

St. Francis Park Scheme

The site consists of 10nr. residential units. The site has been fully snag inspected. Some snags and landscaping works remain to be closed out. It is expected the Scheme will be substantially complete in September 2024.

Local Authority Adaptive Work Scheme (LAWWS)

- LAAWS grant funding of €563,533 including VAT submitted for approval to DHLGH for 2024.
- To date for 2024, 71nr. LAAWS are complete and another 3nr. LAAWS are appointed to Contractors.
- This brings the total to 74nr. LAAWS applications scheduled to be completed in 2024.

Housing Adaptation Grant Schemes for Older People and People with a Disability

628 applications for the value of €3,948,106.29 have been approved.

Local Authority Vacant Units Currently Unavailable for Allocation

Outlined below is a summary per Municipal District of the number of vacant properties that currently require works before they can be re-tenanted, as of 14th October 2024. For the period from 14th September 2024 to 14th October 2024, works were completed on 3 vacant units, while 5 units became vacant during this period.

	No. of Units Vacant < 3 Months	No. of Units Vacant 3-6 Months	No. of Units Vacant > 6 Months	No. of Vacant Units Currently Subject to Works	No. of Vacant Units not yet with Contractors
Ashbourne	2	1	1	2	2
Kells	9	3	3	7	8
Laytown/Bettystown	3	0	0	0	3
Navan	9	4	2	8	7
Ratoath	2	1	0	1	2
Trim	5	4	4	8	5
TOTALS	30	13	10**	26	27

**Note: Nine of these pre-let properties are major refurb which includes energy upgrades to bring the property to B2 BER rating or better.

Summary Profile of Approved Housing Body Approved Projects (Including Part V)

Project Name	No. of Units	AHB	Estimated Completion
Cluain Adain, Navan	32	Cluid	Q4 2024
Gardenrath, Kells	45	Cluid	Q2 2025
Mine View, Athboy Road, Navan	29	Respond	Q4 2024
Woodstream, Bailis, Navan	39	Cluid	Q4 2024
Emmett St, Trim	12	North & East - CAS	Q2 2025
Flowerhill Lodge, Navan	5	North & East - CAS	Q4 2024
Kilmoon	1	Marillac - CAS	Q1 2026
Oldcastle	5	Saint Vincent de Paul - CAS	Q2 2026
Tailteann, Navan	12	Meath Women's Refuge - CAS	Q4 2026
St. Loman Street, Trim	2	Saint Vincent de Paul - CAS	Q2 2026
Total Number of Approved Units	182		

*Delivery Method had moved from Leasing to CALF

Summary Profile of Approved Housing Body Approved Projects Delivered in 2024 Year to date:

Project Name	No. of Units	AHB
Swanbrook, Navan	7	Tuath
Dunville House, Metges Road*	45	Tuath
Cluain Adain Clonmagaddan Navan	36	Cluid
Total Number of Units Delivered	88	

*Delivery Method had moved from Leasing to CALF

Cost Rental

54 Affordable Cost rental units due to be delivered in Woodstream, Bailis, Navan, Co. Meath by Q4 2024.

Homelessness - September 2024

	Single Adults / Couples	Households with Children	Total Households
Placements at 31st of August (Previous Reported Figure)	176 (186 Adults)	83 (138 Adults 11- Children)	259
Placements at 30th of September	180 (188 Adults)	83 (133 Adults, 125 Children)	263

Of the households with children, 74 families are placed in short term accommodation with private providers through Settlement Team's intervention and 9 Families in PMVT Family Hubs.

Reasons for emergency accommodation placement in order of frequency: Primary reason is family breakdown; relationship breakdown; unable to find property to rent; Notice to Quit; domestic violence; overcrowding; couch surfing; addiction; mental health; house fire; unsuitable accommodation; rough sleeping.

Age profile of clients in emergency accommodation on 30/09/2024

Age profile	Clients	0-4	04-11	11-18	18-25	25-40	40-65	Over 65
Families	133	-	-	-	36	51	45	1
Couples	16	-	-	-	2	2	9	3
Singles	172	-	-	-	15	47	94	16
Children	125	45	40	40	-	-	-	-
Total	446	45	40	40	53	100	148	20

83 Families – 133 Adults & 125 Children (of these 25 are adult children)

Adult children range from 18 - 39

Place finder 01/09/2024-30/09/2024

Total	6
Exit from Emergency Accommodation	6
Homeless Prevention	6

Tenant Liaison Team September 2024

Anti-Social Behaviour Investigation	Complaints	Cases
Frequent serious disturbances	84	31
Occupancy of dwelling	49	37
Garden upkeep/maintenance	30	24
Dog/Horse/Pet Control	3	2
Total 01/09/2024-30/09/2024	166	94

Standards in Rented Accommodation

4754 Inspections were carried out on rented properties in Meath up to the end of September 2024. Of this figure, 2502 were first inspections, 159 properties passed after their first inspection. Subsequent follow up inspections will be carried out to ensure compliance. Meath County Council's target for 2024 is 1,850 first inspections which has now been reached.

Social Housing Supports - for the period 1st January to 27th September 2024.

- 1,279 applications for Social Housing received.
- 496 applications were approved onto the Social Housing List.
- 159 applications were unsuccessful.

