

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



Supporting
Our Communities



DONEGAL LOCAL
DEVELOPMENT CLG.
FORBAIRT ÁITIÚIL
DHÚN NA nGALL

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



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Patsy McGonagle
Chairman

Welcome from Our Chairman

2021 continued to test the resilience of communities in an unprecedented way. It also highlighted the vulnerabilities many people face across Donegal and put into perspective, more than ever before, the importance of the work undertaken by DLDC and the community and voluntary groups it supports.

At the heart of every community in Donegal, social enterprises, community groups, and volunteers delivered services and supports to the most disadvantaged, marginalised, and isolated members of society in 2021.

They mobilised in the face of mounting social isolation during the most challenging lockdown periods. They delivered these services with limited resources and many stakeholders to keep happy. Therefore, we must continue supporting these organisations, particularly their leadership, as we look ahead.

As we now move from a period of crisis to recovery and reconnection, we need our communities to be inclusive, resilient and equipped to deal with the toughest challenges. Volunteering is the key to making this happen. I greatly encourage people to share their time and talent to support their local community group. When those with local knowledge are motivated to deal with local problems, communities thrive. We have more significant influence and achieve a far wider-reaching impact by working together.

The lifeblood of DLDC is the team driving the organisation forward. I wish to pay tribute to CEO Pdraic Fingleton, the senior managers, and the dedicated team for ensuring all that we do is driven by a commitment to delivering the highest standards for the communities we support.

I wish to offer sincere thanks to my fellow Board members for their support and guidance, funders, and partners, who work hard to support individuals and communities and positively impact our catchment area in Donegal.

Patsy McGonagle,
Chairman

CEO Report



Padraic Fingleton
Chief Executive

2021 was another remarkable year for community and voluntary groups. It was also a tough year for many of us, both professionally and personally. As we worked through the second year of the pandemic, we saw new challenges arise to replace those before them. However, Donegal community groups proved their extraordinary resilience and adaptability and volunteers turned out in force to do whatever they could to help. It is important that we recognise and celebrate that contribution.

Therefore, a highlight for me was the opportunity to host our “Community Recognition Awards”. These awards acknowledged and celebrated the community groups and volunteers who delivered outstanding work in Donegal during the pandemic and who continue to do so daily, providing a wide variety of supports to the people who need it most. We are not only inspired by the example of the individuals and communities with whom we work all our activities are led by them.

Another highlight was winning the contract to provide Local Area Employment Services in Donegal alongside our partners Inishowen Development Partnership. This contract has significantly increased our capacity to offer a range of supports tailored to the individual needs of people who have been seeking employment for more than 12 months. This enabled us to provide additional facilities in Donegal Town, allowing us to better serve the communities in South Donegal.

The Think Equality Project also came to fruition in 2021. In partnership with Donegal Intercultural Platform and Donegal Travellers Project, this project aims to address the barriers that are preventing members of Black, Minority and Ethnic communities, including Traveller and Roma, from having equality of access and equality of outcome across public services in Donegal. It is designed to promote equality and intercultural understanding while at the same time tackling discrimination and racism.

While new challenges will always arise and we will seek to develop the best possible response to these, one constant is our commitment to using the ‘bottom-up’, community-led approach in every support we offer. Our mission is to develop strong, sustainable community organisations and improve the quality of life for individuals by providing a wide range of programmes and services. These supports include supporting people to access education, training, employment, enterprise, and family supports. We are particularly focused on supporting people living in poverty, disadvantage, and social exclusion. With the high cost of living and inflation, it is unemployed people and low-income families that are impacted most. We will be doing everything we can to support those most affected.

Drawing on our strong relationships with community representatives, statutory agencies, social partners, and elected representatives, we continuously seek to improve the client centred wrap-around services we offer to individuals and communities throughout Donegal. DLDC held county-wide consultations in late 2021, seeking input from individuals and community groups to identify priority needs and inform our strategic plan for the next four years.

We will be drawing on the findings, as well as our first-hand experience over the last several years, to

provide feedback to the government to inform the design of the new Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2023 – 2028 and the new rural development LEADER programme 2023 – 2027.

Looking ahead, we are seeking to provide further social innovation supports to rural communities, particularly through the Smart Towns and Villages Programme, which aims to deliver economic regeneration and transformation. Projects will include advanced digital infrastructure, skills programmes, and measures to transform vacant spaces and community facilities.

We are also focused on raising awareness and encouraging communities to develop initiatives to sustain and protect their environment. We aim to increase the range of supports and build the capacity within Donegal communities to tackling climate change and promote a cleaner, green economy.

As the war in Ukraine remains uncertain, the Ukrainian families who have come to Donegal in recent months will need ongoing support. We will continue to work with other statutory, community, and voluntary organisations to make them feel welcome and ensure they have the necessary information and support to connect with primary services, such as social welfare, health, education, and accommodation.

We welcomed the 100% Redress Scheme for families affected by mica and pyrite. We will continue to lend our support in any way we can to the campaign to seek 100% compensation for the thousands of homeowners devastated by the scandal.

I take this opportunity to thank the Irish Local Development Network (ILDN), the Donegal and the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) for their ongoing support and our colleagues in Donegal County Council, Inishowen Development Partnership, and Údarás Gaeltachta as well as all agencies, academic institutions and fellow community and voluntary sector organisations for all your efforts and courtesies in yet another extraordinarily challenging yet rewarding year.

I want to particularly acknowledge, Minister of State at the Department of Rural and Community Development, Joe O'Brien, for the positive change he has made to the sector, specifically through his support of SICAP.

Finally, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Board of Directors, led by Chairman Patsy McGonagle, for their tireless efforts over the period under review and, above all, to the fantastic team at DLDC for their unwavering commitment and dedication to supporting the most vulnerable in our community. It is brilliant to see everyone out and about, meeting in person again after the forced separation we all endured for so long.

*Padraic Fingleton,
Chief Executive*



About Our Organisation

Our Impact



262

people placed in various part-time, full-time and self-employment roles.



474

new volunteers placed in community organisations.



€791,500

of LEADER funding was claimed by projects in Donegal.



419

participated in job activation and social inclusion schemes.



€2.2m

investment in Donegal in the form of programme staff time and programme initiatives.



109

community groups supported to tackle social exclusion.



46

social enterprises benefitted from intensive one-to-one support, including strategic and business planning, governance and fundraising.



128

people who improved their employability skills.



€684,720

external funding secured by social enterprises with DLDC support.



268

people participated in lifelong learning workshops.



“The support provided to me under SICAP and from the staff at DLDC have been a lifeline for my family. I felt stuck in a bubble and could see no way out. Our problems continued to mount, and I didn’t know where to get the help we needed. Through these supports, I was able to identify our problems and individually address them which has transformed our lives”

- Lara*



“I want to say thanks to those volunteers who knitted a hat, octopus, and baby blanket that now rest in a memory box that I will always cherish, as it holds the memories of my ‘preemie’ baby who both joined us and sadly passed in late 2020”

- Sarah, West Donegal.



“Without this scheme, I would not be in the position I am today. I would highly recommend this CE Childcare Scheme as a pathway to a prosperous career in the future. The team at DLDC looked after me and was always there at a minute’s notice, very supportive throughout my journey”



“My experience of the Tús Scheme is one of the most enjoyable employments I’ve had, with the flexibility and the appreciation of my hard work. I would love it if Tús could be extended from one to two years”

- Michael* Tús participant.



“As an organisation that was initially reliant on volunteers and fundraising to deliver our services, we have found the support from the DLDC an invaluable resource for our operations. We have been working with DLDC for the last ten years and are deeply grateful for the support received”

- Wendy McCarry, The Bluestack Special Needs Foundation



“The LEADER team was patient with any delays associated with the Covid-19 pandemic and shared funding substantial funding application knowledge with us”

- Niall Mc Caughan, Manager Donegal RHC

Our Board



Patsy McGonagle
Chairman
East Donegal Forum



Louise Breslin
Company Director
South Donegal
Community Forum



**Cllr.
Noel Andrew Jordan**
Company Director
Donegal County Council



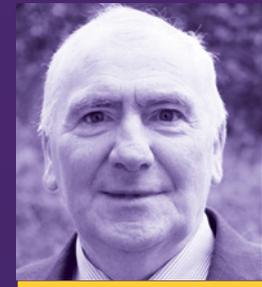
**Cllr.
Patrick McGowan**
Company Director
Donegal County Council



Noel Foley
Company Director
An Taisce



Noirín Uí Mhaoldomhnaigh
Company Director
Gaeltacht and na hOileáin



Benny Trearty
Company Director
North Donegal
Community Forum



Michael Chance
Company Director
IFA



Isobel McGlinchey
Company Director
ICTU



Charles Gorney
Company Director
Donegal ETB



Gary Fisher
Company Director
Teagasc



Máire Uí Chomhaill
Company Director
Gaeltacht



Mary Harte
Company Director
Donegal East



Tony Brogan
Company Director
Donegal County Council



**Cllr.
John O'Donnell**
Company Director
Donegal County Council

About Our Organisation

Donegal Local Development CLG (DLDC) is a community-led local development organisation providing a wide range of local development services, including training, work placements, grants, and services. Established in 1995, DLDC is led by a voluntary Board of Directors from community and voluntary groups, social partners, local government, and state bodies. DLDC's catchment area covers County Donegal except for the Inishowen area, which is covered by Inishowen Development Partnership (IDP).

DLDC has a core staff of 70 people, employed across fourteen EU and Irish Government funded programmes. Our dedicated team manage and implement programmes across the county and many of which, in turn, support a large number of participants on projects and schemes.

At present, over 440 people are participating on such schemes, resourcing communities in rural areas through the Rural Social Scheme (RSS), Tús Programme, and the Community Childcare Scheme. As a reflection of the ethos of rural outreach, further to its' central offices in Letterkenny, Gweedore, and Donegal Town, DLDC has established several outreach centres throughout the county in Ballyshannon, Kilcar, and Killybegs.

Values and Purpose

DLDC has a clear purpose; to support community organisations and individuals by empowering them through enabling their own ideas and actions, to make Donegal a better place to live and work for everyone. DLDC reaffirms its core values of partnership, inclusion, and innovation, guided by the principles of equality, diversity, trust, and integrity. We recognise that every individual has the right to contribute to their community and the right to equal opportunity of access to resources within that community. Partnership, innovation, and inclusion are embedded as core values and principles and inform all aspects of the planning, development, and delivery of progressive and innovative supports to benefit individuals, communities, and enterprises in the region. Our team and Board of Directors operate with empathy, professionalism, and a caring attitude when approaching their work.



Our Strategic & Operational Framework



Governance and Compliance

Donegal Local Development CLG (DLDC) strives to meet the best governance standards driven by the principles of transparency, openness, and accountability. DLDC is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status. The Board of Directors is the ultimate decision-making body within the organisation. It includes representatives from the community and voluntary sector, social partners, statutory agencies, and public representatives to devise and implement solutions to the disadvantage experienced in Donegal, in keeping with the Irish “social partnership” model.

In addition to an annual independent financial audit, DLDC is subject to internal audits by each funder. We are committed to adopting the Principles of The Charities Governance Code as set out below and worked towards compliance in 2021.

Before the Charity Regulator’s Governance Code was in place, DLDC complied with the voluntary code of governance for the community, and voluntary and charitable organisations.

The six principles of the Charities Governance Code are:



An Rialálaí
Carthanais
Charities
Regulator

Risk Management

We define risk as anything that can adversely affect our ability to achieve our objectives to support both individuals and communities in Donegal, sustain our operations, maintain our reputation, or meet regulatory requirements. At DLDC, we look to minimise potential risk through our tight management process and controls. We capture potential risks in our Risk Register, which identify the principal risks, their likelihood and impact, and the actions necessary to manage them effectively.

We have categorised risk factors within the following seven categories:

1. Physical risk
2. Operational risk
3. Human resources
4. Technology risk
5. Financial risk
6. Reputational risk
7. Governance

“DLDC helped us understand what the funder was looking for in an application. The team was patient with any delays due to Covid and shared their substantial knowledge with us”

- Niall McCaughan, Donegal Railway Heritage Centre



The background is a solid teal color with several overlapping, curved, semi-transparent teal bands that create a sense of depth and movement, primarily on the right side of the page.

Community Development Support

Community Recognition Awards

Donegal Local Development Company (DLDC) was delighted to hold its inaugural Community Recognition Awards 2021 in November 2021. DLDC held the awards to acknowledge and celebrate the outstanding community efforts by individuals, groups, and volunteers in County Donegal over the past difficult year.

The awards ceremony took place in the Finn Valley Centre, Stranorlar with 120 representatives from the community and voluntary sector in attendance for the celebration and enjoyed an evening of food, recognition, music, and dance.

The high number of nominations received under the five categories were an acknowledgement of the outstanding community efforts that individuals and groups have delivered in County Donegal during the COVID pandemic and continue to deliver daily.

A representative from each sponsor organisation

attended and presented a bespoke Donegal sandstone award to each winner. The unique award was handmade by the renowned Donegal local artist, Mr Redmond Herrity.

