



Slí

Issue 1- November 2021

'Slí' A newsletter to inform and report on matters which are relevant to island residents around our coast

In this Issue:

- Information on the Transitional LEADER Programme and current funding Opportunities.
- How to set up a Farmers Market: We look at Cape Clear's experience.
- Free Training on the Cork Islands.
- Promoting the Irish Islands for Summer 2022.
- Blueways Development for Donegal and Cork.
- E-Health – the Future: Clare Island leading the way.
- Co-Working Spaces on the Islands.



Pobal na nOileán, Daonra, Fiontraíocht, Timpeallacht na nOileán, Ceantair Tuaithe, Gaeltacht.
Communities on the Islands, Population, Enterprise, Environment, Rural Areas, Gaeltacht
Comhar na nOileán serving the communities of the Islands, the Gaeltacht and Peripheral Communities.



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

Ár dTodhchaí
Tuaithe
Our Rural
Future



Transitional LEADER Programme 2021-2022

Funding Opportunities for Enterprises and Community Projects - Cork Islands, Mayo Islands, Donegal Islands and West Cork.

The Transitional LEADER Programme launched on the 1st of April ensuring that the locally led rural development projects will continue to be delivered using the current LEADER Model until the new EU programme commences in 2023. Comhar na nOileán will continue to work closely with communities on the Islands and the 3 Heads of West Cork, to build capacity in preparation for the next programming period 2023-2027.

There will be an emphasis on the post Covid/post Brexit environment when supporting projects that:

- Support job creation, entrepreneurship, enterprise development and innovation.
- Support communities to address the impact of Covid 19.
- Explore and develop initiatives for the next EU funded programme such as climate agenda, digital transformation and environmental biodiversity.
- Utilise the Smart Village approach in local area development

The Priorities for Comhar na nOileán's Islands and West Cork

- Support rural businesses seeking to reach new markets, expand, innovate and/or diversify in response to the impact of Covid – 19 or Brexit.
- Particular emphasis on providing support to the food sector.
- Community projects that make facilities more accessible to a range of user groups.
- Community-led projects that seek to develop and promote outdoor recreation facilities and improve the accessibility of existing outdoor recreation.
- Applications that have not previously received assistance under LEADER or other rural programmes.
- Support new and innovative projects in the areas of climate change, environmental protection and the green economy.
- Maximising the potential of broadband and the digital economy in communities, through skills development, building awareness and usage of available remote working facilities.

Funding is limited. For guidance and assistance with your application call 099 75096 or email fios@oileain.ie The Transitional LEADER Programme is funded by the DRCD.



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The European Agricultural Fund
for Rural Development:
Europe investing in rural areas

Comhar na n-Oileán – A look back

Turnover:

- 2019 – €1.5m
- 2020 – €1m
- 75 Enterprises Supported
- 78 Jobs Created or Sustained
- 87 Communities Supported



Delivering Programmes 2014-2021 The Achievements and Challenges

Comhar na nOileán are proud of the fact that so much has been achieved with the current LEADER and other Programmes. This is despite an unduly cumbersome administrative process that involves 4 LCDC's in 4 Regions, 6 Evaluation Committees, and the Boards of Comhar na nOileán and Comhdháil Oileáin na hÉireann.

The challenging aspects of Programme delivery were:

- Securing ringfenced funding for the Islands.
- Multiple LCDC/LAG structures and multiple Chief Officers.
- County-wide basis for delivery.
- Islands competing with mainland areas.
- Little consolidation between Programmes due to county-based approach.
- Loss of synergy between Programmes.
- Not delivering LEADER to the Galway Islands i.e., 60% of the population of the Irish Islands.

**JOINING DIFFERENT PROGRAMMES –
YOU CAN ACHIEVE GREATER RESULTS WITH A UNIFIED APPROACH**



GOING FORWARD COMHAR NA NOILEÁN
PROPOSES THAT THE IRISH ISLANDS BE
RECOGNISED AS ONE GEOGRAPHIC AREA

THAT A LOCAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR
THE IRISH ISLANDS, GAELTACHT AND
PERIPHERAL AREAS AS A STAND-ALONE LDS
BE RATIFIED.

WE ASPIRE THAT COMHAR NA NOILEÁN CTR
BE THE LOCAL ACTION GROUP FOR THE IRISH
ISLANDS IN REGARD TO ALL PROGRAMMES.

