

# Roscommon LEADER Partnership Company Limited



## • ENTERPRISE • TOURISM • FOOD • COMMUNITY • VOLUNTEERING

A special supplement explaining the rich work of Roscommon LEADER Partnership as it assists in supporting and sustaining local communities in a range of sectors.

**Find out inside how it can work for YOU!**



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## History of Roscommon Leader Partnership

Roscommon LEADER Partnership Company (formerly known as Roscommon Integrated Development Company), was operational in 2009 through the amalgamation of Roscommon Partnership Company, Arigna LEADER and Mid South Roscommon LEADER. Roscommon LEADER Partnership is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status. Our role is to deliver rural and community development programmes on behalf of the Irish Government and the EU to the people of County Roscommon. The main programmes we deliver at present are:

### Programme:

- LEADER/Rural Development Programme
- Local and Community Development Programme
- Rural Social Scheme
- TÚS initiative
- Rural Men's Project
- Walks schemes for County Roscommon
- Warmer Homes project
- Family support and Play bus project funded by the HSE
- County Roscommon Traveller Primary Healthcare Programme funded by the HSE
- DAF - Suicide Prevention
- Clinical Coordinator for youth mental health funded by the HSE
- National Countryside & recreation strategy for Counties Roscommon & Longford.

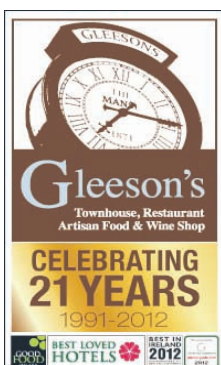
### Detail:

Grant aid for rural development  
 Focuses on disadvantage and works with marginalised communities and individuals  
 Income support scheme for low income farm families in return for work in the community  
 Work activation programme for the long term unemployed  
 Support groups to address the issue of rural isolation among older men or those living alone.  
 Payment to farmers in return for maintaining their section of a national trail  
 To increase the energy efficiency of homes and reduce fuel poverty

We operate from four offices, strategically located throughout the county at Arigna, Ballaghaderreen, Curraghboy, and our head office, located in Roscommon town. Our company consists of a board of directors, sub committees and staff. The board comprises of 24 members representing local communities, state agencies, social partners and local government.

| Name               | Community & Voluntary Pillar | Name                  | Social Partners Pillar                    |
|--------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Michael Spellman   | Community Roscommon          | Brian Nearney         | IBEC                                      |
| Ann McNamara       | Community Strokestown        | Bernard Donohue       | IFA                                       |
| Maurice Gannon     | Community Boyle              | Thomas Gunning        | ICOS                                      |
| Kevin Mc Brien     | Community South Com Forum    | Seamus Conway         | Trade Unions                              |
| Thomas Coppinger   | Community Ballaghaderreen    | Alice Lyons           | Environment Pillar                        |
| Bernard Kearney    | Community North Com Forum    |                       |   |
| Breege Callaghan   | Community Castlereagh        |                       |   |
| Anton Lennon       | Community Athlone            |                       |   |
| Name               | State Agency Pillar          | Name                  | Local Authority & Local Government Pillar |
| Margaret Charleton | Enterprise Ireland           | Kathleen Martin       | County Manager Nominee                    |
| Jean Timothy       | FAS                          | Cllr. Tony Ward       | Local Government                          |
| Joe Curtin         | Teagasc                      | Cllr. Marie Egan Paul | Local Government                          |
| Luke Fannon        | AIT                          | Cllr. Gerry Garvey    | Local Government                          |
| Michael Frain      | County Enterprise Board      | Cllr. Rachael Doherty | Local Government                          |

## Sponsorship





## Chairperson Message

### *Dhia dhiobh arís.*

As Chairman of Roscommon LEADER Partnership, I am delighted that our special supplement with this week's Roscommon Herald is celebrating the wonderful contribution Roscommon LEADER Partnership has made and continues to make to many communities right across the county.

To recognise twenty years of service in 2011, the trading name Roscommon LEADER Partnership was adopted following extensive consultation with all stakeholders and our service users.

The name may have changed but the central ethos remains as strong as ever; that of supporting the economic and social development of rural communities. As part of that ethos, the involvement of local people in the decision-making process is always a key component of our remit.

I am proud to say that Roscommon LEADER Partnership has woven itself into the very heart of communities, providing critical advice, funding and training in a range of areas to help nurture and grow enterprises in order to sustain local economies.

We are acutely aware of the needs of communities across County Roscommon. In these challenging times of high unemployment and increasing social problems, the role of the volunteers



**Roscommon LEADER Chairperson Michael Spellman.**

and the voluntary community organisation has never been more important, with both at the coalface of addressing the needs of individuals and groups in their community.

This supplement will show how Roscommon LEADER Partnership, through its many programmes, can help communities reach their full potential. Two such examples are the Rural Social Scheme (RSS) and the new TUS initiative, both supporting communities by providing workers to local organisations. The former specifically provides employment support for small scale farming families in the county.

The supports and funding for communities and private companies alike has never

been as strong. Roscommon LEADER Partnership currently has approximately 5m. LEADER/Rural Development funding to be dispersed in County Roscommon between now and 2013.

This is excellent news if you are a small enterprise with an innovative idea. Be it enterprise, tourism, food or volunteering, this supplement illustrates to readers the range of sectors receiving tailored support. We also highlight plenty of contact numbers to encourage you to get in contact with us.

I also want to take this opportunity to welcome the significant change to the LEADER Rural Development Programme announced by Environment Minister Phil Hogan on April 25th last.