2020 Donegal Person of the year, Mr Noel Cunningham was Master of Ceremony.

DLDC would like to sincerely thank the Community Groups, Social Enterprises and Volunteers who make an enormous difference in our Donegal communities every day by providing a wide variety of supports in their local communities to people who need it most.



Above: Tacú le Gaoth Dobhair Best Community Organisation / Social Enterprise (Small) - Sponsored by Highland Radio

Right: > Photo Gallery Best Social Inclusion/Peer Support Campaign - Sponsored by Pramerica



Community Recognition Awards Winners 2021

Right: >

*We Care Foodbank
Best Community
Organisation /
Social Enterprise
(Large) - Sponsored
by Letterkenny
Chamber of
Commerce*



Right: >

*Mary Toner,
Bluestack Special
Needs Foundation
received
the Lifetime
Achievement
Award Sponsored
by LYIT*



Right: >

*Different Strokes
for Different Folks
Special Recognition
Award –
A Community
Response to
Covid-19, Sponsored
by Watson Hire*



Right: >
*2020 Donegal Person of the year
Mr Noel Cunningham was Master of Ceremony*



The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP)

The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2018 – 2022 provides resources and funding to tackle poverty and social exclusion through local engagement and partnerships between disadvantaged individuals, community organisations, and public sector agencies.

The vision of SICAP is “to improve the opportunities and life chances of those who are marginalised in society, experiencing unemployment or living in poverty through community development approaches, targeted supports and interagency collaboration, where the values of equality and inclusion are promoted and human rights are respected” (ESRI, 2019).

SICAP works with marginalised communities and service providers using a community development approach to improve people’s lives, providing guidance to groups by sharing good practices and helping them grow in confidence.

The supports provided include social, civic, and cultural opportunities that help combat social isolation, loneliness, and exclusion across the county. The team has seen significant demand for development and progression assistance and continues to strive to meet the needs of the communities they support. Successful collaboration with development companies, agencies, stakeholders, and service providers is critical in achieving successful outcomes for our local communities.

KEY OUTCOMES 2021

109 local community groups across Central Donegal and Donegal Gaeltacht were supported by the SICAP team in 2021.

640 community initiatives were delivered across Central Donegal and Donegal Gaeltacht.

59 representatives from local community groups and social enterprises attended three or more Capacity Building Workshops for the community and voluntary sector.



Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme

Success Stories



Donegal Food Poverty Response Network (DFRN)

The inaugural meeting of the DLDC Food Poverty Response Network took place in May, with 12 community and voluntary organisations in attendance.

The Community Development team provided administrative support and, working with the network, planned a schedule of meetings and activities for 2021.

In November, the DFRN hosted a pre-Christmas countywide one-day fundraising event. All members opened their doors to welcome donations of food, vouchers, cash, or gifts for those in need in their local community.

In addition to accepting donations, many of the centres hosted coffee mornings to raise additional funds. DLDC delivered a PR campaign to promote the services in the run-up to Christmas, including interviews on local radio, fliers, social, and printed media.

“We were overwhelmed by the generosity, goodwill and charitable spirit shown by the people of Donegal, helping ensure that no family in our community went hungry this Christmas”

- We Care Food Bank Letterkenny



Capacity Building Workshop for the Community & Voluntary Sector

To address the need for capacity building support for local community groups, SICAP delivered a suite of free workshops on topics relevant to the sector. Local community groups identified these topics as part of their support plan development for 2021 and included:

- Committee skills and conducting effective meetings
- Data protection and GDPR for the third sector
- Social media awareness for community groups
- Managing charity finances
- Email security for the community and voluntary sector
- Covid infection prevention and cleaning protocol refresher session
- Ready and Able to Re-open in 2021
- Digital marketing

Success Stories

'Zoom Buddies'

The SICAP team delivered Zoom training as part of the 'Zoom Buddies' initiative to encourage community group members to resume their meetings using zoom and keep in touch with their members until COVID 19 restrictions allowed them to meet in person. DLDC shared mobile phones with members of local community groups, many of whom had never used Zoom and had not met up with their fellow members during the pandemic. SICAP Project officer provided training on all Zoom functions. Kilmacrennan Men's shed and Gweedore Men's Shed were among the many groups participating.

"The members of the Kilmacrennan Men's Shed really enjoyed the Zoom training and had many laughs along the way. The team at DLDC were so patient, and no one was left behind. Some of the men have not seen each other since they last met in the shed in March of 2020 and all were delighted to be able to see and talk to one another after over a year apart."

- Raymond McFadden,
Chairman, Kilmacrennan Men's Shed



Community Radio Session – Sunday Stories' Information and Conversation'

The SICAP team, in partnership with Owenea FM, delivered a community radio session titled 'Sunday Stories'. The show aimed to promote positive ageing in Donegal and support older people during level 5 Covid restrictions. The show featured a mix of interviews, music, reminiscence, and words of wisdom. Each week the show interviewed one actively retired local person for conversation and interviewed a 'special guest' to provide information on their area of expertise. The actively retired local guest included volunteers from local community groups such as GAP Heritage, Glenties Day Care Centre, Local Sports Clubs, and Ardara Care of the Aged.



Success Stories

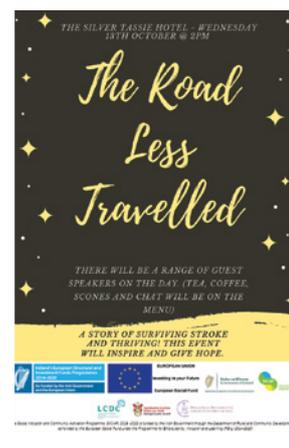
Social Inclusion Week 2021

The SICAP team planned many events as part of the schedule of activities for Social Inclusion Week 2021.

Creative Rural Outreach – Bringing Storytelling and Donegal Histories to rural communities.

DLDC and Dark Daughter Productions collaborated to bring an up-close and personal one-woman play outdoors to various locations across our catchment area. The play starring Maura Logue was titled 'Drumshee Dancehall Days'.

The objective of this initiative was to create a space where members of local community groups could meet outdoors at a socially inclusive event while COVID restrictions remained in place.



The Road Less Travelled - a story of Surviving Stroke and Thriving!

Different Strokes for Different Folks is a local community group that supports those living with long-term changes to day-to-day life due to a neurological event. In 2021, DLDC and Different Strokes for Different Folks collaborated to host 'The Road Less Travelled - a story of Surviving Stroke and Thriving!'. SICAP also collaborated with Rosetta Life, Playhouse Derry, Wall2Wall Music, and ZoNa Dance Company to deliver 'Brain Odysseys', an international online arts project helping brain injury survivors to tell their stories through music.

Time (out) for Tea

Time (out) for Tea aimed to encourage people across Donegal to 'Walk, Talk and Connect' and enjoy their beautiful county. The pandemic left many people feeling lonely and socially isolated. Therefore, when restrictions eased, DLDC created brochures with maps detailing areas for leisurely walks across Donegal and provided some community representatives with picnic backpacks to encourage people to meet up outdoors.



SICAP - Social Enterprise

The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) provides supports to the community and voluntary sector to tackle poverty, social exclusion and inequality. In this context, we support social enterprises to:

1

Deliver services to SICAP target groups in their local communities

2

Create jobs in social enterprises and sustain existing jobs and operations

3

Provide training, employment, or volunteering opportunities for SICAP target groups

KEY HIGHLIGHTS 2021

Throughout the year, DLDC provided supports to 49 social enterprises across Donegal. Of these social enterprises, 46 benefitted from intensive one-to-one supports, including help with writing funding applications which generated €684,720 for their causes.

We also launched a 3-year strategy for social enterprise in Donegal to build a meaningful support structure around social enterprises so they can continue to deliver for communities across Donegal.



Above: Margaret Larkin, Lourda Nee, John Logue, Alison McMonagle, Andrew McNulty, Donna Kenny from the Social Enterprise Team

KEY OUTCOMES 2021



Significant increase in engagement levels with social enterprises, building upon successes in 2020.

46

social enterprises benefitted from intensive one-to-one support, including strategic and business planning, governance, and fundraising - an 84% increase year-on-year.

€684,720

in funding was secured by social enterprises in 2021 following funding application support from DLDC.

9

social enterprises engaged with DLDC's Social Enterprise Network Donegal (SEND) activities, including training, participation in the online hub, our monthly newsletter and monthly network meetings.



A new Social Enterprise Strategy 2022-2024 was launched following consultation with stakeholders.

DLDC's Social Enterprise Network - (SEND)

This monthly network meeting creates a space for social enterprise managers and board members to come together monthly to share ideas, ask for advice and get to know each other.

DLDC's Social Enterprise Round-Up ('The Round-Up')

The Round-Up is a monthly publication sent to 100+ social enterprises in Donegal which details upcoming funding and training opportunities as well as news from the social enterprise sector locally and nationally.

DLDC's Spring Training for Social Enterprises ('Spring Training')

This 3-month training programme was for staff and board members of social enterprises. By participating in this free programme, social enterprise practitioners are learning about the most effective ways to create sustainable income streams for their social enterprises, including:

- Identifying all their existing income-generating assets and how to maximise income from those assets;
- Generating income from goodwill in the community, e.g., Jack & Jill Foundation model;
- Using new technology and digital innovation to generate income;

- Best practices from other social enterprises, charities, and SMEs;
 - Have a plan in place to create new income streams and/or increase existing income streams tailored to their unique circumstances;
 - Learn more about how DLDC and the Social Enterprise Advisor can support them and their organisations going forward.
- DLDC staff provide one-to-one free consultancy support to social enterprises in the following areas:
- Business model generation and evaluation
 - Writing funding applications
 - Strategic and business planning
 - Financial modelling
 - Marketing and branding
 - Running effective meetings
 - Committee roles & responsibilities
 - Financial management
 - Generating trading income
 - Regulatory reporting
 - Leading and managing teams
 - Time management
 - Social media
 - Design thinking

One-to-one consultancy with DLDC's social enterprise advisory staff

DLDC staff provide one-to-one free consultancy

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT GRANT 2021

The SICAP team issued an open call for applications to the DLDC Social Enterprise Grant 2021 in August. The purpose of this once-off small grant scheme is to support small developing social enterprises that are working towards the implementation of annual work plans and actions that align with Thematic Area G1.5 of the SICAP National Programme Framework, to 'Support Social Enterprises Which Contribute to SICAP Outcomes.'

The closing date for receipt of applications was September 3rd. The evaluation committee, which comprised of members of the DICAP Goal 1 Steering Committee met on September 13th and the following applicants were approved:

Cairde Le Cheile	€2,500
Drimarone Development CLG	€1,160
Donegal Famine Heritage Centre CLG	€705.00
Letterkenny Community Centre CLG	€1,581.00
Bundoran Community Development CLG	€2,400.00
Donegal Town Enterprise Scheme (Donegal Bay Waterbus)	€640.00
Liquid Therapy	€1,743.00
Letterkenny CDP	€1,958.00
Lifford Association Tourism Commerce Heritage CLG (LATCH)	€1,889.00
Letterkenny Cathedral Quarter	€1,864.00
Association for the Development of Pettigo & Tullyhommon (ADoPT)	€1,986.00
Finn Valley Centre	€1,978.00
Total	€20,404.00

Success Stories



Above: Social Enterprise Representatives Participating a SEND Network Meeting

DLDC's Social Enterprise Strategy 2022-2024

This strategy comes at an important time for social enterprises in Donegal. On one hand, this is a time of immense opportunity for social enterprises. The past eighteen months have shown us all how vital these organisations are to the health and wellbeing of communities across the county. Public recognition of their societal value is at an all-time high.

On the other hand, it is a time of significant challenge for social enterprises. Service users are slow to re-engage and repeated lockdowns are impacting already difficult financial circumstances. Social enterprise leaders find themselves double and triple jobbing to keep their organisations afloat. Against this backdrop, this three-year strategy is intended as DLDC's contribution to support social enterprises take advantage of new-found opportunities and address age-old challenges.

We wanted to make sure the strategy reflected actual needs on the ground rather than our assumptions about what those needs might be. Accordingly, we undertook an extensive consultation process with social enterprises in Donegal, including interviews with social enterprise practitioners, a 10-week Innovating

Communities project and discussions during monthly meetings of the Social Enterprise Network Donegal (SEND).

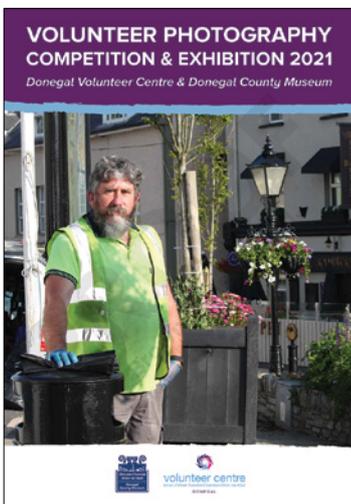
Key measures in the strategy include:

- A Shared Services Model (SSM) – encouraging multiple social enterprises to share key support staff to reduce financial risk while attracting experienced staff
- Dedicated fundraising support – helping social enterprises to research relevant grant opportunities, write applications and report on progress to funders
- A Panel of Practitioners (PoP) – enabling social enterprises to generate unrestricted income by mentoring other social enterprises in areas like governance, financial management and strategic planning
- An enhanced Social Enterprise Network Donegal (SEND) – encouraging social enterprise leaders across the county to support each other.

