

14/15 Castle Street
Castleconnell
Co. Limerick

Telephone:
061 372459

E-mail:
infolccvf@gmail.com

Web: www.lccvf.ie

VOLUNTARY LINKS

- The online network for Irish non-profit organisations
www.activelink.ie
- Limerick County Council
www.lcc.ie
- Limerick County Development Board
www.limerickcdb.ie
- Community Workers Co-Operative
www.cwc.ie
- Combat Poverty Agency
www.cpa.ie
- Information on volunteering for Limerick
www.volunteerlimerick.com
- Useful information for voluntary organisations, volunteers, etc.
www.volunteeringireland.com
- Irish Rural Link, great for funding and policy development and finding out what's happening.
www.irishrurallink.ie
- Pobal - administrative body for funding from Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltach Affairs
www.pobal.ie
- Create - Irish Fundraising Handbook
www.create-ireland.ie

If you want your link here just let us know at

infolccvf@gmail.com

COUNTY LIMERICK LOCAL SPORTS PARTNERSHIP UPCOMING EVENTS

Listed below are upcoming courses and seminars hosted by County Limerick Sports Partnership in the coming weeks. These courses are of interest to coaches, administrators and player athletes in all sports.

For more information on these courses or to book a place(s) please contact the LSP at 061-496463 or check out our website www.clsp.ie

Volunteer Education Seminar

This seminar provides participants with information that helps clubs and organisations to recruit and retain volunteers

Date: February 4th
Venue: Woodlands Hotel Adare
Time: 7:00pm – 10:00pm
Course Fee: Free of Charge

Functional Screening Intro

This new course created by Jim Kilty and Liam Hennessey will help coaches to screen their players and athletes so as to correct any anatomical imbalances

Date: February 20th
Venue: St. Nessian's National School (near South Court Hotel)
Time: 5:30pm – 10:00pm
Course Fee: €60 per person (course costs €100, LSP contributing €40)

Child Protection in Sport Awareness Training

Date: February 23rd & 26th
Venue: Woodlands Hotel, Adare
Time: 7:00pm – 9:00pm (both nights)
Course Fee: €20 per person

SAQ Level 1

Date: February 13th
Venue: St. Nessian's National School (near South Court Hotel)
Time: 4:00pm – 10:00pm
Course Fee: €50 per person (course costs €90, LSP contributing €40)

Child Protection in Sport Awareness Training

Date: March 23rd & 26th
Venue: Woodlands Hotel Adare
Time: 7:00pm – 9:00pm (both nights)
Course Fee: €20 per person

Active Leadership Training

The Active Leadership Award has been developed by the Irish Sports Council and Sports Council for Northern Ireland to provide a panel of trained, knowledgeable and enthusiastic community based leaders, whose aim is to encourage people to become and remain involved in sport and physical activity. The course is designed to ensure that leaders will have the necessary competencies to plan and lead safe, enjoyable sport and physical activity sessions.

Date: March 28th
Venue: To be confirmed
Time: 9:00am – 6:00pm
Course Fee: €30 per person

FORUM REPRESENTATIVES:

Newcastle West Area:	Bruff Area:	Castleconnell Area:	Kilmallock Area:	Rathkeale Area:
Deirdre Barrett	Ger Hehir	Patrick Dempsey	Patrick C. Lynch	Joe Whelan
Jeremiah O'Connor	Des O'Connor	Michael Ryan	Seamus Ryan	Mary Quaid
Larry Begley	Ann Gill	John Keane	Michael Buckley	Patrick Cummins
Denis McAuliffe	Seamus Lordan	Elizabeth Stanley	Charley Richardson	Tina Healey
Seamus Murphy	Joan Dempsey	Pat Fogarty	Theresa Lee	Liz McAuliffe
Anne Maria Dennison	David Maloney		Maria O'Connor	Sean Donovan
Jim Dennison	Michael J. Noonan		Alice McAuliffe	
Seamus Hunt			Bernadette Stokes	

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1st Quarter 2009

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"Representing the views of the Community and Voluntary Sector by influencing policy and decision making for the benefit of the people of County Limerick through effective communication and consultation both locally and nationally."