These changes will see increased availability of funding for private promoters in rural Ireland. The changes to the Programme allow for an increase in the rate of aid for private promoters from 50% to 75%. This change will go some way to addressing the difficulties promoters experience in accessing credit in the current economic climate and it will provide an increased level of support for rural entrepreneurs in Ireland.

As Chairperson of Roscommon LEADER Partnership, I would like to thank everyone who engages with us, not just community groups but private individuals,

business interests, government departments, statutory agencies and NGOs. I would also like to thank our recently retired Director Thomas Mannion for his major contribution in our company.

I also want to extend my gratitude to Community and Enterprise, Roscommon County Council and the County Development Board for their co-operation and help.

On behalf of the board and staff of Roscommon LEADER partnership, I invite individuals, groups and organisations to contact Roscommon LEADER partnership to discuss how we can help you realise your goals. We are in the business of helping you. If you have a project in mind, it may well fall under one of the many programmes available through Roscommon LEADER partnership. Our experienced staff will give you all the support and information you need, and help you prepare a proposal, if necessary.

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank Editor Christina McHugh and the staff of the *Roscommon Herald* for affording Roscommon LEADER Partnership this great opportunity to tell communities across the county that we are 'open for business' - so get in touch!

*Le crioch, míle buiochas arís. Go mbeirimid beo ar an am seo arís.*

## Foreword by CEO

I AM proud to note that over the last 21 years, through a variety of different programmes, Roscommon LEADER partnership's footprint has grown to such an extent that it now has a presence in virtually every community in County Roscommon from Arigna to Shannonbridge.

In these challenging times, we are also proud to highlight that 270 employees are involved across our eleven programmes.

As our special supplement explains, this is very much about you and your community realising desired goals and objectives. So whatever we can do to help, please get in touch or drop in to your local LEADER Partnership office in Roscommon town, Ballaghaderreen, Arigna and Curraghboy to find out more detail about what we can offer you.

Roscommon LEADER Partnership currently manages the following programmes:

- LEADER/Rural Development Programme
- Local and Community Development Programme
- Rural Social Scheme

- TUS initiative
- National Countryside & recreation strategy for Counties Roscommon & Longford.
- Walks schemes for County Roscommon
- Warmer Homes project
- Family support and Play bus project funded by the HSE
- County Roscommon Traveller Programme funded by the HSE
- DAF - Suicide Prevention
- Clinical Coordinator for youth mental health funded by the HSE
- Rural Men's Project

In January of this year, Roscommon LEADER Partnership was also delighted to secure the contract for the delivery of the County Roscommon Traveller Programme. We have recently appointed Una Daly who will co-ordinate this work and the success of this project is a key priority for us in 2012.

The combined investment of just over €6 million in the next two years in our economic and community infra-



**Roscommon LEADER CEO Martina Earley.**

structure can make a real difference. So, sharing in this is up to you; our door is open, so drop in or join us in our work in your sector.

Our greatest challenges remain to support and give confidence to job creation initiatives and investments to help our unemployed through our training schemes, interagency and collaboration work. We always strive to give everyone in our communities in County Roscommon a sense of worth through training, activity measures and innovative development.

I believe that Roscommon LEADER Partnership makes a valuable contribution to County Roscommon. However, this has not been achieved on our own. Over the years we have had great support from various Government Departments and State agencies. Our close working relationships with Roscommon County Council and Roscommon County Development Board have also been essential to our success.

I hope readers of this special supplement will get a clearer idea of the work of Roscommon LEADER Partnership. More importantly, we want people and communities to avail of the supports we provide.

I invite you to read this supplement in full to understand how the approach undertaken by Roscommon LEADER Partnership addresses the challenges and needs of rural Ireland. In doing so, this approach has become a key driver in re-energising local economies in County Roscommon.

Our success over 21 years has been dependent on your willingness to become involved - sincere thanks for your continued support.

## LCDP Staff



**John Tonra**



**Gail Murray**



**Patricia Madden**



**Sandra Quigley**



**Anthony Dockery**



**Teresa O'Brien**



**Noel Connolly**



**Una Daly**



**Una Doris**



**Mary Guihen**



**Joseph Nyirenda**



## Enterprise

# We're open for business'

- Roscommon LEADER Partnership's call to communities and entrepreneurs
- More funding supports available than ever before for rural enterprise



WOULD YOU believe that the Rural Development Programme (also known as LEADER) is the largest Roscommon has ever seen?

"The fourth programme was negotiated during the good times which is fortunate given that money is so tight at the moment. Support for business that continue to employ people and create new jobs have never been more important," explains Martina Earley, CEO of Roscommon LEADER Partnership.

Roscommon LEADER Partnership also hailed

the recent announcement that the current rate of aid being made available for entrepreneurs under the Rural Development Programme (RDP) is being increased from 50% to 75%.

Certainly, that entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well across the county, evidenced by the large attendances at a series of successful information meetings, staged recently by Roscommon LEADER Partnership.

"The interest in these events was huge and showed us that there is plenty of entrepreneurial flair in

Roscommon. Our aim is to grow the local Roscommon economy in every way we can with grants, mentoring and training supports", says Martina.

Patsy Daly of Roscommon LEADER Partnership adds: "We were absolutely delighted with the turnout at all our information evenings - it proves that people are talking the opportunity now to review their options and consider starting or growing their business," commented

Though the information sessions are now complete, Roscommon

LEADER Partnership is keen to remind potential applicants or interested individuals that it is very much 'open for business.'

"We're very keen to hear from anyone who'd like more information on our grants aid or supports - though our info sessions have been completed, we're taking enquiries from those interested in starting or expanding their business," explains Sheena O'Dowd, Development Officer with the company.