Donegal Volunteer Centre

Donegal Volunteer Centre (DVC) works with individual volunteers and community groups across Donegal to help provide meaningful volunteer roles and community engagement. DVC is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and is managed by DLDC.

Throughout 2021, DVC helped record numbers of volunteers engage their communities in a time of significant need. It was a year of new partnerships and new ideas, with relationships forged on environmental issues, governance, awareness, crafting, photography, self-care, heritage, sustainability, and befriending. 2021 saw DVC enhance its intercultural relationships and understanding, enabling us to support the ever-diversifying community of individuals that have made Donegal their home.



KEY OUTCOMES 2021

474

new volunteers supported to start volunteering.

152

new volunteer opportunities developed across the county.

600

knitters were recruited nationally for the delivery of the 'Super Knitters' project for Team Hope and Letterkenny University Hospital.



'Volunteering in Action' photography competition and exhibition delivered in partnership with Donegal County Museum.



Sessions for volunteers and groups on the UN Sustainable Development goals in partnership with Changemakers.



Targeted supports for the asylum seekers hosted in Letterkenny, including befriending, clothing collections, support sessions, orientation walks, and the provision of Christmas gifts for all children in the centre.



Supported the Donegal County Council led 'Community Call' in response to Covid 19.



Volunteers Wanted

To knit or crochet hats & blankets for premature babies in the Maternity Unit of Letterkenny University Hospital



volunteer centre
DONEGAL

Super Knitters

To engage with individuals cocooning, the DVC team invited crafters from across Donegal knit for the premature babies in Letterkenny University Hospital. The project ignited huge online interest, with one social media post reaching over 100k individuals over a weekend, leading to local and national media features. More than 600 knitters pledged their support for the challenge. The volume of interest led us to seek new charity partners and Team Hope quickly joined the project. The result was astounding, with knitters from across Ireland participating in the project and several thousand handknitted hats, bags, dolls, toys, and blankets donated to these deserving causes.

“I want to say thanks to those volunteers who knitted a hat, octopus, and baby blanket that now rest in a memory box that I will always cherish, as it holds the memories of my ‘preemie’ baby who both joined us and sadly passed in late 2020”

- Sarah, West Donegal.

Success Stories

Partnership with Donegal County Museum

- UnCover and ReDiscover your locality collection
- ‘Volunteering in Action’ photography competition and exhibition

As part of its lockdown response, DVC partnered with Donegal County Museum to offer talks on researching family history and local heritage found within a 5km radius - resulting in history, stories, scandals, and intrigue from across Donegal. With the support of Healthy Donegal funding, our volunteers compiled submissions into an exhibition of stories, poems, and pictures from across Donegal.

Inspired by the partnership’s success, DVC and Donegal County Museum launched a volunteer focused Photography Competition entitled ‘Volunteering in Action’. Donegal County Museum featured the finalists in an exhibition, with permanent displays at Rathmullan Pier and the Donegal Intercultural Centre in Letterkenny.

“Lockdown afforded me the time to paint, garden, and finally sort out my house. The discover heritage sessions gave me the tools to understand the family history I had in my area, and indeed, in boxes in the attic”

- Seamus, South Donegal

Rural Development Programme – LEADER

LEADER (Liaisons Entre Actions de Development de l'économie Rurale).

The European Commission established the LEADER programme in 1991 to promote social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas. The programme provides supports to address issues such as the impact of high levels of unemployment and increased levels of poverty and exclusion. It also acknowledges the key challenges facing Irish society following the economic downturn.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS 2021

The International Appalachian Trail (IAT) was formally launched with our partner organisations in 2021. This project features a 279-mile / 449-kilometre coast-to-coast walking trail. The trail starts at Slieve League in Co. Donegal and traverses four counties, culminating at the port of Larne in Co. Antrim. Walkers can experience breath-taking scenery, historic landmarks, and diverse heritage sites along the route.

A transitional funding programme allocated €1.5 million to DLDC in April 2021 to deliver throughout 2021/2022 to support the recovery of rural communities and private enterprises impacted by the pandemic.

The 2014-2022 LEADER programme has a total budget allocation of €4,998,892 to deliver before 2023. LEADER has made cumulative payments of €3,873,759 from this allocation at the end of 2021.

KEY OUTCOMES 2021

€471,556

of funding was approved for four new transitional projects under the transitional programme from June to year end.

€791,500

was processed through 37 claims. The team stayed in touch with promoters throughout the pandemic to ensure this happened.

€630,829

was the combined value of co-operation projects delivered, including the International Appalachian Trail (IAT), Colabora, Innovating Communities and Water Tourism Development to improve access to water based recreation activities.

Success Stories



Above: Drumboe Steam Engine fully restored

Bottom left: Drumboe Steam Engine under restoration

Restoration of Drumboe Steam Engine and Upgrading Works to Railway Museum

The Donegal Railway Heritage Centre (Donegal RHC), located in Donegal Town, is committed to saving, restoring, celebrating, and developing the rail history of Donegal as a first-class visitor attraction.

The Donegal RHC approached the LEADER programme to seek funding for its restoration of the Drumboe steam engine and upgrading works to the Railway Museum. This project focused on restoring the Drumboe steam engine, the last train to operate in the county, back in 1959. There were two main phases to this project: restoring the steam engine itself and building a new presentation platform and canopy at the museum.

Donegal RHC made history in October, when the first original Donegal steam engine returned to

the county. Separately, the museum itself received an upgrade in preparation for Drumboe's return. The museum is now recognised as an example of best practice in transformation and public engagement, establishing it as a must-see tourist/heritage destination in Donegal Town.

The restoration of Drumboe and its subsequent 'homecoming' to Donegal Town has generated huge interest in the county and extended the tourism season for the Donegal RHC in the period leading up to Christmas, usually a quieter time of the year.

Throughout the LEADER application process, the Donegal RHC liaised closely with Donegal Local Development CLG, who provided excellent assistance with in bringing the application together.



"This project was a real opportunity to save something unique to Donegal and to restore it to its former glory. DLDC helped us understand what the funder is looking for in an application. The LEADER team was patient with any delays associated with the Covid-19 pandemic and shared funding substantial funding application knowledge with us."

- Niall Mc Caughan Manager Donegal RHC

Rural Recreation Programme

The Rural Recreation Programme works with landowners, communities, individuals, businesses, and local and national agencies to support mainly trail-based outdoor recreation development, maintenance, and promotion in County Donegal for residents and tourists alike. This programme involves advising on management and maintenance of some of our most valuable recreational facilities, including long-distance trails and looped walks.

The Rural Recreation Officer (RRO) implements the two Walks Schemes in the county - the Bluestack Way and the Sliabh Liag Pilgrims Path. The Walks Schemes is where landowners are contracted to carry out maintenance on the section of trail crossing.

Continued Covid restrictions severely hindered the programme's development while demand for local outdoor recreation opportunities increased substantially. Despite these challenges, DLDC continued to support trail-based outdoor recreation development and successfully developed new initiatives that encouraged trail-based outdoor recreation, including new car parking facilities at the Ard na Mona Looped Walk and supporting the Time (out) for Tea programme.

KEY OUTCOMES 2021

27

2021 saw the start of the 3rd Walks Scheme on the Sliabh Liag Pilgrims Path, with 27 participants and running over five years.



Participation in a steering group to work on developing the new National Outdoor Recreation Strategy and the first-ever Donegal Outdoor Recreation Strategy.



Developing the new car park and connecting trail at Ard na Mona Nature Reserve under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS), doubling the number of visitors to the walk.



Implementation of the International Appalachian Trail (IAT) in Donegal.



Developing route cards and general walks/trail info for the Time (out) for Tea project, online and booklet form.

Success Stories

Ard na Mona Looped Walk

The Ard na Mona Looped Walk project was carried out by DLDC, in partnership with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, and with the support of Donegal County Council, adjacent landowners and the Lough Eske Community Group.

The project enhanced the existing walk through the nature reserve by providing an appropriate car park for the looped walk through the old oak woodland. The old car park had to be closed on health and safety grounds, and it left this well used looped walking trail without safe access. The provision of the new car park was vital to the continued safe and enjoyable use of the walk. The work also included the removal of non-native trees from the natural old oak forest.

The small investment will safeguard access to this fantastic, old Irish woodland in its pristine state and has improved access for visitors and residents alike. Since the opening of the new car park, visitors have nearly doubled, going from 330 to 640 per month.



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



The programme is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and Fáilte Ireland.



Individual Supports

Lifelong Learning



Lifelong Learning is the ongoing, voluntary, and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge. The programme operates under the premise that people of all ages and abilities should be able to participate in education at a level appropriate to their needs and abilities.

Lifelong Learning can also enhance our understanding of the world around us and provide us with opportunities to improve our quality of life. The Lifelong Learning team provides free and confidential one-to-one support to individuals interested in returning to learning and supports them on every step of their Lifelong Learning journey.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS 2021

The Lifelong Learning team continued to respond to clients' needs by developing new courses such as Coping with Covid.

Online Art workshops were extremely successful, particularly with those who were shielding, and they looked forward to the weekly workshop as 90 minutes of connection with others whilst also improving art skills.

A seven-week creative writing course was successfully delivered over Zoom. Participants noted in their feedback how valuable the creative writing exercises were for their mental health, creativity, and enjoyment.

The team continued to support the health and well-being needs of clients with workshops on yoga, Pilates, mindfulness, meditation, and the power of positive thinking. Updating and developing the online Directory of Courses and Resources continued, providing clients with the most up-to-date information.

KEY OUTCOMES 2021

268 individuals participated in at least one Lifelong Learning workshop.

46 young people participated in community-based Learning Support groups designed to support young people with dyslexia.

88 young people participated in Human Trafficking & Gender Equality workshops.

45 workshops were delivered to clients in 2021.

22 clients attended accredited training in Customer Service and Food Hygiene.

8 young people (on average) and their families attended the monthly online 'Saturday Storytime' initiative, designed to support and develop a love of reading from an early age.

Success Stories

Anya

Anya is single parent, unemployed living at home with her young child. She approached the Lifelong Learning Service in May 2021, after talking to a local community group about parental supports. Her self-confidence was very low; she was also finding it difficult to help her young child with various anxiety issues. Some everyday life tasks were very challenging. She signed up for a three-week workshop focusing on Anxiety - Growing Your Child's Psychological Wellbeing delivered by Dr Maria Corrigan. Anya benefited from meeting other parents in similar situations. She picked up lifelong tips and feels more confident in seeking help again if needed.

"After these workshops, I knew my child wasn't any different to many other children, getting friendly support and being able to talk to other parents in the same situation was really helpful".

- Anya

Maria

Our client (AA), a mother of three young children, lived in Direct Provision in Ireland for many years and was granted 'permission to remain' in Ireland in late 2020. She subsequently moved out of Direct Provision and into accommodation. During this time, her support worker contacted DLDC for advice on general support available to her client.

Following many conversations, she decided that she would like to avail of the Lifelong Learning programme. After living in Direct Provision, she was both excited and overwhelmed to be living independently for the first time in many years. She also felt that the timing was good for her to engage in training/education. Maria decided to attend an 8-week Power of Positive Thinking workshop. She gained so much confidence from this as well as other supports, that she subsequently decided to apply for an Access Programme to a third level college. She was accepted and the team continued to support her studies by providing a laptop through the 'Get Connected' programme.

"The advice and support that I get from DLDC is my lifeline and it has spurred me on to apply for a degree course so that I can provide a better life for me and my children"

- Maria



Left: 2021 Dunfanaghy FRC Surf Camp supported by DLDC Lifelong Learning
Far right: Lifelong Learning Women in the Home Killybegs 2021

Employment Support Programme



DLDC's Employment Support Programme aims to assist individuals to progress into employment or better-quality employment. The programme focuses on those most distant from the labour market, such as the long term unemployed, the unemployed not on the live register, disadvantaged women in the home, young people, and people with disabilities, the under-employed, and the Traveller community.

Supports offered to clients in 2021 included one-to-one meetings where the Employment Support team developed personal action plans, compiled CVs, and cover letters, assist with job searching and applications, and interview skills and mock interviews.



Employment support is available through an outreach programme in more rural areas. The outreach programme was re-established in the final quarter of the year when Community Centres and Family Resource Centres could re-open following lockdown and Covid restrictions.

KEY OUTCOMES 2021

128

individuals engaged with Employment Support to better prepare themselves to enter employment.

32

individuals in low-paid, part-time employment, where there is little or no long-term job security, received ongoing support.

26

asylum seekers residing in the IPASS Centre in Letterkenny received employment support, with 10 finding employment in various sectors - mainly hospitality and manufacturing.

30

clients took part in the Fit 2 Work training.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS 2021

The Employment Support team primarily engaged with clients remotely for one-to-one support throughout the year. This online support worked well as clients had gotten used to living with Covid restrictions, and many had embraced technology.

We provided monthly 'Getting Ready for Employment' Zoom workshops, which reviewed CVs, cover letters, interview skills, and positive feedback. We offered mock interviews to 24 clients over Zoom, and clients reported that this was helpful in their preparation for interviews.