VOLUNTARY MATTERS

LIMERICK COUNTY COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY FORUM

FÓRAM PHOBAIL CHONTAE LUIMNÍ

Dear Community & Voluntary Sector Members,

Welcome to the first quarter Newsletter for 2009. I hope the information provided in this edition and previous editions are of value to you. The reason the Forum publishes this Newsletter is to ensure that information is accessible to you at every level. While many organisations provide information on web sites we realise as volunteers ourselves that not everyone can avail of it.

It is important during this time of cutbacks to ensure that resources, financial, human and energy are used in the most effective manner and we would appreciate it if you could advise us of the value of the information we put into this Newsletter. Also, we want the Newsletter to be yours - the Forum's intention is not to use it as a PR exercise.

You can call me on 061 372459 or email at infolccvf@gmail.com. Don't forget to look at our website www.lccvf.ie for more information. This is updated constantly.

Wishing you all the best for 2009.

Yours faithfully

Miriam Cregan
Development Worker

14/15 Castle Street,
Castleconnell,
Co. Limerick.

Tel: 061 372459

Email: infolccvf@gmail.com

Web: www.lccvf.ie

Forum Office Bearers:

Cathaoirleach: Patrick Cummins
Leas Cathaoirleach: Seamus Lordan
Runaí: Seamus Ryan
Cisteoir: Patrick Dempsey
Leas Cisteoir: Denis McAuliffe
PRO: Michael Buckley.

FORUM ELECTIONS MAY 2009

You may be aware that representatives to the Forum are elected every five years in line with the local elections, and the Forum elections will take place in May 2009. The last election took place in 2004. Nominations to the Forum are sought from community & voluntary organisations registered with the County Council.

Community & Voluntary organisations in each of the five Local Government Electoral Areas of County Limerick shall elect four representatives. These representatives will form an executive for their respective Area Fora and shall represent that area on the Limerick County Community & Voluntary Forum together with elected representatives of sectoral interest groups who may reside in that area.

Sectoral Interest Groups shall nominate ten representatives to Limerick County Community & Voluntary Forum to represent the following interests:

Arts & Culture, Sports, Traveller, Disability, Youth, Childcare, Voluntary Housing, Elderly, Parents Associations and Unemployed.

The following three requirements must be observed in the election process:

The need for a geographical balance
The need for a gender balance
The need for different interests to be represented

What is the Forum?

Following on the recommendations of the Government's Task Force on the Integration of Local Government and Local Development Systems, Limerick County Community & Voluntary Forum was established in 2001 to facilitate the representation of and the participation by the community and voluntary sector in matters affecting it.

The Community & Voluntary Sector is recognised as a social partner at national level and the Forum enables community groups and voluntary organisations to fulfill its role as a social partner at local and national level. For more information see the Government's White Paper on Supporting Voluntary Activity (2000).

The Forum is a platform for exchanging information, sharing experiences and working collectively. It enables the community and voluntary organisations to voice issues and concerns relating to the economic, social and cultural development of the County.

What do Forum members do?

The main role of Forum representatives is to represent the community and voluntary sector of County Limerick on various boards and committees such as the Limerick County Development Board and Limerick County Council Strategic Policy Committees. It is through membership of these bodies that the Forum can help to influence policy and decision making.

For more information on the Forum log onto www.lccvf.ie or contact this office.

CHARITIES BILL UPDATE

The Charities Bill completed its journey through the Seanad on 11th December and a number of amendments were accepted which once again improve the Bill

Some of the more significant amendments

- grant relief from personal liabilities for trustees where a trustee has acted in good faith and in line with their fiduciary responsibilities
- require anyone who sells mass cards to show that they have entered into an agreement with the Catholic Church to do so.
- prohibit religious-cult-type organisations, the principal object of which is the making of profit, or that employ oppressive psychological manipulation on followers - or for gaining new followers - from being charities
- increase membership of the Charity Regulator to up to 20 persons (to allow for the necessary skills to be available to the authority to enable it to take on the complex responsibilities of the Commissioners for Charitable Donations and Bequests)
- remove the prohibition on members of local authorities from being appointed to the Authority.

Unfortunately - and at this stage rather predictably - an amendment that proposed to include the Promotion of Human Rights as a charitable purpose was once again defeated.

The Government has consistently opposed all amendments proposed in this area. Senator David Norris made a particularly strong case for its inclusion, and for there being no apparent reasonable grounds for not including it. Senator Frances Fitzgerald, Senator Ivana Bacik, and Senator Jerry Buttimer also made strong cases for including Human Rights as a charitable purpose.