Roscommon LEADER Partnership is always interested in new business grant applications so if

you have a new business idea or want to grow your business, call 090 6630252 today.

**Food Projects Funding Resumes**  
Funding for food projects had been suspended under the RDP for the past year but the Roscommon LEADER Partnership is now delighted with Minister Phil Hogan's recent announcement that funding will be resumed to support the creation and development of Agri-Food businesses.

For more information call our office on 090 6630252.

## Roscommon Innovation House: Free professional advice and support available under the one roof



**LED BY** Roscommon LEADER Partnership in conjunction with Roscommon County Enterprise Board, Roscommon Innovation House is aimed at providing easy access to free professional advice and

support for the development of new business ideas. This service facilitates the delivery of timely, free advice and support without the need to go through cumbersome and time-consuming application procedures.

It is an important initiative that can help bridge the gap between those with new business ideas and the professional advice and support that can guide them in taking the next steps towards their fruition.

Sheena O'Dowd, Development Officer with Roscommon LEADER Partnership says: "This is an important co-operative initiative between RLP and RCEB. We are delighted with the level of interest already shown in

this initiative. Numerous projects have already received assistance from a panel of professional experts that is growing all the time in response to demand. Anybody with new or existing business ideas that would like the

benefit of sound professional advice to assist them should contact RLP or RCEB for a positive and confidential consultation". More information is available from RLP [sheena2@ridc.ie](mailto:sheena2@ridc.ie); RCEB [ceb@roscommon.ie](mailto:ceb@roscommon.ie) or WESTBIC [jdolan@westbic.ie](mailto:jdolan@westbic.ie).



## Enterprise

# Retain your benefits while following your business dream

WERE YOU made redundant or are you unemployed? If so a popular government scheme may throw you a lifeline to help you get yourself back to work. In the absence of jobs, many unemployed are exploring the benefits and the work opportunities the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance Scheme might offer them. In short the Scheme enables those receiving certain social welfare for particular periods of time to retain these benefits while also generating income from new business start ups and can provide an alternative to unemployment. This is a scheme for budding entrepreneurs and small business start ups and can be an excellent building block and springboard for developing business ideas and business models. The scheme has provided financial assistance to a very broad sector of business types and has been instrumental in allowing people to be innovative and entrepreneurial with their talents and skills. Roscommon Leader Partnership manages the Scheme on behalf of the Department of Social Protection and also accesses some supports from the County Enterprise Board.

## Idea Generation Academy

If you have a business idea that you want to explore come along to our Idea Generation Academy for potential Back to Work Enterprise Allowance participants. The Idea Generation Academy, facilitated by professionals with entrepreneurial experience, will help you tease out your business idea to see if it is a worthwhile business venture and check out its potential viability at an early stage. This will involve a pre business start up assessment. The Idea Generation Academy is free to take part in and will be conducted in a relaxed and informal environment and you will get every encouragement and assistance you require to pursue your ideas. If your idea is worth pursuing a wrap around advice and mentoring programme will follow to progress your business. If you would like to take part in the Idea Generation Academy and also if you would like to know if you are eligible for the Scheme just contact Noel Connolly Enterprise Co-ordinator at Roscommon Leader Partnership L: (090)6630252 , M: 0876388590 and E: noel@ridc.ie

## Back to Work Enterprise Allowance Scheme: Testimonials



**Oliver O Grady** from Castlerea, has a background in engineering and design. He identified a growing demand for wood as a solid fuel source which is increasing in supply across the country. More and more people and companies will be considering alternative heat sources into the future. The ban on turf-cutting across many bogs should also result in increased demand for other solid fuel sources like wood. To this end Oliver has designed and produced a user-friendly and innovative log splitter that can produce firewood from felled trees. Two of the great advantages of the log splitter are its mobility and the fact it tailor-made to cut either small or big amounts of timber. Oliver feels that "The Back to Work Enterprise Scheme helps to provide an alternative to unemployment for unemployed people and gives a great financial cushion to those developing their enterprise ideas and their business models." If you would like to contact Oliver to avail of his services you can do so on 0862248146 and [oliverogrady@eircom.net](mailto:oliverogrady@eircom.net)



**Martin Guilford** from Scramogue, is a Road Safety Authority driving instructor for cars and motorcycles. He has completed Compulsory Basic Training to Advanced Motoring with Harris School of Motoring in the UK. He is a registered Initial Basic Training (IBT) & Essential Driving Training (EDT) Instructor. According to Martin, "The Back to Work Enterprise Allowance Scheme provides very valuable supports and assistance at start up stage when there are many periods of income gaps." Martin's newly established business Guild School of Motoring provides quality services on the foot of the new the Road Safety Authority regulation for motorbikes and cars. The regulation states that learner motorcyclists must complete a mandatory 16 hours under instruction before being allowed on the roads while learner car drivers will require 12 hours instruction. All new roads users will create the market for Martin and his new business. For any that would like to avail of these services contact Martin on 0861929597 and [martin-guilford@gmail.com](mailto:martin-guilford@gmail.com)

**Maureen O'Gara**, Aughurine, Ballaghaderreen, had been thinking about starting up my own business for a few years and in 2010 the restaurant she worked in closed down due to the recession. Maureen had 12 years in the food trade so decided it was time to branch out on her own. She opened Gairdín Bia in September 2010 supplying coleslaws, potato and pasta salads and one year on she started producing a specialised vegetable soup to cater for all tastes - it is gluten and lactose free and suitable for vegetarians. Her company caters for all parties and functions and now is our busiest period of the year with communions, confirmations etc. Maureen states that "the Back to Work Scheme gives a great opportunity for learning the skills of self employment and also provides time for me to develop a broader market base for my products." Her business is growing all the year around and she has one part time employee whom she would like to make full time. She would like to thank the local businesses and the local people who have supported her since she started. Without the support of the local people no business can survive. She is hopeful that the food range and business will continue to expand into the future. If you are interested in any of her products or services you should contact her on 087 1617100 and [info@gairdinbia.com](mailto:info@gairdinbia.com) / [www.gairdinbia.com](http://www.gairdinbia.com).



