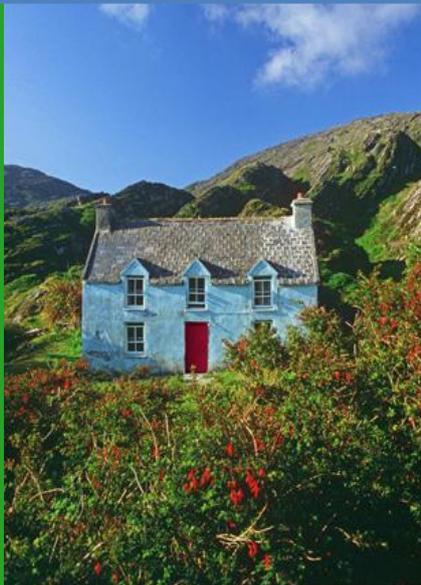


# Communities Creating Jobs



**West Cork Housing Association: Help With Mortgages In Arrears**

**Ballinrobe, Co. Mayo -A Story Of Regeneration**



**Ireland Reaching Out To Global Diaspora**

**Údarás Na Gaeltachta Endorse CCJ**

**Newsletter Spring 2016**

**Vol 12  
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### Editorial by Donal Traynor, Chairman CCJ

The recent general election debates highlighted that many people were suffering greatly from seven years of austerity and have yet to benefit from the national economic recovery. The new government will have to address difficult issues and hardships that remain in place. Trickle down economics without a definite commitment to its arrival in communities will no longer suffice. The people have spoken!

The implementation of the CCJ Jobs model in communities is a low cost, highly effective empowering methodology for the creation of jobs. Ten new jobs in every community is a very attractive proposition for any new government to consider in these difficult times.

Positive developments already announced for 2016 include:  
High speed broadband in every home and business

Leader, CEDRA, Regional Action Plan for Jobs, Co Councils and other funding programmes are due in 2016.

Continued development of social enterprise forms the backbone of local economic prosperity. Increased tourism numbers are already reported in the first two months of 2016 (up 20%). The new Public Participation Network is engaging communities in local development.

Wishing everyone a pleasant St Patrick's Day and that the celebration may inspire people to engage in the regeneration of their communities and achieve a better, more prosperous Ireland.





## West Cork News by Carol Gilbert

### •Housing Association are stepping in to help people in arrears with their mortgage

• Carbery HA buys houses from banks and through a means-tested long term lease which is similar to the lease a local authority would offer. Carbery Housing Association was set up in 2001 to help with the need for low cost homes in Skibbereen and Baltimore where holiday homes had driven most houses beyond the pocket of young buyers. Carbery Housing Association currently has just four properties. They need to raise €3,500 per home and can then borrow money from AIB Bank to buy houses. Some Carbery Housing Association members have put up their own money in the form of a long term loan to help raise the €3,500 and various fundraising events are ongoing. Tenants will not be able to buy their home at the end of their tenancy as the property remains in the ownership of Carbery Housing Association who would re-let the property to new tenants

•However, leases are long and affordable. Jose Ospina of Carbery Housing Association says, 'The house will remain their home for as long as they need it. 'Carbery Housing Association hopes to continue to grow. For further information please contact: [office@carberyhousing.eu](mailto:office@carberyhousing.eu)



### •Community Based Property Marking Scheme

•Ballydehob, Schull and Goleen Community Councils, are at the vanguard of a pilot scheme to combat property crime. Together with other local community groups in the Mizen area of West Cork, they are the first in the country to lead a pilot scheme to combat property crime. Launched on Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup>, in the Harbour View Hotel, Schull, items such as bicycles, laptops, music equipment and mobile phones may be marked with the owner's eircode number. This is unique to all households and can act as an effective crime deterrent to help reduce burglary thefts. Farm equipment such as power tools, chain saws, lawnmowers and of particular interest in the Mizen geographic area is the opportunity to mark all boating equipment. Volunteers in the three communities will be trained to operate the state of the art property marking equipment, and will offer a call out service to each household to mark their valuables over the coming months. The first of its kind in this country, a similar scheme launched by North Yorkshire police in the past year, proved to be a deterrent to thieves. There is also the increased opportunity of police being able to return items, if stolen, to their rightful owners. The initiative was supported by Muintir Na Tire and Neighbourhood Watch. Both organisations have worked for over 30 years in partnership with An Garda Síochána to help reduce crime and the fear of crime in both urban and rural areas. It is hoped the success of this initial pilot scheme will encourage the roll out of an All-Ireland property marking initiative.

## Visitors to Dunhill Multi-Educational Centre Waterford



Michelstown Credit Union  
(L-R) Senan Cooke DREL  
Andrew O'Regan, MCU  
Michael Coughlan MCU  
Dermot Long Manager MCU  
Conor O'Brien MCU  
Natacha Haslam-Hopwood  
Seamus Goggin CCJ

Údarás na Gaeltacha visited  
Dunhill Multi-Educational L-R;  
Conall Mac Gearalt (An  
Chiarraí), Eamonn Ó  
Neachtain, Mícheal Ó hÉanaigh  
(Dún na nGall) Senan Cooke  
Dunhill Rural Enterprises,  
Fionnán Ó hÓgain Seamus  
Goggin (CCJ)

Students from St Augustine's  
College Dungarvan on a visit to  
Dunhill Ecopark. A slide show  
presentation was given and the  
various enterprises on site were  
explored. Teachers Margot McGann  
(at right) and Geraldine Heffernan  
(left) enjoyed the tour which  
included lunch at the Castle Café!