In rejecting the amendment, the Minister noted that:

"My understanding is that no charity has been granted a CHY number by Revenue on the basis that it is a human rights organisation per se. The Bill does not change the charitable purposes that have developed in common law, nor is it within its gift to do so. As I made clear to the House, it is not the intention of the Bill to widen or to narrow the range of purposes that have become accepted as charitable over time. As regards human rights and social justice, during the drafting of the Bill and the detailed consultations that were undertaken at that time with other Departments and statutory agencies it emerged that the advancement of human rights and social justice was not a charitable purpose in Ireland. That is why it was removed. As stated on many occasions, the purpose of the Bill is to maintain the status quo and regulate the current system. While human rights and social justice are not specifically mentioned in the legislation, the acts to which they relate, namely, the prevention and relief of poverty, the advancement of education and the prevention of human suffering, are so specifically mentioned. As stated previously, my purpose has always been to maintain the status quo and draw up legislation that is in line with established practices. On those grounds, I cannot accept the amendments"

A proposed amendment to include humanism as a religion was withdrawn.

With regard to the situation that the Government found themselves in last week when the opposition were successful in including an amendment to make sporting bodies eligible for

inclusion in the register of charities - the Government introduced a fresh amendment to overturn that opposition amendment and the effect is that sporting bodies will - as is currently the case - remain ineligible for inclusion in the register (Specifically, the amendment reinserted the provision excluding an approved body of persons within the meaning of section 235 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997 - sporting bodies - from being eligible for inclusion in the register)

Amendments were also accepted to strengthen the existing provisions to ensure that charities do not find themselves vulnerable to being used as conduits for terrorism .

The Bill will now return to the Dail to have the amendments that have been accepted in the Seanad approved. It will then be sent over to the President to be signed into law, and will be commenced in stages over time (the Minister has indicated that it could take up to two years for the resulting Act to be fully operationalised). Indications are that this will happen early in the new year when the Dail resumes.

One step at a time however.

If you require any further information on the Bill, please do not hesitate to contact me. You can see the transcript of the debate at debates.oireachtas.ie

Ivan Cooper, Director of Advocacy
The Wheel, ISFC, 10 Grattan Crescent, Inchicore, Dublin 8.
Tel: 01 454 8727 Email: ivan@wheel.ie Web: www.wheel.ie

IRISH NATIONAL COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY FORUM – GROUP INSURANCE FACILITY

The Community and Voluntary Insurance Scheme has been a great success to date and continues to go from strength to strength, with continual growth and development and BHP Insurance have expanded their team, which now consists of four people who are dedicated to the facility, with further support staff to ensure that members benefit from an immediate, streamlined service.

Members can avail of competitive cover, including cover required by FAS over the phone with no fuss or hassle and are seeing average premium savings of 46%. Savings are available to members as a result of the benefit of scale from coming together for this group insurance facility, with immediate availability of cover being a huge benefit. In addition to the huge savings members can take comfort in the fact that their covers are comprehensive and specifically tailored to cater for their needs and requirements.

If you see any areas in which this scheme could be further developed, **BHP Insurance** would be delighted to hear from you on **Local 1890 666 111**.

Remember to avail of this Scheme you must be affiliated to the Limerick County Community & Voluntary Forum, which requires the completion of an affiliation form and annual fee of just €20.

NATIONAL BROADBAND SCHEME

In case you were not aware, the National Broadband Scheme was launched in recent days. The National Broadband Scheme is intended to deliver broadband services to consumers and businesses located within those parts of the country which have no form of broadband available at the moment. Irish Rural Link (IRL), while welcoming the initiative, has held off on making an official response to the scheme until we perform a detailed analysis of the information emanating following the announcement. Here in Irish Rural Link we felt it would be useful to also liaise with our members and those living in rural areas for feedback.

I have attached the Press Release announcing the scheme as well as a link to the department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources website that has details of a county by county breakdown of the areas eligible to avail of the scheme, for analysis. Eligibility for the scheme is being done on a DED (District Electoral Division) basis.

www.dcenr.gov.ie (You need to scroll down the page to identify each individual county for analysis) Accessing this page will allow you to make a detailed analysis of your own area to see whether you are eligible to avail of the scheme or not.

