



County Longford Public Participation Network (PPN)

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

PPN Newsletter October 2023 (Part 1)

LOCAL NEWS

Two hours is all you need for a Triple P Discussion Group Positive parenting help for parents around Longford

| Venue | Date |
|--|---|
| Family Centre Longford, St Mel's Road | 14 th September 10-12 |
| Ballinalee NS, N39 HY57 | 15 th September 10.30-12.30 |
| Community House Farnagh, N39 AF30 | 29 th September 10-12 |
| Edgeworthstown Library, 28 Main Street, N39 F7Y8 | 5 th October 10-12 |
| Lus Na Greine FRC, Main St, Granard | 6 th October 10-12 |
| Tivoli House, Leader Park, Glack, | 20 th & 27 th October |

Bookings and Information

Call 043 666 0977 or email admin@Lngfrc.ie

EDI Centre ECCO Project

This programme is an opportunity for participants / colleagues in your network to engage in sustainable training,

The benefits and supports of this project are multidimensional at individual, community, or organizational level, to develop solutions to address climate action and face the many challenges in the transition to Circular Enterprise.

This can be achieved through education & training and learning by doing.

See attached information poster

If this interests your network, please complete the application form below

<https://shout.com/s/JUJKQdRK>.

This is a survey regarding community needs

<https://shout.com/s/ZmmftNNEI>

Please see [here](#) for information

Building Connections



Wednesday October 18th 2023

From 11:00am to 1:00pm

Longford Arms Hotel

(Small Ballroom)

Main Street, Longford

You are invited to a:
Building Connections, Meet and Greet event.
hosted by Citizens Information, Longford
**“Providing you with an opportunity to re-build connections post Covid
with other local Government Agencies and Community and
Voluntary groups in the area”.**

www.citizensinformation.ie

RSPV: mary.murtagh1@citinfo.ie or
mary.gray@citinfo.ie
by 10th October 2023

***We are looking forward to meeting you and/or
a representative from your organisation on the day***



Peatlands Climate Action Scheme - Killashee Bog

Following the availability of funding and the cessation of all its industrial peat extraction operations, Bord na Móna, a climate solutions company, are currently delivering an ambitious scheme of enhanced peatland decommissioning and rehabilitation on 33,000 hectares in over 80 of their bogs under the Peatlands Climate Action Scheme (PCAS).

The Department of Environment, Climate and Communications approved grant funding of €108 million in 2020 for this scheme and this funding is provided by the European Union's Recovery and Resilience Facility which is the key instrument at the heart of NextGenerationEU.

Under this Peatlands Climate Action Scheme, enhanced rehabilitation has commenced on thirty-eight bogs since 2021 and it is proposed that rehabilitation will commence on an additional nineteen bogs in 2023.

The enhanced rehabilitation scheme will deliver benefits across climate action by optimising carbon storage potential within the residual peat, reducing Green House Gas (GHG) emissions and accelerating the development of carbon sequestration by promoting the development of *Sphagnum*-rich vegetation (peat forming mosses), where possible. This will also enrich the State's natural capital, increase eco-system services, strengthen biodiversity, improve water quality and storage attenuation as well as enabling the amenity potential of the peatlands. The measures proposed will set sites on an accelerated trajectory towards the development of a variety of habitats including developing natural peatland, wetland, and woodland.

The rehabilitation measures will focus on optimising suitable hydrological conditions (water-levels) across the peatlands. The key target will be to bring water levels close to the peat surface to re-wet peat and accelerate the development of naturally functioning peatland habitats and the trajectory of sites to become reduced carbon sources and ultimately carbon sinks again.

Bord na Móna propose to carry out rehabilitation measures on **Killashee Bog** in 2023 under this scheme.

Killashee Bog is located in County Longford. Killashee is approximately 8K west of Longford town and 4km east of Lanesborough (Google location: <https://goo.gl/maps/gewncVQ4M1AzfgYo9>). A site location map of the bog is attached for information purposes.

Bord na Móna operates under an Integrated Pollution Control (IPC) Licence issued and enforced by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Killashee Bog is part of the Moundillon Bog Group licence (IPC Ref. P0504-01). Under this licence, a rehabilitation plan must be prepared for permanent rehabilitation of the bog lands within the licensed area and part of the process of developing a rehabilitation plan includes consultation with stakeholders and affected parties.

To facilitate this consultation process, a Draft Rehabilitation Plan and associated Map Book for Killashee Bog is now available on the Peatlands Climate Action Scheme website at the following location: <https://www.bnmpcas.ie/2023-bogs/>. This Draft Rehabilitation Plan sets out, among other items, the planned rehabilitation goals and outcomes and the proposed rehabilitation actions for the bog.