Outlined below is the number of households that have had their accommodation needs met by Meath County Council in the period 1st January 2024 to 27th September 2024

Allocations/Housing Supports	Number
MCC Direct Allocations	257
Transfers	34
Approved Housing Bodies	191
Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS)	1
Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)	216
Long Term Leasing	0
Mortgage To Rent (Approved Housing Bodies)	3
Approved Housing Bodies (AHB) CALF Acquisition	0
TOTAL	702

Community Development



Meath Age Friendly

- The annual Meath Cares About Older people event was held in the Pillo Hotel Ashbourne on Tuesday 3rd October 2024. There were information stands with details on supports and services available to older people, and talks were given by service and support providers. Over 250 older people were in attendance on the day.



Pictured at the Meath Cares About Older people event L-R Brian Hora, Senior Executive Officer Community Departmenty, Kieran Kehoe, Chief Executive, Ita Healy Chair of Meath Older Person’s Council, Cathaoirleach Cllr Sharon Tolan, Michael Finnegan Chair Meath Age Friendly Alliance and Valerie Mc Hugh Meath Age Friendly Programme Manager

Comhairle na nÓg

- The Comhairle na nÓg Annual Youth Conference 2024 (formerly known as AGM), took place on 24th October in the Ardboyne Hotel, Navan. A new Comhairle na nÓg Committee was elected at the Annual Youth Conference.
- A series of topics were identified at the Annual Youth Conference that will form part of the Comhairle na nÓg work programme for the coming year.

Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

- The LCDC meeting took place on Friday 25th October. The next meeting of the LCDC is scheduled for 22nd November 2024.

LEADER Programme 2023 - 2027

- A meeting of the LAG took place on Friday 25th October 2024.

Healthy Ireland / Healthy Meath

- The CommUnity Connect Programme will be launched in early November. CommUnity Connect is a community based positive mental health project which has been developed in collaboration between Healthy Meath and Healthy Louth.
- Healthy Meath had a stand at the recent the Meath Cares About Older people event in the Pillo Hotel in Ashbourne.
- The meeting of the Meath LCDC Health & Wellbeing Committee took place on 15th October.
- The October/November Healthy Meath Newsletter is available here

Public Participation Network

- 707 groups are registered with Meath PPN.
- The development of Linkage Groups within the network continues with Round 3 workshops now completed.

Pride of Place

- The Pride of Place awards nights are taking place across the county and the final awards night will take place in the Ardboyne Hotel on 28th November.
- The IPB Pride of Place awards night will take place in The Hillgrove Hotel in Monaghan on Saturday 2nd November. Meath will be represented by Trim and Moynalty in the population categories.

Local Authority Integration Team

- The Community Integration Forum met on October the 16th.
- A new International Protection accommodation site opened at Flax Mill House, Navan on Friday 13th September with 29 new arrivals to date, the site can accommodate up to 70 when stage 2 is completed.
- The team supported 29 people from Gormanston park to attend the Age Friendly event in the Pilo hotel in Ashbourne on the 3rd of October.
- 15 people from the accommodation centres were supported to attend Meath Chamber of Commerce Job Expo was held on the 9th of October
- **Referrals Logged YTD**

Number of Customer referral cases active	14
Number of Customer referral closed	808
Clinics Held	123

- During October, the LAIT Support Workers continued the yearly progression and conducted 22 on-site clinics at IP (international protection) and Ukrainian centres throughout Meath.

- These clinics facilitated with the assistance of centre management addressed issues for new arrivals in such areas of education & training (23% of all referrals), accommodation queries (15%), employment (14%), health (11%), community engagement (11%) and transport (9%) with childcare youth support and general living/social welfare questions comprising the bulk of the remainder.
- All referral matters were handled by the stakeholders of the Community Integration Forum.

Age Friendly Ireland Shared Service

Meath County Council hosts the Age Friendly Ireland shared service that supports all 31 local authorities to deliver effective local Age Friendly Programmes and acts as a link between local and national government to ensure that Age Friendly objectives are embedded in policy and services. The following is an update on recent activity:

- There is a strong line of referrals coming in for the Healthy Age Friendly Homes Programme across the country, with very high demand in some areas.
- An Age Friendly Sports Taster Day took place in the Sport Ireland Campus on 26th September. Over 100 older people attended from 13 counties. It was an opportunity to try low impact, modified sports such as seated volleyball, Zumba gold, walking football, Exwell, yoga and others. We will review the feedback forms and consider if we can make this an annual event.
- The Age Friendly shared service had a presence in the Government Village at the National Ploughing Championships in County Laois this year, where we promoted our Technical Programme of work, the Healthy Age Friendly Homes Programme, and encouraged older people to join their local Older People's Council.
- The National Age Friendly Recognition Awards will take place on 7th November in the Crowne Plaza Hotel Santry, hosted by Fingal County Council this year. All Age Friendly Programmes and shortlisted projects are invited to attend. The awards recognise and showcase good practice initiatives and services that support ageing communities.
- A further Train the Trainer day is taking place this month for the Age Friendly Business Programme. This will equip programme staff with the skills to deliver this training to businesses locally to help them be more responsive to the needs of their customers.
- We have developed a proposal for a Shared Island approach to age friendly work. We are seeking funding for a project that will help us to engage in a structured way with Age Friendly practitioners in Northern Ireland.
- The recent meeting of the Age Friendly Technical Advisors national network took place in Cork where they had an opportunity to visit some new age friendly housing developments.
- AFI is supporting Irish Rail to develop 10 Age Friendly Train Stations – a strategic oversight group is being set up for each station and Older People's Councils will be involved in walkability audits to assess the built environment. Irish Rail has committed to implementing actions to make these stations Age Friendly.



