



## County Longford Public Participation Network (PPN)

E-mail: [ppn@longfordcoco.ie](mailto:ppn@longfordcoco.ie); Web: [www.longfordppn.ie](http://www.longfordppn.ie)

fb: @longfordppn

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Edel Kelly, PPN Support Worker, County Longford Public Participation Network, Longford County Council, Great Water Street, Longford

# PPN Newsletter November 2023 (Part 1)

## LOCAL NEWS

### The Wheel Funding Roadshows in November- Longford & Roscommon

This is a great opportunity for members of the community to:

- Learn about funding opportunities available – at a local, national and EU level
- Talk directly to funders about potential projects
- Network with other community and voluntary organisations.

The events will run from 9.30am to 3.30pm. Here are further details:

- **07 November, Longford:** Longford Women's Link CLG, Willow House, Ardnacassa Avenue, Longford. Co Longford N39 H6R7. (Details [here](#) )
- **08 November, Roscommon:** Athleague Community Centre, Tiernan Memorial Hall, Main Street Athleague, Roscommon, Ireland F42 P440. (Details [here](#))

Maria O' Connell | Grant Development Officer.

The Wheel | 48 Fleet Street, Dublin 2, D02 T883 (entrance on Parliament Row)

T: (01) 454 8727/ 087 757 6636 | E: [mariaoconnell@wheel.ie](mailto:mariaoconnell@wheel.ie) | W: [www.wheel.ie](http://www.wheel.ie)

[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [YouTube](#)

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## Changing Gears

### Building Resilience and Managing Transitions in Mid to Later Life

Age & Opportunity is delighted to offer Changing Gears in person this November/December in Longford. Designed to boost wellbeing and resilience for those aged 50+ years, it is a four-session course which focuses on managing transitions in mid to later life.

Do you want to discover more about yourself and your capacity to meet different challenges? Take stock of your skills and experiences and plan your next steps in life?

#### What is Changing Gears?

Changing Gears supports people in dealing with transitions or significant life-challenges in mid to later life. It focuses on how we can build resilience, take stock, make changes, and bounce forward in life.

#### How does it work?

Changing Gears offers participants time to:

- Develop skills and techniques to build resilience and confidence in managing life changes or transitions.
- Reframe transitions in their lives as opportunities with positive options, challenging negative stereotypes about ageing.

The programme invites participants to reflect on challenges they have experienced in the past and life-lessons they have learned. In this way, strategies for building resilience and managing change draw on personal experience to lay the foundations for a more positive and fulfilling future.

**“I found Changing Gears very useful. It was very useful to look back at what has served me well and to make a plan, as far as is possible, for the next part of my life.”**

Kathleen Jordan, Dublin. Changing Gears participant, online, February 2023

**“The course content from beginning to end was very relevant. The different aspects of the course were so gently put. We came away totally satisfied at having participated and we gained so much information on what’s out there for us both nationally and locally.”**

Kay Murphy, Ennis, Co Clare. Changing Gears participant, in-person, March 2023

### **How can I get involved?**

This course is delivered in 2.5-hour sessions once a week over 4 weeks.

**Venue:** The Longford Arms Hotel, 25 Main St, Townparks, Longford, N39 X4H6  
**Dates:** **Thursdays 16, 23, 30 November and 7 December 2023**  
**Times:** **10:30 am – 1:15 pm** (which includes a comfort break with tea and coffee)

To book a place on this course, please e-mail Fiona at: [engage@ageandopportunity.ie](mailto:engage@ageandopportunity.ie) or call on +353 1805 7798.

**Please note that this programme has been funded by the HSE and is free of charge. Participation requires attendance at each of the four sessions (please do not book a place if you cannot attend on these dates).**

Age & Opportunity is the national organisation that provides a range of opportunities for older people who want to get more involved in arts and culture, sport and physical activity, civic engagement, and personal development. Our aim is to enable the best possible quality of life for us all as we age, where we are more active, more visible, more creative, more connected, and more confident.

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## **Adult Safeguarding Day**

Adult Safeguarding Day is an annual initiative of Safeguarding Ireland, supported by the HSE, and now in its third year. It is also being coordinated in partnership with organisations across the health, social, financial and justice sectors. The aim is to raise a greater understanding of adult abuse and safeguarding and the emphasis this year is on ‘go to’ actions all adults can take to Plan Ahead and reduce their risk of adult abuse.

**The 2023 Message** is that planning ahead reduces the risk of adult abuse, and that ‘go to’ actions that all adults can take are to:

- Make an Enduring Power of Attorney

- Nominate a Health Representative
- Choose who can Assist with Decisions

## Events

Decision Support Service

**Save the Date: Advance Planning with the Decision Support Service** - Why you need to and how to get started

**When:** Thursday, 30 November 2023

**Where:** Hodson Bay Hotel Roscommon Road,

**Time:** 10am-1pm

## HIQA

The [resources on The Fundamentals of Advocacy in health and social care](#) have been shortlisted for a European Social Services Award. The European Social Services Award recognises innovations that impact social care workforces in a positive manner and the theme of the event is “Promoting Person-centred Care”. The European Social Network (ESN) is a network with over 125 member organisations in 33 European countries and supports the sharing of knowledge, practice and policies between social services across Europe.

