



Slí

ISSUE 2- DECEMBER 2021

A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO YOU ALL

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

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Comhar na nOileán serving the communities of the Islands, the Gaeltacht and Peripheral Communities.



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Funding Opportunities Early January 2022

Community Activities Fund

The launch of the Community Activities Fund gives an opportunity to community groups across Ireland, particularly those in disadvantaged areas (i) with their non-pay running costs for example utility bills (electricity costs, refuse charges, heating charges) or other non-pay operating costs for example rental/lease costs, insurance bills. **AND** (ii) Groups will also be able to use the funding to carry out necessary repairs and improvements to their facilities, purchase equipment such as tables and chairs, tools and signage, laptops and printers, lawnmowers, canopies, and training equipment etc. The Department is stating that only operating/running costs related to this period are eligible - 1st July 2021 to 30th June 2022.

It is rare and unusual for funding to be available for operating costs, and this fund recognises the loss of income that may be impacting groups because of Covid-19. It will be administered through the Local Community Development Committees in each county, and Comhar na nOileán will be posting the relevant closing dates on our social media pages. Each Local and Community Development Committee will be setting their own closing date for applications But no later than 28th February 2022.

LEADER Transitional Programme

Don't forget LEADER funding is still available to support rural businesses and community projects.

Talk to one of our staff who will provide one-to-one support today. 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

The Impact of the LEADER Programme on Projects

Over the next few months, we are choosing projects, both private and community, that have a positive impact on the Islands and surrounding areas on which they are based. It should also be remembered that the promoters themselves invest considerable funds in these projects and take significant risks with their own funds, albeit with carefully compiled market research and business plans. In this issue we look at a project located on Tory Island, Co. Donegal.

Slí Mara Teoranta, Tory Island.



Séamus Mac Ruaidhrí and his wife Jacqui have been running a shop, post office and rental apartments on Tory Island for many years. It is a bit of a misnomer to call what they do a 'business' as much of what they do could be classed as essential community services. They merely eke out a living on an island with only 117 people. It's the only place on the island of Tory where you can get a pint of milk, buy a bag of coal or even a cup of tea for the visitor on an island which can be cut-off due to inclement weather, for up to 40 days a year. Anyone who knows James and Jacqui, knows their generosity and how facilitative they are. Funding for a boat has been secured to enable Séamus to add another element to his tourism business to take people out angling, guided tours around the island and in times of crisis to bring people out to the mainland when the ferry is not able to travel. That is what happened recently to our Project Officer Joe Curran, when he was stranded on the island due to bad weather. The great seaman that Séamus is, brought him out safely through the turbulent Tory sound. The vessel is not only used for tourism purposes but is also available for emergency trips and to bring essential supplies in time of need to the island. It was a privilege to be able to work with Séamus and Jacqui, and to assist them in expanding their business with the development of Slí Mara Teoranta. This demonstrates how LEADER projects can improve lives economically and socially not only for the promoter, but for the wider community in which they are based.





IRISH ISLANDS MARINE RESOURCE ORGANISATION (IIMRO)

Founded in 2014, IIMRO is a representative group and cooperative with members across the offshore islands in Donegal, Mayo, Galway, and Cork. It was established to represent islanders regarding the many issues facing the fishing and marine industries on the islands. Fishing is vitally important in maintaining island communities, and is central to local economies, seasonal employment, tourism, the rescue services, as well as our cultural heritage across the islands. IIMRO was recognised as a Producer Organisation in May of this year, and since then has been working with members to develop a three-year production and marketing plan.



The plan has been recently approved by the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine and will facilitate several initiatives which will benefit members and the wider island communities. Initiatives such as improving prices for catches, onshore infrastructure, marketing, encouraging new entrants, recognising the role of women in fisheries as well as various training programmes are planned for the duration of the plan.

