



An Roinn Forbartha  
Tuaithe agus Pobail  
Department of Rural and  
Community Development

Ár dTodhchaí  
Tuaithe  
Our Rural  
Future



Tionscadal Éireann  
Project Ireland  
**2040**

# Town and Village Renewal Scheme



## Town and Village Renewal Call for Proposals 2025 Scheme Outline

All queries should be emailed to: [ruralregeneration@meathcoco.ie](mailto:ruralregeneration@meathcoco.ie)

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# Introduction

Funded under [Project Ireland 2040](#), the [Town and Village Renewal Scheme](#) (TVRS) is a key measure directly supporting the objectives of *Our Rural Future* and the *Town Centre First* (TCF) Policy. The Scheme which was introduced in 2016, is part of a suite of measures designed to rejuvenate rural towns and villages throughout Ireland.

The [National Planning Framework](#) (NPF) sets the vision and strategy for the development of our country, balanced across all of our regions, towns and cities, out to the year 2040. The Department of Rural and Community Development strives to support the enhancement of vibrant, inclusive and sustainable communities throughout Ireland. The Department supports NPF commitments through targeted policy and investment that empowers communities, supports sustainable rural regeneration and fosters regional growth.

[Our Rural Future - Ireland's Rural Development Policy 2021 – 2025](#), commits to supporting a thriving rural Ireland. This is integral to our national economic, social, cultural and environmental wellbeing and development. This includes regenerating rural towns and villages, and enhancing the vibrancy of rural places. It aims to enable people to live and work in a high quality environment.

The [Town Centre First](#) policy further aims to give our towns the tools and resources they need to become more viable and attractive places in which to live, work, visit and run a business. It contains a range of actions and direct supports designed to enhance the social and economic revival of towns, as well as improving rural resilience through addressing challenges like vacancy and dereliction. The actions also support the protection of our environment, as well as the heritage and culture of our towns.

**This 2025 TVRS is designed to support the revitalisation of rural Ireland by focusing on stimulating town centre economic and social regeneration.** This will be achieved through projects which support **sustainable employment creation, town centre resilience and regeneration**, enhancing our **streetscapes**, and bringing **vacant and derelict buildings and lands** back into use as community multi-purpose spaces through refurbishment and renovation.

The TVRS is administered through local authorities, who work closely with local communities and businesses to develop place-based proposals.

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# 1 Overview of the 2025 Scheme

The Department, through the *Our Rural Future*, *Town Centre First* and the [Our Living Islands](#) policies, recognises the importance of creating and maintaining vibrant and resilient rural towns and villages, and that this will continue to be achieved by delivering a wide range of strategic interventions and investments throughout the country.

Since the launch of the Town and Village Renewal Scheme in 2016, more than €177 million has been allocated to almost 1,800 projects across Ireland. The **2025 TVRS** will support small to medium sized capital projects.

A project submitted under the TVRS must be located in the town and village centre. Funding will be made available for proposals which can be submitted under two distinct headings;

- 1) the **Main Scheme** where grant funding for projects will range from €50,000 to €500,000;
- 2) applications made under the **Project Development Measure** with funding of up to €50,000 available per project.

## Main Scheme

The 2025 TVRS 'Main Scheme' is designed to support the revitalisation and resilience of rural Ireland through an ongoing focus on town centre regeneration and enhancing economic and social vibrancy in line with the Town Centre First policy.

This will be achieved through projects which:

- drive town centre regeneration;
- support town/village centre plaza development;
- develop green spaces / recreational amenities in town or village centres;
- enhance streetscapes;
- support town or village centre markets, e.g. farmer's markets or artisan markets;
- support the provision of infrastructure (e.g. public realm works, service provisions, canopies etc.) to facilitate town or village centre markets (e.g. farmers markets, open-air markets, local trader markets, artisan markets or similar);
- upgrade / refurbish community centres;
- bring vacant and derelict buildings back into use as multi-purpose community spaces;

## Project Development Measure

The Project Development Measure (PDM) will provide up to €50,000 per project. The purpose of the PDM is to assist local authorities to establish a pipeline of significant, well developed projects which could subsequently be quickly and efficiently progressed to construction stage, subject to the availability of further funding.