Bord na Mona invite you to make a submission or to comment on the Killashee Bog Draft Rehabilitation Plan. Please make any such submissions to the email address (pcasinfo@bnm.ie) before November 2nd, 2023.

In addition, please contact us if you have any queries, require further information, or wish to discuss the proposed rehabilitation in Killashee Bog or the PCAS scheme in general.

Kind regards.

Bord na Móna Doreen King, Project Manager

Tinnitus Community Event Sunday, October 22

Tinnitus is the continuous ringing in the ear. About 10-15% of Irish people experience this. Unfortunately, there is not a solid community for tinnitus in Ireland. As part of the National PPI Ignite Festival, Tinnitus Éire, an upcoming community for tinnitus in Ireland together with Trinity College Dublin and Sing Ireland at University of Limerick are organising the "Sing Your Tinnitus Story - a co-creative poetry and chorus workshop".

Date: Sunday, October 22

Time: 11:00 - 15:00 (Tea/coffee and lunch provided)

Venue: Samuel Beckett Dance Studio - Trinity College Dublin

If you have tinnitus, or you know someone with tinnitus, please come join us to find your community through song and music!

If you have more questions, please email tinnitus.eire@gmail.com.

Best regards,

ANUSHA YASODA-MOHAN

Tinnitus Éire

www.tinnituseire.ie



PPI Festival - Sing
your tinnitus story.p



**OCTOBER
BREAST
CANCER
AWARENESS
MONTH**

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Every year, the month of October is dedicated to breast cancer awareness. **Breast Cancer Awareness Month** aims to promote screening and prevention of the disease, which affects one in 9 women in Ireland every year.

Early detection affects survival rates. It is therefore important for all women to be breast aware – that is, to “know their normal” – and for women in target populations to be screened through high-quality, organized screening programmes. Treatment for breast cancer can

be highly effective, especially when the disease is identified early.

The early detection of breast cancer is often key to successful outcomes. But do you know what to look for or when to see your doctor?

To help you be aware of your breasts and explain the various types of changes that women experience we invite you to

- ❖ Familiarise yourself with the contents of the attached brochure from the Marie Keating Foundation - further information at <https://mariekeating.ie/cancer-information/breast-cancer/>
- ❖ Take home a Breast Cancer Ireland information shower card available at the entrance to the Canteen in Aras an Chontae. (Copy attached - cards will be distributed to non-Water Street based offices and libraries)
further information at <https://www.breastcancerireland.com/>

A word of caution – If you find a lump or other changes in your breast, don't use the booklet or card to diagnose yourself, you must seek your GP's advice immediately.

New Routes Programme - Starting 18th October 2023



New Routes
Outdoor Adventure Based
Personal Development Programme

10 Week Course
Monksland, Athlone
Suitable for 18 yrs & over
Wednesdays 10-1pm
Starts October 18th 2023

For more information
Please Contact
Barry@venture-out.ie
Or 086 1049684

What's it All About?
Health & Fitness
Taking on a challenge
Learning about the Outdoors
Employability Skills
Learning Social Skills
Personal Development
Making Positive change

Venture-Out.ie
Instagram Facebook Twitter LinkedIn

WESTERN REGION
Drug & Alcohol Task Force
Maidhead Drug and Alcohol

VENTURE OUT

Venture Out Wilderness Project CLG



Venture Out
information flier Em



Venture Out
Wilderness Project C

Say Yes to the Dress and No to Duchenne - LAST COLLECTION



I am doing a last collection for the following items for this great cause on **THURSDAY 12TH OCTOBER 2023.**

A huge THANK YOU to everyone who has donated so generously to date!

Collecting the following clean, pre loved or new items:

Wedding Gowns & Accessories

Bridesmaids Dresses

Flower Girl Dresses

Debs Dresses

Communion Dresses

Mother of The Bride outfits

Men's Suits

Boys Suits

Please click here for [Tickets and Information](#) if you are interested in attending the event.

Contact me at mcarney@longfordcoco.ie or 043-3343513 to arrange collection.

Promoting Wellness for Women - MenoWell Longford

MenoWell Longford' is a free 6-week online evidence-based exercise, nutrition, and health education programme promoting wellness for women in all stages of adult life, with a special focus on perimenopause and post-menopause.

Designed and delivered by EduFIT and funded by Longford Sports Partnership and Longford County Council the programme is aimed at women aged 30+ years living in Longford.

The programme will begin on **Wednesday September 13th at 8pm** and run for **6 weeks** as follows:

- 2 x 40-minute live online women- and menopause-specific multimodal **exercise classes** per week – **Mondays and Thursdays at 8pm** hosted via Zoom, instructed in real time and include a suitable warm up and cool down.
- 1 x 30-minute live online women- and menopause-specific health **education masterclass** per week – **Wednesdays at 8pm** also be delivered via Zoom with a focus on different topics relating to women’s health and the menopause journey including muscle, bone, and cardiovascular health, healthy nutrition, sleep hygiene and self-care.