- AFI Chief Officer Catherine McGuigan is chairing the Reference Group for the Commission on Care, which is examining how health and social care are provided to older people. There have been a number of consultation sessions and focus groups this year while the Commission is in its research phase. Its first report will be produced in the new year.
- AFI held its annual NGO Networking event on 9th October which supports collaborative working between local government and NGOs in the ageing sector.



- The September meeting of the National Network of Older People's Councils heard a presentation by Jacinta Barrins, a former UN official who is now providing climate workshops for older people around the country.
- We have piloted a new communications training programme for nursing home staff in CHO 1 in partnership with the HSE, drawing on the experiences of older people in long-term residential care to improve communication between staff and residents.
- Age Friendly is represented in the Open House Architectural Festival this month, with a talk by National Technical Manager Declan Gaffney and a walkability audit of Dublin City Council Civic Offices.
- AFI were pleased to see the publication of the National Payments Strategy this month which responds to the issues raised by Older People's Council members in relation to continued acceptance of cash payments. The Department of Finance attended the National Convention of Older People's Councils in May this year to hear their views on the future of the payments system.
- Healthy Islands - Healthy Ireland funding is being used this year to deliver health and wellbeing activity for older people on off-shore islands (in Counties Cork, Galway, Mayo, Donegal). A range of activities is being provided to islanders including equipment, physical activity sessions, consultation, and information provision.
- Older People's Council members met with the National Ambulance Service on 10th October to discuss their ideas for making the service more Age Friendly. There are regular consultation opportunities with the National Clinical Programme for Older People which has established a reference group from the membership of Older People's Councils.

- Content has been updated for the accredited 'Age Friendly Housing & Public Realm' training module. Training sessions are scheduled with local authorities for the remainder of this year.
- The first Age Friendly Housing Estate Demonstrator & Case Study launched on 6th September – Castlefen Estate, Sallins, County Kildare
- Age Friendly Libraries refresher training has been provided to library staff this year. All public libraries are participating in this programme.
- Ongoing Climate Action workshops are being delivered for older people across Ireland, focusing on 1) climate science and policy 2) energy saving, home energy upgrades & climate actions at a local level

Libraries Services



Ballivor Library

Special screening of 'Goodnight Ballivor' and reading by John Quinn

John Quinn, Ballivor native, former RTE producer and author visited Ballivor Library on Tuesday 15th October for a special showing of the Irish-language documentary *Goodnight Ballivor, I'll sleep in Trim*, based on his memoir of the same name. The audience were treated to a reading and Q&A afterwards. Veritas gifted a set of his books to Ballivor library including *Sea of Love*, *Sea of Loss*, an intimate and inspiring book, written as a tribute to his late wife Olive and *Daily Wisdom Léann an Lae* - Irish proverbs and Sayings for Each Day of the Year. The village turned out in force with a large number in attendance.

Creative Ireland

Their Voice, Their Process - Creative Concept Development

As part of Meath Cruinniú na nÓg 2024, young people from the Fóroige Navan Young People's Development (NYPD) project worked with local artist, Mark Smith to create a beautiful, unique piece of typography art to amplify their voices within their community. Building on the momentum of this work and the enthusiasm for creative engagement that it generated, the group will develop a new creative project as part of Cruinniú na nÓg 2025.

To prepare for this new project, local creatives Alun Smyth and Mark Smith are conducting a creative concept development process with the group throughout the month of October. Using musical instruments and technology (drum machine software etc), the group will explore their own taste and creative interests. The process will spark creative thinking and idea sharing giving the group the skills to develop their project idea for Cruinniú na nÓg 2025. The process will be youth led and adult supported, ensuring it truly is 'their voice and their process'.

Right to Read Programme – Children's Book Festival

Children's Book Festival is one of the four core programmes of the national *Right to Read* programme. The focus is to promote literacy and reading development for people of all ages and backgrounds and to encourage the love of reading.

Meath's Children's Book Festival features ninety-one events with seventeen facilitators. Events include author/illustrator visits, storytellers, creative writing sessions, interactive story shows, book quizzes, Irish language events and music events. A selection of online events is included in the programme to facilitate participation from schools that are some distance from their nearest local library.

Highlights include interactive storytelling shows for schools in partnerships with Solstice Arts Centre and Swift Cultural Centre. A Family Day in Ashbourne Library was organised to facilitate attendance at events for children and families who traditionally can't attend midweek events due to work commitments.