**Mark Craven** from Lisphelim, Knockcroghery, set up a company that trades under the name Outdoor Pursuits. Mark does some contract work for the National Parks & Wildlife Service which also includes boat work on the Shannon Callows and Lough Ree. He is also currently doing some guided boat work for Crossing The Lines Film Company on Lough Ree and parts of the river Shannon. Mark points out that "the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance Scheme is providing me with great supports in starting up my enterprises and also giving me time to develop my business ideas." He plans to extend the guided boat services to accommodate for members of the public interested in bird watching and in the historical sites on Lough Ree. At the moment he is building a range of services to include a Mobile Clay Pigeon Shoot for hire to established clubs, Archery and Fly fishing for beginners. If you make contact with Mark about his products and services at Outdoor Pursuits you can contact him on 0877573680 and [markcraven@eircom.net](mailto:markcraven@eircom.net)



# €200,000 up for grabs in Dragons Den challenge

FANCY ENTERING the Dragon's Den to pitch your business idea and win a slice of €200,000 funding in the process?

Well, Wednesday, May 23rd will be D-Day for budding entrepreneurs to avail of the opportunity to sell their idea to renowned Dragon Bobby Kerr and his team of experts.

The Dragon's Den styled event, already attracting huge interest, will take place on that date in Roscommon town.

Funded by Roscommon LEADER Partnership and co-ordinated by WESTBIC, participants with new business ideas as well as those considering expansion of existing enterprises, will have the opportunity to present their proposals to a panel of experts. Bobby Kerr has a particular affinity with County Roscommon through his investment in the infamous "illuminated handbag" project as depicted on RTE's Dragon's Den.

Participants will have the opportunity to present their business ideas to the expert panel and receive constructive feedback on how best to develop their proposal.

According to event co-ordinator James Donlon, "The objective is to provide as much encouragement as possible to new entrepreneurs, to assist them in evaluat-

ing their proposals and identifying the next

steps that they should take. Last year 16 entrepreneurs presented their ideas, and with a little bit of help, a number of these have gone on to successfully establish their businesses, whilst others are currently in the process of doing so."

All information will be treated with the strictest confidence so participants shouldn't have any fears, as a positive, yet pragmatic approach is adopted by those involved"

## Private Investors Confirmed for Roscommon Dragon's Den Event

Similar to last year, James has confirmed that private investors will again be represented on the expert panel, through the Halo Business Angel Partnership (BAP) whilst a bank manager will also be on the panel. This will provide the opportunity for some viable business projects to secure private investment and/or loan finance, depending on their needs. The Dragon's Den initiative is part of Roscommon LEADER Partnership's

Enterprise Creation and Development Measure, aimed at encouraging and supporting rural enterprise in the county. Eligible projects will benefit from the constructive feedback given by the expert panel, along with follow-up advice and support with business planning and preparing funding applications to Roscommon LEADER Partnership. Up to €200,000 of non-refundable grant aid may be available to eligible projects from LEADER subject to eligibility criteria, terms and conditions.

Along with the direct feedback and assistance available, projects will also be signposted to other suitable sources of support, such as Roscommon Innovation House, Innovation Vouchers through Enterprise Ireland and the WIN Atlantic Interreg programme through which international business opportunities may be explored by eligible enterprises. The Dragon's Den event is co-ordinated by WESTBIC on behalf of Roscommon LEADER Partnership. Potential participants should contact James Donlon at WESTBIC, Tel: 090 6625196, email [jdonlon@westbic.ie](mailto:jdonlon@westbic.ie) for further information. Places are limited so participants are advised to contact WESTBIC as soon as possible.

# WANTED!

PARTICIPANTS WITH NEW ENTERPRISE IDEAS FOR

## DRAGONS DEN

ROSCOMMON

WEDNESDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> MAY

AVAIL OF THIS UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT YOUR BUSINESS PROPOSAL AND RECEIVE FEEDBACK FROM AN EXPERT PANEL LED BY

DRAGON



BOBBY KERR

AS SEEN ON TV

UP TO €200,000 REWARD...

UP TO €200,000 OF NON-REFUNDABLE GRANT AID IS AVAILABLE FOR ELIGIBLE PROJECTS FROM ROSCOMMON LEADER PARTNERSHIP\*

PRIVATE INVESTMENT MAY ALSO BE AVAILABLE THROUGH HALO BUSINESS ANGEL PARTNERSHIP

FOLLOW-UP ADVICE AND SUPPORT WILL BE AVAILABLE TO ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

HOSTED BY WESTBIC ON BEHALF OF ROSCOMMON LEADER PARTNERSHIP  
TO RECORD YOUR INTEREST AND BOOK YOUR PLACE, PLEASE CONTACT  
JAMES DONLON AT WESTBIC, TEL 090 6625196, EMAIL [JDONLON@WESTBIC.IE](mailto:jdonlon@westbic.ie)

\*€200,000 BASED ON 50% GRANT RATE FOR ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE OF €400,000. SUBJECT TO ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA, TERMS & CONDITIONS. PARTICIPATION IN THE EVENT DOES NOT GUARANTEE GRANT APPROVAL.