An on-demand library of women- and menopause-specific exercise videos and nutrition recipes, as well as recorded health education workshops will also be available to all participants.

You can sign up for the programme by clicking on the following link

<https://edufit.ie/menowell-longford/> you will be asked to complete a short-answer online questionnaire, but all information will be kept strictly private and confidential,

(There is a button to confirm you live in Longford, however as an LCC staff member you can click ‘Yes’)

Don’t worry if you can’t commit to all classes, once registered you can attend as many as you are available for.

Age Friendly Annual Information Day & Expo - Monday 9th October

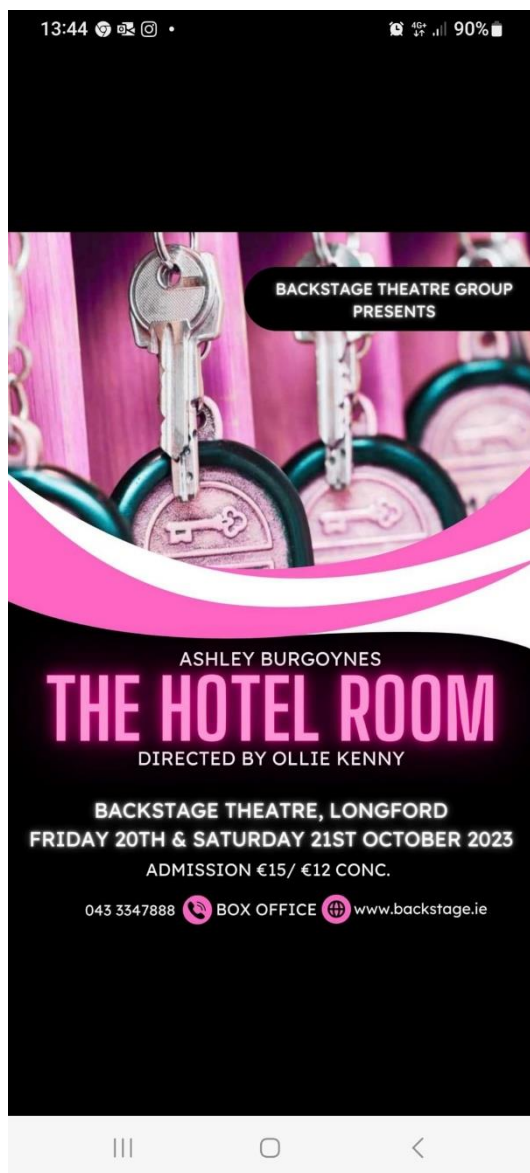
Budget 2024 - Everything You Need to Know

How did the Irish community and voluntary sector fare in Budget 2024? In this webinar specifically designed for our members, Brian Harvey, an esteemed independent social researcher will present his in-depth analysis of Budget 2024 and discuss its implications for charities, community and voluntary organisations, and social enterprises.

We understand the importance of being prepared and staying ahead, and our session will equip you with the key insights needed to navigate the sector landscape in 2024.

[Find out more](#)

Don't Miss!



COURSES

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 or 0866086771.

Kind Regards

Dereck



Dereck Carolan
Technology Trainer

NCBI Labs: 1800 911 110

Email: Dereck.Carolan@ncbi.ie | www.ncbi.ie



TRAINING SESSIONS FROM THE WHEEL

Training sessions have been uploaded to the Gov.ie website. These training sessions include-

- **Basics of Employment and HR Practice**
- **Successful Communication for Community Groups and Voluntary Boards**
- **Leading Communities- The Role of the Board or Committee Member**
- **Social Media**
- **Procurement**
- **Strategic Planning**

The link to our website can be found [here](#).

Training from The Wheel

**Budget 2024 - Impacts on The
Community & Voluntary Sector**

13 Oct 2023

[LEARN MORE](#)

**Achieving & Maintaining
Compliance with Data
Protection & GDPR**

17 Oct 2023

[LEARN MORE](#)

National News

“Is Ireland Thriving? Yes, but...” - New Research from the NESC Secretariat

- As part of its 50th year work programme, the National Economic and Social Council (NESC) has published a new Secretariat paper, [Is Ireland Thriving? - Answers from International Assessments](#).
- The theme of NESC's 50th anniversary NESC@50 programme of research and events is "A Thriving Ireland: Inclusive, Protective, and Forward Looking." This paper was prepared to help explore this theme.
- This report examines the extent to which Ireland can be described as a thriving country with reference to nine regularly cited assessments (covering well-being; human development; sustainable development; transition performance; social progress; biodiversity; competitiveness; inclusive wealth; and the doughnut model incorporating ecological and planetary boundaries).
- The approaches examined have limitations, yet their consideration is a necessary starting point in any discussion of a country's social, economic, and environmental position. This paper reinforces the position that they can only be a starting point.