Margadh Feirmeoirí: Establishing a Farmer's Market on Cape Clear



FIRST STEPS

Cape Clear is an island off the west coast of Cork and like many islands, tourism is an important source of revenue for many islanders. The main tourism season on Cape Clear runs for about six weeks from July until mid-August, with a final flurry for the Story Telling Weekend in September. The island also plays host to Irish language students during the summer months, but as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak, there were no students for the last 2 seasons, causing economic strain not only on local households who would normally host students but the island economy as a whole. The ensuing Covid-19 lockdown also meant that there were no people visiting the island and all the local businesses were hit hard.

Cape Clear residents order most of their shopping either online or over the phone from the local mainland supermarket. This is then packed into cardboard boxes and delivered to Baltimore, where it is put in a container and hoisted by crane onto the ferry. As a result of the lockdown these deliveries were like 'Christmas deliveries, three times a week' and consequently, orders were outweighing the actual capacity of the delivery container.



As with all community projects, it is important to gauge the level of local interest and also to allow people to express their views on how the project should proceed. It was decided that the best way of doing this was to carry out a local survey on how people in the community felt about setting up a farmers market and what they would like to achieve with it.

The main aim of this survey was to gauge how supportive the local population on Cape Clear would be in the establishing of a farmer's market.



Choosing the correct location is important for any enterprise, and the community were widely consulted.

From the results of the survey, it was clear that local people would definitely be interested in purchasing from a local farmers market and also be interested in providing food and produce. It was decided that the market would be called “Margadh Feirmeoirí Chléire”, and that a four-week trial would begin on Wednesday the 8th of July 2020.

In all, thirteen market days were held between 8th of July and 6th September 2020. The market continued to be successful during 2021

FUNDING AND SUPPORT

Comharchumann Chléire Teo. was one of the main sponsors of the market, and they kindly provided the space for the stall holders, providing them with electricity and access to their services

Comhar na nOileán provided a development worker for support and co-ordination of the project, as well as providing tea and coffee for all.

Social media can also play an important role in promoting small food businesses and Comhar na nOileán are now in a position to assist other islands in setting up a Farmers Market.

MARKET DAY



As well as local farm produce, a variety of local crafts are also sold from market stalls including pottery and knitwear. In continuing with their support for local produce, the wool used by the knitwear producers is all sourced from local sheep. This local craftwork has been particularly popular with visiting tourists who wish to purchase an authentic memento of their time on the island.



The market has played an important role both socially and economically for the community on Cape Clear.

Go mba fada buan an margadh



EUROPEAN UNION
Investing in your future
European Social Fund



Rialtas
na hÉireann
Government
of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040



Training Opportunities coming up for Residents of the West Cork Islands.

- We have online training in Food Safety Training at Level 1 and Level 2. These courses can be completed in your own time and at home, so long as you have reasonable internet access. If you are interested, please contact jude@oileain.ie
- We are hoping to run a HACCP Course before December through the ETB. Participants will have to have completed Level 1 and 2 in order to attend. The course will involve an individual session with the trainer, possible site visits and online content. Please contact jude@oileain.ie

Community Education Courses

- Cape Clear Island – Felt Making with Catherine. 2nd of November – 30th November. 5-week course
- Fitness Classes with Shane, 4th of November, 6-week program.
- Sherkin Island – Ceramics Class with Nicola Kelly, Group 1: 12th and 19th November; Group 2: 26th November & 3rd December
- Bere Island – Arts and Crafts with Brian. 12th November – 3rd of December

BLUEWAYS - DONEGAL

A number of organisations including Comharchumann na nOileán Bheaga, Comharchumann Thoraigh, Donegal County Council, Údarás na Gaeltachta and Comhar na nOileán came together to explore the possibility of developing a Blueway between the small islands of Donegal and the adjacent mainland area. Funding has now been granted to fund an Animator to carry out the development work which will include:

- Develop Blueway pilot sites selection criteria
- Assess and ‘write up’ selected trails (kayak, snorkel, walks, marine related) for inclusion in the Blueways project
- Secure approval of Blueway pilot sites by National Trails Office
- Promote and create awareness of the Blueways Pilot project
- Develop and implement a Blueways brand, marketing strategy and pilot site infrastructure plan

The work will involve a high level of engagement with the local community along the trail sites. Please work with us in bringing this Blueway trail to fruition.

This will also create wonderful opportunities for outdoor recreational activities on the Islands and adjacent mainland coastal areas. If you have an idea, get in touch with us. We will explore a number of funding streams with you.