# BALLINROBE, CO MAYO



Ballinrobe is an interesting case study on the potential of small town regeneration. It has many assets that have yet to be developed and that would benefit from the new funding supports coming on stream in 2016. There are many new job opportunities to be developed over the next 5 years. Much work has been completed to date and TACU (support) the local Family Resource Centre has been a driving force for development of people and place. Its positive influence has seeped into many

different aspects of town life. Tacú services impact on the population of town of 3692 people and its hinterland involving parishes of Shrulce, Tourmakeady (Gaeltacht) Glencorrib, Cong and Cross. This wider area has a population of 12,000 and is known as the Lake District of Mayo. Ballinrobe is located in a rural setting with agriculture, tourism, fishing and SMEs are the main employment options open to job seekers. Ballinrobe Mart is a very busy centre. The surrounding towns of Tuam, Castlebar, Westport and Galway provide employment in public services, manufacturing and private services.

## Heritage and History

Ballinrobe and environs has been recognised as a very marketable tourism destination. On entering the town you will view a statue commemorating John King a native who emigrated to the US and was awarded 2 Congressional medals of Honour from US Navy. A US navy missile armed destroyer has been named after him – UUS John King. The pretty village of Cong is close by and is an example of how local assets can be maximised. Their abbey, riverside walk and the international publicity garnered through acting as the setting for the famous film ‘The Quiet Man’ starring John Wayne and Maureen O’Hara attracts 14 bus tours to the town every day throughout the tourist season. What makes Cong so special is the careful way historical features are presented. Exceptional examples are the local visitor centre, signposted walking /tourist trails and special guided tours around the town. Ballinrobe has equally outstanding attractions that if properly developed and presented could increase employment and economic success for shops, restaurants, cafés, food producers, butchers, bakeries, printers, artisans, artists, craft workers and other small enterprises.

**Cultural tourism** is an important element in the overall national tourism proposition and in this regard Ballinrobe has serious potential in this regard. The town contains many interesting and historical structures. It has unique architecture, a combination of architectural styles spanning centuries which gives a special feeling for the past. These include Ballinrobe Castle, Infantry Barracks, several Ecclesiastical Sites, Bowers Riverside Walk and a number of industrial heritage sites. A major deficit is the lack of a town hall/ heritage centre to show case artefacts and provide a town centre which would engender civic pride and as a welcoming centre for locals and visitors. The mid- 18<sup>th</sup> century former courthouse/market house located on Main Street has been identified as the next big project by Tacú. It is to be renovated as a Town Hall/ Heritage Centre at a cost of €1m with €400,000 to be raised locally from voluntary effort. Ballinrobe has a very strong musical tradition and currently they host their annual musical in the local secondary school. It is intended that they will move to the Town Hall when it is constructed. The Musical Society has won many awards locally nationally and internationally. The 3 day ‘Queen of the Lakes Festival’ was re-organised in 2015 successfully. A 5 day festival is planned for 2016. Many additional events will be added to the 2015 itinerary. Ballinrobe will also host the County Fleadh Cheoil in 2016

**A Unique town.** The town is unique in different ways. It has successfully integrated a significant number of migrants including Hungarians, Latvians, Lithuanians, Polish and Romanians into the community. For such a small town it has a number of top of the range tourism, sports and recreation facilities. These include Ballinrobe Golf Course winner of best parkland course in Connaught for 2013 and 2015. Ballinrobe Racecourse follows Galway in leading the league of racecourses in the province. It was selected by Horseracing Ireland as racecourse of the year in 2013. It is also a premier angling location. Every August week-end a world trout fishing championship is held on Lough Mask and attracts many anglers from around the world.



**Education.** Ballinrobe has developed a strong educational network including 2 primary schools; St Joseph's Cloonliffen and Roxboro.

Its secondary school, Ballinrobe Community School has 635 students. It won the All-Ireland Colleges B Football Championship in 2011. It has Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim Education & Training Board (MSLETB) VTOS course running in the town. A very strong 'Youth Reach' organisation offers second chance education programmes. These include Junior and Leaving Cert Applied, Hairdressing, Home Economics, Metalwork, Woodwork, Physical Education and Enterprise. FETAC Level 4 certificate courses in Communications, IT Skills, Maths, Computer Applications, Personal & Interpersonal Development, Reception Skills, and Personal Care are offered along with Work Experience Placements. In 2014 Ballinrobe won the All-Ireland Girls Indoor Soccer Competition.

**Ballinrobe GAA Club-** has yet to win a Mayo senior football championship though it has produced many outstanding footballers. Current county star, Donal Vaughan plays for the local club along with 3 under 21 county players, Tony Walkin, Rory Keane and Sean O'Brien. In the 1990s Peter Forde one of Mayo's greatest ever full backs played for club and county. Stephen Rochford current Mayo manager lives nearby.

**Prominent People-**One of its best loved people is living in Dublin. Rory O'Neill (Panti Bliss) played a prominent role in the 2015 Marriage Equality

Referendum. An infamous historical person connected to the town is Captain Boycott. His nefarious activities conflicted with tenant farmers and the Land League Movement in late 1800s. He was ostracized and the word 'boycott' was added to the English Language/dictionary as a verb.