The [full report](#) & accompanying [press release](#) can be found on our website: nesc.ie

NESC is celebrating 50 years of providing advice to the Taoiseach and Government on strategic policy issues relating to sustainable economic, social, and environment development in Ireland. To mark the 50th Anniversary, NESC will be hosting a full-day, in-person conference in the Printworks, Dublin Castle, on 23rd November 2023. Click [here](#) for more information.

You can also sign up to our [mailing list](#) so you won't miss out on any updates relating to our work, or 50th anniversary plans throughout the year.

Follow us [@NESCireland](#) #NESC50

Minister Donnelly and Minister Butler announce Government approval of Commission on Care

Minister Donnelly and Minister Butler announce Government approval of Commission on Care. Government approves proposal for a Commission on Care for Older Persons to get underway in January 2024

Independent Commission to examine health and social care services and supports for older persons. Cross-departmental group to examine supports for positive ageing.

The Government has approved a proposal from the Minister for Health and the Minister of State for Older People to establish an independent Commission on Care for Older Persons. The Commission, which is due to be established in January 2024, will examine

the provision of health and social care services and supports for older persons and make recommendations to the Government for their strategic development. Subsequently, a cross-departmental group will be established under the auspices of the Commission to consider whether the supports for positive ageing across the life course are fit-for-purpose and to develop a costed implementation plan for options to optimise these supports.

Minister Donnelly said:

“I am delighted to announce that the Government has approved our proposal for the Commission on Care for Older Persons. Fulfilling a commitment in our Programme for Government, the establishment of the Commission will provide a mechanism for a comprehensive and independent review

of our health and social care services and supports provided to older persons. This review will underpin the development of a framework for the overarching strategic development of health and social care for older persons that advances national policy priorities.

A cross-departmental group will then be established under the aegis of the Commission to examine the support provided across Government and civil society for citizens’ healthy and autonomous ageing.”

Minister Donnelly continued:

“That Ireland has one of the most rapidly ageing demographic profiles in the EU is an achievement to be celebrated and a range of initiatives are already being put in place which are significantly enhancing our responsiveness to older persons’ care needs. The work of the Commission

will ensure that these initiatives are underpinned by a coherent policy approach that draws on lessons learnt internationally and maximises our responsiveness to the challenges and opportunities presented by our ageing population on a sustainable and cost-effective basis.”

Describing the Government’s approval of the proposal for the Commission as a “significant milestone”, the Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People, Mary Butler, commented:

“As Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People, I am aware of the great progress we have made in recent years in responding to the care needs of our older people. I am also aware of the challenges we face as our population ages. The Commission on Care for Older Persons

provides an opportunity for us to take stock of our progress to date and to future-proof our health and social care provision for the older age cohort. Engagement and collaboration with stakeholders will be central to the work of the Commission.”

Minister Butler continued:

“It is well-established that the inequalities that accumulate across a person’s life impact upon their care needs in later years. It is therefore vitally important that,

as a Government, we do everything we can to support everyone to age well. Accordingly, I am particularly pleased that the remit of the Commission will include the establishment of a cross-departmental group to examine support for positive ageing across Government and civil society. This holistic approach to responding to the challenges and opportunities of our ageing population will ensure that Ireland continues to be a great country in which to grow old”.

ENDS

Notes to editor:

Acknowledging the disproportionately negative impact of the pandemic on older persons, the Programme for Government: Our Shared Future (2020) commits to the establishment of ‘a commission to examine care and supports for older people’.

The Commission on Care for Older Persons will be an independent commission appointed by the Minister for Health and the Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People. Its work will be supported by a secretariat from the Department of Health.

The target date for the establishment of the Commission is January 2024.

Minister for Mental Health and Older People announces plans to extend Nursing Homes Support Scheme to benefit farmers at National Ploughing Championships 2023

This change to the Scheme means that after a period of 3 years, the value of family-owned farms and businesses will no longer be considered when calculating the cost of a person’s nursing home care. This will happen where a family successor commits to working the farm or business. The Act extends the existing 3-year cap on contributions to the cost of care to the proceeds of sale of a person’s principal residence. It is intended that this change will remove any disincentive for people who want to sell their vacant home while in Fair Deal.

Minister Butler recognises that access to day centres can make an important contribution by providing invaluable support, advice and social interaction for older people who may, for any number of reasons, be experiencing isolation and loneliness.

Older people also benefit from increased physical activity, cognitive stimulation, enhanced nutrition, health care monitoring and social work support. Day centres are also an important indirect resource for carers.