BLUEWAYS - CORK ISLANDS

An initial meeting has taken place to explore the opportunity of joining up the Cork Islands under an ambitious Blueway Development that would develop trails to and on the Islands and connect up to existing mainland trails. Comhar na nOileán, Cork Sports Partnership and local community groups are spearheading the development. The plan is to engage an Animator to work with the communities and other stakeholders on the Cork Islands and adjacent mainland areas. Before an application to Blueways Ireland Accreditation process can be made, the following has to be documented and assessed:

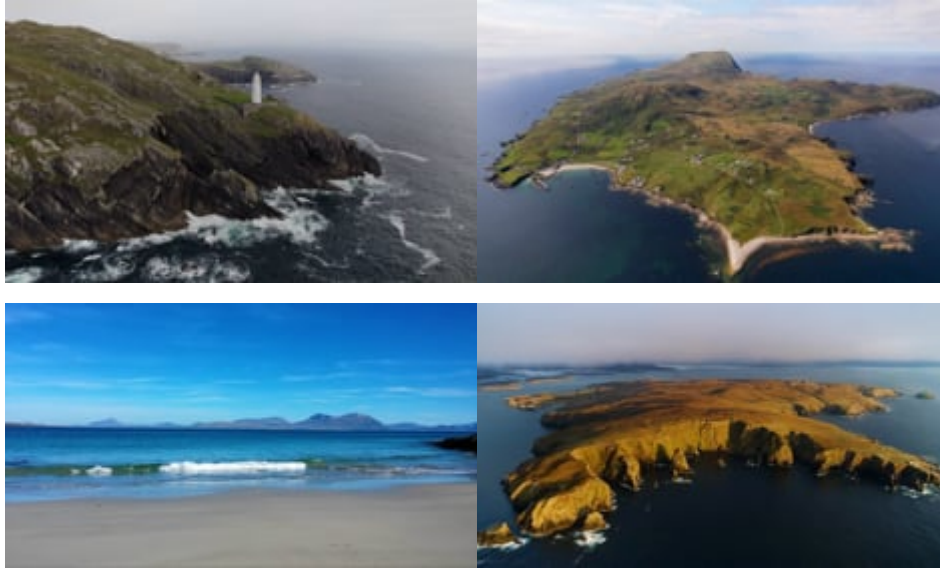
- Location
- Activities and Distance (e.g. Snorkelling and general beach use)
- General Information (e.g. Parking, child-friendly facilities, toilets, lifeguards)
- Signage
- Trailhead (e.g. Hire equipment, trained guide, access to fresh water, changing facilities)
- Entrance and Exit issues
- Infrastructure requirements
- Trail width, visibility, special interest, navigation (what you can see, flora and fauna, shellfish, range of seaweeds, birds etc)
- Resources; Accommodation, dining etc.

Therefore, we would appreciate cooperation in collating and compiling information.

OUTDOOR RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE SCHEME (ORIS) FUNDING FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE ISLANDS 2022 *‘OUT AND ABOUT ON THE OFFSHORE ISLANDS’*

Comhar na nOileán, following a successful application to ORIS, have engaged HG Production Ltd. to make and produce a 4-minute video to be easily broken down into 4 x 1-minute videos best representing the islands in the 4 regions of Ireland. The video(s) will feature outdoor activity across the Marine/Outdoor Sector and will showcase other activities such as cycling walking and rock climbing. The filming took place during August 2021.

The video will be used to encourage additional visitors to the Islands after Covid 19 and to showcase what the islands have to offer.



The purpose of the video is:

- To enhance the visibility of activity tourism on the offshore Islands.
- To promote walking, cycling trails/activity and water sports such as sailing, kayaking, diving, snorkeling, and paddle-boarding on the islands.
- To offer the visitor exceptional insights into lifestyles that offer tranquility, relaxation, spirituality, fine food and memorable experiences that encapsulate the attractions of Ireland’s wild Atlantic ways.
- To encourage visitors back to the islands, post COVID 19, featuring the video on Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and other modes of social media in 2022.
- To allow businesses to use the 1 min regional videos for promotion on their websites in 2022 to promote maritime and other activities to attract visitors.

This project is funded by the Dept. of Rural and Community Development, Comhar na nOileán, Comhdháil Oileáin na hÉireann and the air service and ferry companies who contributed to the funding. We would like to express our thanks to HG Productions LTD., all the funders and supporters.