A single PDM application should include the development costs e.g. detailed design, preparation for the planning and/or procurement, appropriate assessments etc. in respect of one single future strategic medium to large scale project. It should be noted that the approval of funding under this category does not automatically guarantee future support under the TVRS for delivery of the emerging project – the resulting projects will need to be submitted as normal under the competitive TVRS process.

The PDM Call for Proposals includes a maximum of **two** applications can be submitted by a local authority for funding of up to €50,000<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> This can include a project linked to a Town Centre First/Town Teams process where that project has the support of the Council.

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## 2 Main Scheme Grant Level Available<sup>2</sup>

Under the Main Scheme of the 2025 Town and Village Renewal Scheme;

- The minimum grant made available will be €50,000.
- The maximum level of grant available under the 2025 Scheme will remain at €500,000 in respect of **one** application from each local authority.
- A funding ceiling of €300,000 will apply in respect of a maximum of further **3** applications per local authority.
- **One** additional application for funding of up to €300,000 is invited from local authorities with an **inhabited offshore island and/or Gaeltacht areas** (a maximum of one per local authority if an authority has both an inhabited offshore island and a Gaeltacht area).
- Only one application can be submitted in respect of any individual town/village, including towns that may be under the remit of more than one local authority.
- In recognition of the classification by the EU Commission of the **North-Western region** as a 'Transition Region' and with a view to proactively helping to address regional disparities, **grant aid of 95%** of the total project cost will exceptionally apply to counties in that region<sup>3</sup>.

Appendix 1 includes a table with a schedule detailing the number of applications permitted per local authority for specific project categories.

The maximum TVRS grant level has been set at 90% of the total cost of a project. The remaining 10% match funding must be contributed by the local authority and/or the community and/or Philanthropic contributions

In recognition of the classification by the EU Commission of the North-Western Region as a transition region and with a view to proactively helping to address regional disparities, the maximum grant funding is 95% for those counties in the North-Western region. In this case, the remaining 5% match funding from the local authority and/or the community and/or Philanthropic contributions.

Funds secured from existing Department of Rural and Community Development schemes or programmes or other public funding streams are **not eligible** to be used as match funding.

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<sup>2</sup> Details of grant levels available under the Project Development Measure and the Building/Land Acquisition Measure are available on page 4 and 5 of this document.

<sup>3</sup> Counties in the North West Transition Region are Donegal, Cavan, Sligo, Mayo, Roscommon, Galway, Leitrim, Monaghan.

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## 3 Categories of Towns

The 2025 scheme is targeted at three categories of towns/villages as follows and based on [Census 2022](#) data:

**Category 1:** Towns and villages<sup>4</sup> with a population of up to 5,000 people.

**Category 2:** Towns with a population of 5,001 to 10,000 people.

**Category 3:** Larger towns with a population of up to 15,000 people may be eligible where the application is of a high quality and outlines a strong need for the investment, good value for money and positive outcomes that will have a substantial impact on the town.

The central focus of the scheme will be on Category 1 towns and villages which will receive at least 60% of the overall funding available under this Call.

Our inhabited offshore islands will continue to be supported under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2025. This will support sustainable and vibrant communities, and also provide visitors an opportunity to experience and appreciate the unique culture, heritage and environmental richness the islands have to offer.

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<sup>4</sup> A village is defined as a small settlement of houses, smaller in size than a town, clustered around at least one central point of interest such as a school, church, shop, pub, community centre etc.

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## 4 Types of activities supported

The following indicative list of activities (not exhaustive) will be eligible for funding under the 2025 Scheme.