The voting is now open to the public by visiting the [ESN Website](#). The project is listed under the category “Workforce Support”.

HSE National Office for Human Rights and Equality Policy

The Health Service Executive and researchers from the University of Limerick are currently undertaking on Do Not Attempt Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (DNACPR) practice and policy.

To inform future policy development, the researchers are interested in capturing the experiences and opinions of healthcare workers and service providers through a questionnaire. (Further details are available in the attached update). The questionnaire will remain open for responses until close of business on Friday 10th November.

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## Sports Bursary and Sports Star Awards 2023

Longford Sports Partnership is thrilled to introduce the below initiatives for 2023, aimed at promoting sports and physical activity throughout County Longford.

### Sports Bursary

Longford County Council, through Longford Sports Partnership is pleased to announce that the Longford County Council Sports Bursary is now open for applications. The County Council has allocated €5,000 towards this bursary. It is awarded to individual sportspeople who have shown ability in their sport and possess the potential to achieve excellence at national and international levels.

Applicants from any sporting field must be born or reside in County Longford. The award assists in the cost of education, training, travel and equipment. It will normally be made to those over 16 years of age, however, exceptions to this may be made in the case where a

person is competing at national, international or equivalent level, as determined by the chosen sport.

The closing date for applications is **Monday, 6 November at 5pm.**

The criteria for applications are attached to this email, and you can access the online application form here: <https://forms.office.com/e/KJZhqcvqin>

### **Sports Star Awards**

We invite the public to submit your nominations for the 2023 Longford Leader Sports Star Awards, presented in association with Longford Sports Partnership. You can submit your nominations via email to [longfordsportsawards2023@gmail.com](mailto:longfordsportsawards2023@gmail.com)

Please include the nominee's name, club and sport and a brief explanation for the nomination.

Alternatively, nominations can also be posted to Longford Leader Sports Star Awards 2023, Longford Leader, Market Square, Longford N39 KN82.

Please note that ***the closing date for submission of nominations is 10am on Thursday, November 9, 2023.***

Ten award recipients will be selected from the nominees submitted by the public and we are also seeking nominations for the following five awards.

- Hall of Fame Award (Exceptional Service to Sport)
- Club Volunteer of the Year Award
- Junior Sportsperson of the Year Award
- Sports Ability Award
- Team of the Year Award

A selection committee will adjudicate on the nominations.

Each of the winners will be presented with a memento in recognition of their achievement at a gala presentation function in the Longford Arms Hotel on Friday, November 24, 2023, at 8pm and they will also be in the running for the coveted title of Overall 2023 Longford Leader Sports Star of the Year.

There is a vast array of vibrant and well organised sporting clubs and groups across county Longford and you can be sure that the selection committee for the Longford Leader Sports Star Awards, in association with Longford Sports Partnership, will take note of all achievements, whether it is in Athletics, Basketball, Boxing, Canoeing, Community Games, Cricket, Cycling, Equestrian events, GAA (Gaelic Football & Hurling), Golf, Motor Sport, Rugby, Soccer, Swimming, Triathlon or Water Sports, into consideration when they sit down and complete their deliberations ahead of the gala awards dinner.

If you have any queries or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.



Longford Sports Partnership  
Longford County Council  
Great Water St. Longford N39 NH56

☎ 043 3343494

✉ [smulligan@longfordcoco.ie](mailto:smulligan@longfordcoco.ie)

⇒ [www.longfordsports.ie](http://www.longfordsports.ie)

[Privacy Policy](#)



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## Win Big in Our Competition & Dive into Zero Waste News!



In the fight against Halloween waste, we want you to show us your best homemade Halloween costume made with upcycled materials and you could win a **€100 All 4 One gift card!** [Details Here](#) (Before 6<sup>th</sup> of November)