**Youth Café** -A suitable derelict building was acquired for renovation and has accommodated a first class youth café. It was funded through South Mayo Leader Partnership and National Lottery Funding with some local matching funding contributed to cover the full cost of the project. The building accommodates 200 youth on a weekly basis; an after-school facility attended by 23 kids, a mother and baby facility, parent and toddlers' facility, craft group, yoga classes and other activities and events. Special arrangements are organised with An Garda for targeted youth to attend for pool games on a Wednesday evening. Other activities include a Mindfulness programme, self-esteem programme, girls group, guitar and piano lessons, Jamming Sessions, Social Inclusion Group, philosophy group, drop in service and Coderdojo. The philosophy driving TACU services is one of inclusion and the search for solutions to social, cultural and economic issues. Everyone is included in the support structure including elderly and toddlers, abled and those with disabilities, unemployed and employed, girls and boys, women and men, native and migrant.



**For further information-** See the town's very successful website [www.historicalballinrobe.com](http://www.historicalballinrobe.com) run by a local volunteer. It is networked to the National Museum of Ireland. Just 6 years in operation it has built up a data base with support from all over the world. The website is an invaluable resource and has promoted Ballinrobe's special place in the promotion of Irish heritage. The next 5 years will witness the transformation of Ballinrobe into one of the most dynamic and resourceful towns in the country.





**Minister Deenihan, Laura Colleran, Clare Doyle and Mike Feerick at the Iveagh Gardens June 2015**

## Using modern technology to connect every community in Ireland with its global diaspora

Ireland Reaching Out (Ireland XO) connects people of Irish heritage around the world to their ancestral parishes and counties in Ireland. It provides local communities with a practical and scalable solution to developing and managing the relationship with their global diaspora, while creating international visibility for the local area itself.

Developing diaspora relations brings multi-level benefits to local communities: it establishes a global online network for people from the parish and those descendant from it; it increases the potential of tourism in area; it leverages business, cultural and sporting relationships to grow local initiatives and strengthen the community; it nurtures an interest in parish heritage to promote local identity and pride of place.

Ireland Reaching Out is a nationwide, non-profit diaspora programme and relies on a growing network of 600 local volunteers who contribute to the initiative in a variety of ways. The programme has two key concepts. The first is that of “reverse genealogy”, which involves researching those who left an area, tracing them and their descendants and inviting them to connect back to Ireland. The second is that of “meet & greet”, making sure that when someone of Irish heritage does return, they get a warm and knowledgeable welcome by someone familiar with the local area.

Most of the interaction happens on the Ireland XO website, which has over 80,000 members and is registering more than 600 new members every week. Every parish in Ireland, north and south, has its own space on IrelandXO.com, including a message board for engaging with the diaspora and an interactive area where it can promote local heritage, events and other community initiatives. New features are being added to the functionality of this website every month with the aim of creating a highly dynamic, interactive space that acts as both a gateway and an incubator of parish/diaspora relations. The collective presence of each parish and county in Ireland, ensures that IrelandXO.com is a highly visible online presence, which can be efficiently maintained at a globally significant level.

Every community in Ireland has a voice on IrelandXO.com and our local volunteer networks have been connecting with their global diaspora since 2009, when the programme began as a pilot in County Galway. It has been operating successfully at a national level since 2012 and today is uniquely positioned to develop the definitive global database of those with Irish heritage - opening up economic, social and cultural opportunity to Ireland and her people, wherever they are based.

In recognition of the importance of “a sense of place” for the Irish diaspora, and the need for local community engagement, Ireland Reaching Out plays a key role in the Government's policy for the Diaspora. The programme has been financially supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade since 2010, as part of its Emigrant Support Programme. As well as providing financial support the DFAT also provides strategic and operational support to the programme, leveraging inter-departmental relationships within the Government while promoting awareness of the initiative through their extensive network of consular and promotional agencies worldwide. Ireland XO also receives funding from The Heritage Council.

Ireland Reaching Out looks to the past to discover the story of our emigrants, but it is very much a programme about our future relationship with Irish people all over the world. Being Irish is about a shared cultural history and individual pride in an identity that is welcomed all over the world for its creativity, friendliness and uniqueness. These bonds are stronger than geographical boundaries and it is this pride of origin that has the power to unite all Irish people in the world today.

To find out how your community can engage with its diaspora and build its online global presence, visit [www.IrelandXO.com](http://www.IrelandXO.com) or email Laura Colleran at [lcolleran@IrelandXO.com](mailto:lcolleran@IrelandXO.com).

Conheady, Patrick 1,707,706 \*White \*Colored.  
 (Surname) (Christian name) (Army serial number) 330  
 Residence: 59 Vandam St., New York (Town or city) NEW YORK (County) (State)  
 \*Enlisted in U.S.A.R.C. Inducted at New York, N. Y. on Feb 25, 1918  
 Place of birth: Tulla Co., Clare, Ireland or date of birth: 24 5/12 yrs.  
 Organizations served in, with dates of assignments and transfers: Co. A 308 Inf Apr 4/18 to Oct 5/18.  
 Grades, with date of appointment: Pvt.  
 Engagements:  
 Served overseas from † Apr 6/18 to † Oct 5/18 from † to †  
 Killed in action Oct 5, 1918  
 Other wounds or injuries received in action: None  
 Person notified of death: Katie Walsh (Name) (Degree of relationship) Sister  
 57 Vandam street New York (City, town, or post office) (State or county?) N. Y.  
 Remarks:  
 Form No. 724-A, G. O. \*Strike out words not applicable. † Dates of departure from and arrival in the U. S.  
 Nov. 22, 1919. 3-724