## LEADER Funding supports successful Boating Venture

ANGLING SERVICES Ireland is a premier guide service for fishing and pike fishing in Ireland, managed by Professional Angling Guide, Bodo Funke. The business is based in Boyle, Co. Roscommon, which lies in an area of great natural beauty, with excellent angling opportunities in the many lakes and rivers close by. Since its foundation in 2001, Angling Services Ireland has served clients from all over the world with its guide service, boat hire and package fishing holidays. Many visiting anglers continue to come back to Bodo on an annual basis.

Bodo applied to LEADER in 2011 for funding to purchase additional fishing boats, ancillary equipment and marketing materials for his tourism angling service. Encouraged by the LEADER team Bodo was brought through the application process and his project was successful. Bodo applied to LEADER for funding in April 2011 and his project was up and running in November 2011. This was a man in a hurry and Roscommon LEADER Partnership was only too happy to assist!



Angling services Ireland, owner and guide, Bodo Funke with a happy guest and his catch in the new Guiding boat.

## Could you add to the visitor offering?

75% funding is available to develop your recreational tourism enterprise which could involve:

- Bicycle hire and cycle hubs
- Cycling and mountain bike trails
- Dry rooms, trail rest stops
- Facilities for fishing
- Access and interpretation of wildlife areas and areas of natural beauty
- Canoeing, kayaking trails and facilities
- Watersports of all types
- Bridle paths and horse riding facilities

For more information call Úna  
086 7713550 or [una@ridc.ie](mailto:una@ridc.ie)



## Tourism



# Roscommon tourism operators to benefit from exciting marketing campaign

ROSCOMMON TOURISM operators are set to benefit from a new and exciting consumer marketing campaign for the county to be launched next month.

Led by Roscommon Community Tourism Network, the project will see the introduction of new marketing brochures, a highly interactive website and innovative social media campaigns. Working closely with Roscommon County Council and Fáilte Ireland, the new campaign introduces a new fresh brand for the county.

Targeting a significant increase in tourism business in the county, the marketing campaign will bring together the very best of Roscommon's tourism offerings: our wealth of visitor attractions, vibrant festivals, award winning culture and heritage projects and choice accommodation. Other marketing activities will include radio advertising, new county boundary signage and video generation.

The brand, developed by Momentum Marketing through a series of branding workshops, seeks to play to Roscommon's strengths.

Martina Earley, CEO, Roscommon LEADER Partnership explains: "At the heart of the brand is the signature logo, which pays a small but important homage to our Celtic/heritage roots which are very strong in our county. We also want-

ed this to come across as warm and contemporary too and if you look really closely, the letter 'R' in the logo also contains the figure '1' with the subliminal message: 'Roscommon is No. 1!' Now that is community pride!

"The brand colours are very fresh, the blue of the Shannon water - we have the longest Shannon borderline - the green of nature and our unspoilt county and the pink emphasising a sense of fun - we have one of the best collections of visitor attractions in the west and beyond. The use of the tick symbol seeks to emphasise the emotions we evoke and the statement to say we tick that box, it's a very positive message."

Roscommon County Council is delighted to be involved. Kathleen Martin, Director of Services said the council had recently invested in a major marketing campaign with Ireland West Airport to highlight the region and our county to their new European destinations. "It is important that Roscommon have the necessary marketing tools to stand out and appeal to this important market. In advance of the marketing launch, a second edition of the 2012 Roscommon events guide has just gone to print and introduces the new brand for the first time."

Subject to funding from Roscommon LEADER Partnership, the marketing project will be the

most ambitious ever undertaken in the county. Lora O'Brien, secretary of Roscommon Community Tourism Network

explains: "It is time to put the national and international spotlight on how special the Roscommon tourism offering is. This campaign will capture the spirit of our community and connections our visitors can enjoy with the locals, culture, heritage and attractions in Roscommon. Research shows that tourists are looking for less 'official' information, they want an insider's view of an area; they want to be part of experience and not just look in. Our campaign will focus on the real Roscommon DNA!"

While marketing materials and events will be an important part of the campaign, Roscommon LEADER Partnership is keen to ensure that tourism operators are upskilled to take advantage of the marketing investment. Training programmes are planned over key themes such as PR, social media marketing, high impact marketing and information management and others.

Una Doris, Rural Recreation Officer, Roscommon LEADER Partnership welcomes expressions of interest from those wishing to participate. Ensuring that individual tourism businesses benefit from the marketing returns is really important, says Una.





## Village and Countryside Renewal

# Could your land be suitable for recreational tourism?

FARMERS and others with land or buildings located close to natural amenity areas can now benefit from 75% funding and one-to-one support to develop these resources for recreational tourism.

Una Doris has recently joined Roscommon LEADER Partnership as Rural Recreation Development Officer for Roscommon and Longford; tasked with creating opportunities for the recreational use of the countryside. Availing of these opportunities will enhance our tourism offering and create new income opportunities for local people. According to Una; 'Roscommon has a wealth of natural assets and natural beauty. My focus will be on helping people to capitalise on the tourism and recre-



ational potential of these assets, for the benefit of local business and to create income and employment opportunities throughout the county'.

Rural recreation types include cycling, canoeing, kayaking and watersports of all types, horseriding, walking and exploring wildlife habitats and scenic areas. Help and advice is available for anyone who lives, works or farms close to lakes, rivers, National Waymarked Ways (Suck Valley Way or Miner's Way), existing or potential walking or cycling trails, scenic areas or any other areas with potential for outdoor recreation. If you would like to explore these opportunities, contact Una on 086 7713550 or una@rldc.ie

## Village and Countryside Renewal: What can your community achieve?

Roscommon LEADER Partnership is delighted to role out a Village and Countryside Renewal programme. This programme will provide funds for community groups in Roscommon to enhance their local environment.