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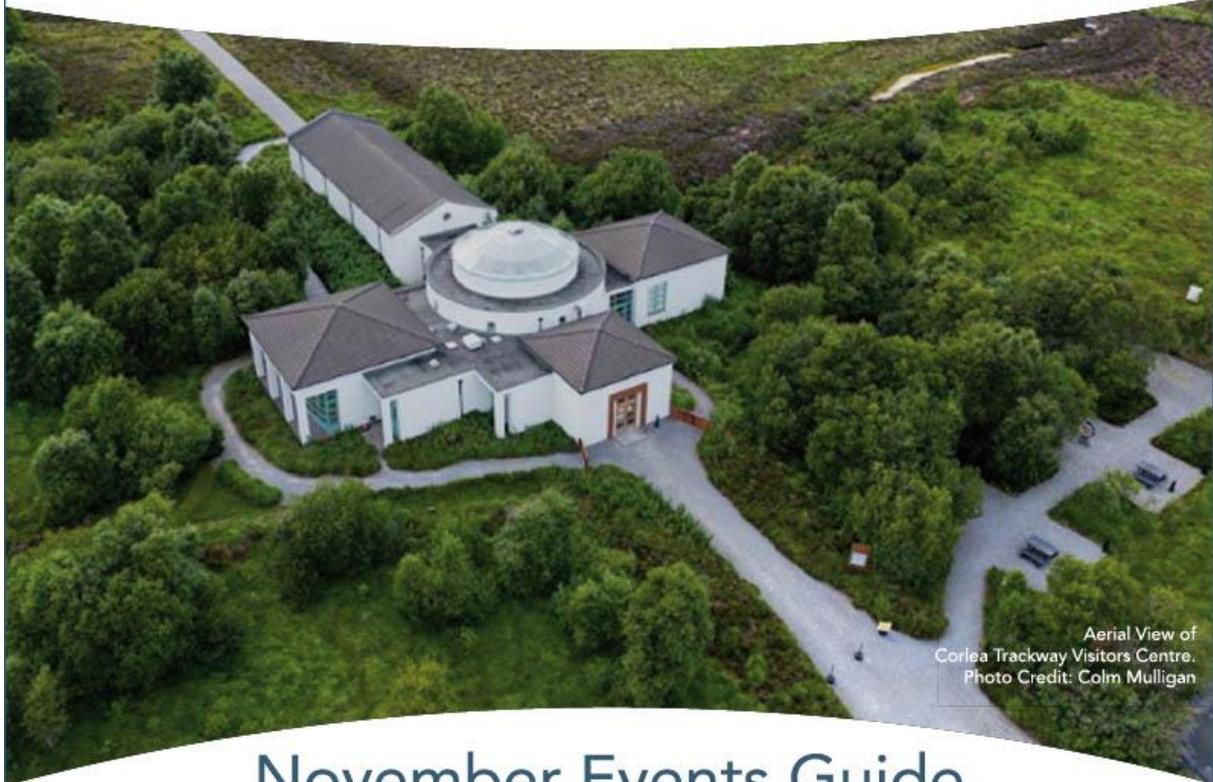
Please contact for entering a stall:



**GAELS UNITED FC**  
**PRESENTS**  
**DRUMLISH STREET**  
**CHRISTMAS**  
**MARKET**

**DECEMBER 9TH & 10TH**  
**2PM TO 6PM**

**PLEASE CONTACT 0851249528 BY**  
**TEXT IF YOU WISH TO ENTER A**  
**STALL**



Aerial View of  
Corlea Trackway Visitors Centre.  
Photo Credit: Colm Mulligan

## November Events Guide

- **Arts & Crafts for children 6-10 years in Granard Library**  
on Wednesday 1st Nov at 12pm
- **Poetry Reading with Margaret Nohilly at Ballymahon Library**  
Saturday 4th Nov – 12.30 pm - 1.30 pm
- **Share your ideas to inform the new Longford Town Centre First Plan.**  
Visit [www.longfordcoco.ie](http://www.longfordcoco.ie) to have your say.  
Platform closes Monday 6th November.
- **Paediatric First Aid, suitable for all including parents, grandparents, and Childminders.**  
Certificate on completion. Bridgeways Family Resource Centre, Ballymahon Tuesday 7th November 7.30 – 9.30 p.m.
- **Oliver Cromwell is really very Sorry**  
Saturday 11th November at 8pm at the Backstage Theatre.
- **Mostrim Players present a one act comedy "A Wolf by the Ears".**  
Written by Mattie Lennon, directed by Eileen Spillane. Bog Lane Theatre, Ballymahon Saturday 11th November at 8pm.
- **The Lost and the Local: Wildlife Past and Present.**  
The National Museum of Ireland visit Bridgeways Family Resource Centre, Ballymahon with special guest Owen Murphy, Warden from the National Parks and Wildlife Services – Friday 17th November 3-5pm.
- **Night Fever – Longford Variety Group.**  
All proceeds going to Longford Hospice Homecare and other local charities.  
Backstage Theatre, Longford  
Thursday 23rd – Saturday 25th November
- **Longford Parkrun –**  
every Saturday 9.30 am in the Albert Reynolds Peace Park
- **Longford Farmers Market –**  
every Friday morning on the Market Square Longford

Find more events on [Longford.ie](http://Longford.ie) / Advertise your event with us by emailing [tourism@longfordcoco.ie](mailto:tourism@longfordcoco.ie)

# COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM WORKSHOP

THURSDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2023  
LONGFORD TEMPERANCE HALL



Community  
Wetlands  
Forum



Ireland's Hidden  
**HEARTLANDS**

## **Community Based Tourism Workshop**

**Thursday, the 16th of November 10:00-17:00, Temperance Hall**

### **About the workshop**

We are excited to offer a workshop on community-based tourism in collaboration with Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. Over the course of the day, you will hear from a number of practitioners of community-based tourism and meet with those who have expertise in developing community tourism projects. This workshop is a must for any community embarking on a community tourism project and for local and regional authorities to learn more about how they can support communities.