Irish Rural Link will be making an official response in the near future and need to be fully informed in order to make a comprehensive evaluation of the situation. I would appreciate your co-operation with this and look forward to your analysis, opinion about the scheme or any relevant feedback.

It is critical to ensure that the technology platform for the National Broadband Scheme is capable of delivering the Broadband quality and speed necessary to allow users access the new technologies and services that will be available in the coming years. We need to end the current digital divide that exists between urban and rural Ireland and ensure that we do not repeat the mistakes that caused it.

Looking forward to hearing from all.

Vincent Nally, Membership Development Officer,
Irish Rural Link, Moate Business Park, Clara Road, Moate,
Co. Westmeath. Tel: + 353 9064 82744

PRESS RELEASE 2009

€220 million investment in rural broadband infrastructure

- **170 jobs to be directly created**
 - **Universal coverage by September 2010**
- Dublin, 22 January 2009**

Communications Minister Eamon Ryan today announced the National Broadband Scheme, the Government scheme to deliver broadband services throughout the country. Following the conclusion of a competitive tendering process, the Minister has entered into a contract for the delivery of this scheme with '3' (a Hutchinson Whampoa company). Ireland currently has over 1.2 million subscribers to broadband.

The National Broadband Scheme will provide the remaining 10% of our population, or approximately 33% of the area of the country, with broadband services (see attached map). Ireland will have 100% coverage by September 2010; half of the area under the scheme will be covered by the end of this year. Investment of €223 million from a combination of Exchequer funds, EU co-financing and '3' will create 170 direct jobs. Hundreds more will be protected and created as the availability of broadband increases the investment and enterprise in the targeted areas.

'3' will extend its network to provide mobile wireless broadband services into the NBS area. Initially, the service will have a minimum download speed of 1.2 mbps. At least, two upgrades of speeds are planned during the lifetime of the contract. These product upgrades will be carried out at no cost to the customer. Announcing the scheme, Minister Ryan said, "For too long, rural Ireland has been without this essential service.

Today's announcement is a boost for the rural economy. Now businesses throughout the country can have ready access to the national and international markets. Employment will be created and sustained. Quality of life will improve for rural residents and communities will be strengthened.

This contract represents real value for public money. I congratulate '3' on winning this contract and look forward to them meeting the challenging, but achievable coverage targets." Robert Finnegan Chief Executive of 3 commented: "3 is delighted to have won the NBS tender - it's great news for 3 and for rural Ireland. We'll be rolling out our first class broadband network bringing internet services to thousands of homes and businesses across the country. Over five years we'll be investing 223 million euros and creating around 170 new jobs giving Ireland's economy a welcome boost. There has never been a more important time for people to get connected as Ireland strives to sharpen its competitiveness. 3 has already played an important part in bringing Ireland up to speed in the broadband league tables and we look forward to further strengthening 3's market leading position with the most innovative and services and best value price plans available."

WATER MATTERS 2009

Managing the waters of the Shannon - Consultation

The European Union Water Framework Directive was adopted in 2000. It requires governments to manage all of their waters: rivers, canals, lakes, reservoirs, groundwaters, protected areas (including wetlands and other water dependant ecosystems) estuaries and coastal waters. Member states must ensure that their waters achieve at least good status by 2015 and that their status doesn't deteriorate.

In order to achieve this objective the Directive requires the preparation of a management plan for all waters in an area called a River Basin District (RBD). Some 400 river basins on the island of Ireland have been grouped and assigned to a total of eight river Basin Districts for the purpose of water management. These districts are not based on traditional county boundaries but on the natural flow of water in river catchments or basins and, where these cross national boundaries, they are known as international RBDs (IRBDs).

The Shannon is an IRBD as a tiny portion of it is in Co. Fermanagh; it also includes large areas of counties Limerick, Clare, Tipperary, Offaly, Westmeath, Longford and Roscommon as well as significant portions of counties Kerry, Galway, Leitrim and Cavan.

WATER MATTERS CONTD...

Other counties that have smaller portions in the Shannon District include Sligo, Mayo, Cork, Laois and Meath, while all of Limerick City is located within it. Limerick County Council is the Co-ordinating Local Authority for the Shannon IRBD. (Note most local authorities are in more than one RBD, with Cavan being in four RBDs).