We created a weekly job list for clients throughout the year. The job list was an excellent resource for clients to search for jobs and provided support to employers who could use it to list their available positions.

The team provided ongoing support to those living in the IPASS Centre in Letterkenny. Many of these individuals have had their CVs compiled and availed of the Zoom training and mock interviews. Of the 26 clients who engaged with the service, ten obtained employments in various sectors, mainly in hospitality and manufacturing.

In 2021, we continued to support 30 clients in their online training through the Fit 2 Work and held two celebration events for those who completed it.

Success Stories

Nigel

Originally from Nigeria, Nigel was 54 years old and had been living in Ireland for 12 years and had no family in Ireland. The Donegal Volunteer Centre referred him as he needed help updating his CV and a cover letter. Nigel has completed an MSc in Food Business Management and Technology – QQI Level 9 in the Institute of Technology Tallaght. He worked in Charles Vial Fish, in Dunkineely as Quality Control & New Product Development Officer for one year. Due to the distance to travel each day, Nigel decided to look for other employment closer to Letterkenny or in more urban areas of Ireland. He was willing to re-locate if an employer offered a good position. Nigel had thought about setting up his own business, importing and selling organic fertilisers, and we referred him to the Enterprise Team. However, he was not eligible for the Back to Work Enterprise Scheme.

The Employment Supports team advised him about Tús and CE schemes and referred him to the Department of Social Protection to request to participate in a local scheme. We also approached the Tús Supervisor in DLDC and advocated on his behalf. We conducted a mock interview to prepare him for his interview and subsequently, he got on the Tús scheme. He was delighted with this outcome. He continues to be supported by the employment support team as he is still seeking full-time work; we continue to liaise with him on his journey and help, assist and advise him as much as possible.

Job Club

Job Club was funded by the Department of Social Protection to provide a service to assist jobseekers in entering/re-entering employment through individualised supports such as a 'drop in' service, CV preparation, and one-to-one support formal workshops.

The service enabled jobseekers to explore employment opportunities and take positive steps toward realising their career plans.

KEY OUTCOMES 2021

131 one-to-one sessions with participants took place, with 18 CV preparation clients.

3 online workshops were delivered in the first half of the year, supporting 13 participants.

30 participants placed into various full-time and part-time employment, including retail, hospitality, construction, childcare, accounts, driving, cleaning, and warehouse operator.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS 2021

As part of a client's progression, DLDC created an Employment Action Plan based on the client's experience, goals, and identified needs.

Job Club also linked in with additional support measures provided by DLDC, offering the client a wrap-around service. Examples of inter-company referrals include Donegal Volunteer Centre, Tús and RSS Schemes Department, Enterprise Team - for Start Your Own Business support, Traveller Job Coach, SICAP – Lifelong Learning, and CE Childcare Scheme.

In 2021 the Job Club successfully supported 162 clients in total. This was an excellent outcome considering the country remained in a strict lockdown, due to Covid 19 health restrictions, during the first quarter of the year.

In-person outreach supports recommenced at the end of September 2021, for the first time since March 2020, with the lifting of government health restrictions. These outreach clinics for One 2 One clients took place in locations throughout the county, such as Letterkenny, St Johnston, Donegal Town, Milford, and Raphoe.

Unfortunately, after 22 years, the Job Club funding ended as of 31st December 2021. The two team members were redeployed to the new Donegal Local Area Employment Service (LAES) programme.

Success Stories

Edel*

Edel, a woman in her early 50s, contacted Job Club in 2021 requesting help. Edel had been a homemaker for the previous 25 years and was now keen to re-enter the workforce, having upskilled in IT and Admin.

The Job Club leader worked closely with her over the next few months, which included multiple engagements, reviewing Edel's CV, conducting a mock interview over Zoom, emailing feedback on cover letters, and helping her to explore job advertisements.

Through ongoing support and encouragement over the next few months, Edel gained confidence and self-belief again. She persevered in applying for roles relevant to her recent training and successfully gained several job interviews. Within a few months, Edel secured her dream job as an office assistant working close to home and was thrilled with the various types of support she received.

John*

In June, John was referred to Job Club by the Department of Social Protection. He was struggling to get a job and informed the Job Club leader that it had been negatively affecting his mental health. He had engaged in counselling as a result.

The Job Coach leader praised him for attending counselling and for his many efforts to secure employment. The leader gave assistance with CVs, cover letters and interview techniques on an ongoing basis and provided several links to useful websites, including the employment opportunities list on dlc.org. After several months of persevering and applying for more focused jobs, he secured employment as a full-time Retail Assistant in a supermarket in Letterkenny. The client was delighted with his new position and very grateful for the support received from the Job Club.



Special Initiative Traveller / Traveller Job Coach

Donegal Local Development Company (DLDC) has been operating the Traveller Job Coach programme since 2011. The programme aims to support Travellers to re-enter the workforce and source training and education courses that will enhance opportunities in gaining employment.

The programme is funded by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. The programme operates across the whole County of Donegal and employs one full-time project worker. Traveller Job Coach programme is based in Donegal Travellers Project premises in Letterkenny and meets clients in Inishowen and South Donegal.

KEY OUTCOMES 2021

20
21

was a very successful year for Traveller Job Coach, with clients engaging in employment, apprenticeships, and work experience.

29

clients took up employment in part-time and full-time positions.

77

clients engaged in various educational and training courses.



P Mc Ginley Recovery Services showcased their vintage Bedford lorry with Santa Claus for the Christmas party at the Asylum Seekers Centre, Letterkenny, organised by Donegal Volunteer Centre.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS 2021

2021 was a very successful year for Traveller Job Coach, with clients engaging in training, apprenticeships, and work experience, resulting in 29 clients taking up employment in part-time and full-time positions. Most of the positions were based in Letterkenny, with roles in the retail and hospitality sectors, the transportation sector, and the construction industry. Unfortunately, due to Covid restrictions, some clients were employed temporarily, or the business had to cease due to Government restrictions. Many clients who have successfully taken up employment were students and clients under 35 years of age.

There was an increase in clients interested in setting up a business, enquiring about the Department of Social Protection's Back to Work Enterprise Allowance (BTWEA) and other self-employment initiatives delivered by DLDC. Two clients attended an online DLDC bookkeeping course and registered their business. One client is currently operating his business in the UK, decommissioning a nuclear plant. Many clients that are enquiring about self-employment are people of mature age with previous experience in the areas of enterprise.

Most of the training in 2021 moved online, with over 77 clients engaged in various courses. Individual training sessions were tailored to the needs of each client and ranged from FM media/radio skills, patient moving and handling, HACCP, GWO working in heights and HGV, CPC, etc.

Group training in Safe Pass, manual handling, and customer service was run in partnership with Donegal Travellers Project Men's Health Worker and Involve Traveller Youth Worker.

The Traveller Job Coach collaborated with the Donegal Travellers Project in various activities and supports. These included participating in in-house education/training, supporting primary health care with families experiencing fuel poverty and engaging with education workers in ongoing student support.

Self-employment supports

Providing pathways to self-employment and social enterprise.

Enterprise supports are aimed at people who may consider self-employment to improve their current financial situation and personal progression. The Enterprise Team works with a range of people across Donegal, primarily unemployed individuals and those who may have disengaged from the labour market due to various reasons, including illness, disability, time spent in education, and engagement in family duties.

Participation in the programme enables individuals to explore potential business opportunities. Participants are given one-to-one guidance, training, and mentoring to help develop their ideas and turn ambitions into reality. For many who have been through the process, it has increased confidence and empowerment.

They have been able to provide an income for themselves and their families and, in some cases, provided employment opportunities for others also.



KEY OUTCOMES 2021

222

individuals engaged in enterprise support.

144

participants established new businesses following receipt of Enterprise Supports.

233

clients received a range of follow-up supports.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS 2021

Despite the ongoing challenges of Covid-19, enterprise staff continued to deliver support to new and existing clients by facilitating online training opportunities and one-to-one meetings and offering face-to-face interventions when restrictions allowed, and clients felt comfortable.

In addition to this, the enterprise team continued to support and address the issues facing Back to Work Enterprise Allowance (BTWEA) and Short Term Enterprise Allowance (STEA) clients due to the ongoing uncertainty of COVID restrictions. The team provided information to businesses to ensure that they knew all grants, financial supports, and assistance available to help them diversify and adapt to continue trading.



Success Stories

Diane*

Diane had spent many years as a carer for family members. The carer's support network advised Diane that she should explore opportunities outside caring for her health and wellbeing. Diane was always interested in photography and completed several online training courses to improve her skills.

Diane also set up a local network of photographers to learn and develop her skills further. Diane realised that she might be able to start a business in photography and contacted an enterprise officer at the DLDC following a referral from the Department of Social Protection.

Diane attended a few one-to-one appointments and completed the Start Your Own Business course. This support gave Diane the confidence to proceed with her business in photography, and she set up a studio at home to run her business. Diane continues to avail of support from DLDC through training, mentoring, regular advice and support from an Enterprise Officer to ensure the long-term viability of her business. Diane had been out of the workplace environment for many years. The ongoing interaction with an Enterprise Officer and business network helped build her confidence and continue to grow her business.

CoH-Sync

(Community Health Sync Project)

Donegal Local Development Company's Community Health Sync Project (CoH-Sync) offers free support to individuals and communities who want to improve their overall health and wellbeing. Clients are supported to manage their own health needs through access to local services.

Throughout 2021, CoH-Sync focused on improving health literacy, prevention of and early intervention in long term ill-health, and its main risk factors. We delivered a wide range of community health interventions throughout Covid-19 restrictions, adapting how we work to maintain online delivery of the programme. Supports included Pilates, mindfulness, music, book club, gardening, interior design, laughter yoga, Zumba, knitting, 10,000 steps-a-day challenge, cookery, including cooking for kids and a male-only cookery class. This resulted in over 900 personalised health and wellbeing plans completed, offering up-to-date, relevant information, advice, and 1:1 support to clients.

KEY OUTCOMES 2021

20

successful workshops were completed by the CoH-Sync team in 2021.

900

health and wellbeing plans and individual supports were delivered from January to September, 2021.



Delivered cross border support including the Happy Health Programme to the Foyle Down Syndrome Trust, highlighting the risk factors associated with chronic illnesses such as heart disease.

600

individuals engaged in the Time for Tea initiative and explored their locality and set personal health goals.



Success Stories

21 Day Walking Challenge

The 21 Day Walking Challenge was a fun incentive to help active and inactive participants get outside and walk with family and friends. CoH-Sync encouraged participants to share their progress and photographs of their walks in nature on a dedicated Facebook page, creating a positive online space for people to connect. The challenge was to hit the recommended 10,000 steps a day. However, the overall goal was to increase clients' daily step count regardless of fitness or ability levels. The CoH-Sync team used the extra incentive of rewarding people with fitness watches for active participation. Participants' feedback on was very positive, and many reported that it was motivating and helped relieve the stress of Covid-19 restrictions.

"Thanks, DLDC, for this great initiative. It was a great way to give my husband and me the kick we needed to get active. We've both kept up with the steps, and we are getting the whole family involved."

- Aisling

Time for Tea

'Time for Tea' aimed to encourage people from across Donegal to 'Walk, Talk and Connect' and enjoy the beautiful county post Covid. It supported people to re-engage, meet up for a walk, and enjoy the outdoors. CoH-Sync provided backpacks to individuals who registered through an online registration portal to encourage people to get out walking. The bags contained everything the participants needed to have a picnic, including a flask, cutlery, plates, etc., including literature and maps of developed and maintained walks, parks and outdoor amenities across Donegal, which participants could explore. Over 600 individuals engaged and received support from their health facilitator, explored their locality, and set personal health goals over the six-week period. DLDC collaborated with Donegal County Council, Rural Recreation office, Donegal Volunteer Centre, Healthy Donegal, and Donegal Sports Partnership on the project.