### **What is Community-based tourism?**

Community-based tourism (CBT) refers to tourism experiences that are owned, hosted and managed by local communities. Well-managed CBT creates jobs, generates income and safeguards the local environment. CBT is all about sustainable community empowerment. Local people are directly and collectively involved in preparing and providing the tourism

experience. They benefit through skills development and improve economic self-sufficiency, and the community can proudly preserve their culture, heritage and local environment.

## **The Community Wetlands Forum**

The Community Wetlands Forum (CWF) CLG is a membership-led organisation, with 58 members across 15 counties in Ireland. The main objective of the CWF is to promote, develop, and support community-led wetland conservation for the public benefit; and to provide a representative platform for community-led wetland conservation groups.

Tickets available from [Eventbrite](#)

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## **COURSES**

### **A.S.I.S.T. (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) & Bereavement Support Workshop for those working with people bereaved through suicide @ EDI Longford**

Just a quick update re: spaces available on the following training workshops:

**A.S.I.S.T. (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training)** EDI Longford, 11 spaces available.

**Date:** Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> November & Wednesday, 8<sup>th</sup> November 2023 2 days

**Bereavement Support Workshop for those working with people bereaved through suicide** - EDI Longford, 9 spaces available.

**Date:** Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup> November '23 1 day

#### **Training Venue for both:**

Employment Development and Information Centre (EDI), 11A2, Mastertech Business Park, Athlone Road, Longford, N39Y0F4

Any questions please come back to me.

Patrick Jones

Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention - Longford/Westmeath

Tel: 0449340191 | Mob: 0876486649

Email: [patrick.jones1@hse.ie](mailto:patrick.jones1@hse.ie)



ASIST Training  
Leaflet.pdf



Bereavement  
Training Leaflet.pdf

## FUNDAMENTALS OF VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT TRAINING LONGFORD

Please note places are limited. If you would like to book a place on this 2-module training, **Nov 7th AND Nov 14th**, please let me know by reply email.

Please contact me on 087-9981815, or Verona on 087-2915367 for more information.

Bronwyn Slevin  
Longford Volunteer Centre Outreach & Development Officer  
Longford Community Resources Clg., Templemichael, Longford, N39 RH22

Phone: 043-3345555

Mobile: 087 9981815

E-Mail: [bslevin@volunteerlongford.ie](mailto:bslevin@volunteerlongford.ie)

Website: [www.lcrl.ie](http://www.lcrl.ie) [www.volunteerlongford.ie](http://www.volunteerlongford.ie)

Video training for beginners and more advanced

# TV, STUDIO & VIDEO PRODUCTION

## 2-DAYS TRAINING COURSE

### FOR COMMUNITY TV ENTHUSIASTS

- How to create community TV productions and livestream using **BLACKMAGIC DESIGN** equipment
- How to use **DA VINCI RESOLVE** for post production

**FREE 2-days training**  
*Very limited spaces*

To register - fill out the form in the [link BELOW](#) ▼

**18-19 November**  
from 10am  
Colaiste Chiarain School  
**Athlone**

\*\*\* Participants have to bring their own laptop with FREE Da Vinci Resolve installed \*\*\*



## **FREE 2-DAYS TV, STUDIO, VIDEO TRAINING COURSE (18-19 NOVEMBER)**

We are organizing FREE 2-day TV, studio, video training course for all video enthusiasts - beginners and more advanced.

FREE 2-days TV, studio & video training course in English for all video-enthusiasts. Practise on Blackmagic Design studio equipment and cameras and learn to use Da Vinci Resolve software for post-production. Very limited spaces - register only if you intend to attend the training to give all interested the opportunity. To get more information and register - use the link below. Registration is on first come - first serve basis

<https://forms.gle/ruVyeMoADLK4xcRy8>

Slavek Kazek (he / his)

Chairman

Midlands Polish Community CLG

[www.polishcommunity.ie](http://www.polishcommunity.ie)

ph. 0851463545

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## **NALA'S STRATEGIC PLAN – HAVE YOUR SAY BY 17 NOVEMBER 2023**

**Please complete this survey by Friday 17 November 2023**

We need your help to develop our new Strategic Plan for the next six years.

### **Why is NALA asking for your views?**

As a valued National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) supporter, we want to hear your thoughts on:

- What work do you think NALA does best?
- What you think we should focus on to have the biggest impact?

You can share your views by [completing the NALA Strategic Plan Survey.](#)

### **How to complete the survey**

If you receive this survey more than once, complete it only one time.

**It will take you about 20 minutes to complete.**

The survey has 18 questions in four sections as follows:

- Section 1: About you
- Section 2: About NALA today
- Section 3: About NALA in the future
- Section 4: About NALA's context

### How will we use your answers?

This survey is being managed by [2into3](#) a consulting firm that supports organisations to have a transformative social impact. 2into3 will administer and handle the survey data. Responses will not identify you unless you give your name, email address and or phone number to take part in a discussion group.