Minister Donnelly receives Government Approval to Publish the General Scheme of Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2023

The Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly, has today (Tuesday 3 October) received Government approval to publish the General Scheme of the Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2023.

The Bill, when enacted, will amend current legislation to enhance the Minister’s power to make regulations for management of and access to medicinal products, and will

provide for Rent-a-Room income up to €14,000 per annum to be disregarded in medical card income assessments.

Announcing publication of the General Scheme, Minister Donnelly said:

“I am delighted to receive Government approval to publish the General Scheme of this important Bill.

“The Bill is necessary to prepare the way for some much-needed changes around oversight of medicines supplies and access to medicines. I have been clear that I want to further enhance the contribution that pharmacists make to our health services, and this will be an important step forward in that regard.

"I have established a Taskforce on pharmacy and will be getting recommendations later this month. This legislation will allow us to implement changes quickly and increase access for patients, while taking pressure off our GPs.

"This Bill, when enacted, will also progress commitments under Housing for All, to remove potential barriers to participation in the Rent-a-Room scheme.

"I'd like to thank officials in my Department and look forward to working with the Office of the Attorney General and the Oireachtas to get this legislation progressed as a matter of priority.

The General Scheme will now be referred to the Office of the Attorney General for priority drafting of the Bill. The text of the Bill will be finalised as a matter of urgency, and it is intended to progress the legislation through the Houses of the Oireachtas as a priority in the coming months.

The General Scheme will be published on the Department of Health's website shortly.

ENDS

Note for Editors

Following publication of the General Scheme, officials from the Department of Health will work with officials in the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, and in the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, to finalise priority drafting of the legislation and publication of the final text of the Bill at the earliest opportunity.

Independent Living Movement Ireland invites you to the “The Green Paper on Reform of Disability Payments” Discussions!

Discover the potential changes to Disability Payments in Ireland and have your say in this vital conversation. ILMI invites you to Zoom sessions on **October 18th at 11 AM and October 24th at 7 PM** to explore the Green Paper proposals and voice your concerns. This is your chance to help shape our (ILMI) collective response as we seek to ensure fair and effective policies. Email info@ilmi.ie to sign up, specifying your preferred daytime or evening session. For a detailed analysis, visit <https://ilmi.ie/government-publishes-green-paper-on-reform-of-disability-payments-need-to-create-strong-ilmi-response/> Make a difference, Have your voice heard – join us!

Government publishes Green Paper on Reform of Disability Payments: Need to create strong ILMI response.

On Wednesday 20th September, ILMI attended a briefing led by Minister for Social Protection, Heather Humphreys TD, and she published a Green Paper on reform to Disability Payments.

What is a Green Paper?

This green paper is not an agreed policy. It is a proposal by the Department to create a focussed discussion on how disability payments could be changed in the future. No decision has been made yet, and the Department did say that through consultation it is possible that no changes would be made.

What does this Green Paper propose?

The Minister and Department officials were keen to point out that there needs to be action based on the research from the Cost of Disability report but that the measures proposed alone would not be enough to meet the costs of disability. They pointed out that costs such as transport, medical supports and so on needed to be delivered by other Departments, but that in terms of reducing risk of poverty these proposals would look at changes to payments and measures to try and support more disabled people into employment.

The Green Paper sets out that the main aims are:

1. To encourage a higher level of employment for disabled to enhance their participation in society and reduce the risk of poverty and deprivation.
2. To better protect disabled people who cannot work from poverty and deprivation.

The green paper makes three changes to disability payments as follows:

- 1) Introduction of a Three-tiered Personal Support Payment:**
- 2. Introduction of new in-work supports**
- 3. Addressing inconsistencies in eligibility**

ILMI have published a short blog on our website ([link](#)) providing some analysis of the details of the Green Paper.

Concerns raised at the Green Paper launch:

Whilst there is an increase in payment in Tier one and Tier two, neither come close to the cost of disability in the Department's report.

The "obligation" to engage with INTREO and take up training or work immediately raised concerns as ILMI raised that this sounded not dissimilar to the "Work Capacity Assessments" in the UK which used the language of "welfare reform" to make savings in the welfare budget and push disabled people into work, with huge human costs and suffering.

ILMI also raised concerns about the current capacity of mainstream employment services such as INTREO and the systemic barriers to inclusion of disabled people in the workforce, including the low expectations that systemic exclusion from employment has had on disabled people themselves.

Next steps for ILMI?

It is vital that as a national cross-impairment Disabled Persons Organisation that we create a strong collective submission into this process.

We are going to have a discussion online to discuss the proposals and develop a clear sense of how to respond as a DPO.

These will take place on Wednesday 18th October at 11am and Tuesday 24th October at 7pm. Both will be on Zoom with agenda and information to follow.