We will be sending a region-specific version of the 1-minute videos to the ferry operators and service providers who contributed some match funding to the project.

Arranmore

Congratulations to Comharchumann Oileán Árann Mhór CTR and the Arranmore Islanders who are at an advanced stage in the Development of the Burtonport to Arranmore Blueway. Earlier this year funding was granted through LEADER for a Development, Promotional, Marketing and Management Plan for the proposed Blueway Development at Árann Mhór Island & Burtonport.

During October 2021 further funding was granted through ORIS to acquire Blueway signage for water and land-based trails on Arranmore Island and Burtonport



Access Point
Áit Rochtana



Sailing Point
Pointe Seoltóireachta 5KM



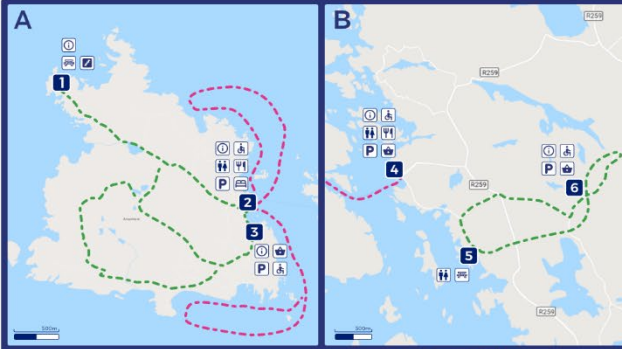

Information Point
Pointe Faisnéise 12KM



Arranmore Blueway
Bealach Gorm Árann Mhór

Visit the Arranmore Blueway Today

Advice Advice

- Information Point
- Car Parking
- Public Bathrooms
- Wheelchair Accessible
- Steps
- Accommodation
- Picnic
- Food and Drink
- Shops
- Cycling Routes
- Sailing Routes
- Hiking Routes
- Kayaking Routes

Activities

1	2
3	4
5	6

Call 999 or 112 in an emergency
Gloigh or 999 nó 112 i gcás eigeandála

Map Trails **Grades**





Clare Island's Connected Health Living Lab



Exciting developments are planned for Clare Island in the provision of E-Health.

This project aims to develop Clare Island as the first place in Ireland with a Community-wide, proactive virtual healthcare system:

- Designed by the citizens and HSE together in a public and patient involvement (PPI) process,
- Creating the healthiest population in the World, and
- A new care model for adoption across Ireland.

The Clare Island community is quick to say that they have the best personal care in the country: with two local resident nurses and a weekly doctor visit providing clinic and home care of the highest order.

However, Clare Island has many healthcare challenges:

- No resident doctor.
- No pharmacy.
- Resident public health nurse only for treating minor accidents.
- An aging Health Clinic which is no longer fit for purpose.
- Lack of appropriate transport to medical centres.
- A helipad which is inadequate for current needs.
- Communications sub optimal.
- Isolation pronounced in winter.
- Small community with concerns about privacy.

The Impact of the Development will be:

- Clare Island to become a beacon for connected health
- An ideal test bed
- Lightbulb moment for healthcare provision
- Creates a space for radical innovation
- Wellness focus, not sickness
- Intervention at early stage
- Empowerment of Islanders to manage their own health
- Isolation reduction throughout the year
- Health promotion integrated with health care
- Improved digital connectivity creates new opportunities

The project partners are Cliara Development, HSE, Cisco, Manna, NUI Galway, Think Biosolution, Mayo County Council, The Western Development Commission and the Dept of Rural and Community Development.

With initial funding by CISCO and the Science Foundation of Ireland, the Clare Island Living Lab is a long-term project designed to place Ireland at the forefront of proactive virtual health care worldwide.