### Have a question about the survey?

If you have any questions about the survey, please contact Johnny O'Rourke. His email is [jonathan.orourke@2into3.com](mailto:jonathan.orourke@2into3.com). His phone number is 083 010 6376.

### Do you need help?

We want to make sure everyone's voice is included.

If you would prefer not to do the survey online, call us on **Freephone 1 800 20 20 65**.

We can complete it with you over the phone.

### How to get started

First you will be asked to read a statement about your data.

If you agree with the statement, you can begin the survey.

[Take part in the NALA Strategic Plan Survey](#)

Kind regards,

**From all the team at the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA)**

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## FREE DIGITAL LITERACY COURSES

My name is Dereck Carolan, and I am a technology Trainer for NCBI. I am reaching out to discuss how I can help and support your communities, specifically people with low sight or no sight and their families.

Here is a link to our website - <https://www.ncbi.ie/supporting-you/technology/ncbi-labs/>

### Services Offered

As part of my role, I can provide the following services:

- Group training courses, projects, and talks that will enable the low-vision and no-vision community to access their local area.
- Technology assessments and demonstrations.
- Technology clubs and webinars.

We are promoting the following course

Are you ready to embark on a journey towards digital empowerment? NCBI Labs is thrilled to announce our FREE Digital Literacy Courses, designed to equip people with essential digital skills! Course topics include computers and the internet, using a smartphone, connecting with others, entertainment and shopping, hobbies and travel, and online banking.

### Next Steps

I would love the opportunity to discuss further how we can work together moving forward. Please feel free to contact me at [dereck.carolan@ncbi.ie](mailto:dereck.carolan@ncbi.ie) or 0866086771.

Kind Regards

Dereck



Dereck Carolan  
Technology Trainer

NCBI Labs: 1800 911 110

Email: [Dereck.Carolan@ncbi.ie](mailto:Dereck.Carolan@ncbi.ie) | [www.ncbi.ie](http://www.ncbi.ie)



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## Literacy Friendly Workshops

Learn how to become more literacy friendly in your work.

Join us at one of our in-person workshops to get top tips, share experiences and learn from examples of good literacy friendly practice.

**Reserve your place today for one of these free in-person workshops (by clicking on any button below):**

**DUBLIN - 21 NOV**

**CORK - 22 NOV**

**ATHLONE - 28 NOV**

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## Family learning conference 2023: Register (free event)

NALA has a Family Learning conference on Thursday **23 November** 2023 in The Richmond Centre, 1 North Brunswick St, Smithfield, Dublin.

The conference is on from **9.30 am to 3.15 pm**.

You can [register here](#).

There is **no fee** for attending this conference. Feel free to forward this to colleagues.

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## Grant Writing Tips and Tricks (Webinar) 10<sup>th</sup> November

Click [Here](#) for Information.

## **AN INTRODUCTION TO FINANCE FOR BOARDS (FREE WEBINAR)**

Finance is something all board members should have a strong understanding of. This free 1-hour webinar will provide you with an essential overview, tailor-made for board members / trustees.

Topic to be covered will include:

- Financial responsibilities and duties
- Financial management.

The session hopes to improve the confidence of trustees and make them more comfortable dealing with finance.

**Event Date:** 17 Nov 2023 – 10:00am to 11:00am

**This event is part of the 2023 Charity Trustees' Week.**

### **How to register**

This webinar is free and open to all. Registration is required. *\*NOTE: After registration, you will receive a confirmation email with instructions for joining the session.*

### **Who should attend**

This webinar is suitable for trustees, new board members, volunteers, CEO's, anyone interested in learning more about finance for boards.

**[LOGIN OR SIGN UP TO REGISTER](#)**

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## **ALONE DIGITAL CHAMPIONS TRAINING THIS NOVEMBER**

**ALONE is a national organisation that supports older persons to age well in their homes and communities.**

**ALONE Community Impact Network is offering FREE digital champion training to organisations staff and volunteers so they can support older persons to use their phone/device and get online.**

A Digital Champion gives an older person the confidence, basic digital skills, and knowledge to use their device and make the most of being online.

- This training is offered to external groups, services/organisations so they can support older individuals with basic digital skills to use their phone/device and get online. The format is a 1-hour self-directed eLearning and a 2.5-hour workshop (online or in person depending on numbers).
- For volunteers of external groups, services/organisations we offer the free 1-hour e-learning resource.

- Ongoing support & check-ins are provided to ensure you are confident in your Digital Champion role supporting the individuals with digital skills. To learn more about how ALONE can support your organisation in upskilling older persons, please contact [digitalskills@alone.ie](mailto:digitalskills@alone.ie)

Our online training dates available for November are:

- November Thursday 23 11am – 1pm
- November Thursday 30: 11am – 1pm

You can [Register Here](#) for the November dates. You can also avail of information on further training dates and in-person training dates by registering or emailing us at: [digitalskills@alone.ie](mailto:digitalskills@alone.ie)

### **ALONE's Schools/Youth Digital Champion Programme**

We are offering Digital Champion training to students and youths nationwide so they can support older persons use their phone or device and be comfortable online. This a great opportunity for both young and old to learn new skills and transfer knowledge to help bridge the digital skills gap amongst older persons and foster a greater understanding between the two generations.