To sign up for the discussions, email info@ilmi.ie and please indicate which session (daytime or evening) work best for you.

For a more detailed analysis please click here <https://ilmi.ie/government-publishes-green-paper-on-reform-of-disability-payments-need-to-create-strong-ilmi-response/>

Invitation to participation in World Mental Health Month

We are currently running online Connect Café information sessions throughout September. Registration is still open for the last few sessions, so if you didn't have the possibility to do so yet, could you please share this attached poster on your social media?

I would like to encourage you to give your local community opportunity to register and promote their WMHM events on our dedicated website <https://worldmentalhealthmonth-mhi.ie/get-involved/register-your-event/>

Every registered event will feature on the 'Find Out What's Happening in Your Area' page of the website. If you could also share this information on your social media and with your groups that would be great.

Viola Di Bucchianico, Thrive Action Research Officer, Tel. 083 478 2166

'National Disability Authority Annual Conference 2023: Public and Political Participation of Disabled People



Guaranteeing the equal participation of disabled people in political and public life in Ireland – United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) Article 29

Date: Thursday, 26 October 2023

Time: 9:30am – 4.15pm

Location: Aviva Stadium, Lansdowne Road and Online

Cost: Free of charge. [Registration required.](#)

We would like to invite you to our **Annual Conference 2023: Public and Political Participation of Disabled People.**

This year's event will take an in-depth view of all the implications of Article 29 of the UNCRPD in Ireland, which focuses on the participation of disabled people in political and public life.

The conference will look at issues around accessible voting, and the public and political representation of disabled people in Ireland. Disabled people, public officials and elected representatives will discuss barriers faced by disabled people and propose solutions. We will look at international practices and present learning from other countries which could inform potential solutions to address the challenges and barriers faced in Ireland.

Speakers confirmed so far include:

- Art O'Leary, Chief Executive, An Coimisiún Toghcháin (The Electoral Commission),
- Cahir Hughes, Head of Electoral Commission Northern Ireland,
- Robbie Sinnott, Voice of Vision Impairment,
- John Dolan, CEO, Disability Federation Ireland (DFI),
- Ivana Bacik, TD, Labour Party.

The [conference programme is available on our website](#) and will be updated as more speakers are confirmed.

We encourage all relevant stakeholders to attend, including professionals who are preparing to implement the Electoral Reform Act 2022 and individuals whose lives will be impacted by it, including:

- Disabled Persons Organisations and other disability organisations
- Policy makers
- Public sector officials
- Local authority officials
- Individuals with disabilities and their families

The conference will be a hybrid event, in-person at the Aviva Stadium, Lansdowne Road or online via Zoom.

You need to [register to attend](#), but the event is **free of charge**.

Irish Sign Language interpretation and real-time captioning will be available.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us [by email](#) or by phone on 01 608 0400.

We look forward to welcoming you to our Annual Conference 2023!

Minister Joe O'Brien addresses 5th National Public Participation Network Annual Conference

- *Two-day conference brings representatives from across Ireland together to discuss citizen engagement*
- *Public Participation Networks (PPNs) give local communities a say in local government decisions*
- *Over 18,500 groups across Ireland helping to 'Build a better future' through their involvement*

Minister of State with responsibility for Community Development, Charities and Integration, Joe O'Brien, T.D., today (Thursday, 5th October 2023) attended the fifth National Public Participation Network Conference held in the Arklow Bay Hotel, Wicklow.

Addressing the delegates, Minister O'Brien spoke about the important contribution PPNs make:

"PPNs are key partners in local decision making and are increasingly becoming the 'go-to' for community engagement. After all, who knows better than the citizens at the heart of our communities what is best for our communities and how to work together to achieve positive results."

The two-day conference event was hosted by Wicklow Public Participation Network, in conjunction with Wicklow County Council, the Department of Rural and Community Development and the National PPN Advisory Group. It was attended by a wide range of PPN stakeholders, including volunteer representatives from PPNs across the country, local authority officials, and elected representatives.

Minister O'Brien highlighted the value of the work done by PPNs in promoting citizen engagement and participative democracy:

"PPNs give communities access to decision-makers in a very unique way. They provide a voice for communities in local decision-making and create strong relationships between stakeholders."

The Minister continued:

"Hundreds of PPN representatives currently sit on boards and committees of local decision-making bodies across the country, contributing to decisions on housing, climate, transport, migrant integration, community health and wellbeing, policing and many more. Your local knowledge is key to understanding and delivering information, support and practical solutions to issues in your

areas. You are bringing the community voice to the table to help ensure no one is left behind.”

The conference, which was attended by 200 delegates, had a varied and interesting agenda of workshops and presentations on, for example, collaborative projects between PPNs and Local Authorities, and innovative community schemes initiated by PPNs around the country. It also included site trips to a number of locations around Wicklow, where delegates met with local community organisations that are involved in and empowered by Wicklow PPN.