Pictured at the launch of Children's Book Festival in Navan Library are:

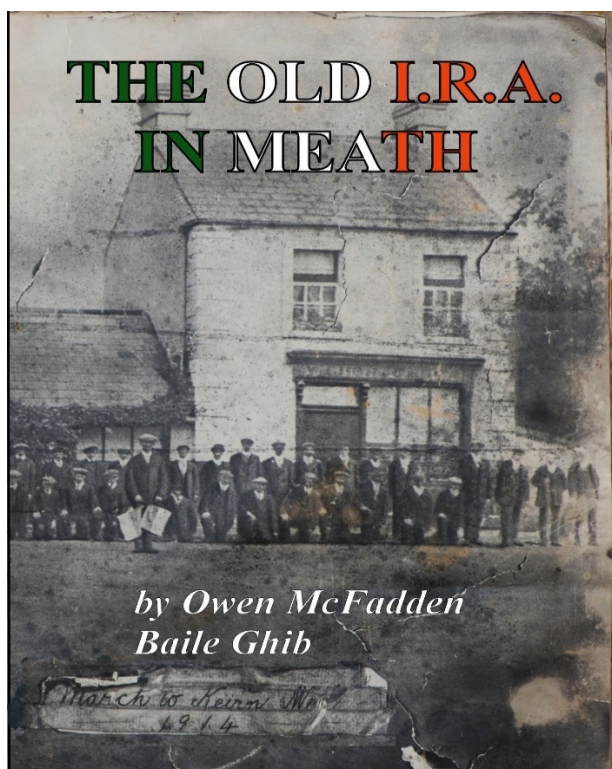
Meath Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Sharon Tolan, illustrator Karen Harte, Teachers and pupils of St. Joseph's Mercy, Navan 3rd Class, Executive Librarian Eve Morrisson and County Librarian Maedhbh Rogan-McGann

Local Studies

The Old IRA in Meath, published by Owen McFadden in 2015, met with huge popular demand and quickly went out of print. The volume has been brought back into print with the assistance of Meath County Council via the The Commemorative Initiatives Programme 2024 from the *Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media*.

The book provides a chronological account of the activities of the Irish Volunteers and the IRA in Meath from 1913 to 1923, including the 1916 Easter Rising. It contains listings of more than 50 local Companies of Irish Volunteer or IRA in County Meath, and lists of more than 1,400 Volunteers within those Companies and it provides a short profile of the life of the individual Volunteer, where possible.

The work also includes accounts of the activities that the Volunteers were involved in. The accounts are based on Witness Statements by actual participants or eyewitnesses which were mainly obtained from the Bureau of Military History and the Military Archives. It also includes references to and photos of their graves, where possible, throughout County Meath. The book is intended to provide the reader with a feel for the times and with the necessary information to identify graves of historical importance in Meath in the wake of the commemorations of 1916 Rising, the War of Independence and the Irish Civil War. It is a valuable reference for genealogists and historians alike.



The Old I.R.A. in Meath cover image

Archives

Threads of Tradition

Meath County Archives hosted an afternoon seminar in Solstice Arts Centre on Saturday 18th September. The Commemorative Initiatives Programme from the *Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media* funded the event, and it was focused on the early years of the new Irish state.

The theme was on craft and design in Meath, with a particular focus on the first decade of the new state.

Presentations included one from Vawn Corrigan on the disappearing world of Irish textiles. She gave an illustrated overview of the unique relationship Ireland once had with textile production

Project archivist Clare Ryan focused on Clayton Woolen Mills and the ambitious archival project, weaving together stories of wartime contributions, community impact, and the intricate threads of international commerce in the early years of the state.

Author Ken Davis spoke about the contribution of Navan Carpets. As one of the key industries in Navan which helped power the local economy throughout the 20th century, Navan Carpets opened in 1938 when a carpet factory was first established in Navan. Templeton Carpets Ltd had its roots in the James Templeton & Co concern in Glasgow, one of the foremost carpetmakers in the United Kingdom since 1843. Ken talked about how those early years helped pave the way for the thriving industrial landscape that allowed Navan Carpets to flourish.

Over 100 people attended the seminar, and many were former employees and workers. One former employee of Claytons brought the Clayton Bell, which was used each to call staff in from lunch, and the bell rang to signal the end to the afternoon.



Clayton Bell

Transportation Services



1. National Roads

Funding Source	TII
Grant Allocation	€18,254,967 (including Greenways €3,140,000)

<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Update</u>
N51 Dunmoe Phase 2	Main construction works complete. Completion of snag items is ongoing with an expected completion of December 2024.
N2 Slane Bypass & Public Realm Enhancement Scheme	Further Information has been requested by ABP. MCCs consultant is currently collating this information.
N52 Grange to Clontail	The CPO statutory processes were completed in September 2024. Progression to the next phase of the project is subject to funding approval.
National Road Resurfacing	N52 Kells Bypass resurfacing works on approaches to the roundabouts commenced in October 2024.

2. Non - National Roads

Funding Source	DoT
Grant Allocation	€25,143,640
Supplementary RI Allocation	€ 1,304,000

2(a) Restoration Improvement & Restoration Maintenance (Surface Dressing)

Grant Allocation	€16,548,500
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<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Update</u>
Phase 1 (Recycle, Overlay & Surface Dressing):	95% complete
Phase 2 (Surface Dressing)	Complete
Phase 3 (Structural Overlay & Surface Dressing)	90% complete
Phase 4 (Wearing Course)	90% complete
CIS Works Carried Out, Roads Wearing Course bases complete	87% complete

2 (b) Strategic Regional & Local Roads & Specific Improvement Grant - as per September report