**National Library of Ireland; Ireland Reaching Out; Eneclann; with the Minister**

# Duhallow Community Food Services Limited.

This organisation is based in Boherbue & Newmarket, in the Duhallow Region of North West Cork. It is a non-profit social enterprise which was established to address the unmet needs of an ageing population and the long term unemployed. These groups may never be able to access the open labour market due to age, lack of education or skill, disability or mental illness. The main business of the organisation is to prepare produce and deliver hot nourishing meals to the elderly living in rural isolation. A second aspect of the business is the employing and training of some staff who may have been long term unemployed, come from a disadvantaged background or have a disability. These staff members benefit greatly from the experience and training that is provided and the sheltered supervised work placement is one of the few outlets where their skills and training are prioritised. For some, it is the first step in getting back into the mainstream workforce, while for others their job is helping them face the many barriers to participation that they encounter each day.

## Background

The Duhallow region of North West Cork is roughly thirty miles from the urban centres of Cork, Limerick and Tralee. Duhallow is a largely rural area covering 1,800 sq. km with over 85% of the population living in the open countryside or in settlements of less than 200 people. (IRD Duhallow 2007)



The demographic profile of the region shows that a large proportion of the population are over 65 years of age, the national average is 11% but in Duhallow this is 17% Ref; (C.S.O. 2006). There are over 9,000 households in Duhallow and 23% of these households consist of one or two persons over the age of 65, with 25% of over 65s living on their own Ref; (C.S.O. 2006). This demographic profile of the region points to high dependency ratio with poor service provision particularly for the elderly living in rural isolation. There are a number of long-term unemployed people in Duhallow who realistically may never be able to access work in the open market due to several factors. Examples of these are : disability, mental illness, lack of education, age combined with the reluctance of mainstream employers to employ these individuals. Therefore the provision of a sheltered working environment is essential to give these people a chance to gain valuable work experience, training and the structure of a daily working routine. This employment can act as a stepping stone to open employment opportunities. It was from this background that a rural meals on wheels business was established called Duhallow Community Food Services Ltd. (DCFS). This idea evolved from a need analysis, community consultation and liaisons with community nurses, doctors, clergy, relevant state agencies and a local rural development company called IRD Duhallow.





# Fáilte go Cnoc Loinge!

## Welcome to Knocklong

### Knocklong - Where We Were; Where We Are and Where We Would Like to Go!

**Knocklong Development Association, Co Limerick** was formed in 1973 with a purpose to create jobs and getting real life back to the village. The association had considerable success during the following 15 years. Tom Fitzpatrick was the chairman of the Association for most of that period.

Their first venture was "Rent an Irish Cottage". Rent cottages were built in the village and were very successful for the following ten years and were sold mostly to local families. Their next venture was an IDA factory creating 15 jobs. In 1977, the KDA purchased and developed the community sports field. In 1980, Knocklong Community Centre opened its doors. The hall was built by members of the Aneco group, with help from all members of the community.



**Knocklong Tidy Towns** was established in the late 70's early 80's and the committee have entered the competition since that time. The committee have an excellent track record in managing projects that serve to the natural, built and historic heritage of Knocklong. Some of its achievements since its inception include:

The research, development, mapping and launch of the Sli na Slainte route in April 2002

Securing recycling facilities for the village

Participation in Adopt a Bank scheme

The installation of the heritage panel relating to the history of Knocklong

The erection of a pump feature with a curved stone wall around it and associated landscaping adjacent to community field - in a previously unused area

The committee has won numerous awards throughout the years such as:

Litter free village

Tidiest village

Wildlife, landscaping and built environment

Shop front award

Knocklong Development Association strives to make Knocklong a better place for people to live. Our aims are:

To maintain KDA services in Knocklong

To eliminate rural exclusion

To plan for our future

To work with all organisations together for the good of Knocklong.

**'When the world seems large and complex, we need to remember that great world ideals begin in some home neighbourhood'** Konrad Adenauer.

In September 2012 a committee was formed and a plan for the future was drawn up. We called this The Plan for Knocklong - P4K

This plan is made up of a number of different challenges which include Services for Children and Young People, Leisure and Recreation, Services for People in the Community, Employment and Enterprise The Built and Natural Environment, Community Safety and Tourism History and Heritage.

#### **The Plan for Knocklong (P4K)**

Developing the plan was the work of a large diverse group of people in the community over a period of 18 months. The purpose of the plan is to have a roadmap for the KDA to deliver the key identified needs of the community. The development of the groups was to insure everything that was considered important in the working group had an outlet to be developed.

In our initial analysis of the working of the groups we identified that the overall membership needed to be widened as there was a lot of overlap of personnel across the focus groups.



It is also understood that certain groups will organically grow and stand alone in the future such as the activities for the elderly. They now organise their own activities and have independently grown. The services for children will develop into a playschool group over time once facilities are in place. Until then they will work with the KDA to promote these aims.

**The built and natural environment** group will work with the Tidy Towns in time and with the support of the KDA will liaise with the local authorities.

**The Education and Employment** group has done a number of initiatives to support businesses and training. Together with the KDA this group will work to assist areas of support for business and training courses for upskilling people.

**The History, Heritage and Tourism** group are driving the Knocklong Railway project as well as a number of digital heritage recording projects on the graveyards as well as mapping the historic sites in the community.