Carrownabrickna Residents Association was a new applicant to the LEADER process but not new to carrying out developmental projects in around their area. The Group, which represents a broad base community, has completed a variety of community projects in the past. This is a good example of how local people can pull

together to achieve great things.

Funding Available The type of projects that may be considered will include environmental, heritage, car parks and playgrounds and projects which provide appropriate supports to enhance the economic and social attractiveness of villages, small towns and the surrounding countryside. Projects will complement rather than overlap, with projects funded under the County Council.

Examples of fundable projects include Environmental upgrading e.g. upgrading parks, civic areas, river

walks, Access facilities to amenities, Public utilities such as ornamental street lighting etc. but excluding water, sewage and major road works, general appearance upgrading (such as ornamental paving, street art, ornamental lighting, &c.) and renovation of relevant derelict buildings excluding traditional farm buildings. The development of farmers markets may also be included.

In all cases proposed projects will have to be carried out with the consent of and in consultation with Roscommon County Council.





## Tourism

# Unique opportunity for one local community to receive expertise to develop and promote its tourism offerings

SUCCESSFULLY ARTICULATING an area's unique sense of place and people is the foundation of every authentic selling message for community tourism initiatives. The opportunity to achieve that with the aid of proven expertise is now being offered to one lucky community in the county through Roscommon LEADER Partnership.

Roscommon LEADER Partnership is now inviting submissions from towns and villages to be part of this exciting project which will see one community develop and pilot a community tourism toolkit from the ground up. This will then be transferred to other interested communities across the county.

Claire Carty of Roscommon LEADER Partnership explains: "We work very closely with the Community Tourism Network in Roscommon and with towns and villages across the

county in building a better tourism connection in each area. The Community Tourism Toolkit is all about best practice, our consultant with work with one area on really drilling in on their potential and how best that can be nurtured and marketed for community tourism purposes."

This particular initiative is being undertaken in partnership with LEADER in Co Meath where a similar initiative is now underway with the community in Oldcastle. In practical terms, the project will look at how best an area can apply the best possible methodologies in achieving community engagement with the tourism sector and in presenting a warm and interactive environment for visitors.

Leading this local effort will be tourism specialists John Higgins and Associates. John was instrumental in the revival of Kiltimagh, Co. Mayo

which is regarded as a successful blueprint in community and economic development. John points out that community tourism is about new levels of relationships between the host village or town and its environs in welcoming visitors. What is particularly appealing to the visitor can be found among the varied natural attractions, local resources and talents, the indigenous attributes of a community including various themes and expressions of local culture.

Claire Carty explains: "This is a competitive call, just one community will work with the consultant initially but we look forward to transferring the learning across the county into 2013. Any community interested should contact us on 090 6630252 for an expression of interest form."

## The Window to the World



MICHAEL MCMANUS has been working on The 112 km long Miners' Way/Historical Trail which winds its way through North Roscommon, South Sligo and part of Leitrim for over fifteen years now. When local priest Fr. Sean Tynan initiated the Trail in the early 1990s many were sceptical of how useful it might be. However with the work of Rural Social Scheme workers like Michael the Trail has improved dramatically and is now attracting increased numbers of walkers both national and international in recent years. Michael is proud of the work that he does on the Trail and knows every inch of it as it winds for over forty kilometres in and around Arigna village. The high point in recent years for Michael was when the John Murray (RTE radio) attracted over 300 walkers to Arigna for an 8 km hill walk last August. The recent addition of The Kilronan Castle Loops which Michael worked on last year is also a proud achievement. It includes the beautiful view through The Window to the World on Doon point behind Kilronan Castle.

## Food

# Culinary delights to become major platform to attract domestic and overseas tourists

ROSCOMMON'S CULINARY delights are set to become part of a major food tourism initiative aimed at attracting domestic and overseas tourists.

At the heart of this innovative project are plans to set up a series of culinary tourism hubs around the county.

Serving as showcases for the best of Roscommon food, these culinary hubs are designed to capture the attention of the growing numbers of visitors who have developed a passion for local and artisan food products.

This exciting development follows the Board of Roscommon LEADER Partnership's recent approval of plans which will lead to LEADER funding for a series of these hubs in Co. Roscommon.

These satellite culinary hubs will serve various purposes involving a mix of tourism, manufacturing and community. They will include time share production, the provision of learning facilities and incubation support for start up artisan food producers.

"These culinary tourism visitor centres will be developed as part of a bid to take advantage of the growing food tourism sector in the county," explains Martina Earley CEO, Roscommon LEADER Partnership.

"Culinary Tourism is about much more than the product itself; research tells us that visitors to County Roscommon want to feel part of the community and to engage with the community during their stay in the County," says Martina.

The Chairperson of

Roscommon LEADER Partnership Michael Spellman says 'the concept of culinary tourism hubs is really strong. Fáilte Ireland has recognised the importance of food tourism.

"A culinary food trail and marketing support is also earmarked for the county bringing together farmers markets, food festivals and training in the agri food sector.

"The way is now open for both food producers and tourism providers to examine this growing market and to capitalise on what is on offer through

LEADER support," says Michael.

In this context, Roscommon LEADER Partnership is open to approaches from all interested parties and will be holding an open meeting of all interested parties,

at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday 16th May in Gleeson's Townhouse Roscommon.