Find out more via the links below:

- [Digital Champion Leaflet](#)
- [Schools Digital Champion Leaflet](#)

You can register your interest here: [Schools/Youth Digital Champion Registration](#) . Once this registration form is received, we will be in contact with you to chat through more details and to arrange scheduling.

Digital skills and connection to family and friends is a huge issue faced by many older persons, so we really appreciate your interest and participation in this initiative.

For any questions or queries on this programme, please do not hesitate to contact us at: [digitalskills@alone.ie](mailto:digitalskills@alone.ie) and a member of our team will be in contact with you.

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## **National News**

### ***Social Justice Ireland Annual Policy Conference 2023 - A Just Transition***

**15th November 2023 - Online**

One of the fundamental principles of a Just Transition is to leave no people, communities, economic sectors or regions behind as we transition to a low carbon future. Transition is not just about reducing emissions. Just transition also means

changing how we travel, communicate, work, and entertain and what we eat, wear and consume to ensure that we share both the benefits and challenges of our new way of living. It is about transforming our society and our economy, and investing in effective and integrated social protection systems, education, training and lifelong learning, childcare, out of school care, health care, long term care and other quality services. The coming decade will be one of transformation as we try to meet our climate goals. Join us online to hear from a variety of speakers whose contributions to the ongoing debate on what a Just Transition should look like will provoke thought and debate.

Registration

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## **BUDGET 2024 - SELECT COMMITTEE ON BUDGETARY OVERSIGHT**

In discussing the impact of Budget 2024 with the Select Committee on Budgetary Oversight *Social Justice Ireland* made the following observations: Overall, Budget 2024's legacy will be to widen further the gap between the better off and those on the lowest welfare and work incomes; given the resources available it is a regrettable outcome. There is considerable evidence to show that the cost-of-living crisis hits low-income families the hardest.

Budget 2024 was an opportunity for Government to address this. Instead, it contained a range of temporary measures for the poorest, while favouring wealthier households with permanent tax changes. In the immediate term, counting both permanent and temporary measures, the Budget gives more resources to lower income households. Given the challenges that so many households face in making ends meet, particularly those on the lowest incomes, much of that assistance is welcome and badly needed. However, once these temporary measures are discontinued (from April 2024 onwards), the gains to welfare dependent households in this Budget will fall by 35 to 46 per cent.

*Social Justice Ireland* made the case for adjustments in core social welfare rates in the Social Welfare Bill 2023:

The €12 increase in core social welfare rates fails to make up for the impact that inflation continues to have on poorer households. A €25 boost was the minimum required for Government to benchmark rates to 27.5% of average weekly earnings. This was the target set by Government in 2007. The €12 increase falls far short of achieving the modest 2007 target, leaving those on social welfare with less than a quarter of average weekly earnings.

*Social Justice Ireland* does not accept aspects of the Budget that ignore the most vulnerable and marginalised and leave Ireland's poorest worse off when Budget 2024's one-off measures are discontinued early next year. We call on Government to revisit its decisions in these areas and to make the necessary adjustments in the forthcoming Social Welfare Bill to ensure the most vulnerable are prioritised. In particular, we urge Government to increase core social welfare rates by €25 a week. Anything less is a failure of this Government to do what is necessary to address poverty.

*The impact of Budget 2024 in the following areas were also discussed with the Committee:*

## Child Poverty

- 1 in 7 children (190,000) in Ireland are living in poverty. Budget 2024 did not contain the measures that would tackle child poverty, that would put more income into poorer families' pockets and make the public services they rely on more available and more affordable.
- Child poverty solutions hinge on issues such as adequate adult welfare rates, decent rates of pay and conditions for working parents and aspiring parents, and adequate and available public services. Child benefit also remains a key route to tackling child poverty. It is of particular value to families on the lowest incomes. Government failed to implement these solutions in the budget.
- The failure to adequately increase core social welfare rates and Child Benefit and to address low pay leaves vulnerable families trailing behind. Government did not prioritise their access to housing, childcare, healthcare, education, and other essential public services. While some welcome changes were announced regarding the Free School Book Scheme, National Childcare Scheme funding, the Hot School Meals Programme and maintenance grant thresholds, these remain insufficient.

## Housing

- Continued inflation is primarily being driven by housing costs. It is clear that the housing crisis is fuelling the cost-of-living crisis, yet Government has again failed to support those most in need, in favour of subsidising property owners.
- Rather than increase housing stock, the extension of the Help to Buy and First Home schemes will simply maintain high house prices. Likewise, the Rent Tax Credit does not benefit low-income renters. Meanwhile, the commitment to build 9,300 social homes in 2024, fails to take account of the 1,567 shortfalls in the 2022 target, and the likely shortfall from 2023.
- The Mortgage Interest Relief announced in Budget 2024 will benefit mortgage holders with tracker or variable-rate mortgages the most, irrespective of their capacity to pay. It is deeply regrettable that Government did not instead target borrowers of the more than 17,000 mortgages which fell into arrears as a result of rising costs.