In an overall sense we want to maximise the support services that are available to rural communities like ours. We are aware that rural communities are under threat unless they work smartly with like-minded groups across the country. Doing the plan helped us to identify the areas of the community that needed support as well as giving us a roadmap to follow to achieve our targets. It also gave us

an introduction to the different groups and organisations such as Limerick City & County Council as well as the Third Level Institutions. The back-up of having the plan completed portrayed a professional approach to these groups also.

In the future we are looking at a number of areas that will benefit the community such as sustainability, incubation support for businesses and an effective community council that will insure we are properly positioned to maximise supports to benefit our area. We need to identify the competitive advantages rural communities like ours have and focus on promoting these. The future can be as bright as we work to make it.



## REARCROSS NORTH TIPPERARY FOOD WORKS



The site in the village of Rearcross, Co. Tipperary is home to three food production units. They are a 1000 sq. in size, comprising of large preparation room, office space, intake dispatch lobby, dry goods area, staff room, toilets/changing area, hygiene lobby and entrance lobby. All three units have their own independent entrance door and roller shutter door. All panels and walls are to food hygiene standards. They include individual water and ESB meters. They have everything a growing food producer need to expand their enterprise and bring it to a larger scale from the kitchen. The site also boasts a Development Kitchen and Training Centre. The time-share kitchen is fully equipped with four burner stove, large scale ovens, stainless steel tables large scale food mixer to name but a few. The kitchen can be rented by the hour at an extremely attractive rate making it the ideal opportunity for producers at a product development stage to test run their recipes in a food hygienic area. The kitchen is also ideal for existing food producers and food business that require additional preparation space at busy periods during the year such as Easter and Christmas. A viewing area and board room lies adjacent to the development kitchen allowing training days and demonstrations to be held. The training centre also contains two office spaces, with their own entrance, with access to a staff canteen and toilet facilities on the same floor. All of these facilities make the Food Enterprise Centre in Rearcross an ideal venue for a range of producers at different levels from a food producer who is at the 'early days' with product development up to a growing business seeking their own premises without incurring the large fixed costs of building a production facility. The centre is situated on the main road between Thurles and Limerick city. Its location allows access to a customer base across the Mid-West region. Contact North Tipperary Foods, Main Street, Rearcross, Newport, Co Tipperary. 87-3938544 [foodhubrearcross@gmail.com](mailto:foodhubrearcross@gmail.com)



Speedpak's vision is to build our business to provide work opportunities to end long term unemployment. We improve the

employability of long term unemployed people on Dublin's Northside by providing real work experience, accredited training, mentoring, tailored interventions and supports in a commercial business environment. We trade, we train, we transform.



L-R: John P. Murphy, CEO Speedpak Group; Marian Vickers, Director Speedpak Group; Minister of State, Ann Phelan TD & Jim Lillis, Chairperson, Speedpak Group.

### A DAY OF CELEBRATION

On 2 December 2015, the Minister of State, Ann Phelan, TD, launched the Report "Evaluating Speedpak's Workplace Learning Programme". The Report by Dr. Peter Tiernan, Dublin City University, focused on 25 training participants who took part in our unique Workplace Accreditation Model (WAM) training programme. We developed WAM in 2009 in collaboration with Coláiste Dhúlaigh College of Further Education and with social investment through the Arthur Guinness Fund Award. WAM was designed to harness the learning achieved through the workplace and commercial activities with relevant educational content, leading to an educational qualification equivalent to Leaving Certificate.

The WAM course itself involves on-the-job training supported by our core staff, one-to-one meetings and support sessions at work stations and production lines on our premises. In addition, tutor led training, facilitated by Coláiste Dhúlaigh CFE takes place in our bespoke Learning Centre and involves theory, practice, personal reflection and group discussions.

Among key findings of the Report were:

- Training staff were provided with additional knowledge and skills needed for further employment and training opportunities
- Attitudes to education and overall performance work improved as a result of taking part in the training programme
- Focusing on both work and learning had a positive impact on the organisation which led to improved relationships and attitudes in work.
- Communications, problem solving and collaboration with colleagues improved.
- Training staff were more positive about their future prospects and were more confident about progressing to work or further education.

The findings of the Report concur with those of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (2012), which predicts that those without a Leaving Certificate will be unable to find suitable employment by 2020. The Report concludes that "Speedpak's approach of fusing work and learning...provides a sustainable model for the up-skilling of the long-term unemployed, demonstrating a positive impact on this vulnerable cohort of workers, and on the organisation itself.

According to our Chairperson Mr Jim Lillis, the findings "reinforce the view that an integrated approach to tackling long-term unemployment and up-skilling of workers may be more effective than providing employment initiatives alone". A copy of the Report can be found on our website [www.speedpakgroup.com](http://www.speedpakgroup.com).

On the day, the Minister also presented 15 of our Training staff with a Major QQI Award at Level 3. This was particularly significant as 93% were ex-school leavers with 47% leaving school after primary education. This brings to 40 the total number of successful graduates since the WAM training initiative began. All Training staff were previously long term unemployed and 33% were from specific target groups including people with disabilities and ex-offenders. We were delighted to mark and celebrate their courage, commitment and achievement.



Speedpak Graduates



## Copper Coast UNESCO Global Geopark Wins Prestigious

### National ‘Get Involved’ Award!

WATERFORD’S Copper Coast UNESCO Global Geopark was awarded a prestigious ‘Community Impact’ prize at the national ‘Get Involved’ 2015 award ceremony, as was local newspaper, The Munster Express.