The draft River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) for the Shannon IRBD which has now been produced covers the six-year period from 2009 until 2015 and sets out a programme of works as to how good status is to be achieved (to download a copy go to www.shannonrbd.com); any remaining issues or new problems will be tackled in two further six-year plans, 2015–2021 and 2021–2027.

The draft plan is issued by the constituent local authorities whose areas are included in the Shannon IRBD, namely the county councils of Cavan, Clare, Cork, Galway, Kerry, Laois, Leitrim, Limerick, Longford, Mayo, Meath, Offaly Roscommon, Sligo, Tipperary North, Tipperary South and Westmeath and Limerick City Council.

What are the main issues affecting our water quality?

The main pressures on our waters come from the following sources:

- wastewater and industrial discharges
- landfills, quarries, mines and contaminated land
- agriculture
- wastewater from unsewered properties
- forestry
- usage and discharge of dangerous substances
- physical modifications
- abstractions
- other more local pressures which vary across the RBD, such as the spread of invasive alien species, cruising/boating and peat extraction, as well as the need to protect high quality areas.

What actions must we take?

The greatest gain can be achieved by concentrating efforts on those sources that pose the greatest threat to our water environment. Two key sectors stand out, agriculture and the water industry. Both Northern Ireland Environment Agency and the Environmental Protection Agency have identified the need to take action in response to these sectors in the River Basin Management Plan. "Discharges from municipal wastewater treatment works and from agricultural activities are the principal suspected causes of less than satisfactory water in the State. Industrial discharges and discharges from several other activities have also been identified as contributing to a lesser extent" (Environmental Protection Agency, 2008). The measures (actions) to improve our waters fall into two categories – Basic measures and Supplementary measures. Basic measures refer to actions taken under existing water-related legislation, such as the directives relating to urban wastewater treatment, bathing waters, drinking waters, sewage sludge, nitrates and habitats, but the full implementation of these existing pieces of legislation will go a long way to meeting the objectives. Where measures are not sufficient to address the problem then "supplementary measures" may be necessary; however, these measures have to be technically feasible and

provide the most cost-effective solution. The impacts of the supplementary measures on the wider environment have to be considered, through Strategic Environmental Assessment, to ensure that they are sustainable.

Extension

The plans acknowledge that the 2015 target date to achieve at least good quality status will not be possible in all cases and an extended six year period has been set for a limited number of waterways in some RBDs. The extended deadlines relate mainly to waters where measures may take some time to work or where further investigations are required. Sectors where some extensions will be sought include agriculture where recovery from agricultural nutrient losses or morphology enhancement will take several years. In the case of impacts from on site systems, wastewater and industrial discharges further investigations will be needed in some cases. However, it is important to state that the granting of extended deadlines will arise in a limited number of situations only.

Invitation to Comment

A crucial aspect in the development of the plans is seeking views of the public on the various measures proposed in the plan to ensure that good water status is achieved by 2015. For this reason the draft plan is open for public consultation for a six month period until 22nd June 2009. There will be then be a further period of reviewing the consultation and making amendments to the Plans as required before they are finally adopted and published by 22nd December 2009. It is really important that you consider this draft plan and how it will affect you. You may think that the actions are not practical, too strict or too lenient – or perhaps you have additional suggestions. If so, this is your chance to *help us plan?*

We are seeking your views on the following:

- **Proposed objectives** – what is your view about our proposals to designate heavily modified and artificial waters and extend deadlines or set likely less stringent objectives for certain waters? Are these proposals appropriate? Have we missed something important?
- **Proposed action plan.** Are these proposals appropriate? Have we missed something important?
- **The register of plans and programmes.** Is it complete? Have we missed some important plans or programmes?
- **Action themes.** Have we addressed all the themes? Have we missed something important?

Please send your comments and views before 22 June 2009 to:
Mr Enda Thompson, Limerick County Council,
Shannon IRBD Project Office, Mulkear House, Newtown Centre,
Annacotty Co, Limerick. info@shannonrbd.com

Early responses would be appreciated to allow more time to clarify and resolve issues that may arise.