## Taxation policy

- The decisions made on taxation will widen divides in Irish society and are unfairly targeted. Raising the threshold for the higher rate of tax serves only to benefit those already on incomes above €40,000.
- While less regressive, changes to the USC will only benefit those with incomes above €22,920 and is negligible for workers earning between €15 and €20 per hour.
- *Social Justice Ireland* has continually highlighted the relevance of refundable tax credits as a means of making the taxation system fairer, especially for those in part-time low paid work.

*Social Justice Ireland's* opening statement to the Select Committee on Budgetary Oversight is available [here](#).

Opening Statement by Social Justice Ireland to the Select Committee on Budgetary Oversight on the 25th of October 2023. John McGeady, CEO



2023-10-25 -  
Opening Statement

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## **Second Edition of Guide for Inclusive Community Engagement in Local Planning and Decision Making Launched**

Minister of State, with responsibility for Community Development, Charities and Integration, Joe O'Brien TD, has launched an updated, second version of '[A Guide for Inclusive Community Engagement in Local Planning and Decision Making](#).'

This guide builds on Ireland's commitment to the Sustainable Development principle of 'Leave no one behind' and has been developed by the Department together with Pobal, Community Work Ireland, as well as members of the Irish Local Development Network and local government.

[Find out more](#)

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### **GRANTS FOR A HOME ENERGY UPGRADE**

The National Home Energy Upgrade Scheme provides grants to upgrade the energy efficiency of your property. When the work is completed, your property should have an energy efficiency rating of B2 or above. The scheme is available to homeowners, private landlords and [approved housing bodies](#).

The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) administers the grants, and a private company manages the work for you. These companies are called [One Stop Shops](#), and the scheme is also known as the [One Stop Shop Service](#).

The SEAI also provides [individual energy upgrade grants](#), if you only want to do certain home energy upgrades, and would prefer to manage the process yourself. There is also a [free home energy upgrade scheme](#) for people on low incomes.

For more information click [Here](#)

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### **PUBLIC INTEREST LAW ALLIANCE (PILA) NGO PITCH EVENT INVITING APPLICATIONS**

As part of the Pro Bono Week Ireland 2023, Public Interest Law Alliance (PILA) will organise an NGO Pitch event, taking place online on **Tuesday 21 November** from **1pm - 2pm**.

The objective of the event is to connect [Pro Bono Pledge Ireland](#) Signatories that have committed to doing pro bono work with NGOs and civil society organisations that have projects in need of legal expertise.

Representatives from civil society organisations will have the opportunity to introduce themselves to Pledge Signatories, which include over 50 law firms across Ireland. During the 10-minute pitch, representatives of 4 selected NGOs, charities, social enterprises, or other civil society groups should provide an overview of their organisation and articulate their unmet legal needs. Following each pitch, Pledge Signatories will have the opportunity to ask any questions which will help them decide whether they can form a long-term relationship

with the NGO and offer pro bono legal assistance. PILA will facilitate the introduction between the civil society representatives and the legal practitioners who wish to develop an ongoing relationship after the event.

### **Application Process**

Please download [here a copy of the application form](#).

Applications must be made on the current NGO Pitch Event application form. The completed application form must be sent to PILA, **before 7 November 2023 at 5pm**. Please email all completed applications to [pila@flac.ie](mailto:pila@flac.ie) with the subject line: NGO Pitch Event Application - November 2023.

Shortly after assessment, all applicants will be contacted and informed of the outcome.

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### **International Men's Day Webinar 2023**

#### **"Men Making a Difference"**

Join us to celebrate the occasion through hearing from men sharing experiences that have prompted them to become advocates for men's health and wellbeing.

[Register here](#)

Date: **Thursday 16th November 2023 Time: 12pm – 1.15pm**

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### **Community Champion Welcome Workshop**

The Dementia: Understand Together campaign aims to inspire individuals, organisations, and community groups to take actions to make our communities dementia inclusive. Over 40 national partners and 650 local community champions are supporting the campaign. If you are interested in getting involved and learn more about the things you can do as an individual, business or community group to support people with dementia, the campaign is holding an online Community Champion Welcome Workshop. In the workshop we will explore the practical actions we can take to ensure people with dementia can stay connected and included in their communities and hear from people with dementia and champions about their own experiences.

**When:** Wednesday 8th November from 12pm to 1.30pm, **online** via Teams

Don't miss out. You can register by emailing [understandtogether@hse.ie](mailto:understandtogether@hse.ie)

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## **Living Well – Your toolkit for better health**

There are two Living Well programmes starting in October.

- Living Well Chronic pain self-management programme on Thursday 26th October from 10:30am-1pm for **7 weeks via Zoom**.
- Living Well Chronic disease self-management programme on Saturday 21st October from 10am-12:30pm for **7 weeks via Zoom**.