2 (c) Safety Improvement Works on Regional & Local Roads

Grant Allocation	€362,500
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<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Update</u>
R149 – Stirling	Works commenced October 2024
R132 – Keenoge	Contractor appointed. Works scheduled to commence October 2024.
R163/L7141 - Junction Gibbstown	Works ongoing

2 (d) Bridge Rehabilitation Works Regional & Local Roads

Grant Allocation	€672,500
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<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Update</u>
Castlecor Bridge (R154)	Tender documents issued.
Newtown Commons Bridge Duleek	Tender documents being finalised.
R154 Addanstown Bridge	Tender documents issued.
Minor Bridge Works 2024	Works commenced September 2024
Laytown Pedestrian Bridge	Tender documents being finalised.
Ballivor Bridge	Tender documents being finalised.
Ashbourne Bridge	Tender documents being finalised.
BAMS Engineering Inspections	Inspections 80% complete.

2 (e) Climate Change Adaptation & Resilience Works

Grant Allocation	€545,500
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<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Update</u>
L10021 - Timooole, Ashbourne	Design being finalised
L3414 - Commons Road, Navan	Drainage works have been completed.
L7403 - Carrickleck, Kingscourt - Flood alleviation works	Remaining drainage works and raising the road level works are scheduled for the end of October.

3. Active Travel Grants

Funding Source	NTA
Grant Allocation	€14,000,000

<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Update</u>
Navan Town Scheme (Navan 2030)	Design work and tender document preparation is continuing the proposed kiosk building for Kennedy Plaza. Snagging and defects works is continuing for Contract 3.

<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Update</u>
Athlumney to Trim Road Cycle and Pedestrian Scheme – Phase 1 Works from Solstice to Beechmount.	Stage 3 RSA completed. ESB overheads removed and undergrounded. Snagging and outstanding works are completed.
NA1: R147 Martha's Bridge to Circular Road	Consultants/Designers working on Phase 5 Detailed Design process including detailed drawings, specification etc. Additional specification updates received and reviewed. Additional meetings and negotiations have taken place with affected landowners with respect to potential land acquisition and accommodation works.

NA1: R147/N51 Poolboy Bridge to Kells Road Roundabout	Detailed design is currently ongoing. The tender assessment for the GI survey is almost complete, with the preferred contractor approached for clarification on several items. Additionally, the tender for slit trenches is set to be issued imminently.
Flowerhill Cycle & Pedestrian Scheme	Feasibility and options design work ongoing. Results of Navan traffic model is being reviewed at present and transportation assessment underway.

<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Update</u>
Navan Public Realm: Trimgate Street Pedestrianisation	Preliminary design drawings and documents for submission to NTA are currently being finalised.

<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Update</u>
Convent Road to Metges Road & Trim Road: Beechmount to Balreask Manor Active Travel Schemes	Design work continuing the Preliminary Design for this section of the Trim Road cycle and pedestrian scheme.

<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Update</u>
Pathfinder Scheme R161, Navan to Trim Scheme	Non-statutory public consultation completed, and submissions are currently under review.

<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Update</u>
Ratoath Pedestrian and Cycle Scheme	Contract 1 (R155 Fairyhouse Road, Woodland Road, R125 Dunshaughlin Road, R125 Main Street and the Super Valu Junction) is currently on

	hold until funding is approved. The completed design for Contract 2 (Skryne Road, Curragha Road and Broadmeadow Greenway) is currently under review.
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<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Update</u>
Dunboyne and Clonee Pedestrian and Cycle Scheme	The scheme has been broken down into two sections. Section 1 will run from the Fingal Co.Co. boundary through Clonee and up to the Rooske Road Junction in Dunboyne. A design is being developed to progress this Section 1 of the overall scheme through the Part 8 planning process. Section 2 is confined to Dunboyne. A masterplan for Section 2 is being developed which will determine how each of the remaining Active Travel routes in Dunboyne will be funded and delivered.

4.Roads & Sustainable Transport Schemes

Funding Source	Primarily DoT & NTA
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<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Update</u>
Ashbourne R135 Cycle Network Design	The last of the major construction works will be complete this month. All road surfacing works are scheduled to be complete by the 17th of October after which only minor finishing works and snagging will remain.

<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Update</u>
Boyne Valley to Lakelands County Greenway - Kilberry to Greenway Footpath & Gibstown Car Park 1	Letter issued to the successful tenderer. Works envisaged to commence on the car park construction in November. Works on

	the footpath will commence in the new year.
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<u>Greenway Scheme</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Greenway Maintenance	The maintenance contractor is schedule to complete the final verge cutting in October. The edges of the greenway will be cleared by the maintenance contractor before year end.
Link between the Greenway and Blackwater Park, Ratholdren Road, Navan	Awaiting ESB to remove overhead cable to facilitate installation of new public lighting.
Kilberry to Greenway Footpath & Gibstown Car Park	Awaiting ESB to remove overhead cable to facilitate installation of new public lighting. Remaining shared surface to be delivered between LDR4 junction and Blackwater Park by the LDR4 contractor in 2025.
Nobber Car Park Kilbeg Road	Contractor has commenced works on the new car park; works are schedule to be complete in 6 weeks.
Poles Cross Car Park and Footpath Link to Gyproc and Ballinaclose	Part 8 public submissions period now complete. Planner's report being finalised for the Kells MD elected members.