Please note that the plan does not go into the detail of the measures/actions to be applied at the local level but is rather a strategic overview of the situation throughout the whole of the Shannon IRBD. Information at the local level is available by going onto the website www.wfdireland.ie and clicking on the "water maps" tool. This is an interactive map of Ireland which allows you to zoom into the part of the country/coastal area of interest to you and find out what is the current status of the water in this area, what the objectives are and what measures are being proposed to address the issues.

We will comply with data protection requirements and will use information that you provide to compile a digest of responses. Please let us know if you wish your response to remain anonymous: if you do, we will include your comments in the digest without saying who made them. If you want to add to your comments or information you can contact our website at any stage www.shannonrbd.com.

COUNTY CHILDCARE COMMITTEE

The Limerick County Childcare Committee has just published their Training/Workshop Calendar for Jan-June 2009. For information on Training/Workshops, Networking Events and Workshops contact the **Childcare Committee on 061 60918** or email them at clcc@eircom.net or you can log onto their website at www.clcc.ie

The committee has also produced a very helpful guide on the Community Childcare Subvention Scheme (CCSS). This can also be accessed at the above contact details.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME LAUNCHED BY BALLYHOURA DEVELOPMENT

Mr. John Walsh, Chairperson of Ballyhoura Development launched Ballyhoura Development Rural Development Programme at an event in the Charleville



Through the Rural Development Program Development will support individuals, businesses and communities to develop projects which meet the objectives of diversifying the rural economy and improving the quality of life across the Ballyhoura Development area. Mr. Walsh stated "I am delighted to announce the commencement of the Rural Development Programme where funding will support and facilitate the continued development of rural communities in the Ballyhoura Development area. With the current economic climate, this support for rural communities is timely and will provide a boost for the area. Under previous LEADER programmes, a great variety of projects were developed in the Ballyhoura area across all sectors, many of which exhibit best practice at an international level. The majority of the enterprises supported under previous LEADER programmes now employ increased staff numbers and are yielding significant direct and indirect benefits to the local communities; the generation of this additional economic activity in rural areas is a key to their survival in the long-term as it results in a significant multiplier effect. Many of the community projects supported under LEADER programmes enhanced the landscape of rural communities and also delivered key infrastructure in communities such as playgrounds and refurbishments to community centres."

To ensure that communities, individuals and businesses are aware of the opportunities available through the Rural Development Programme, Ballyhoura Development arranged a series of information sessions which were open to the general public.

While each information session will give an overview of the programme, sessions focused on the specific topics of tourism, community and enterprise. Mr. Walsh encouraged people with project ideas to attend the relevant information session as deadlines will apply to some of the funding opportunities. These sessions will provide details of the types of supports available together with grant rates and application procedures. If persons were not in a position to attend one of these sessions, they could contact Ballyhoura Development for information on the roll-out of the programme and available supports.

Funding through the programme will cover a range of activities across enterprise, food, community, tourism heritage, environment and recreation with support for research and development, training and direct project funding.

The Chief Executive, Ms. Carmel Fox, thanked Minister O'Cuiv and his staff at the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs for preparing the National Rural Development Programme and in securing increased funding for the Rural Development Programme. In looking forward to supporting the roll-out of the programme in partnership with a range of agencies and to seeing projects developing and growing during this time, Ms. Fox paid tribute to the present and past Board and staff members of Ballyhoura Development together with members of various sub-structures and partner organisations who supported the development of the Ballyhoura Rural Development Programme. For further information in relation to the tourism and enterprise sessions, contact **Mr. Pdraig Casey, Economic Development Manager, Tel: 063-91747**. For information on the community sessions: contact **Ms. Catherine Smyth, Community Manager, Tel: 063-91732. Email: info@ballyhoura.org; Web: www.ballyhouradevelopment.com**

Note (Extract from www.pobail.ie)

Rural Development Policy in the EU promotes sustainable development in Europe's rural areas addressing economic, social and environmental concerns and is an increasingly important component of the Common Agriculture Policy. In this context the European Commission approved the Irish Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 in July of 2007. The programme is divided into 4 Axes and co-managed by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (Axis 1 and 2) and the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht (Axis 3 and 4). Axes 1 and 2 provide funding for improvement of the agricultural sector, environment and the countryside. Axes 3 and 4 provide funding for projects under the broad heading of Quality of life in Rural Areas and diversification of the rural economy. Of the €425.4 million, €234 million will come from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and €191 million from national exchequer. The Programme will be delivered through the LEADER approach, an innovative 'bottom up' approach that encourages rural areas to explore ways to become or remain competitive, to make the most of their assets and to overcome whatever challenges they may face. This approach is community driven and is managed through the Local Action Groups. Issued by Ballyhoura Development, Kilfinane, Co. Limerick.