### Food & Catering Course to commence in May

Commencing in May, an accredited 'Food and Catering' course will take place to upskill individuals in areas such as food catering, cookery, food preparation, food hygiene, health and safety along with training in IT skills, communication skills, CV and interview skills, work experience and much more. In September an accredited training programme will be delivered around employment opportunities in the tourism sector. For further information contact Anthony Dockery, Rural Development Officer, Tel: 090 6630252 or email Anthony@ridc.ie



## Are you involved in food tourism?

A new project has just been launched by Roscommon LEADER Partnership to develop culinary tourism hubs in the county which will celebrate and showcase the very best of local food tourism.

This is a sector with so much potential & to explore same we wish to invite the following food/culinary tourism contributors to a project kick start information evening.



Gleeson's Townhouse, The Square, Roscommon  
Wednesday, May 16th @ 7.30pm  
RSVP: Orla on 071 962 3500

Supported by Roscommon LEADER Partnership and Meath Partnership as an inter-territorial co-operation project under the Rural Development (LEADER) Programme 2007-2013





# LEADER gives 75% for Sport Horse Projects

Roscommon LEADER Partnership is delighted to announce that we now give 75% grant aid for eligible Sport Horse projects.

The following is a summary of eligible measures

## Infrastructure

Infrastructure cannot be solely for personal use - it must be offered for public use, regardless of whether a fee is charged or not.

Equestrian Centres, Riding schools and Livery yards

- Arenas
- Horse walkers
- Equine swimming pools
- Stabling in furtherance of tourism and or for hire
- Spectator viewing & seating facilities
- Toilet facilities
- Online booking technologies
- Accommodation Facilities
- Bridle paths
- Cross Country Courses
- Facilities to improve access for Riding for the Disabled and Para Equestrian activities
- Open Farms

## Rural Tourism

Measures that further promote rural tourism e.g. agricultural shows, national and international events held in rural areas that undertake

- Viewing and seating areas
- Car parking facilities
- Disability access
- Toilet facilities

- Catering facilities
- Improvement to arenas and show grounds
- Surface improvements, Cross Country Course fence improvements
- Directional signage
- Properly trained commentators
- Creation of festival atmosphere around rural areas with event as focal point
- Children's play areas
- Picnic areas

## Access

- Bridle Ways on public and private lands. Improved access to woodlands, beaches and bridleways
- Increase facilities for Western Riding, Trekking
- Residential equestrian competition & coaching activity weekends focused on encouraging visitors who want to improve competitive riding and coaching skills

## Training & Education in New Technologies

This training must not be for courses of instruction or training which form part of normal education programmes or systems at secondary or higher levels.

Please note that the foregoing projects are examples only and are not intended to be an exhaustive list of projects that may be funded and the examples are therefore for indicative purposes only. A limited number of applications under each category will be considered for funding.

New 75% Rural Development Funding and Support for Development of the Sport Horse Industry

## FINAL CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FARMERS AND NON-FARMERS

WOULD YOU LIKE TO START UP OR EXPAND A SPORT HORSE ENTERPRISE?

### GRANT AID

Construction, Equipment and Marketing  
75% grant rate to a maximum of €200,000

Research, Business Plans, etc  
75% grant rate to a maximum of €30,000

o Professional fees can be included to a maximum of 12% of total project costs

See our item alongside for further details

Assistance is now being provided free of charge to applicants with eligible projects in the preparation of applications and supporting documents.

For a free no obligation consultation or to make an enquiry contact

Allen McAdam [allen.mcadam@ruraldevelopment.ie](mailto:allen.mcadam@ruraldevelopment.ie) or 086 8267495

or

Una Doris, [una@ridc.ie](mailto:una@ridc.ie) Tel: 090 6630252 or 086 7713550

Roscommon LEADER Partnership  
Unit 12, Tower B  
Roscommon West Business Park  
Golf Links Road, Roscommon Town  
Co. Roscommon

<http://www.facebook.com/RoscommonIntegratedDevelopmentCompany>  
<http://www.ridc.ie/>



## New 75% Grant Aid Development of Redundant Farm Buildings Maximum grant €200,000 FARMERS AND FARM FAMILIES

DO YOU HAVE A REDUNDANT FARM BUILDING?  
WOULD YOU LIKE TO START UP AN ALTERNATIVE ENTERPRISE?  
IF SO, CONTACT ROSCOMMON LEADER PARTNERSHIP

### Grant Rates

Construction, Equipment and Marketing -  
75% grant rate to a maximum of €200,000

Research, Business Plans, etc. -  
75% grant rate to a maximum of €30,000

o Professional fees can be included to a maximum of 12% of total project costs

See our item alongside for further details

Assistance is now being provided free of charge to applicants with eligible projects in the preparation of applications and supporting documents.

For a free no obligation consultation or to make an enquiry contact

Allen McAdam [allen.mcadam@ruraldevelopment.ie](mailto:allen.mcadam@ruraldevelopment.ie) or 086 8267495

or

Una Doris, [una@ridc.ie](mailto:una@ridc.ie) Tel: 090 6630252 or 086 7713550

Roscommon LEADER Partnership  
Unit 12, Tower B  
Roscommon West Business Park  
Golf Links Road, Roscommon Town  
Co. Roscommon

<http://www.facebook.com/RoscommonIntegratedDevelopmentCompany>  
<http://www.ridc.ie/>



## LEADER gives 75% grant aid for Redundant Farm Buildings

Up to €200,000 per applicant

Reutilization of redundant farm buildings Farmers and Farm family members

We are currently seeking to identify farmers who may have farm buildings which they no longer use for agricultural use but may have potential for use as an alternative enterprise. These buildings have potential for the development of an alternative farm enterprise and can attract LEADER funding at 75% grant rate up to a maximum of €200,000. In addition, a farmer's own labour can be counted as matching funds bringing the grant rate above 75%.