5. Other/Projects

<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Update</u>
Oldcastle Public Realm Scheme	Part 8 Planner's Report will be represented to the Kells MD October meeting.

<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Update</u>
Trim Millennium Pedestrian Bridge.	Response issued to An Bord Pleanala re submissions received regarding the NIS application

<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Update</u>
Footpath Rehabilitation Programme & small works.	Works in Mill Race, Duleek complete.

<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Update</u>
Refurbishment of Boardwalk on the Boyne Greenway	Works commenced on Boardwalk refurbishment.

Planning



1. Planning Applications (Section 34)

1189 planning applications were lodged in the period 01.01.2024 to 30.09.2024. This is compared to 1246 in the same period in 2023.

67% of the applications received this year have been via the online portal -ePlan

2. Commencement Notices

713 valid commencement notices were received in the period 01/01/2024 to 30/09/2024. This is compared to 496 in the same period in the previous year.

The commencement notices can be broken down as follows:

Development Type	Number
One-Off House	350
Multi-Units	2560** (units)
Extensions	103
Other*	27

* Agricultural, Commercial, Recreational etc

**This includes a resubmission of a commencement notice where the initial valid commencement notice had since been withered.

There were 820 Multi Units in the month of September. This larger than normal number was the result of the Irish Water Waiver scheme which had a deadline for the 30th of September.

One commencement notice has been lodged in relation to solar farms for the period 01.01.2024 to 30.09.2024.

3. Development Contributions (Section 48)

Development Contribution receipts up to 30th September 2024 show a collection of €6,068,565. (Figures are inclusive of Irish Water receipts and development contributions already recouped from the DHLGH under the Temporary Time-Limited Waiver Scheme).

Temporary Waiver Scheme

In addition to the above, development contributions covered by the Temporary Time-Limited Waiver Scheme for June, July, August and September 2024 (€6,601,050) are due to be received from the

Department. *Please note: MCC can only recoup the waived contribution on receipt of a signed and witnessed undertaking from each applicant.*

4. **Planning Enforcement (Sections 152,154 and 160)**

145 planning enforcement cases were opened to 30.09.2024

New Cases to be Investigated	25
Warning Letter	36
Enforcement Notice	49
Referred for Legal Proceedings	6
Closed	96


*please note these figures relate to cases opened in 2024 only

5. **Forward Planning**

Joint Maynooth Local Area Plan	Draft Joint LAP was on display from 19 th June until 1 st August 2024. There were 1311 submissions received. The CE Report on submissions was circulated to the Elected Members of both Meath and Kildare County Councils on 10/09/24. A Workshop to brief the members on the CE Report was held on 16/10/2024. The Members Meeting to consider the CE Report was held on 21/10/24 and it is now envisaged that Material Alterations will go on display in early November 2024.
National Planning Framework First Revision	The Forward Planning Team submitted and prepared a detailed submission on the NPF First Revision which was on public display from Wednesday 10th July 2024 to Thursday 12th September 2024.
Variations to the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027	<p>Variation No. 3 – To incorporate the Sustainable and Compact Settlement Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2024 into the CDP & update the Age Friendly Section of the CDP is on public display from 18/10/24 to 18/11/24. A Chief Executive Report on submissions received will be circulated to the members in December and the Draft Variation and CE Report will be considered by the members at the Council Meeting in January 2025.</p> <p>Work on Variation No. 4 <i>To carry out a Settlement Capacity Audit (SCA) for South Drogheda and zone appropriate lands to meet the household allocation for the CDP & Joint Urban Area Plan period</i> is progressing. It is envisaged that this variation will go on public display in Q4 of 2024 or Q1 of 2025.</p> <p>Work is also progressing on the Settlement Capacity Audit (SCA) for all other settlements in the county to identify lands that are serviced (Tier 1) and lands that are serviceable (Tier 2) and settlements that have the capacity in infrastructure to facilitate development & growth in the future. Potential new zonings, amended zonings and revised housing targets from NPF review will be incorporated into CDP by this future variation.</p>
High Court Case	<p>Forward Planning are currently preparing background information and papers for The High Court Record No. 2024/604JR Protect East Meath Limited V Meath County Council in relation to: Laytown/Bettystown/Mornington/Donacarney LAP. Relief sought by Protect East Meath is as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Order of Mandamas to commence the process of making LAP for East Meath pursuant to S19 of the P&D Act 200 as amended.

- A declaration that the Council is in breach of its statutory obligations to prepare a LAP and carry out consultations.