Contact Points: Tourism and Enterprise Sessions: Mr. Pdraig Casey, Economic Development Manager, 063-91747
Contact for Community Sessions: Ms. Catherine Smyth, Community Manager, 063-91732 General Enquiries:
Tel: 063-91300 Fax: 063-91330 Email: info@ballyhoura.org
Web: www.ballyhouradevelopment.com

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The Community and Voluntary Forum is represented on the Limerick Area Network on Violence Against Women. The Network brings together people whose work brings them into contact with the public and therefore into contact with women and children who are experiencing violence in their intimate relationships. Interested members of the Public are also represented on the Network and voluntary organisations.

Vision

The Network has a vision of a society where women will be safe from violence and where perpetrators of such violence will be held accountable.

Principles

- We recognise women are the best people to identify their own needs
- We believe in creating opportunities where women can identify the issue of violence against women for themselves
- We affirm that violence against women is a crime and that perpetrators of the crimes must be held accountable
- We believe in working with women where they are at and they decide the steps and the pace
- We believe in empowering women through access to information, services and help, within their local community
- We believe in building the capacity of each member to support each other to actively and equally participate to the inclusion of all members

The Network aims to facilitate information sharing between network members and other identified relevant groups and organisations. This is done by inviting members to give presentations on their roles and organisations and by inviting other relevant individuals to give presentations and to meet the group.

The Network also aims to identify the major obstacles for women experiencing violence and abuse in the Limerick area and to ensure they are addressed in the appropriate forum. Members awareness of the issue of Domestic Abuse is raised. Each member becomes more alert to possible obstacles in their own area of work or community. By actively participating in the work of the Network these obstacles are addressed and overcome where possible.

The West Limerick Network has similar aims and meets in Newcastle West.

Frequently Asked Questions:

What is Domestic Abuse/Violence?

“Domestic Violence refers to the use of physical or emotional force, including sexual violence in close adult relationships.. The attacker is known to the woman and is likely to have had an intimate relationship with her,” (i.e. husband, partner, son...)

Task Force Report – 1997

“Domestic Violence is the use of physical or emotional force or threat within a close adult relationship in a way that causes harm or distress to victims... it includes non-physical intimidation such as persistent verbal abuse, emotional blackmail and enforced social and financial deprivation.”

Tackling Domestic Violence – 1995

“any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.”

United Nations – 2000. This definition is used by Amnesty International & World Health Organisation

How can I help a friend or relative who is experiencing domestic violence?

It can often be very difficult for a woman in this situation to even recognise she is in an abusive relationship. She is caught up in a cycle of abuse which begins with minor incidents, builds to more serious acts, then the perpetrator often feigns remorse in order to return to the status quo. For weeks or months there may be a ‘honeymoon’ period when all is rosy in the garden and the woman tries to forget the abuse and works hard to please the perpetrator and prevent a recurrence. Eventually the tension builds and another incident occurs. The skilled perpetrator will be able to convince the woman that it is her fault. It is not. The cycle is then repeated over and over.

You can help by:

Approaching the woman in an understanding way. Explain to her that she is not alone and that there are many women in the same situation. (1 in 5 women in Ireland) Acknowledge that it takes strength to trust someone enough to talk to them about experiencing abuse. Give her time to talk, don’t push her into giving too much detail if she doesn’t want to.

Support her as a friend. Be a good listener. Encourage her to express her hurt and anger. Allow her to make her own decisions, even if it means she is not ready to leave the relationship. Respect her decision.

Talk to her about her safety and that of her children if she has any. Encourage her to get support from ADAPT services 1800 200 504 or Women’s Aid 1800 341 900.

They will help her to understand what is happening and what options are open to her whether she chooses to stay or to leave. They will help her to make a report to the Gardai if she chooses to do so.

Keep in contact with her. The perpetrator usually tries to isolate the woman from her family and friends, often moving to another area to achieve this. It may take time for her to realise her situation and to get the courage it takes to deal with it. Be there for her when she is ready, however long it takes.