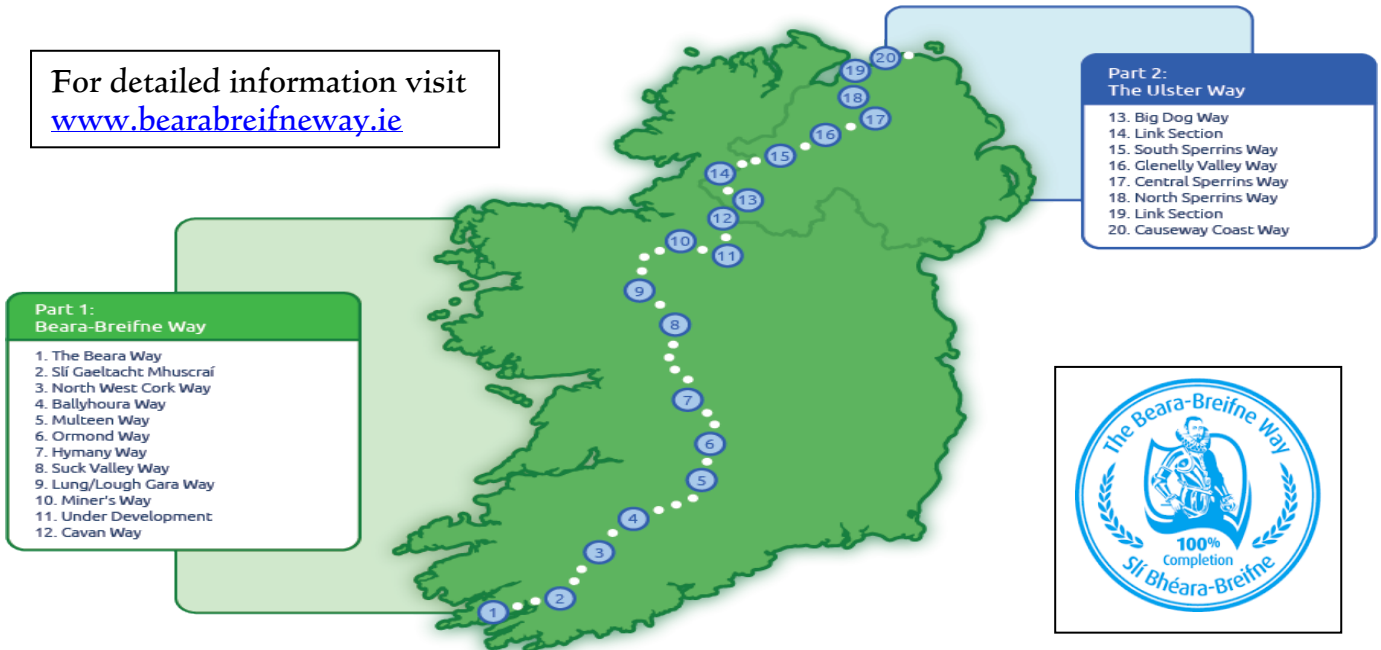


Producer Organisation recognition gives IIMRO representation on various consultative committees such as the Quota Management Advisory Committee, the Brexit Seafood Taskforce, EMFF monitoring committee and others where we continue to raise island issues and offer solutions. We work in partnership with other island organisations such as local development groups, Comhdháil Oileáin na hÉireann, Comhar na nOileán, European Small Islands Federation (ESIN) and the Low Impact Fishers of Europe (LIFE) to raise awareness of island issues at a national and EU level. There are major changes proposed for the marine sphere over the next year which will have an impact for many years to come. These include the upcoming marine protected area proposals, offshore renewable energy developments, the marine strategy framework directive and marine spatial plan proposals. An informed and united voice from the offshore islands will be more important than ever.

To find out more about IIMRO's work visit www.iimro.org

The Beara Breifne Way

Let your Journey Begin!



The Beara Breifne Way is a 500km walkway from the tip of the Beara Peninsula at Dursey Island in Co. Cork to Blacklion in Co Cavan. The route closely follows the line of the 17th century march of O'Sullivan Beare, the last great chieftain of the West Cork and South Kerry area. The route runs through counties Cork, Kerry, Limerick, Tipperary, Offaly, Galway, Roscommon, Sligo, Leitrim and Cavan.

Comhar na nOileán acted as a funding and administrative partner for the development of the Beara Breifne Way. As part of this work, a tender process was carried out to appoint a company to undertake the necessary works. This contract was awarded to Signiatec Ltd. and Jim O Sullivan was appointed to the role of Clerk of Works.

The works involved upgrading elements of the various established routes, extending, and completing other walks and developing links between various established routes along the way. Prior to this phase of the project, there were numerous sections of the Beara Breifne trail not developed while others had lost their trail status due to lack of maintenance. This work was done in conjunction with the Councils, Community Groups, and landowners.

A passport book and stamps were also developed as part of this project. This allows trail users to record/document their progress along the route as they complete various stages of the walkway. Full scale promotion and marketing of the trail has yet to take place with further development of the walkway expected in the coming years.



How does the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) make a difference to Islanders?

Assisting with Digital Constraints

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic it has become evident that some islanders did not have access to the necessary hardware needed to stay in contact with friends and family or engage in educational and social activities. With the help of local communities, we were able to identify individuals who would greatly benefit from access to this hardware. By developing a Material Loan Scheme, we used SICAP funds to purchase twelve internet accessible Acorn pads. These Acorns are currently out on loan to digitally isolated members of the community across the seven West Cork Islands.