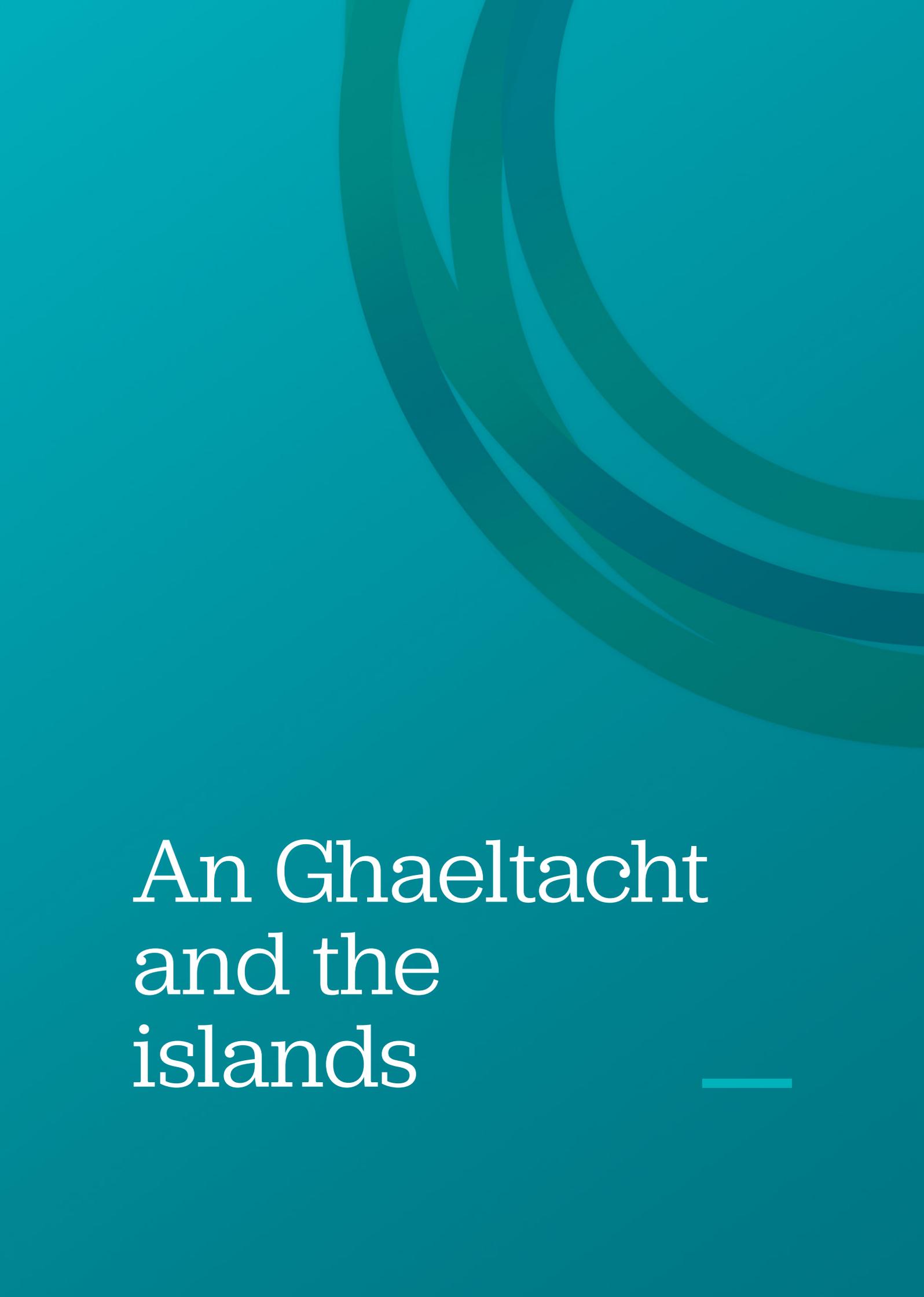
"Thank you so so much for the Time for Tea backpack. Now we could enjoy our long walks and cups of tea in style!"

- Sarah



"We are lucky to have the resource of the DLDC to assist and guide us in this uncertain time for communities."

- Frances Boyle, Ionad Cois Locha

The background is a solid teal color. On the right side, there are several overlapping, curved, semi-transparent bands in various shades of teal and green, creating a sense of depth and movement.

An Ghaeltacht and the islands

Lifelong Learning – An Ghaeltacht

Lifelong Learning is the ongoing, voluntary, and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge.

The programme operates under the premise that people of all ages and abilities should be able to participate in education at a level appropriate to their needs and abilities across the Gaeltacht.



2021 OVERVIEW

Promoting Personal Development

The Lifelong Learning team assisted individuals who required support across the Gaeltacht region. The range of one-to-one support provided aims to empower the individual and encourage them to start on their personal development journey by offering them softer support to enhance their long-term capabilities.

Due to the ongoing pandemic restrictions, we continuously revised, modified, and adapted supports, and we strived to engage with the most isolated and vulnerable clients. With

IT assistance, we provided the opportunity to participate in specifically adapted online workshops and courses to improve their connectivity and increase social inclusion, thus boosting their personal development and wellbeing.

Tailored supports provided in 2021 included gardening workshops, wellness, flower arranging, personal development, safeguarding adult, and capacity building.

Providing Lifelong Learning

The Lifelong Learning team focused on supporting individuals to engage in opportunities across the Gaeltacht region, emphasising low-income households, the unemployed, lone parents, disadvantaged women, farm families, and others. The team continued to facilitate increased participation and progression of existing SICAP clients and newly identified individuals, supporting and encouraging individuals to value and participate in training and understand the importance of lifelong learning.

The Lifelong Learning team offered pre-

training opportunities to individuals not ready to partake in certified courses to ease them into longer-term education options. Due to the uncertainty and constraints of the times, we remained flexible and facilitated online or onsite training when permitted. The team delivered a range of credited and non-accredited tailored supports based on identified needs of our clients across the Gaeltacht. These were predominately online and included customer care, ATV safety, CPR & Defib, HACCP & Food Safety, patient moving and handling, Safe Pass, PHECC first aid, the safe use of pesticide, and orienteering.



Supports for Children and Young People

The pandemic significantly affected vulnerable children and their families, especially those on the spectrum and with dyslexia, who could not access additional supports. The Lifelong Learning team delivered a range of supports that helped these identified needs within the system. These supports ultimately benefitted the young person and prevented early school leaving or eased the transition into second-level education, helping them remain within the education system.

The team provided wellness workshops which proved very beneficial to parents through these challenging times. Parents and children participated in online and onsite workshops, including parent support workshops, 'Saturday Club', dyslexia support classes, digital workshops, healthy eating for families, and ASD yoga.

KEY OUTCOMES 2021

98 clients received personal development and well-being supports.

125 clients were assisted on their Lifelong Learning journey.

275 children and young people and 122 adults attended education and development supports.

35 courses and workshops were provided onsite and online for clients.

29 clients obtained a QQI L3-5 qualification.

77 clients received industry accredited qualifications.

Foghlaim Feadh an tSaoil – An Ghaeltacht

‘Sé atá san Foghlaim Feadh an tSaoil ná Tóraíocht eolais atá leanúnach, deonach agus féinspreagtha.

Tá an clár a reáchtáil faoin bhunprionsabal gur cheart de dhaoine d’achan aois agus d’achan ábaltacht a bheith rannpháirteach san oideachas ar fud na Gaeltachta, ag leibhéal atá oiriúnach dá gcuid riachtanas agus ábaltachtaí.



etb

Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Dhúin na nGall
Donegal Education and
Training Board

FORLÉARGAS 2021

Forbairt Phearsanta a Chur Chun Cinn.

Chuidigh foireann Foghlaim Feadh an tSaoil le daoine aonair ar fud na Gaeltachta a raibh tacaíocht a dhíth orthu. Chuir an réimse tacaíochta duine le duine spriocanna ar fáil leis an duine aonair a chumasú agus iad a spreagadh le tús a chur lena dturas forbartha pearsanta fhéin tré thacaíocht níos boige a thairiscint dóibh lena gcumas fadtéarmach a fheabhsú.

De thairbhe na srianta leanúnacha paidéime rinne muid tacaíochtaí a athbhreithniú, a athrú agus a chur in oiriúint go leanúnach agus rinne muid dícheall ceangal a dhéanamh leis na

cliaint is mó a bhí san iargúlacht agus i mbaol. Le cuidiú ó IT, chuir muid deiseanna ar fáil a bheith rannpháirteach i gceardlanna agus i gcúrsaí ar líne a bhí curtha in oiriúint go sainiúil chun comhcheangailteacht agus cuimsiú shóisialta a mhéadú agus ar an dóigh seo ag treisiú forbairt agus folláine phearsanta.

San áireamh sna tacaíochtaí a bhí curtha in oiriúint agus a cuireadh ar fáil in 2021 bhí ceardlanna garraíodóireachta, folláine, cóiríú bláthanna, forbairt phearsanta, cosaint duine fásta agus forbairt acmhainne.

Foghlaim Feadh an tSaoil a Chur ar Fáil.

Dhírigh foireann Foghlaim Feadh an tSaoil ar thacaíocht a thabhairt do dhaoine aonair ar fud na Gaeltachta deiseanna a thapú, ag cur béim ar theaghlaigh ar ioncam íseal, lucht dífhostaithe, tuismitheoirí aonair, mná atá faoi mhíbhuntáiste, teaghlaigh feirme agus daoine nach iad. Lean an fhoireann ar aghaidh ag éascú rannpháirtíocht níos mó agus dul chun cinn do chliaint SICAP atá ansin agus do dhaoine eile atá aitheanta, ag tabhairt tacaíochta agus ag spreagadh daoine aonair meas a bheith acu don traenáil agus a bheith

rannpháirteach ann agus an tábhacht atá le Foghlaim Feadh an tSaoil a thuigbheáil.

Thairg foireann Foghlaim Feadh an tSaoil deiseanna réamh-thraenála do dhaoine aonair nach raibh réidh le bheith rannpháirteach i gcúrsaí creidiúnaithe, chun iad a éascú isteach i roghanna oideachais níos fadtréimhsí. Mar gheall ar neamhchinnteacht agus ar na srianta a bhí ann ag an am, bhí muid solúbtha agus rinne muid traenáil ar líne nó ar an suíomh a éascú nuair a bhí sé ceadaithe. Reáchtáil an

fhoireann réimse de thacaíochtaí creidiúnaithe agus neamh-chreidiúnaithe a bhí curtha in oiriúint, bunaithe ar riachtanais aitheanta ár gcliaint ar fud na Gaeltachta. Bhí siad seo ar líne, ar an chuid is mó agus bhí cúram custaiméirí san áireamh -- sábháilteacht ATV, ACS agus Dífhibrileoir, AGPRC & Sábháilteacht Bia, láimhseáil agus aistriú othair, Pas Sábháilte, garchabhair PHECC, úsáid shábháilte a bhaint as lotnaidicíd, agus treodóireacht.

Tacaíochtaí do Pháistí agus do Dhaoine Óga.

Ghoill an paindéim go mór ar pháistí leochaileacha agus a dteaghlaigh, go háirithe iadsan a bhí ar an speictream agus a raibh disléicse orthu agus nach raibh fáil acu ar thacaíochtaí breise. Chuir foireann Foghlaim Feadh an tSaoil réimse de thacaíochtaí ar fáil a chuidigh leis na riachtanais seo a haithníodh taobh istigh den chóras. Bhí na tacaíochtaí seo, i ndeireadh na dála, mar bhuntáiste ag an duine óg agus chuir siad cosc le fágáil na scoile go luath nó rinne sé an t-aistriú isteach to dtí an dara leibhéal den oideachas a éascú, a gcoinneáil taobh istigh den chóras oideachais.

Chuir an fhoireann ceardlanna folláine ar fáil a bhí mar bhuntáiste mór do thuismitheoirí ag am a bhí thar a bheith dúshlánach. Bhí thuismitheoirí agus páistí rannpháirteach i gceardlanna ar líne agus ar an suíomh, san áireamh bhí ceardlanna tacaíochta thuismitheoirí ‘Club an tSathairn’, ranganna tacaíochta disléicse, ceardlanna digiteacha, réim bia shláintiúil do theaghlaigh agus yoga ASD.

“Bhí sé iontach deas fáil amach as an teach agus bualadh le daoine in áit shábháilte arís, thóg sé mó chroí”

- Bríd

“Bhí sé áisiúil domsa an cúrsa a dhéanamh agus cáilíocht a bhaint amach ar líne agus ní raibh gá dom feighlí leanaí a fháil nó íoc ar son taistil”

- Síle

PRÍOMH THORTHAÍ 2021

98 Fuair 98 cliant tacaíochtaí d’fhorbairt pearsanta agus folláine.

125 Fuair 125 cliant cuidiú ar a dturas Foghlama Feadh an tSaoil.

275 Rinne 275 páiste agus duine óg agus 122 duine fásta freastal ar thacaíochtaí forbartha agus oideachais.

35 Cuireadh 35 cúrsa agus ceardlann ar fáil ar an suíomh agus ar líne do chliaint.

29 Fuair 29 cliant cáilíocht QQI L3—5.

77 Fuair 77 cliant cáilíochtaí creidiúnaithe ó earnáil na tionsclaíochta.

Community Development – An Ghaeltacht

Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) Community Development programme aims to support local communities in addressing poverty, social exclusion, and inequality issues.

The Community Development team provide direct supports to local committees and volunteers using a community-led bottom-up approach to develop the capacity of members and volunteers who represent or work with disadvantaged communities and target groups of the SICAP Programme.

2021 HIGHLIGHTS

Bereavement Support Event

The SICAP team collaborated with Ionad Naomh Padraic to deliver a bereavement support event with Liam Cannon of New Dawn Counselling Services to support individuals and families who suffered a bereavement. This event created the foundation for establishing a bereavement support group in the North West, beginning in 2022.

Rosses Radio ‘Saturday Stories’

This was an initiative to connect with the vulnerable and isolated in our communities. The project was aimed at community members who lived in rural areas, had a poor internet connection, and are not tech savvy. A collaboration with the Rosses Community Radio station resulted in a two-hour show broadcast on Saturdays. The show featured gardening, heritage, volunteering in your community, family, and information on supports available to the elderly and housebound by Muintir na Tíre.