‘Get Involved’ is a sustainable communities initiative developed by 51 local newspapers throughout Ireland, represented by the newspaper network, ‘Local Ireland’ and is a way for local communities all over Ireland to work together to improve their own lives, create local jobs, and protect the environment.



Duncan Stewart, Judging panel of the Clann Credo awards; Bruce McDonald, Orlaith Hamersley, John Galloway and Catherine Kavanagh from the Copper Coast Geopark; Paul O Sullivan, CEO of Clann Credo; and Kieran Walsh and Kieran Foley of The Munster Express

The main sponsor of ‘Get Involved’ 2015 is the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI). In addition, Clann Credo, the Social Investment Fund also supported this worthy initiative by sponsoring a new category this year - the ‘Community Impact’ prize. This category highlights how outstanding community-based projects meet local and community needs in an innovative and collaborative way. ‘Get Involved’ 2015 aimed to inspire and stimulate community collaboration through voluntary efforts and to foster ‘green’ and ‘social impact’ enterprises, to build local resilience and generate new and sustainable livelihoods.

John Galloway, Director of the Copper Coast Geopark says ‘This award has been a

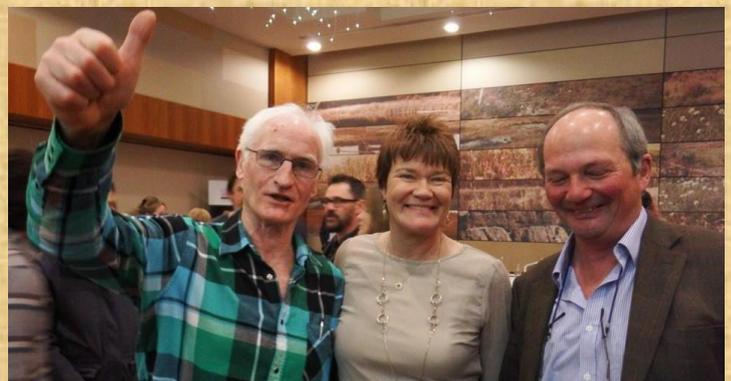
really encouraging boost for everyone involved in the Geopark as has been this collaboration with the Munster Express’. What sets the Copper Coast Geopark apart from other Global Geoparks is that it is a social enterprise managed by volunteers, many of whom are local and whose vision is for a thriving and sustainable community in the Copper Coast. They aim to help create employment and enterprise opportunities to generate economic development through sustainable tourism and supporting local arts, crafts and food producers etc.

The Copper Coast UNESCO Global Geopark were delighted and honoured to be awarded the 3rd prize in this competition and would like to thank all those who supported us and voted for us in this competition. For more information on ‘Get Involved’, visit [www.getinvolved](http://www.getinvolved)

The Geopark Café has been nominated for the Irish Restaurant awards 2016. Using the best of local produce from Dunhill Enterprise’s Aurelia, Pure Food and Healys to mention but a few.



For more information on the Copper Coast Geopark, visit [www.coppercoastgeopark.com](http://www.coppercoastgeopark.com)



Duncan Stewart, Chairman of the Judging panel of the ‘Get Involved’ Awards, Catherine Kavanagh, Manager of the Copper Coast Geopark Visitor Centre, and John Galloway, Director of the Copper Coast Geopark.

# THE CARLOW CAMINO!

Turlough O'Brien, coach to the Carlow Senior Football team has mapped out a fabulous cycle tour of County Carlow. This is a concept which can be applied to so many areas of Ireland, boosting tourism trade in lesser known areas.



Carlow is the second smallest county in Ireland, but has over 1,000 kilometres of local and regional roads, offering cycling enthusiasts a fantastic network of quiet rural back roads to plan short and long trips to suit all ages and fitness levels.

This network of roads has the potential to be used to support our declining villages and towns by attracting the growing number of cycle tourists, both homegrown and international.

Carlow has a rather unique product for cyclists as it has the

truly un-spoilt gem in the 50kms of the **River Barrow Track** to add to the mix of local roads. This off-road route along the majestic river bank takes in the finest river scenery in the country between Goresbridge and Saint Mullins connecting many sacred and historic sites along with beautiful scenery. With only a small investment our towns and villages can produce a tourism product that is

unique in Europe. One of the advantages of Carlow as a cycling destination is that the road network is under-utilised and little known to the tourist trade. Traffic volumes are thus no deterrent to would be cycle tourist. I am an avid cycle tourist myself and have cycled across much of Europe and Ireland. In my opinion, nowhere compares with rural Ireland in terms of beautiful scenery, friendly people, mild and temperate weather (ideal for cycling and walking) and the gentle pace of life. With a little promotion Carlow could become a niche destination.

There is a significant segment of cycling and walking tourists who like to combine active holidays with spiritual journeys; visits to historical and scenic sites, travelling over mixed terrain, mixing moderate to challenging daily distances, seeking an authentic experience in a foreign country as opposed to the usual 'tourist' image portrayed, who like solitude and are satisfied with basic good quality accommodation. With this in mind I have mapped a route around my own county that fulfills all these elements and more. I call it **The Carlow Way**.



The route is compact at 180kms in length and there are lots of options to extend that or shorten out to suit individual needs. Carlow's rich monastic tradition is rarely properly recognized or realised. There are many important sacred sites that could form the basis for a walking / cycling route similar to the Camino Santiago. Thousands of Irish people have completed the Camino for a variety of reasons; spiritual, social, health & fitness, or simply to take time out and reflect on life. This is an unspoilt alternative to such a journey.