Living Well is free, evidence based, group, self-management programme for adults with long-term health conditions. Originally developed at the School of Medicine, Stanford University, USA, this Chronic Disease Self-Management Programme has been available in Ireland since 2005 under various names.

### **What does Living Well involve?**

- It involves attending one workshop every week for seven weeks. Each workshop lasts 2.5 hours.
- It will be delivered online.
- Two trained facilitators run the workshops, one of which lives with a chronic pain condition.
- The workshops are delivered in a relaxed and friendly way.
- Each person who takes part gets a book about self-management.

### **Who is Living Well for?**

Living Well is for adults 18 years and over who are

- living with one or more long term chronic pain conditions

The Living Well programme is not suitable for people with significant memory or learning difficulties but the carers of people with these conditions could benefit from it

For more information contact the Living Well Team Email: [LivingWellDNCC@hse.ie](mailto:LivingWellDNCC@hse.ie)

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Amazon, a corporate behemoth, has drawn considerable criticism for its treatment of employees and the environmental consequences of its practices. In this article, we delve into Amazon's dubious record as an employer and its wasteful policy of dumping unsold goods.

Read more Amazon [HERE](#)

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### **Hybrid Social Finance Loan 2023 – 2024 Opens for Applications**

Rethink Ireland, in collaboration with Community Finance Ireland, and the Department of Rural and Community Development via the Dormant Accounts Fund, have introduced the second open call for applications to their Hybrid Social Finance loan.

The scheme is aimed at supporting up to 20 social enterprises that are first-time borrowers. This fund will offer a mix of a loan that must be paid back, along with a non-repayable loan and business support.

The Department of Rural and Community Development via the Dormant Accounts Fund has committed €890,000 for this scheme. In addition, Community Finance Ireland will provide approximately €500,000 in repayable loans.

A key requirement for applicants is that their social enterprise must not have borrowed money before.

#### **Each Award will include:**

1. A repayable loan between €10,000 and €50,000 provided by Community Finance Ireland (which can be financed over five years at a competitive rate)

2. A non-repayable loan for up to the same amount provided by Rethink Ireland (between €10,000 and €50,000)
3. A business supports package for the amount of €10,000 (which includes one to one consultancy supports and Accelerator workshops)

#### Upcoming Q&A sessions:

- Thursday 19 October at 12 pm: [register](#)
- Friday 10 November at 12 pm: [register](#)
- Thursday 23 November at 1 pm: [register](#)

The **deadline for applications is 8 December 2023 at 1 pm** via the [Rethink Ireland website](#).

Questions can be also directed to [hybridsocialfinance@rethinkireland.ie](mailto:hybridsocialfinance@rethinkireland.ie).

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#### **EU Just Transition Fund Application Support Events - Pobal**

The [EU JTF Local and Regional Economic Strategies Support Scheme](#) will provide €24 million for the wider Midlands region to help implement bottom-up local and regional initiatives that create employment, boost communities and diversify the local economic fabric. Multiple application support events will be held:

- 7 Nov - Planning your project
- 16 Nov - "Ready to go" projects for Category 1 LECP Local Authority led projects
- 17 Nov - Category 2 REP Projects

[Register here](#)

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#### **CURRENT GRANTS AVAILABLE: (PLEASE PRESS LINK FOR DETAILS)**

[EIL Explore](#)

[The Arts Council - Festivals Investment Scheme](#)

[Irish Aid Global Citizenship Education Grant](#)

[Local Bereavement Development Grants 2023](#)

[The Arts Council Co-funding Award 2024 for Creative Europe Cooperation Projects](#)

[Sports Bursary](#)

[2023 Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund Inviting Applications](#)

[EU Just Transition Fund: Local and Regional Economic Strategies Support Scheme](#)

[European Youth Foundation Grants – International Activity Grant](#)

[Benefact Group – Movement for Good Awards](#)

[The Arts Council – Arts Participation Project Award](#)

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## EU News

### **Wednesday 8 November: EUACT 2 Debate - Housing and Healthcare in Ireland and the EU, Galway**

European Movement Ireland's EUACT 2 Debate – Housing and Healthcare in Ireland and the EU - will take place in the University of Galway on Wednesday, 8 November. EUAct2 is a pan-European programme, aimed at building democratic engagement with people who don't always feel heard in the EU. EMI is bringing together people living in Ireland, Austria, Greece and Slovakia, and giving them a platform to influence policies and share their ideas on a truly international level.

Please click [HERE](#) for information

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### **Thursday 9 November: Citizens' Energy Forum, Dublin**

The 15th Citizens Energy Forum takes place in Dublin on Thursday, 9 November. The Forum addresses mainly citizens' interest groups, a wide range of stakeholders including NGOs, businesses, as well as policy makers (ministries and regulators) on energy consumer issues in the context of the post energy crisis, including their role, related opportunities and risks in the electricity market design of the future. The event is co-organised with the Commission for Regulation (CRU), which is Ireland's independent energy and water regulator. It will be live web streamed, and the on-line audience will also be able to engage through Sli.do.

Please Click [HERE](#) for information

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