Yarn Bombers

To lift the spirits of the rural community of Kilcar and Glencolmcille, the SICAP team started a ‘yarn bombing’ initiative where knitters and crocheters alike were encouraged to come together in a creative and social setting. DLDC worked collaboratively with local community groups Tobar na mBan, Mná Cheantar Mhín an Aoire, and Coiste Forbartha na Carraige in four separate locations - Kilcar, Carrick, Glencolmcille and Meenaneary. The completed pieces will be displayed in 2022.

Capacity building workshops

A total of 17 community groups took part in capacity building online workshops.

Charity Governance workshops

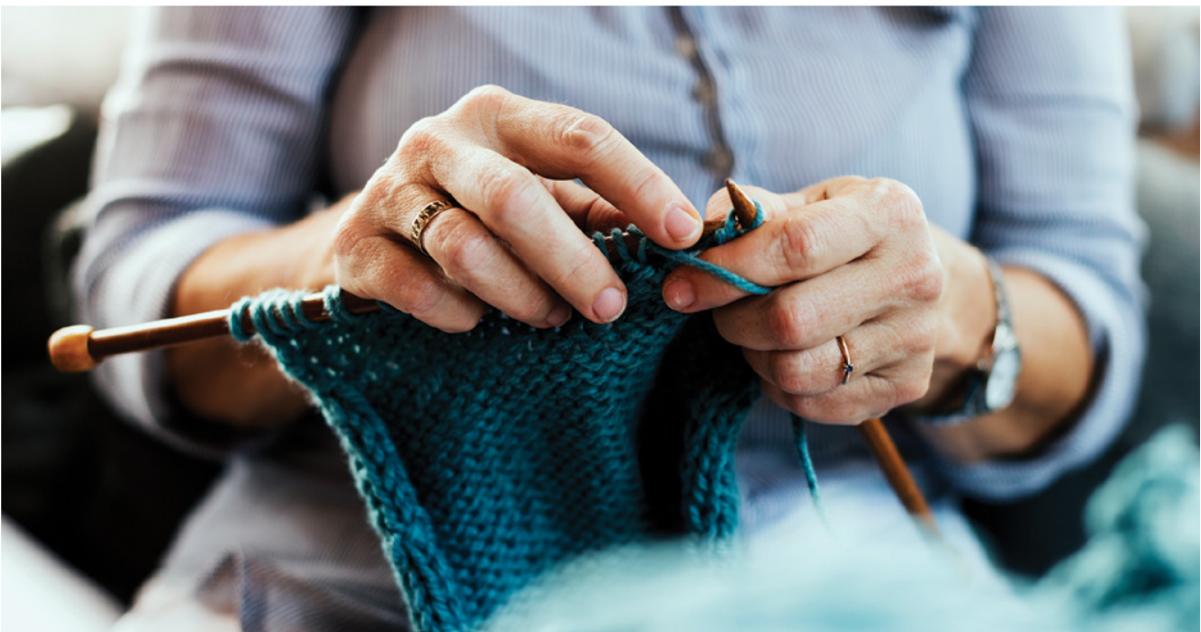
Training was provided on Charity Governance to a total of 10 groups. The focus of this training was on completing the Compliance Record Form – mainly covering the six principles of the Charity Regulator Authority.

“Our committee was happy to avail of the opportunity to attend Zoom meetings provided by DLDC on areas of governance. We received guidance on updating our Constitution and three-year work plan in a format which we could regularly visit, analyse our strengths, and weaknesses, and a realistic action plan. Whilst the recent covid lockdown delayed full implementation of our new governing documents, we are now at a point where we can move forward with a better vision and a basis for working with our community.”

- Seamus,
Coiste Forbartha Cheantar Mhín an Aoire

“Being the new manager of a community centre, coupled with some new board members, I felt overwhelmed with all the administration. The Charity Regulator, strategic planning, budgeting, policies and procedures, social media platforms and board meetings were all something I was aware, but had no reason to fear, as they were someone else’s problem. The training offered by DLDC has proven invaluable.”

- Síle,
Manager, Togra Fiontar & Cultúr Uladh CTR



Forbairt Pobail – An Ghaeltacht

Tá sé mar chuspóir ag an Chlár Forbartha Pobail, an Clár um Chuimsiú Sóisialta agus Gníomhachtú Pobail (SICAP) tacaíocht a thabhairt do phobail áitiúil a dhul i ngleic le bochtaineacht, cuimsiú sóisialta agus ceisteanna neamhionannais.

Cuireann foireann na Forbartha Pobail tacaíochtaí ar fáil go díreach chuig coistí áitiúla agus saorálaithe tré úsáid a bhaint as cur chuige ó bhun aníos atá a threorú ón phobal chun ábaltacht na mball agus na saorálaithe a dhéanann ionadaíocht nó a oibríonn le pobail atá faoi mhíbhuntáiste agus spriocghrúpaí Chlár SICAP a fhorbairt.

BUAICPHOINTÍ 2021

Ócáid Tacaíochta Méala

Chomhoibrigh foireann SICAP le hIonad Naomh Pádraig chun ócáid tacaíochta méala a chur ar fáil ag a raibh Liam Cannon ó Sheirbhísí Comhairleoireachta New Dawn ansin le tacaíocht a thabhairt do dhaoine aonair agus do theaghlaigh a d'fhulaing de bharr méala. Leag an ócáid seo an dúshraith le grúpa tacaíochta méala a chur ar bun san Iarthuaisceart, ag tosú in 2022.

Scéalta an tSatairn le 'Raidió na Rosa'

Ba seo tionscnamh le ceangal a dhéanamh leosan inár bpobail atá i mbaol agus iargúlta. Bhí an tionscnamh seo dírithe ar bhaill den phobal a bhí beo in áiteacha iargúlta agus ag a raibh droch-cheangal idirlín agus gan iad eolach ar chúrsaí teicneolaíochta. Bhí seó dhá uair a craoltar ar an Satharn mar thoradh ar chomhoibriú le Stáisiún Raidió Pobail na Rosa. Bhí garraíodóireacht, oidhreacht, ag oibriú go deonach sa phobal, an teaghlach agus eolas ar na tacaíochtaí a chuireann Muintir na Tíre ar fáil dóibhsean atá aosta agus atá gabhte sa teach mar chuid den chlár seo.

Yarn Bombers

Le hardú meanman a thabhairt do phobail iargúlta Chill Chartha agus Ghleann Cholmcille chuir foireann SICAP tús le tionscnamh 'Yarn Bombing' áit ar spreagadh cniotálaithe agus lucht cróise araon a theacht le chéile i dtimpeallacht a bhí cruthaitheach agus sóisialta. D'oibrigh DLDC i gcomhar le grúpaí pobail Tobar na mBan, Mná Cheantar Mhín an Aoire agus Coiste Forbartha na Carraige i gceithre ionad éagsúla --Cill Chartha, Carraig, Gleann Cholm Cille agus Mín an Aoire. Cuirfear na píosaí atá críochnaithe ar taispeáint in 2022.

Ceardlanna faoi fhorbairt acmhainne

Ghlac 17 grúpa pobail ar fad páirt i gceardlanna ar líne faoi fhorbairt acmhainne.

Ceardlanna faoi Rialachas Carthanachta

Cuireadh traenáil ar fáil faoi Rialachas Carthanachta do dheich ngrúpa ar fad. Bhí an traenáil seo dírithe ar an Fhoirm Taifead Rialachais a chomhlánú – ag baint le sé phrionsabal Údarás an Rialtóra Carthanachta den chuid is mó.

“Bhí lúchair ar an choiste s’againne an deis a thapú freastal a dhéanamh ar chruinnithe Zoom a chuir an DLDC ar fáil ar réimsí de rialachas. Fuair muid treoir ar uasdátú ár mBunreachta agus ar phlean oibre trí bliana i leagan amach a bhféadfadh muid amharc air go rialta, anailís a dhéanamh ar ár mbuanna agus ar ár laigeachtaí agus ar phlean gníomhaíochta réadúil. Cé gur chuir dianghlasáil Covid le gairid, moill le cur i bhfeidhm ár ndoiciméid rialaithe úra, tá an pointe sroichte againn anois inár féidir linn gluaiseacht ar aghaidh le fíis agus bonn níos fearr le dhul i gceann oibre lenár bpobal”

- Seamus,
Coiste Forbartha Cheantar Mhín an Aoire

“ Mar bhainisteoir úr ar Ionad Pobail agus le roinnt ball úr ar an bhord, mhothaigh mise trína chéile ag an riarachán ar fad. Bhí mé eolach ar an Rialtóir Carthanachta, ar phleanáil straitéiseach, ar bhuiséadú, ar pholasaithe agus ghnásanna, ar ardáin do na meáin shóisialta agus ar chruinnithe boird agus cha raibh cúis ar bith agam a bheith inmíoch fúthu mar gur fadhbanna do dhaoine eile a bhí iontu. B’fhiú go mór domh an traenáil a chuir an DLDC ar fáil”

- Síle,
Bainisteoir Togra Fiontair & Cultúir Uladh Ctr



SICAP - Social Enterprise – An Ghaeltacht

In 2021, the SICAP team supported social enterprises in the Gaeltacht to deliver services to SICAP target groups.

The team supported social enterprises to create and sustain jobs, secure funding, build their capacity, and provide volunteering opportunities for SICAP target groups.

Success Stories



Ionad Cois Locha

Ionad Cois Locha is a social enterprise situated on the shores of Dunlewey Lough in the shadow of the fabled Poison Glen. The multipurpose centre includes heritage buildings, guided tours, a boat trip out on the Dunlewey Lough, a children's play area, restaurant, a wedding venue and gift shop. The centre is a major source of employment and training for the local community.

DLDC supported Ionad Cois Locha/The Dunlewey Centre to complete a business plan, financial plan and application for Pobal's Community Services Programme (CSP). From this application, Ionad Cois Locha secured funding for two full-time roles including a manager. This will ensure the future sustainability of the Centre and its continued development as one of Donegal's largest social enterprises.

"I had the privilege of working with DLDC to prepare a CSP application to POBAL for a manager and workers for the activity Centre here in Dunlewey. Their knowledge and support in writing this application were of great benefit not only to myself but also to the Board of Management. DLDC has been a great source of help regarding information and assistance in numerous other topics. We are lucky to have the resource of DLDC to assist and guide us in this uncertain time for communities."

- Frances Boyle,
Tourism Development Officer
@ Ionad Cois Locha

SICAP - Fiontar Sóisialta – An Ghaeltacht

I 2021, thug foireann SICAP tacaíocht d'fhiontair shóisialta sa Ghaeltacht le seirbhísí a chur ar fáil do spriocghrúpaí SICAP.

Thug an foireann tacaíocht d'fhiontair shóisialta le jabanna a chruthú agus a chothú, maoiniú a fháil, a n-acmhainn a fhorbairt agus deiseanna le hoibriú go deonach do spriocghrúpaí SICAP a chur ar fáil.

Scéal a raibh rath air



Ionad Cois Locha

Tá Ionad Cois Locha ina fhiontar sóisialta atá suite ar bhruach Loch Dhún Lúiche faoi scáth Ghleann Nimhe cháiliúil. San áireamh san Ionad ilfheidhme seo tá foirgnimh oidhreachta, turais threoraithe, turas báid ar Loch Dhún Lúiche, áit spraoi do pháistí, bialann, ionad pósta agus siopa brontanas. Tá an tIonad ina fhoinse mór fostaíochta agus traenála don phobal áitiúil.

Thug DLDC tacaíocht d'Ionad Cois Locha le plan gnó, plan airgeadais agus iarratas chuig Pobal don Chlár Seirbhísí Pobail (CSP) a chur i gcrích. Fuair Ionad Cois Locha maoiniú do dhá phost lánaimseartha, bainisteoir san áireamh, ón iarratas seo. Déanfaidh seo inbhuanaitheacht an Ionaid san am atá romhainn a chinntiú agus leanfaidh an fhorbairt ar aghaidh ar cheann de na fiontair shóisialta is mó i nDún na nGall.

“Bhí sé de phribhléid agam a bheith ag obair le DLDC le hiarratas CSP chuig Pobal a ullmhú chun bainisteoir agus oibríthe a fháil don Ionad Gníomhaíochta anseo i nDún Lúiche. Bhí a gcuid eolais agus tacaíochta leis an iarratas seo a scríobh ina bhuntáiste mór, chan amháin domhsa, ach fosta don Bhord Bainistíochta. Bhí DLDC ina chuidiú mór maidir le heolas agus cuidiú ina lán topaicí eile. Tá an t-ádh orainn DLDC a bheith againn mar fhoinse le cuidiú agus treoir a thabhairt dúinn ag am ina bhfuil neamhchinnteacht sna pobail.”

- Frances Boyle, Oifigeach Forbartha Turasóireachta @ Ionad Cois Locha

Donegal Volunteer Centre – An Ghaeltacht

Donegal Volunteer Centre (DVC) works with individual volunteers and community groups across the Gaeltacht region to help provide meaningful volunteer roles and community engagement.

DVC's role is to promote volunteering while enhancing the volunteering capacity of groups coupled with supporting new and existing volunteer roles.