We can connect with airports and ferry ports by smart use of the rural road network and river and canal towpaths. Carlow can be

accessed safely by bicycle from Dublin airport via the Grand Canal and the Barrow Track from Athy. It can be linked to ferry at Rosslare by local roads that take cyclists across the heart of rural Wexford while avoiding the busy N11 and N80.

## Highlights of The Carlow Way:

These are almost too many to mention, but include St. Mullins, the famed Romanesque doorway at Killeshin then off-road along the beautiful river bank of the Barrow. Passing through scenic Milford and onto the historic town of Leighlinbridge for a possible first overnight stay.



Switching from the west bank to the eastern side of the Barrow at the oldest bridge on the Barrow the track passes by Dinn Rí, once the seat of the Kings of Leinster. A short stretch into Bagnalstown we continue along the river bank passing through a series of Loughs until the Town of Goresbridge.

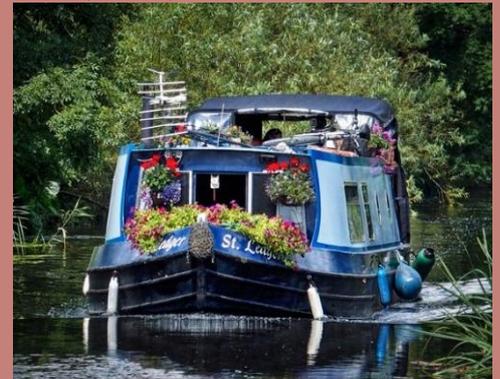
The river scenery from Goresbridge to St Mullins is truly breathtaking and is full of surprises around every bend in the river. St Mullins was a monastery of national import and to wander through the village and places associated with the great Saint is

worth a day in itself. The riverside Mullacháin Cafe is a welcome treat for thirsty and hungry cyclists. There are many traditional swimming points that a over-heated cyclist can avail of to cool down on this leisurely cycle into the deep south of Carlow. The town of Borris isn't on the river but it can be accessed by taking to the road at Ballytiglea Bridge or by following the beautiful tributary of the Mountain River through the grounds of Borris House.

Borris is a very popular destination close to the foothills of the Blackstairs and with some excellent restaurants, traditional pubs and good accommodation, to rest weary limbs. Rejoining the Barrow the town of Graiguenamanagh comes into view with Duiske Abbey on the opposite bank. d both sides of the river are lined with boats and barges that ply the waters in the summer months.

Mount Brandon dominates the skyline from the western bank as you cycle onwards into the Clonmacnoise of Carlow.

Views are stunning. The green road rejoins the cycle route and soon arrives at the small village of Ballymurphy. It's not far from there to the beautiful village of Rathanna where a fabulous new hostel, Osbornes, has been opened. This is a great example of how this route could develop - if there were a couple more hostels strategically located along the route it would provide accommodation to facilitate cyclists doing the full circuit. Our journey is almost at an end as we head into Carlow and on the way visit Ireland's largest Portal Dolmen at Browneshill.



Carlow is just over the hill and our circumnavigation of Carlow concludes back where we started at the award winning **Carlow County Museum**.



The entire route can be comfortably completed in 4 to 5 days and it shows the unspoiled beauty of Carlow. There is no doubt in my mind that a route such as this can be a flag ship which can be developed and can support the revival of our small towns and villages by generating tourism income through a niche product in a county that, until now, has failed to realize it's potential. To view the map of the route follow the link below;

[http://ridewithgps.com/routes/12045011/embed?privacy\\_code=bBjkLvrX6tVF4xID](http://ridewithgps.com/routes/12045011/embed?privacy_code=bBjkLvrX6tVF4xID)



## ConnectIreland is for everybody!

If you know or learn through one of your contacts, of a company that is considering expansion, simply let us know. We will contact the company and speak with the decision maker there in order to set up a meeting and explain the benefits of locating in Ireland. If we are successful in influencing them to expand into Ireland, you - the connector – will receive a financial reward from the government.

Chameleon Advertising Technologies Ltd, will establish a new hub in Dublin, creating 21 jobs. The Irish office, which is based in the Guinness Enterprise Centre in Dublin 8, will be responsible for all business activities, including software development, sales and marketing support for expansion into new markets.

The company is majority owned and co-founded by Carlo Petito. He has relocated to Ireland and is joined within the organisation in Dublin by Roy Bellingham, CTO while Ruben Amoroso manages their ongoing operations in Italy.



**Carlo Petito, co-founded Chameleon AD, celebrates his company announcement with, Joanna Murphy, ConnectIreland CEO, Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Richard Bruton TD & Roy Bellingham, CTO Chameleon.**

The Italian company chose to locate in the capital after Dubliner, Niall O'Connor signed up as a 'Connector' with ConnectIreland while travelling through Dublin Airport on a business trip to Rome. While in Rome, the tech expert met with Mr Petito and suggested that Dublin would be a great hub for their expansion into Europe.



**Kevin Murphy, Co-Founder and Partner of CGM LLC, celebrates his company's announcement in Waterford with Neil Doherty, the connector who introduced the company to ConnectIreland, Joanna Murphy, ConnectIreland CEO and Minister Paudie Coffey. Photo: John Power**

## 2016: Promising year ahead

2016 has already gotten off to a great start with a slew of mammoth jobs announcements throughout the month.