6. Heritage & Conservation Projects

Village Core Redevelopment & Public Realm Enhancement Scheme for Old Johnstown Village, Navan.	Transportation surveys have been carried out and are now complete. The results of which are currently being analysed to inform the preparation of the Draft Plan.
Dunshaughlin Courthouse Project	Sheridan Woods Architects and Planning Consultants have been appointed to proceed with Stage (ii)b Substage 1 which includes Detailed design and compliance with the building regulations to completion and submission of statutory approvals.
Duleek Heritage Led Regeneration Plan	<p>The Draft Duleek Heritage Led Regeneration Plan has been finalised and is available to view from Monday 28th of October to Monday the 9th of December 2024 (inclusive)</p> <p>Submissions are being invited during this time.</p> 
THRIVE Funding Application	A meeting re ERDF grant took place in Buvinda House followed by a site visit with staff from the South Regional Assembly on the 25th of September.
Navan Streetscape Enhancement 2024	<p>Working with Economic Team in developing Streetscape Enhancement Scheme for Ludlow and Bridge Street Navan.</p> <p>Currently three applicants have been offered the grant with works set to be completed by the 31st of December. Four applicants are waiting to be evaluated once documents have been received for assessment.</p> <p>We will have seven projects total for this grant scheme for 2024.</p>
Communities in Bloom	Trim were announced as Gold Medal winners in the International Communities in Bloom Competition on the 19th of October.
Meath Biodiversity Action Plan 2025 - 2030	<p>A list of actions has been drafted and are currently being discussed with senior representatives from multiple sections of the local authority.</p> <p>The actions will be presented to the Biodiversity Working Group of the Meath Heritage Forum at the start of November before being finalised and discussed with Meath County Council Senior Management. The draft plan will go to Public Consultation in Spring 2025.</p> <p>The biodiversity working group will take place on the 1st of November.</p>
Local Biodiversity Action Fund projects	Several projects are nearing conclusion for 2024 with oversight provided by the Meath County Council Biodiversity Officer including: The Hare's Corner, Hill of Lloyd

	<p>Grassland Management & Biodiversity Enhancement project, County Meath Swift project, Barn Owl Conservation Project, Mayfly Red List, Biodiversity Audit of Meath and Community Biodiversity Initiatives. Meath County Council has also provided support towards to the development a Woodland Bat Monitoring Scheme. These projects are jointly funded by the National Parks and Wildlife Service through the Local Biodiversity Action Fund and Meath County Council.</p> 
<p>Community Monuments Fund 2024</p>	<p>1. Ardmulchan Church and Graveyard: Contractors are currently on site and works to conserve the church and graveyard are progressing. 2. St. Patrick’s Cathedral, Trim: Conservation assessments have been undertaken to inform the Conservation Management Plan which will be completed in November.</p>
<p>Community Heritage Grant Scheme 2024</p>	<p>In 2024, 23 community projects were supported which included heritage week events, publications, survey and awareness raising activities. The deadline for all grant drawdown was 16th of October.</p>
<p>IWTN Interpretation Fund</p>	<p>1. A booklet on The Medieval Walled Towns of Meath featuring Navan, Trim, Kells and Athboy was prepared by Abarta Heritage with support of the Heritage Council and will be published in November. 2. Trim Town Walls: A contractor has been appointed and conservation works to consolidate a section of Trim Town Walls at the rear of St. Patrick’s National School are progressing. Works are due to be complete in November.</p>
<p>County Heritage Plan</p>	<p>Meath County Council and the Heritage Council are supporting the publication of Moynagh Lough Studies 1. The first volume dedicated to this nationally important archaeological site in Nobber. The volume is edited by Dr Michael Potterton (Maynooth University) and will be published by Four Courts Press.</p>
<p>Built Heritage Investment Scheme 2024</p>	<p>For BHIS this year we had a total of 39 projects. Of the 39, 15 received grant funding this year. We have reached the deadline for grant drawdown forms which was the 11th of November.</p>
<p>Built Heritage Investment Scheme 2025</p>	<p>BHIS 2025 applications have been received and are ready to be assessed. For 2025, we have received €194,705 for grant funding. All assessments will be completed and returned to the department by the 6th of December 2024. HSF 2025 has not been announced</p>

Economic Development & Tourism



7. Economic Development Update

Trade Delegation

A trade delegation took place to Toronto, Canada with meetings held from 15th - 18th October, including the following:

1. Consulate General of Ireland,
2. IDA and Enterprise Ireland, Toronto offices
3. Tourism Ireland
4. Irish Design House
5. Irish Canadian Immigration Centre

Representatives from the Economic Development team also attended an event at the 18th Toronto Global Forum 2024 as guests of the City of Toronto's Economic Development & Culture Division where the guest speakers included Börje Ekholm, President and CEO, Ericsson; Sonja Volpe, President and CEO, BNP Paribas Canada and Hon. Caroline Mulroney, President of the Treasury Board, Minister of Francophone Affairs, Ontario.

A report on the delegation will be produced and available for the next meeting.

MEDF

A meeting of the Meath Economic Development Forum took place on 26th September, where an update was given on all objectives in the MED Action Plan.

8. Food Development Update

Blas na hÉireann, now in its 17th year, is the largest competition for quality Irish produce. The awards are held annually in the Blas Village, Dingle, celebrating the best in Irish food and drink. Producers from across Ireland gather to showcase their products, engage with customers, and meet industry buyers. This year's awards were held on Friday, 4th October. There were 8 finalists from County Meath in total and 6 of the Meath finalists travelled to the event.

Award Winners – Meath (8)

- **Roll It Pastry** took home the title of **Best in Meath**. They also won **gold** for their **All Irish Butter Gluten Free Pastry (Ready Mix Savoury)**, while their **Simply Better Shortcrust Pastry** and **Simply Better All Butter Pastry** were also highlighted in the Chefs Larder category.
- **Baska Bakery** won **gold** for their **Sourdough White**.
- **Newgrange Gold** won **silver** for their **SuperValu/Centra Irish Rapeseed Oil** and also for their **Irish Rapeseed Oil (Savoury Pantry Oils)**.
- **Lir Chocolates** won **two golds** and a **bronze** for their **Tesco Finest Belgian Milk Chocolate Orange Bar**, **Tesco Finest Belgian Milk Chocolate Vanilla** and **Salted Caramel Bar** and **Roisin's Salted Caramel Filled Chocolate**.