Volunteer ME4 Awards

Donegal Volunteer Centre ran its annual ME4U awards to recognise and thank individual volunteers and projects throughout County Donegal who work to improve their community. The DVC had two winning groups from the Gaeltacht region, Club Óige Chnoc Fola from Gweedore and Playmatters from Dungloe.

Playmatters Dungloe

Playmatters is a community organisation aimed at supporting family health and wellbeing by integrating and connecting children and families with their community and the natural environment. Due to an increased demand on its service, Playmatters needed to recruit volunteers. DVC helped them to fulfil the necessary roles and assisted with training and Garda Vetting.



“The Donegal Volunteer Centre is always our first port of call for queries around people management and engaging with other community groups. Without them, we wouldn't have had such a successful year.”

Below: Helen Farrell, Melanie Boyle, Playmatters and John Curran, Donegal Volunteer Centre



Ionad Saorálaithe Dhún na nGall – An Ghaeltacht

Oibríonn Ionad Saorálaithe Dhún na nGall (DVC) le saorálaithe aonair agus le grúpaí pobail ar fud na Gaeltachta le cuidiú leo ról dheonacha atá fiúntach agus gníomhaíocht pobail a chur ar fáil.

Is é ról an DVC ná obair dheonach a chur chun cinn le linn d’acmhainn dheonach na ngrúpaí a bheith a bhfeabhsú comh maith le bheith ag tacú le ról dheonacha atá ansin agus ról úra.

Gradaim Shaorálaí ME4

Rinne Ionad Saorálaithe Dhún na nGall gradaim bhliantúil ME4U a réachtáil le haitheantas agus buíochas a thabhairt do shaorálaithe aonair agus tograí ar fud Chontae Dhún na nGall, a oibríonn lena bpobal a fheabhsú. Bhí dhá ghrúpa buaiteoirí ón Ghaeltacht ag an DVC -- Club Óige Chnoc Fola as Gaoth Dobhair agus Playmatters as an Chlochán Liath.

Club Óige Chnoc Fola, Treasa Ní Ghallchóir agus Pádraig Mac Pháidín



Playmatters as an Chlochán Liath.

Is eagraíocht pobail atá in Playmatters atá dírithe ar thacaíocht a thabhairt do shláinte agus d’fholláine teaghlaigh tré pháistí agus teaghlaigh a nascadh agus a cheangal lena bpobal agus leis an timpeallacht nádúrtha. Mar gheall ar go dtáinig méadú ar éileamh na seirbhíse bhí ar Playmatters saorálaithe a earcú. Chuidigh DVC leo na ról riachtanach a chomhlíonadh agus chuidigh siad le traenáil agus le Grinnfhiosrúchán an Gharda Síochána.

“Is ar Ionad Saorálaithe Dhún na nGall a thugtar aghaidh ar dtús le ceisteanna faoi bhainistiú daoine agus faoi cheangal le grúpaí pobail eile. Gan iad cha bheadh ár mbliain comh rathúil agus a bhí sé.”



**Donegal
Volunteer Centre**

Ionad d’Obair Saorálaí Chontae Dhún na nGall

Self-employment supports – An Ghaeltacht

Providing pathways to self-employment and social enterprise

The Enterprise Team works with a range of people across Donegal, primarily unemployed individuals and those who may have disengaged from the labour market due to various reasons, including illness, disability, time spent in education, and engagement in family duties.

Participation in the programme enables individuals to explore potential business opportunities. Participants are given one-to-one guidance, training, and mentoring to help develop their ideas and turn ambitions into reality. For many who have been through the process, it has increased confidence and empowerment.

They have been able to provide an income for themselves and their families and, in some cases, provided employment opportunities for others also.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS 2021

Despite the ongoing challenges of Covid-19, enterprise staff continued to deliver support to new and existing clients by facilitating online training opportunities and one-to-one meetings and offering face-to-face interventions when restrictions allowed, and clients felt comfortable.

In addition to this, the enterprise team continued to support and address the issues facing BTWEA / STEA clients due to the ongoing uncertainty of COVID restrictions. The team provided information to businesses to ensure that they knew all grants, financial supports, and assistance available to help them diversify and adapt to continue trading.

Tacaíochtaí Féin-fhostaíochta – An Ghaeltacht

cosáin a chur ar fáil chuig féin-fhostaíocht agus fiontar sóisialta – An Ghaeltacht

Oibríonn an Fhoireann Fiontar le réimse daoine ar fud Dhún na nGall, go háirithe iadsan atá dífhostaithe agus iadsan atá scoite amach ón mhargadh fostaíochta ar chúiseanna éagsúla lena n-áirítear tinneas, míchumas, am caite in oideachas agus gabhte le dualgais teaghlaigh.

Cuireann rannpháirtíocht sa chlár ar chumas daoine deiseanna d'acmhainneacht gnó a phlé. Tugtar treoir, traenáil agus meantóireacht duine le duine do rannpháirtithe le cuidiú leo a gcuid smaointe a fhorbairt agus a gcuid uailmhianta a fhíorú. Dona lán daoine a bhí fríd an phróiseas mhéadaigh sé ar an mhuinín agus ar an chumasú acu.

Chuir sé ar a gcumas ioncam a chur ar fáil dóibh fhéin agus dá dteaghlaigh agus, i gcásanna áirithe, chuir siad deiseanna fostaíochta ar fáil do dhaoine eile fosta.

BUAICPHOINTÍ 2021

D'ainneoin dúshláin leanúnacha Covid 19, lean an fhoireann fiontar ar aghaidh ag cur tacaíocht ar fáil do chliant úra agus do chliant a bhí ansin tré dheiseanna traenála ar líne agus cruinnithe duine le duine a éascú agus idirghabháil aghaidh ar aghaidh a thairiscint, nuair a cheadaigh na srianta é agus gur mhothaigh na cliant compordach leis.

Comh maith le sin, lean an fhoireann fiontar ar aghaidh ag tabhairt tacaíochta agus ag tabhairt faoi na ceisteanna a raibh ar chliant BTWEA/STEA déileáil leo de thairbhe an neamhchinnteacht leanúnach a bhain le srianta Covid. Chuir an fhoireann eolas ar fáil do ghnóthaí lena chinntiú go raibh a fhios acu faoi na deontais, na tacaíochtaí airgeadais agus an chuidiú a bhí ar fáil le cuidiú leo éagsúlú agus athrú chun leanúint ar aghaidh ag trádáil.

Success Stories

Darren*

Darren had been in an accident in 2017, and his recovery took a few years. He realised that his injuries could impact his ability to work full time for an employer in his chosen career of construction. Darren decided to explore the option of self-employment.

Darren engaged with DLDC in July 2021 and had several one-to-one sessions with a member of the Enterprise Team to explore business ideas. Before working in the construction industry, Darren had worked in painting and decorating. During the pandemic, Darren decorated his own home and found that his work was less intensive physically, and he could work at his own pace.

The Enterprise Team worked with Darren to put together a business plan. It explored the level of income that Darren may be able to achieve with a painting and decorating business. Darren conducted his market research to see if there was a demand for painting and decorating services in his area and researched the tools and equipment, he would need to start his business.

In October 2021, Darren started his business. DLDC organised mentoring support for Darren in bookkeeping and marketing. This support gave Darren the confidence to promote his business and secure bookings. Darren's business has continued to thrive, and he hopes to take on an apprentice towards the end of 2022.

Scéal a Raibh Rath air

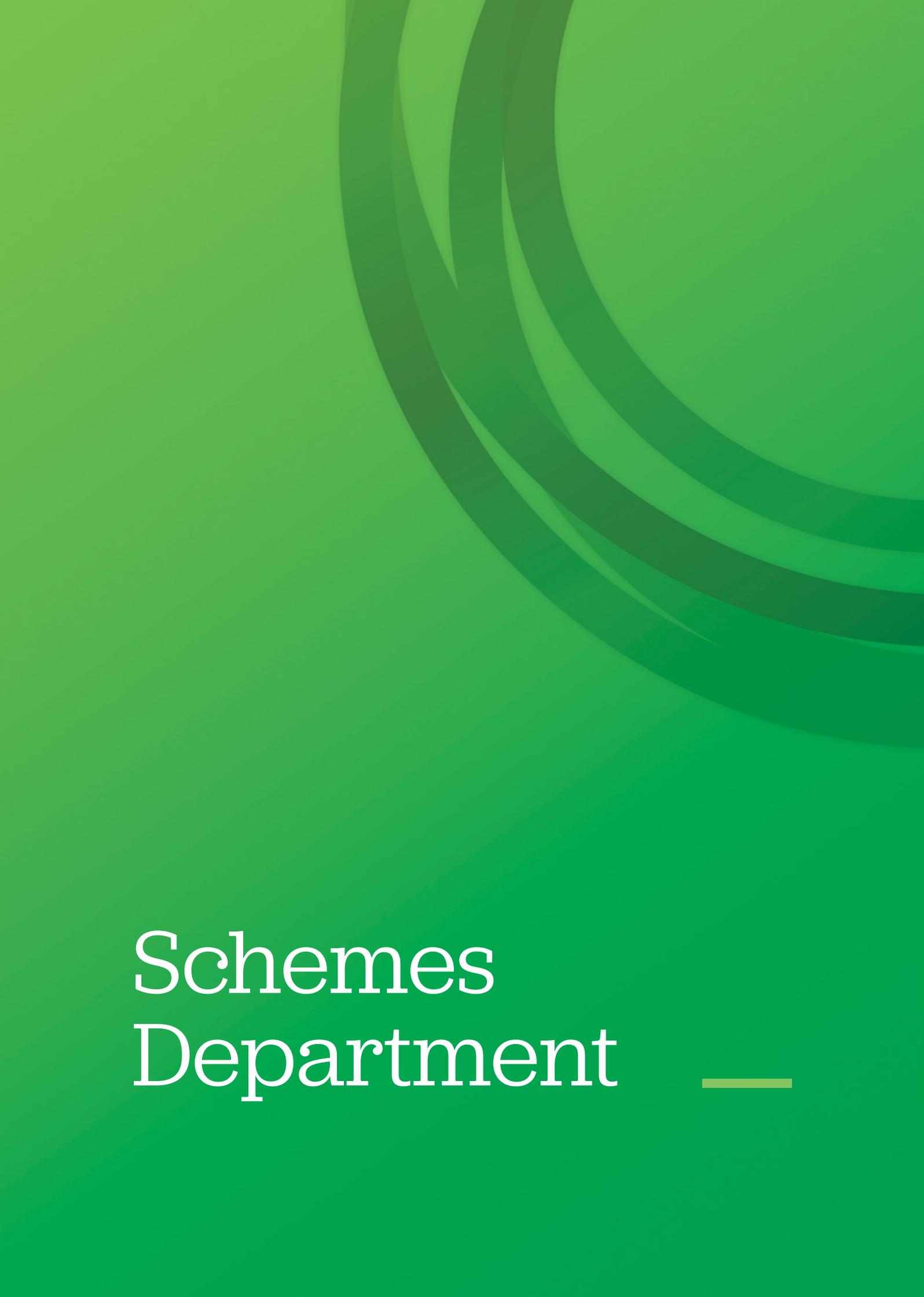
Darren*

Bhí timpiste ag Darren i 2017, agus ghlac sé cúpla bliain sula raibh biseach air. Thuig se go gcuirfeadh a chuid gortaithe isteach ar a chumas a bheith ag obair go lánaimseartha d'fhostóir in earnáil na tógála, an slí beatha ba rogha leis. Shocraigh Darren rogha na féinhostaíochta a iniúchadh.

Chuaigh Darren i dteagmháil le DLDC i Iúil 2021 agus bhí roinnt seisiún duine le duine aige le ball den Fhoireann Fiontar le smaointe gnó a phlé. Sular oibrigh sé i dtionscal na tógála d'oibrigh Darren ag péinteáil agus ag maisiú. I gcaitheamh na paindéime, mhaisigh Darren a theach fhéin agus mheas sé nach raibh a chuid oibre chomh treiseach sin go fisiciúil, agus lena chois sin thiocfadh leis a bheith ag obair ag a luas fhéin.

D'oibrigh an Fhoireann Fiontar le Darren le plean gnó a chur le chéile. Rinneadh iniúchadh ar an leibhéal ioncaim a d'fhéadfadh Darren a bhaint amach le gnó péinteála agus maisithe. Rinne Darren a thaighde margaíochta le feiceáil má bhí éileamh ar sheirbhísí péinteála agus maisithe ina cheantar fhéin agus rinne sé taighde ar na huirlisí agus an trealamh a bheadh a dhíth air lena ghnó a chur ar bun.

I nDeireadh Fómhair 2021, chuir Darren tús lena ghnó. D'eagraigh DLDC tacaíocht mheantóireachta do Dharren i leabharchoimeád agus i margaíocht. Thug an tacaíocht seo an muinín do Dharren a ghnó a chur chun cinn agus áirithintí a fháil. Tá gnó Dharren faoi bhláth go leanúnach, agus tá súil aige printíseach a thabhairt ar bord cóngarach do dheireadh 2022.