- Regeneration projects that assist in revitalising and building resilience in our rural towns and villages, in line with the *Town Centre First* Policy, through planned and sustainable regeneration.
- Development projects that will drive greater economic activity and footfall, address vacancy and dereliction and ensure the re-use of heritage and other existing buildings<sup>5</sup>.
- Projects to support vibrant and sustainable Gaeltacht communities and/or island communities on Ireland's inhabited offshore islands.
- Upgrade or refurbishment to community centres (where there is a clearly identified need / rationale – an additional questionnaire applies<sup>6</sup>).
- Support for the development of remote working facilities. Given the number of hubs supported to date, any application received which includes the establishment of a hub (see Appendix 2 for hub classification guide) must expressly demonstrate a clear demand/need for such a facility and that clear additionality will be delivered - any such applications will be required to provide information in relation to need/demand/additionality and engagement with relevant stakeholders.
- Projects to support the establishment or regeneration of town or village centre markets (e.g. farmers' markets, open-air markets, local trader markets, artisan markets or similar) – i.e. ground works, provision of stalls, equipment, and services provision. Markets must be built on ethical and sustainability principles to ensure longevity and must be developed with high visibility and improved public realm which will attract a high level of footfall.
- Projects to develop town / village centre plazas, public outdoor dining spaces, parks, green spaces (including allotments and community gardens) and recreational spaces/amenities (to include outdoor sports facilities such as skate parks, basketball courts, tennis courts, etc.) in town centres to make them vibrant hubs for community enjoyment, and to increase footfall for local businesses. Where a proposal includes a plaza, outdoor dining space, amphitheatre or similar, consideration should be given to appropriate public lighting which supports mobility, accessibility, safety and security to ensure the spaces can be used for evening and night time activities.

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<sup>5</sup> Footpath development/improvement projects or similar will not be supported as these can be financed by Local Authorities directly or through the Active Travel Investment Programme.

<sup>6</sup> TV Community Centres Questionnaire



Applications for funding will only be considered where the properties and/or lands are publicly or community owned or leased<sup>7</sup>.

- Projects to support the upgrade and enhancement of shopfronts and street facades (including murals) in towns and villages. Local authorities are encouraged to engage with local business and property owners to examine how group projects can add colour and vibrancy to main streets.
- Projects that bring vacant and derelict buildings and sites back into use as multi-purpose spaces. This includes the renovation of vacant and derelict buildings or development of sites within the town or village as multi-purpose community assets. Multi-purpose use includes enterprise spaces, arts, tourism, youth hubs, parks, parklets, allotments, play areas and other community uses.
- Projects that support and enhance the night-time economy in line with recommendations from the [Night-Time Economy Taskforce](#)<sup>8</sup>.
- Enhancement of heritage assets (e.g. local museums/tourism attractions focused on historical aspects of the area, heritage sites/buildings, etc.) located in towns and villages, including energy efficiency measures.

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<sup>7</sup> Please note, leases for all projects must be in place for a minimum of 15 years – see Funding Conditions section

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/c1ba7-report-of-the-night-time-economy-taskforce/>

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## 5 Types of activities not supported

The following activities and project applications are not considered eligible under the scheme (not exhaustive);

- Applications where the local authority does not have the appropriate planning permission or other permissions / leases necessary for the successful delivery of the project in place at application stage. A proposal must not be submitted by the local authority where the relevant permissions / lease / planning permission / feasibility studies and assessments are not in place.
- Footpaths and cycle routes in towns and villages.
- Projects that are not located within the immediate vicinity of a rural town or village<sup>9</sup>.
- Support for a single private enterprise – projects that collectively assist private enterprises within a town or village are acceptable.
- Incomplete projects - phases of projects are acceptable however a project must be stand-alone and operable in its own right to be deemed eligible as a 'phase' of a wider project.
- Ongoing operational costs.
- Projects that do not clearly demonstrate that a consultative process has been undertaken to ascertain the views of local community and businesses.
- Projects that are more appropriate for funding under CLÁR, the Local Improvement Scheme (LIS), the Outdoor Rural Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) or Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF).
- Funding for development of Town Centre First or other plans not linked to a specific capital development project.

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<sup>9</sup> Note exception for islands, which are deemed to be eligible given their specific circumstances.