Typically a quiet month, this January has been incredibly busy on the jobs front. So far this year, over 4,700 jobs have been announced across Ireland by companies in a wide variety of sectors, many of which are supported by our partners in IDA Ireland. At ConnectIreland, we have also seen a busy start to the year, with a 52% increase in connectors registered in the first four weeks, along with many exciting new companies already introduced. Let's make this another great year; reach out to your networks and introduce expanding international companies to ConnectIreland.



**HERE'S TO A BIGGER  
AND BETTER 2016**  
with your continued support

## Social Innovation Fund Ireland launched by An Taoiseach



Deirdre Mortell- CEO of Social Innovation Fund Ireland; Sean Peters – Founder of Save a Selfie- (Dublin Firefighter & volunteer in the Order of Malta); Dara Connolly- Executive Director of ReCreate; Colette Ryan- General Manager of Carebright; Majella Murphy- Business Development Manager of Carebright; Rónán ó Dálaigh- CEO of Thriftify

On 27<sup>th</sup> January 2016 An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny, officially launched Social Innovation Fund Ireland and presented awards to the first four grantees of the *Animate* Programme. *Animate* is a programme for early stage social innovations, winners receive a grant of up to €10,000 in cash and €10,000 non-financial supports- mentoring, growth planning and technical supports. The four Recipients of the Awards, ReCreate, Thriftify, Carebright and Save a Selfie were selected from a pool of 58 applicants from topics ranging from child to environment to increasing charities' revenues. Carebright for example, is a social enterprise specialising in homecare Co. Limerick. Increasingly numbers of their clients develop Dementia - with current figures being 60% of their clients. In response to this they have developed a project called The Dementia Hub which allows those clients living with Dementia in a rural area to live as independently as possible. This is a unique and disruptive concept in homecare offering currently in Ireland. The uniqueness of their project and their desire to see their project adopted by the National Dementia Strategy as a national model made it an ideal candidate for Social Innovation Fund Ireland's first programme *Animate*.

The Social Innovation fund Ireland is Ireland's first Non-F

Accelerator. It provides growth capital and supports to the best social innovations in Ireland to allow them to scale and maximise their impact. It was established by Government in 2013, and has received a challenge fund of 5 million euro, which means that for every Euro raised in private giving it is matched by a Euro from the government. Over the next few years it aims to support and fund 10-15 social innovations to help them grow and maximise their impact. Communities all over Ireland have developed innovative solutions to the most pressing issues in their locality but too often these projects fail to spread beyond parish or county borders.

Its vision is of an Ireland invigorated by the world's best system for supporting social innovations. It believes strongly that social innovation is key to Ireland's social recovery and plans to demonstrate through its work that innovation has the potential to address Ireland's social needs at scale, as well as the potential to create people centred jobs and employment. The awardees of the *Animate* programme are estimated to create within the next year 85 new opportunities for employment, in some cases the most disadvantaged groups or long term unemployed people are among those who will benefit. The second programme to be pursued by the Social Innovation Fund is the Growth Programme which it hopes to open up to applications late this year or early 2017. This programme will be for more established projects with an ambition to scale. The funding will range from €105,000 to €1 million and the non-financial supports will be targeted at growth and tailored for projects.



With the Awardees Terence O'Rourke- Chairman of Social Innovation Fund Ireland; Minister Ann Phelan- Minister with responsibility for Social Enterprise; An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny, T.D

For more information see [www.socialinnovation.ie](http://www.socialinnovation.ie).



# WHAT IF YOUR BIG IDEA COULD CHANGE IRELAND?

We're here to support your big idea.

Find out how at [socialentrepreneurs.ie](http://socialentrepreneurs.ie) #SEIawards

THINK BIG  
ACT NOW  
CHANGE  
IRELAND

social  
entrepreneurs  
IRELAND



## Social Entrepreneurs Ireland - Who we are?



Michael thought big about people growing their own food to improve their health. He acted and started GIY.

With our support, each year GIY helps over 150,000 people in 4,500 communities to grow their own food.



Aolbheann and Iseult thought big about food waste. They acted and started FoodCloud.

With our support, FoodCloud have re-distributed 855 tonnes of food, the equivalent of 1.9 million meals, to over 300 charities across Ireland and the UK.



John thought big about men in isolation. He acted and started Irish Men's Sheds.

With our support, there are now over 300 men's sheds reaching 10,000 men in communities across Ireland.

*Social Entrepreneurs Ireland supports the development of new solutions to Ireland's social problems. They invest money, time and support in ambitious early stage social entrepreneurs who have ideas that have the potential to fundamentally change our approach to some of Ireland's most pressing social problems. Social Entrepreneurs Ireland works with these entrepreneurs to help them to develop and scale their organisations.*

*Since 2004, Social Entrepreneurs Ireland has supported 190 social entrepreneurs, investing more than €6.26 million in their projects, as well as providing significant training and mentoring supports. These projects in turn have directly impacted the lives of 380,000 people across Ireland, and created 1,080 jobs in the process.*

*Who do we support?*

*We support social entrepreneurs with the greatest potential to bring about positive change to Ireland's most pressing social and environmental challenges.*

## How do we support them?

*Through our Awards programmes we provide funding, mentoring and support to high potential social entrepreneurs.*

## Who are we looking for?

*We're looking for social entrepreneur-led projects that address a societal challenge in a new or better way.*

*We're here to support your big idea.*

*Closing date for applications is*

*Thursday 7th April 2016*

*Find out how at [socialentrepreneurs.ie](http://socialentrepreneurs.ie) #SEIawards*