Schemes Department

Tús and Rural Social Scheme (RSS)

DLDC's Schemes Department employs 16 supervisors to support 142 participants on the Rural Social Scheme (RSS) and 240 participants on the Tús programme.

RSS is an income support programme for farmers and fishermen/women who are currently in receipt of a means assessed long-term social welfare payment while providing services of benefit to rural communities by harnessing the skills and talents available among low-income farmers and fishermen.

Tús is a participant-led programme which provides short-term quality working opportunities for those who have been long-term unemployed. Participants gain valuable work experience while building on existing skills and acquiring new skills.

Both RSS/Tús offer a wide variety of placements with community, voluntary, and not-for-profit organisations, such as:

- Maintenance and Caretaking
- Environmental Work
- Administrative/Clerical work/Receptionist
- Childcare Assistant
- Youth Work
- Retail Assistant
- Social Care/Bus Escort
- Community Development Work
- Coaching
- Gardener
- Drama Facilitator
- Kitchen Assistant
- General Assistant

KEY OUTCOMES 2021

360 was the overall total of participants on the RSS/Tús programmes.

132 RSS participants were on the ground supporting community and voluntary groups as they came through another year of the pandemic.

228 participants took part in quality work placements through the Tús job activation programme.

160 community groups were supported by the team and their participants.

234 participants received manual handling/health and safety training.



Success Stories

Donegal Town Tidy Towns

Donegal Town Tidy Towns Committee has Rural Social Scheme and Tús Programme participants carrying out necessary work in Donegal Town on behalf of the Tidy Towns Committee. This work includes litter collection and maintaining public spaces such as the Famine Graveyard.

The RSS participant plants and maintains the flora and fauna of Donegal Town, and his work has not gone unnoticed by the local population and visitors. The Tidy Towns Committee recently introduced twice-yearly planting of flora and fauna due to this RSS participant's talent and dedication, resulting in the town having an all-year-round floral display.

"I am placed with the Donegal Town Tidy Towns. I look after the flora and fauna landscape and planting in the Diamond, Donegal Town, and surrounding areas. I completed a horticulture course which has enhanced my work. I enjoy the variety of work and social interactions with work colleagues, local businesses, and tourists. It also gives me a good balance, working part-time on the RSS and working on the farm at home"

- Sean Harley,
RSS participant (pictured right >)



Owencarrow Viaduct Memorial

Ben McFadden (RIP) from the Creeslough Community Association, pictured above alongside Donna Moore, Tús Supervisor, was a great advocate for his local community.

Ben championed the Owencarrow Viaduct Memorial project from beginning to end. In April of this year, RTÉ's Nationwide visited the local town of Creeslough to highlight the great work that Creeslough Community Association and other members of the local community have done to improve resources and employment.



Success Stories



Milford Fly Angling

Tús participants James Diamond and Aidan O'Donnell restored the Milford Fly Angling clubhouse to its former glory. They painted the clubhouse and benches, sanded and repainted the boats, and restored the stove and surrounds back to their original state. James and Aidan are looking forward to locals enjoying the clubhouse, the fishing, and the beautiful views.

Ray Community Centre

Tús participant Kenny Friel demonstrated admirable craftsmanship at Ray Community Centre, where he designed and built outdoor play frames and picnic benches for the new BBQ and family area. Kenny (pictured below with Schemes Department Manager, Angela Wren) was supported by the RSS participants Hugh McBride, Ronnie Davis and Liam Begley.



Celebrating Women on the Rural Social Scheme

"It is typical for people in my area to move away to find work due to high unemployment levels. This was not an option for me as I needed to be close to my elderly parents. The RSS scheme was a lifeline for me as I could remain in my local area. The RSS had allowed me to work and earn an income and keep contributing toward my pension. Those things are important to me - as is being able to provide care for my parents. The security that I can give them knowing that I'm nearby unmeasurable. I thoroughly enjoy my time on the RSS. As I only joined in 2020, I can only stay for six years, so I hope they change that decision, and I can remain on the scheme after 2026."

- Mary Boyle, RSS participant (pictured above)

"A Tús supervisor gave me the information about RSS as I had been employed as a chef for years but had given that up due to family reasons. I got a telephone call from a RSS supervisor who explained how the scheme works and the different roles within the scheme, and the rest, as they say, is history. I love my role within the RSS. I enjoy the work and the flexibility of the RSS to fit in with home and farming life. I love the opportunities that it has given me"

- Bernice Alcorn, RSS participant

CE and JI Programme

The CE Childcare Scheme is an employment programme that helps long-term unemployed people, generally aged 21 years and over, re-enter the workforce.

It operates in 22 different towns and villages around Donegal. Participants are placed in community-based childcare facilities around the county and are given the opportunity to complete a QQI Level 5/6 Major Award in Early Childhood Care and Education and other associated training while at the same time, gaining work experience in a childcare setting.

The Job Initiative scheme is a programme providing full-time employment for people who are 35 years of age or over, unemployed for five years or more, and in receipt of social welfare payments over that period. Following changes introduced to the Job Initiative scheme by the Minister for Enterprise Trade and Employment in late 2004, there is currently "no recruitment" onto the scheme while existing participants will continue to have their contracts renewed. There are presently nine JI participants with DLDC.

2021 OVERVIEW

2021 continued to be a challenging year. With Covid 19 still prevalent in communities, the childcare services remained open and CE participants continued with their work placements. Staff shortages in the sector due to Covid meant that participants were needed more than ever. As things improved through the year, classes moved to blended learning, which allowed the participants to have both classroom and online teaching.



An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí
Department of Social Protection

KEY OUTCOMES 2021

59 individuals were supported on CE Childcare, working in 25 community-based childcare facilities.

51 level 5 minor awards and 36 level 6 minor awards were attained by participants during the year.

7 level 5 major awards and 7 level 6 major awards were achieved by participants.

40 participants completed training in areas such as health and safety, manual handling, paediatric first aid, child protection, and Aistear curriculum.

8 participants progressed into employment and 1 participant progressed into higher education during the year.

Success Stories

Marie

"During my participation in the Childcare CE Scheme, I got fantastic encouragement. When I was about to give up because everything got too much for me with coursework and raising a family of three kids, the tutors gave me the best advice and support.

I have a QQI level 5 & 6 in Childcare, and a QQI level 6 in Special Needs Assisting. I also completed training in Paediatric First Aid, Manual Handling, Health & Safety, Aistear and Safeguarding Children with Túsla. I recently finished a maternity post as an Aims Support Worker, and I'm currently working as a substitute SNA in a range of different national and secondary schools.

Without this scheme, I would not be in the position I am today. I would highly recommend this CE Childcare Scheme as a pathway to a prosperous career in the future. The team at DLDC looked after me and was always there at a minute's notice, very supportive throughout my journey."

Georgina

"Having been given the opportunity to complete a CE Childcare Scheme, I have gained numerous benefits and achievements. I gained so much experience, achieved QQI Level 6 Early Childhood Care and Education, and earned my Level 7 Special Needs course through St Angela's College. I gained employment in the childcare setting after the scheme finished. Overall, the Community Childcare Employment Scheme has many benefits for participants with all the training and guidance provided".



Community Hands

Community Hands team offers support for local community groups to undertake small projects/ work which otherwise would be out of their reach. The work is carried out by RSS participants who can meet the needs of groups who require either a one-off task or extra support for existing RSS projects. Any voluntary or charitable group are eligible to apply for assistance.



Above: DLDC Community Hands South Donegal



Above: DLDC Community Hands North Donegal

Throughout the pandemic, our teams in the north and south of the county have supported those groups with the maintenance/upkeep of their community buildings and grounds, including:

- Ballymore Parochial House - painting
- The Lifford Old Courthouse - maintenance and general repairs
- Raphoe Cathedral Hall - maintenance/ power washing
- Creeslough Community Association - repairs to stone walls in the town
- DLDC's Rural Walkways - cleared for safe use
- Glenties Community Park - supported with maintenance
- Inver Community Center's pathways - access way cleared
- Glenties Community Playgroup's rooms - painting

“The advice and support that I got from DLDC have been a lifeline. It has spurred me to apply for a course so that I can provide a better life for myself and my children”

- Maya*





Finance



Finances for 2021

DLDC receives funding from several national programmes and state agencies, which are listed below:

- Department of Rural and Community Development
- Department of Social Protection
- Department of Justice and Equality
- EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund
- Donegal Local Community Development Committee
- Donegal County Council
- Health Service Executive
- Donegal ETB
- Fáilte Ireland

DLDC is a not-for-profit organisation and did not return a profit or loss for the financial year ended 31st December 2021. The audited financial statements will not be available until the completion of the AGM in September; however, the below table outlines the breakdown of the income and expenditure recorded for 2021.

DLDC received a total combined income of €3m from funders during the year.

[Please see chart \(Fig 1\) on next page which shows the income breakdown >](#)

During the year, DLDC invested €2.2m into the local community in the form of programme staff time and programme initiatives.

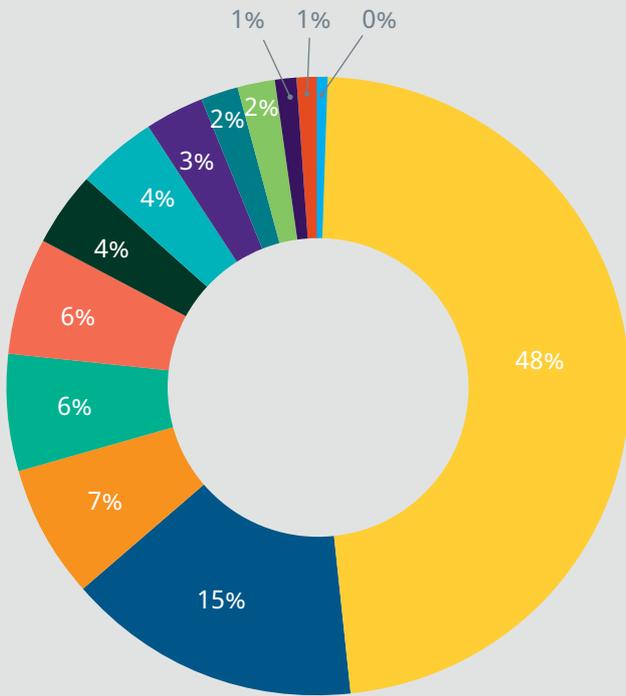
[Please see chart \(Fig 2\) on next page which shows the investment breakdown >](#)

In addition to the income and expenditure recorded through its financial statements, as outlined above (and opposite), DLDC also

supported community groups to receive:

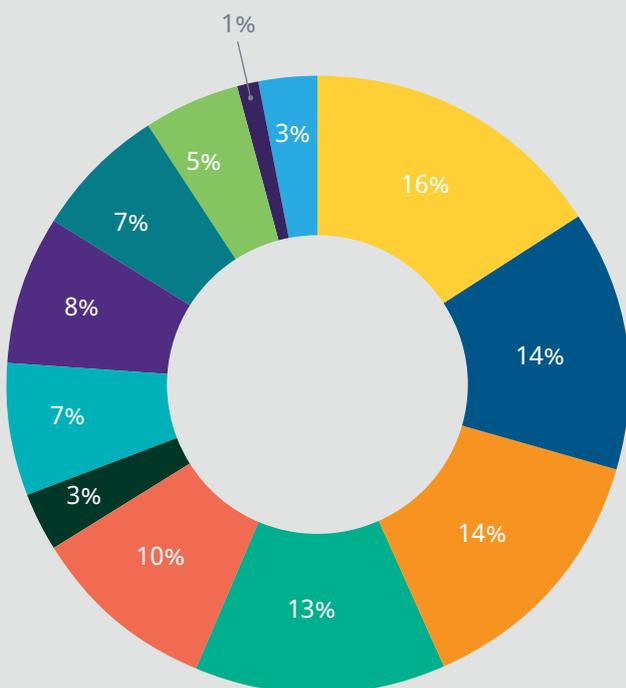
- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------|
| • LEADER funding | €471,556 |
| • Comic Relief funding | €10,000 |
| • ETB Community Education Supports | €10,510 |

Fig 1. DLDC Programme Income 2021



SICAP	€ 1,461,129
LEADER	€ 452,331
Tús Scheme	€ 227,181
CoH-Sync Health Initiative	€ 176,693
Countryside Recreation	€ 168,025
Rural Social Scheme	€ 129,620
Volunteer Centre	€ 127,263
Job Club	€ 97,845
Special Initiative for Travellers	€ 74,855
Refugee Resettlement	€ 59,640
CE Childcare	€ 34,792
Think Equality	€ 24,376
Job Initiative	€ 11,496

Fig 2. DLDC Investment in the Community 2021



Community Groups engagement	€ 368,441
Life Long Learning	€ 303,286
Employment Supports	€ 310,063
LEADER	€ 289,930
Self-Employment Supports	€ 219,197
Resettlement Supports	€ 57,450
Community Health Initiatives	€ 154,154
DSP Schemes participant costs	€ 174,582
Rural Recreation	€ 164,448
Volunteering	€ 107,693
Think Equality	€ 18,812
Social Enterprises	€ 71,105

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Support & Training for Individuals, Communities & Social Enterprises

*Over 25 years' experience of delivering
to communities in Co. Donegal*



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