Hundreds of women have found the courage to opt out of damaging, abusive relationships. Survivors have found new hope and made new lives and there is plenty of support available.

There is still a long way to go in dealing with this most awful crime and everyone has a role to play in condemning intimate relationship abuse and promoting zero tolerance in our society. Ask not “why doesn’t she leave?” ask HIM “why do you do it?”

January 2009.

WEST LIMERICK TO BENEFIT FROM ITS SHARE OF €425.4 MILLION RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



Following an allocation of almost €10million under the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013, local community development company West Limerick Resources is currently in preparation for the official launch which is expected to take place before the end of January. The Rural Development Programme, formally known as LEADER, is designed to target resources to support improvements to the quality of life in rural areas and the diversification and development of the rural economy.

A number of areas will be targeted under this Programme including:

- Increasing economic activity in the rural economy
- Supporting the creation and development of micro-enterprises in the rural economy
- Encouraging rural tourism based on the sustainable development of natural resources and the cultural and natural heritage
- Improving access to basic services for rural dwellers
- Regenerating rural villages by improving economic prospects, community relations and quality of life
- Maintaining, restoring and upgrading the natural and built heritage

West Limerick Resources expect that the Rural Development Programme will be operational by the end of January and will be holding a series of Information Workshops throughout the West Limerick area to inform individuals, small business and community groups about the programme and the supports available. The dates of the workshops will be advertised in the local papers in early February.

The Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 is the largest ever package for rural development, almost treble the amount available under the last programme (2000-2006). Speaking about the new Rural Development Programme, West Limerick Resources Chairperson Mary Quaid said “Rural Development is playing an increasingly important role in helping rural areas meet the economic, social and environmental challenges of the twenty first century. We have achieved much under the last two programmes but there is still much to be done. Under this new programme entrepreneurs and community groups can benefit from increased access to financial assistance for a wide range of projects and initiatives. Community groups will be especially happy to learn that the rate of aid for capital projects has increased from 50% in the last programme to 75% under this new programme. We now strongly encourage individuals, groups and communities to think about the long-term potential of their area and work with us to develop their vision into reality for the benefit of the entire community.”

For further information please see www.wlr.ie or contact:

Joan Casey, Rural Development Programme Coordinator on 069 66294 or **Email:** jcasey@wlr.ie.

www.mylocalnews.ie

www.mylocalnews.ie is a new, fast growing nationwide community based, local news website with a dedicated page on each of the key towns and villages in the country. It is a FREE service for all community groups.

Examples of community groups successfully using this service include:

Abbeyfeale: www.mylocalnews.ie

Newcastle West: www.mylocalnews.ie

Kildimo-Pallaskenry: www.mylocalnews.ie

It has two aims:

1. Help community groups to proactively promote their regular messages to the local community.
2. Help people to better connect with their community today.

Using a unique password, community groups log in, copy and paste news updates in your town in 30 seconds.

The website is a one-stop shop for all community activity containing the following information:

- Sports club PRO’s post fixtures for the weekend and match reports.
- School principals post parent-teacher meeting notices, enrolment days, etc.
- Church leaders post weekly newsletters and other important church events.
- Public representatives post information on key local issues.
- Community activists report on matters of wide community interest.
- Arts, social and youth club officials post information on upcoming events.
- Undertakers post local death notices.

The service is paid for through local and national advertising. We are anxious to invite as many community groups as possible to avail of this service.

How do I avail of this service?

Take the following simple steps:

1. Log on to www.mylocalnews.ie.
2. Click the ‘Login’ button at the top of the page.
3. Register as a ‘USER’ on the site in the town where your community group is based.
4. Then click the ‘Become a Key Contact’ button on the bottom left of your town page.
5. Choose the appropriate category, outlining your reason for acceptance.

Applications will be accessed by an existing ‘Key Contact’ in the applicant’s town.

- If none exists, it will be quickly processed by central admin.
- You will receive an e-mail advising you that you have been approved.
- Begin posting news updates of relevance to the locals in each town.

Enquiries welcome and the MyLocalNews.ie team are happy to assist.

Kevin McDermott, Founder

www.mylocalnews.ie, 126 Lower Baggot Street, Dublin 2.

Tel: 01 6599687 **Mobile:** 086 8218444 **Fax:** 01 6766827