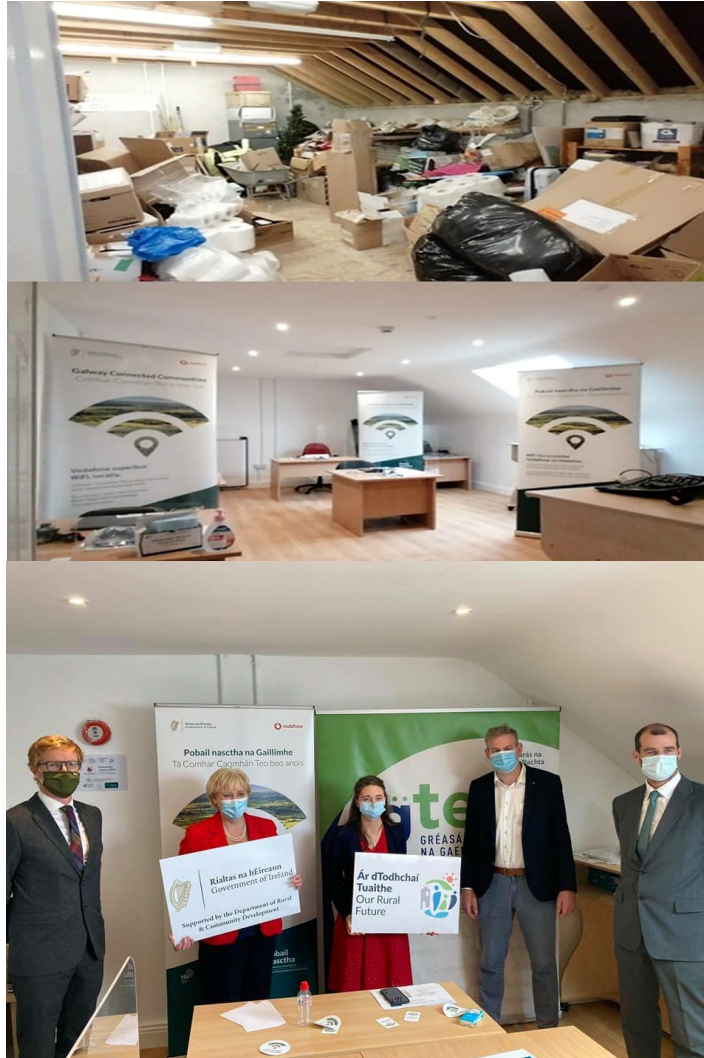
We wish Brendan Tobin, the team at Cliara Development and all the project partners the very best of luck and we will follow this development with interest.

Co-Working Spaces on Islands

We look at Inis Oírr, Clare Island and a longer article on the first Island Digital Hub on Arranmore

Inis Oírr

This summer, Comhar Caomhán Teo. created a co-working space from a storage area in the cooperative offices on Inis Oírr. This followed the installation of the Broadband Connection Point. People can now rent the space by the hour, by the week, month or on a long-term basis. The refurbishment of the room was supported by Galway County Council and the National Broadband Plan. We wish Comhar Caomhán the best of luck with the space.



L-R: Rónán Mac an Iomaire, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Minister Heather Humphreys, Chloe Ní Mháille, Manager Comhar Caomhán Teo, Senator Sean Kyne, Ruairí Ó Neill, Údarás na Gaeltachta.

MINISTER FOR RURAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT HEATHER HUMPHREYS VISITED INIS OÍRR DURING JULY 2021.

THE MAIN TOPIC UNDER DISCUSSION WAS THE PROPOSED PIER DEVELOPMENT ON THE ISLAND. MINISTER HUMPHREYS AND HER ENTOURAGE MET THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF COMHAR CAOMHÁN TEO.

SHE THEN MET WITH COMHAR NA NÓILEÁN WHERE THE FUTURE OF PROGRAMMES SUCH AS LEADER AND SICAP FOR THE IRISH ISLANDS WERE DISCUSSED. WE ARE GRATEFUL TO THE MINISTER AND TO THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BAIREBRE NIC AONGHUSA, AS WELL AS OUR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE'S SENATOR SEÁN KYNE AND ÉAMON Ó CUÍV FOR TAKING THE TIME TO SEE AND HEAR THE ISSUES FIRSTHAND.



Clare Island

We would also like to congratulate Clare Island on the development of a co-working space on the Island.

This co-working space can hold up to 8 spaces whilst following HSE guidelines (increasing up to 11 when restrictions ease). The community centre also hosts the island broadband connection point (BCP). High speed broadband is available in the co-working space, in the main sports hall and in a multipurpose room, used for remote learning and for taking exams by students during lockdown. During Covid, a number of young islanders returned to the island to work remotely. One couple have used the BCP successfully to work for US based companies. The BCP also made it possible for Ruairidh McCabe to be one of the first, if not the first, islander in the country to successfully defend his PhD thesis from their own island.