Concluding the Minister said:

“From my own perspective and that of my Department, one clear message I would like you all to take away from this conference is that we will continue our support of PPNs into the future.

“You are all, as our awareness campaign said, building a better future and better communities for everyone.”

ENDS

Notes to editors:

Public Participation Networks (PPNs)

Established under the Local Government Reform Act 2014, Public Participation Networks enable local authorities to connect with volunteer-run groups around the country. They provide a mechanism by which citizens can have a greater say in local government decisions that affect their own communities.

A PPN is a network for Community and Voluntary, Social Inclusion and Environmental groups in each local authority area.

PPNs provide the voice of the community for local authority boards and committees.

Where a local authority requires a representative from the community to sit on their boards or committees such as Strategic Policy Committees or Local Development (LCDCs), they must source this representative from the PPN. PPNs work to enable the community to be represented in decision-making processes that impact citizens through representation on council committees, consultation processes, policy submissions and more.

The PPN is therefore the “go to” for all local authorities who wish to benefit from community and voluntary expertise in their area.

Membership of a PPN is open to all volunteer-led/not-for-profit groups in a local authority area. More than 18,500 groups nationwide are currently members of a PPN

National Allotments and Community Gardens Week 14th-21st Oct 2023



The first ever national **Allotments and Community Gardens Week** will be taking place in Ireland from **14th - 21st October 2023!**

We are running this event to raise awareness of allotments and community gardens, to highlight how important they are and to detail the huge benefits of community gardening for communities, individuals, and the environment.

The 2023 theme is *"Growing with Nature"* and we are hoping to get as many allotments and community gardens involved.

Some examples of activities during the week are:

- 1) Organise a tour or an event** (in person or virtual!) at your allotments or community gardens with an emphasis on how you are helping local wildlife and biodiversity!
- 2) Post photos and videos online** during the week about what actions you are taking to *grow with nature* at your allotment or community garden!
- 3) Publicise the week** as it is the first ever Irish event like this - we will be posting information on our social media in the coming weeks, so please share and like!
#NationalAllotmentsWeek #NationalCommunityGardensWeek
#GrowingWithNature

If you don't have social media, you can email us any photos or videos and we can post them online and tag your community garden or allotment.

If you are going to run an event during this week, please let us know by replying to this email and by tagging Community Gardens Ireland on social media during the event (14th - 21st October 2023).

To align with the start of Allotments and Community Gardens Week 2023, we will be

organising our Yearly Gathering of Community Growers.

This year it takes place in Cork City on Saturday 14th October where we will be visiting and seeing first hand some amazing community growing projects in the city. More details including Eventbrite link to follow on this!

Dónal McCormack
Chairperson Community Gardens Ireland
086237129

Create National Networking Day 2023 Booking OPEN

We are delighted to announce that booking is now open for our National Networking Day 2023: Collaborating on Climate Justice, hosted on **19 October** at Project Arts Centre in Dublin.

The event will feature guest speakers including the Climate Justice team from **TASC**, the think tank for action on social change, and experienced environmental campaigner and journalist, **John Gibbons**. TASC will draw on their recent experience working at grassroots level through their People's Transition pilot projects around the country, while John will explore the complicated issues around media narratives, disinformation, and storytelling. Attendees will also have the chance to hear from a group of artists who have taken a range of approaches to engaging with the many nuances of climate justice through their practice. These presentations, and a workshop facilitated by TASC, will aim to stimulate discussion amongst those present and provide a basis for developing future work in this area.

After the close of the main event, we invite attendees to join us for a reception to celebrate the milestone achievement of **Create's 40th year**, as well as the **21st anniversary** of Create's management of the Artist in the Community Scheme.

Booking is now open [via Project Arts website](#).

All About Hedgerows *October 15th*

Join us for Irish Environmental Network's upcoming Autumn event that is all about hedgerows in collaboration with Hedgerows Ireland!

Learn from experts, meet others in the field, take action for nature and biodiversity!

You will learn how to plan, plant and maintain a hedgerow, discover what makes up a hedgerow on the Hedge Walk, see a practical demonstration of hedge laying and more!

[Book your tickets here](#)

CURRENT GRANTS AVAILABLE: (PLEASE PRESS LINK FOR DETAILS)

[National Integration Fund 2023](#)

[Club Development & Volunteer Support Grant Scheme 2023](#)

[Foras na Gaeilge – Colmcille Projects Scheme A](#)

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

[National Disability Authority’s \(NDA\) Research Promotion Scheme](#)

[Investment Grant Aid Scheme for Private & Community SMEs](#)

[Colmcille Projects Scheme B](#)

[Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme](#)

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

[EU JFT 2nd call- Bioeconomy Demonstration Initiative Scheme](#)

[St Stephens Green Trust – Traveller Accommodation Grant Programme](#)

[Energy for Generations Fund](#)

[Community Foundation Ireland – Biodiversity Fund](#)

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

[Foras Na Gaeilge - Festivals Scheme](#)

[Rethink Ireland - Freedom From Fear Fund](#)

EU News



We are delighted to announce that the [#OurEUStory Awards 2023](#) are now open for entries. If you're an Irish organisation active in EU funding, don't miss this valuable opportunity to share your EU story and win a cash prize!