As a result of our own research, we saw an opportunity to extend this scheme. With many islanders now working from home, and children attending online classes, it became clear that many households would not have a suitable number of devices to meet their needs.

We took the opportunity to apply to the Mitigating Against Educational Disadvantage Fund through the West Cork ETB in late 2020 to secure funding for 12 laptops that could be loaned out to community members. These laptops are out on loan across the seven West Cork Islands. They are currently supporting young people to attend college, secondary school students, adult learners and helping islanders to work and stay connected. We are extending our loan scheme this year to include digital support for two community groups. The Whiddy Island Development Association will be supporting the community to access training, whilst the Cléire Community Sponsorship Group will be offering support to a refugee family to assist them with their educational and language needs as well as any other required assistance. This is one of many examples of direct supports to individuals and communities that make a tangible difference in people's lives.



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Take a trip “OVERSEAS” to Ireland’s offshore islands

Our recent press release to launch our Promotional Video of the Irish Islands.

Are you dreaming of a trip overseas in 2022?

Does your heartache for chillout time, unspoilt beaches with golden sands, tranquility, crisp and clear blue water, rugged coastlines, majestic landscapes, and glorious sunsets?

Maybe gentle morning rambles on a scenic nature trail before stopping off at the local café for a relaxing coffee sounds more like your ideal break?

Well, you can have all that and more right here at home in Ireland on our many islands that are spread along the majestic Wild Atlantic Way that stretches from Donegal in the Northwest, right down south to the coast of Cork.



Join us for this short promotional film that highlights the wide array of outdoor activities and facilities available on the offshore islands, all set to the backdrop of some breathtaking scenery. The place, the people, the welcome, the culture and, of course, the craic. Ireland has an array of stunning islands dotted around the coast, each with their own unique character that sets them apart from the mainland.

A visit to these picturesque islands feels like a lifetime away from the hustle and bustle of the mainland. Escaping to the islands offers an amazing range of activities to suit all from the most adventurous, to those seeking rest and relaxation. From thrill seekers rock climbing and surfing to the ocean tranquility experienced by early-bird kayakers, there is endless excitement and pleasure that can be found on these picturesque islands. Picture yoga at sunrise with the Atlantic waves rolling gently in as you leave behind the stresses of

daily living. And all this is just a short ferry ride away.

Explore a wide range of outdoor activities available including walking, cycling, water sports, bird watching, rock climbing and holistic escapes as we present an alternative to holidaying abroad. This promotional film will offer a unique and authentic look at island communities. The striking scenic images speak for themselves, and the local islander’s input brings a personal and intimate touch to the film. This ensures that a vibrant and authentic reflection of island life is presented which will act as a wonderful advert to attract visitors from across Ireland, and beyond.



The promotional film was directed by award winning documentary maker Helena Gallagher. Helena has extensive experience as an interviewer along with a track record of getting the best from contributors. As an island native herself, her passion and insight into what the islands offer gives us an authentic and reflective look at the activities that are available to visitors of all shapes and sizes. From water sports, cycling and rambling to relaxation and appreciation of nature we will show that the offshore islands have something for everyone with a memorable experience guaranteed.

This project is being funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development, Comhar na nOileán CTR and Comhdháil Oileáin na hÉireann under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme.

Special thank you to the passenger service providers who contributed towards the match funding of this project.

Visit www.oileain.ie for further details on service providers to the offshore islands.



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A Government of Ireland initiative

Think before you meet up.

R.S.V.P.

Risk, Symptoms, Venue, People.

Ask yourself the questions overleaf and assess your level of risk or visit gov.ie/riskaware

#BeRiskAware



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RISK

Am I vaccinated / have I received my booster?

Being vaccinated offers good protection against severe illness and hospitalisation and lowers the risk to you and others.

Am I more vulnerable than others?

Activities involving meeting others is higher risk so you need to take steps to protect yourself.

Will I be there longer than 2 hours?

The shorter the duration of an activity, the lower the risk.

Will the event be indoors?

Indoor activity is riskier than outdoor activity.

If the activity is indoors, will there be adequate ventilation?

Let fresh air in to reduce the risk of COVID-19.

SYMPTOMS

Do I have symptoms that could be associated with COVID-19?

If you are displaying any symptoms, you should stay at home and arrange a PCR test – do not go out.

Does anyone I'm meeting have symptoms that could be associated with COVID-19?

Feel comfortable asking the people you are meeting if they have symptoms and if they do, advise them to stay at home and book a PCR test.

VENUE

Can I keep a safe distance from others?

By keeping your distance from others, you can reduce your risk – be aware that this may be more difficult in some places.

Will the venue be crowded?