The facilities at the broadband connection point will be augmented this year with the installation of a virtual health consultation room and a conference room/remote learning and teaching classroom. Plans for a new office space for Cliara and the Living lab program are also being advanced. The new installations will be in the form of several prefabricated pods. These are seen as interim measures on the path to the development of a dedicated co-working /business incubator in the coming years.



Arranmore

MODAM – Ireland’s First Offshore Digital Hub by Adrian Begley

In a world where life seems to be moving faster than ever, it is sometimes difficult to strike a balance between being productive in the working world while still being able to maintain a good quality of life. It is not always easy to find a workspace which provides what is needed for one to excel in their chosen field of work while still being able to live in an idyllic setting. Imagine having a five-minute commute from your front door to your office, and being able to sit in a modern, luxurious workspace at a desk overlooking a beach and rolling waves, while still having access to highspeed internet connectivity and state of the art web conferencing facilities as good as you would find in Dublin, London or New York.

While this might seem like a dream, it is now a reality on Arranmore Island, County Donegal. With less opportunities for employment in traditional industries, many of the island’s school leavers have been moving into industries on leaving third level education leading to Arranmore’s youth moving away from their homeplace. In an attempt to turn the tide on this in 2017, Arranmore Island Community Council embarked on a project called ‘Cominghome’ and asked the Arranmore diaspora what was needed to make their island a place they felt they could return home to live once more. From that survey it was clear that, while Arranmore had so much going for it, what was missing was employment opportunities and highspeed broadband to allow those who could work remotely to do so from Arranmore.

With funding from the Department of Community and Rural Development obtained through Donegal County Council, the island’s council set about establishing a digital hub in which there would be a shared workspace with reliable highspeed internet. By Spring 2019, this project had come to fruition and Arranmore Island is now able to boast Ireland’s first offshore digital hub. Named MODAM, an abbreviation of Mol Oifig Digiteach Árainn Mhór, the new community run initiative has gained global interest. This is in part due to an advertising campaign by Three Ireland who have worked in partnership with the island council to supply internet connectivity to the hub and the wider community. Also, with assistance from the creative media company Boys & Girls, the island council have sent out an open letter to the world announcing that Arranmore’s digital hub, and indeed other businesses on the island, are now open, ready and able to interact with others around the world with their new improved internet connectivity.

The digital hub is already a place where islanders frequently work remotely. In a very short space of time, the diaspora have quickly caught on to the idea of being able to extend their holidays on the island, and in some cases, trebling the length of their normal time “at home” as a direct result of this. Bookings for desk space in MODAM during the summer months are already being made by the diaspora and there is now talk of individuals considering moving home to the island now that they have a facility which allows secure, fast and reliable internet. There are even islanders considering taking on a new career which would allow them to work from Arranmore and the island council have already been working with *Grow Remote* to show those interested how they can make such a move.

It’s not just the diaspora they are reaching out. Arranmore Island Community Council are also very aware of the digital nomad market; individuals who like to travel while working from anywhere in the world as long as they have the connectivity to do so. Such digital nomads can now travel to a unique, idyllic location such as Arranmore Island and work in a space which is as modern and fresh looking as any new office in any major city in the world. Not only does it have the office space, but it also has a breakout room for meetings and state of the art video conferencing facility all using technology thanks to partnerships with Samsung and Cisco. The facility even has en-suite accommodation on site. Right on the doorstep of MODAM there is a golden beach where you can kayak or sail and endless country lanes to explore on foot or by bicycle (which you can hire from the island community centre). All this is in addition to the several bars, cafés and self-catering accommodation available on the island.

Far from being a quaint throwback to Ireland of years gone by, Arranmore Island is a vibrant community which, with the addition now of MODAM, is the ideal place to strike that perfect work-life balance. With nearby Donegal airport providing 45-minute flights to international airports (Dublin and Glasgow), Arranmore Island is on the doorstep of the world, and might well be the pearl in the worlds oyster.



THANKS FOR THE ARTICLE TO ADRIAN BEGLEY. WE WISH THEM THE VERY BEST OF LUCK WITH THIS EXCEPTIONAL DEVELOPMENT.



Irish Islands Youth Forum

Comhdháil Oileáin na hÉireann welcomes young Islanders around Ireland to take part in a new 'Youth Forum'. If you are a young person and would like to have your say on the issues affecting Islands and collaborate with other Islanders please email:

comhdhailoileainnaheireann@gmail.com

A letter of permission is needed from parents / guardians if you're under 18

Deadline: 5pm 24 November 2021





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