The #OurEUStory Awards celebrate the transformational impact that EU-funded projects have on communities and organisations across Ireland. Last year was the inaugural launch of the Awards and we were blown away by the [fantastic contributions](#) our sector has made to the development of today's European Union through these projects.

Entering the #OurEUStory Awards is your chance to showcase the difference EU projects have made in your community and inspire your peers to start their own EU journey!

How to Enter

Entries consist of a 140-second (maximum) video shared on X (formerly Twitter) and/or Facebook and a brief application form. The application form is now live (see link below), so here's a handy 4-step guide for preparing your entry:

1. Visit <https://www.accesseurope.ie/our-eu-story>
2. After reading the Terms & Conditions and considering the judging criteria, brainstorm ideas with your team on how to best tell your EU story
3. Create your video and share on X and/or Facebook using the hashtag #OurEUStory and tagging Access Europe so we can share your story far and wide
4. Once you've shared your story, copy and paste the URL of your X and/or Facebook post into [this application form](#) before the deadline on 27 October.

All entries will be shared on the [Access Europe Facebook](#) and [X](#) accounts using the hashtag #OurEUStory. Entries close on 27 October at 5pm.

Prizes

The three best entries will win a prize: €1,000 for first place and €500 each for second and third places.

We'll announce the winners at the #OurEUStory Award Ceremony at our Access Europe Showcase in December, so watch this space for more details!

Please contact us at europe@wheel.ie if you have any questions. We look forward to seeing your entries!

Emily Nelson, EU Programmes Officer, The Wheel

FUNDING THE JUST TRANSITION: OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY SECTOR (WEBINAR)



Stronger Charities.
Stronger Communities.



Tionól Reigiúnach Oirthir agus Lár-Tíre
Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Ára chomhchistiú ag
an Aontas Eorpach
Co-funded by the
European Union

Are you an organisation operating in the wider Midlands? Are you interested in funding to address the economic, social and environmental impact of the shift away from carbon-intense activities in your community? Then join us online on Tues, 24 October at 10am for [Funding the Just Transition: Opportunities for the Community & Voluntary Sector](#).

[The EU Just Transition Fund](#) aims to support regions that are experiencing negative impacts from the transition away from fossil fuel-intensive industries. In Ireland, the EU Just Transition Fund provides funding to the areas in the wider Midlands where communities have been negatively affected by the closure of peat production and peat-fired energy generation facilities ([see a map of the eligible territory here](#)).

Terence Connolly, [the Irish National Contact Point for the EU Just Transition Fund](#), joins us for a discussion on how community and voluntary organisations can benefit from this funding programme.

Topics covered will include:

- What is a *Just Transition*?
- An overview of the EU Just Transition Fund and its aims
- Opportunities for the community and voluntary sector
- Supports available.

As usual, you'll have the opportunity to share your thoughts and ideas with the event facilitators during the Q&A session.

The event is free, so [book now!](#)

We look forward to welcoming you online on 24 October.

Kind regards,

Christina

Christina Nuhr | European Programmes Officer | The Wheel



Abi is Brussels for the #BreakFreeFromPlastic and @rethink.plastic alliance members' week of action and advocacy in the run-up to the votes on the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation. With packaging and packaging waste legislation in the EU spotlight, we are coming together to highlight the need to move away from single-use packaging and towards a future where reuse systems are supported and strengthened. **Stay tuned for more updates on this over the month of October.**

YES - I WANT TO SUPPORT VOICE

Wednesday 18 October: Launch of IOM's research on human trafficking on the island of Ireland

IOM Ireland and the European Commission Representation in Ireland will host an event to mark EU Anti-Trafficking Day on Wednesday, 18 October 2023, from 10 am in Europe House at 12-14 Lower Mount Street. The event, supported by the Department of Justice, will commence with welcoming remarks from IOM's Chief of Mission, Zuzana Vatralkova, and the Head of the European Commission Representation in Ireland, Barbara Nolan. This will be followed by a presentation of IOM's research on human trafficking on the island of Ireland. There will be a panel discussion with representatives from the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC), An Garda Síochána Human Trafficking Investigation and Coordination Unit, Ruhama and the Sexual Exploitation Research Centre (SERP).