Avoiding crowded places will reduce the risk associated with an activity.

Will I/we wear masks?

Wearing masks reduces the risk for everyone.

Is it a well-managed premises?

If a venue is not following public health guidance, including checking your vaccine pass, there may be a higher risk. You should take your business elsewhere.

PEOPLE

How many people am I meeting?

The more people you meet, the greater the risk.

How many households are meeting up?

Getting together with your own household is lower risk. The more households you meet with, the greater the risk.

Am I meeting vulnerable people?

You should take particular care if you are meeting with vulnerable people. You should take steps to protect them such as wearing a mask or taking an antigen test before meeting them.

Are the people I am meeting vaccinated / have they received their booster?

Being vaccinated offers good protection against severe illness and hospitalisation and lowers the risk to you and others.

Heritage Capacity Fund

An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council



The Heritage Capacity Fund (formerly The Heritage Sector Support Fund) aims to support the capacity of organisations, with a demonstrated national relevance, working in the heritage sector by providing funding towards their core costs:

- to build capacity in the heritage sector by developing and strengthening the skills, processes, and resources that heritage organisations need to survive, adapt, and thrive following the Covid-19 pandemic.
- to support heritage organisations who play a key role in the heritage infrastructure of Ireland and are vital to the delivery of national policy and plans.

Who can apply:

Not-for-profit, heritage-focused non-governmental organisations (NGOs), with a **demonstrated national relevance**.

1. The purpose of the organisation must relate to one of the aspects of heritage mentioned in the [Heritage Acts 1995, 2018](#), or organisations engaged in the protection of intangible cultural heritage as part of Ireland's commitments to the [2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage](#).
2. Demonstrated national relevance – the organisation must carry out work that has application **at a national scale** or, its work is being used to inform policies at a national scale.
3. Work plan- the organisation must be undertaking innovative small to medium scale actions that provide clear outcomes that assist in the delivery of one or more of the following - [the Heritage Council's strategic plan 2018 -2022](#); [the National Biodiversity Action Plan](#); and the emerging national heritage plan [Heritage Ireland 2030](#).

What can organisations apply for:

Applicants are asked to provide a **costed work plan for 2022** covering at least one of the following:

1. Plans which assist their recovery from the economic impact of the COVID 19 pandemic and that helps organisations become more financially resilient.
2. Initiatives that deliver heritage priorities based on programmes that organizations are running already or to initiate new projects.

Note: *The Heritage Council is not proposing that new projects be started to avail of this funding but that existing core programmes can be protected.*

Types of actions that could be included in a Programme of Work for 2022:

- Actions that communicate the importance of heritage through advocacy work.
- Actions that support partnership and networking events that address common challenges and needs within the sector.
- Provision of community training, advice and support to increase access to and awareness of heritage.
- Actions that promote the practice of conservation to internationally accepted standards through the provision of continuing professional development, professional accreditation, publications, training workshops and bursaries.
- Data collection and research relating to Ireland's heritage that can be used for formulating future policy and advice, training workshops and bursaries.
- Testing and consulting on new activities that will help recovery and diversify your income streams.

Apply via the Heritage Council's [online grant system](#) from 25th November 2021-11th January 2022. Please note that The Heritage Council does not provide or accept paper forms.

Timescale

- Open for applications: 25 November 2021 – 11 January 2022 at 5pm.
- January/February 2022 In-house professional officer assessment and external panel assessment.
- Approval of grant offers by Heritage Council board at its February meeting.
- Notification of outcome to applicants - early March 2022.
- Final report and claim for payment submitted through the Heritage Council's online grant system 18th November 2022.

Wishing all the Irish Islands a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Máire Uí Mhaoláin
POF /CEO, Inis Oírr 099-75096 maire@oileain.ie

Marian Uí Chonghaile
Riarthóir Airgeadais / Financial Administrator, Inis Oírr 099-75096 marian@oileain.ie

Máirín Ní Chonghaile
Riarthóir Oifige / Office Administrator, Inis Oírr 099-75096 mairin@oileain.ie

Mary Lavelle
Oifigeach Forbartha / Development Officer, Inishbofin 099-75096 ext 101 mary@oileain.ie

Joe Ó Curraoin
Oifigeach Forbartha / Development Officer, Inis Oírr/Na Forbacha 099-75096 ext 100 joe@oileain.ie

Jude Gilbert
Oifigeach Forbartha / Development Officer, Iarthar Chorcaí 099-75096 ext 105 jude@oileain.ie

Conor MacThaidhg
Riarthóir Tograí / Project Administrator 099 75096 conor@oileain.ie

Dáithí Ó Briain
Riarthóir Tograí / Project Administrator 099 75096 daithi@oileain.ie

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