Centre of Food Culture

Events

- The launch event for **Samhain Festival of Food and Culture (7th – 10th November)** took place in the **Bookmarket Cafe Kells** on **Wednesday 25th September**, marking the launch of the festival programme.



Work Programme

- The Centre of Food Culture, Boyne Valley collaborated with Bord Iascaigh Mhara at their Remote Classroom whilst they were based in Athboy for 2 weeks holding workshops for schools in the surrounding area. The COFC Project Manager joined the remote classroom on 1st October to speak to students on Irish food culture and how they can get involved in The Centre of Food Culture.
- The first masterclass focused at food service took place on Monday 21st October at Sheridan's Cheesemongers HQ, where chefs, restaurant managers and front of house attended and learnt about Irish farmhouse cheeses.

9. Tourism Update

Boyne Valley Tourism Strategy 2024 – 2030 Launch



The new strategy was launched on Friday 4th October at Emerald Park with a great attendance of approx. 90 industry, stakeholders and elected members. Speeches by the Cathaoirleach Cllr. Sharon Tolan and Cathaoirleach Louth County Council Cllr. Kevin Callan commenced the event. This was followed by a panel discussion including Chief Executive Kieran Kehoe, Chair Boyne Valley Tourism Cllr. Aisling Dempsey, Director of Services Louth County Council Thomas McEvoy and Head of Ireland's Ancient East Brian O'Flynn, chaired by Des Foley.

Based on comprehensive research, the strategy identifies 6 key transformative projects to pave the way for an ambitious target of becoming one of the leading Experiential Destination in the world. With sustainability, inclusivity and rural spread at the heart of this strategy, it sets a target to increase dwell time from 29% to 50% staying at least one night in the destination. Outlining 16 recommendations, the strategy has a clear action plan to deliver golf, equine, music, walking and cycling experiences, position the Boyne Valley as the world's signature destination for the Celtic Festival Calendar. Develop the coast and promote the Boyne Valley as a leading food and drink destination.

Púca Festival Launch



The Púca Festival Launch took place on 4th October at the Swift Cultural Centre with MC Tom Dunne Newstalk Radio Presenter. Having just won the Grand Pinnacle Award from the 2024 International Festival and Events association in Pittsburgh, USA, this was announced at the Festival launch.

The Cathaoirleach Cllr. Sharon Tolan told the audience that there were 43,000 people at the festival last year yielding a revenue of €4.6mn for the local economy. With international ticket sales ahead of targets at 17%, the festival is growing its international profile and is part of a new campaign by Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Ireland to highlight Ireland as the Home of Halloween with Púca as the flagship festival. Meath County Council is a key partner in the Festival having invested in the archaeological research at the Hill of Ward to enable us to research the origins of Samhain at the Hill of Ward.

UK Press Visit

Boyne Valley Tourism held a UK Press Visit on 2nd to 4th October with key UK journalists in attendance including Sainsburys Magazine, I News (national newspaper UK), The Sun, Foodepedia (Online food news website) and Travel Weekly (a travel trade magazine). Over a 3 day visit, they visited sites including the Boyne Valley to Lakelands Greenway, Trim Castle and surrounding sites, Brú na Bóinne, Oldbridge, Annagassan, Kells and surrounding sites before heading back to Dublin Airport. The objective of the visit is to garner multiple positive news articles for the region at a low cost.

Grants Approved and Training

Grant Approved/Mentoring Sessions/Training	Number
Trading Online Voucher Approval	13
Mentoring Assignments Approved	10
Attended Online Training Courses	128
Attended Digital Marketing Clinics	7
Attended Website Health Check Clinics	6
LEAN for Micro Applications	3
GREEN for Micro Applications	1
Digital for Business	2
LEO Grants	1

Finance



Housing Loans:

LAHL Data 1 st January 2024 to 16 th October 2024		
Fully Completed Applications Received	47	
Awaiting Recommendation from Housing Agency (Underwriters)	1	2024 application
Awaiting Further Information from applicants	0	2024 application
Approved by Credit Committee	33	3 relate to 2023 and 30 relate to 2024 applications
Refused by Credit Committee	15	1 relates to 2023 and 14 relate to 2024 applications
Awaiting Decision by Credit Committee	0	
Active Approvals	25	3 relate to 2023, 22 relate to 2024
Expired	28	20 relate to 2023, 8 relate to 2024
Drawdown by Customer	18.97	15.97 relate to 2023 applications, 3 relate to 2024 applications

Figures above related to activity from 1st January 2024 to 16th October 2024 and in some cases relate to applications from 2023. Previously expired loans may be extended in some cases.

Other Information:

Power Up Grant: As part of Budget 2025, the Power Up Grant has been introduced through the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE) to support commercially rateable premises in the retail and hospitality sectors with a flat grant of €4,000. This initiative aims to distribute €170 million to these businesses by the end of 2024. The scheme is still under development by DETE, as soon as the scheme details and the payment procedure is in place grant payments will be made to qualifying businesses.