### Examples of projects;

- Conversion of an old stone barn to self-catering accommodation, an art studio, a bait store or smokehouse for anglers, a drying room for anglers
- Conversion of former grain store for waste segregation and recycling
- Conversion of mushroom houses for wood pellet production
- Former poultry house to a go-carting facility.
- Slatted house converted as part of a quad biking facility

Grants are available for feasibility studies, business plans construction, equipment and marketing. No agricultural production equipment or machinery will be grant aided.

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity - don't miss out



## Community & Volunteers

# Open up a whole new wonderful world with the Volunteering Roscommon Project

ARE YOU Interested in exploring new opportunities, expanding your horizons, boosting your CV, showing innovation, make new friends, keeping active and involved or sharing life experiences?

Are you involved in a community or not for profit organisations who wish to engage with and develop long term projects with new volunteers?

If the answer is Yes to either of the above then the Volunteering Roscommon Project can help you.

If you are a community or not for profit organisation interested in providing volunteer opportunities, the Volunteering Roscommon Project can help by promoting your volunteering opportunities and signposting volunteers to your organisation. We will also source information, guidance and training in all aspects of good practice and volunteer management.

Alternatively should you be interested in getting involved as a volunteer in County Roscommon, we can also help source the ideal volunteering opportunity for you.

When you volunteer you are giving something back to your community by lending a helping hand to people and organisations. What you may not realise is that volunteering also benefits you as an individual. There are many good reasons to get involved in the community, including learning something about yourself. The Roscommon Volunteering project offers volunteer opportunities for both individuals of all ages and community groups/organisations within the county.

Volunteering gives you an opportunity to change lives, including your own. If you're feeling frustrated or overwhelmed e.g. by the unemployment situation or the economic downturn after the boom years of the 'Celtic Tiger', volunteering to help can be a great way to make a difference in your community and society as a whole and will benefit you intrinsically as an individual.

### Some of the benefits of volunteering are;

- Make new friends
- Explore career and personal interests
- Obtain references for

future employment or college applications

- Develop marketable job skills
- Build your CV
- Stand out from the crowd at interviews
- Avail of training opportunities
- Uncover hidden skills and talents
- Increase your self-confidence
- Have fun
- Make a difference

### Why Volunteer?

Volunteering has a lot to offer people from all types of backgrounds and walks of life. People volunteer for many different reasons. Some of the reasons you may choose to volunteer may be because you want to: do something really enjoyable; make use of specific interests and competencies; learn new skills and develop new interests; meet new people with similar views/interests; make new friends; find out more about a work position which you are considering as a career; have a chance to take some responsibility and make decisions; gain valuable training and experience which may lead to paid employment

Unlike school and the world of work volunteering enables you to choose what really interests you and who or what is most deserving of your time. Need some ideas to get you started? Here are examples however the list is endless:

Help kids learn and grow by becoming a Big Brother or Big Sister, Youth leader or Youth club/café volunteer. Organise an after-school sports program. Special Olympics games and events are great ways to get to know special-needs kids.

Help the environment. Join a walking group or contact the walks supervisor or heritage officer in your area with a view to assisting with the upgrade and promotion of way-marked trails or involvement with preservation projects in the county.

By exploring new skills you may discover a new talent. It is never too late to learn, to realise new skills or to accumulate knowledge. Employers are often seeking well-rounded individuals who have good teamwork and goal setting skills. Planning and implementing a

fundraising event can develop goal setting, planning and budgeting skills. Serving on a volunteer committee or board is a great way to learn group dynamics and team work. Being part of a committee and coordinating events increases facilitation skills. Painting a mural or making banners could highlight your art talents. The possibilities are endless.

### Be active in your community.

There are so many options for being involved in your community, through community development groups, neighborhood watch initiatives, arts and historic clubs and social service organisations such as community catering, day care centers, family life and support organisations. Volunteering is ultimately about helping others and taking part in impacting people's welfare and happiness. What better way is there to connect with your community and give something back? Do you feel strongly about something that is happening or not happening in your community and want to get involved? As a volunteer, you certainly return to your community some of the benefits that being part of that community gives you.

### Meet a diverse range of people.

Volunteering brings together a diverse range of people from varied backgrounds. Both the recipients of your volunteer efforts and your fellow volunteers can be a valuable source of inspiration and a beneficial tool to expand your interpersonal skills. You do not know who you will meet, what new information you will acquire, and how this could impact your life.

Receive personal rewards and sense of achievement.

Volunteering is about donating your time, energy, and skills generously. Volunteers generally convey a sense of achievement and motivation which ultimately is generated from the desire and enthusiasm to help. For others volunteering may simply be a break in regular routine or an opportunity to create balance in their lives. Volunteering around a personal interest or hobby can be enjoyable, relaxing, and

revitalising. That energy and sense of fulfillment can even be carried over to other situations and sometimes help to relieve tensions and foster new perspectives for old situations.

### Create Leadership.

Watching those around you can allow you to identify leadership qualities that you most appreciate and can develop in yourself. Opportunities are available to lead by persuasion, show innovation, and share your ideas and values. Volunteer settings allow you to learn strategic thinking and facilitation and problem resolution skills. You will learn about your community, about trends, concerns and developments as they present, about people and about resources all of which can help you develop your leadership potential.

### Enhance Career Opportunities.

Volunteering offers an incredible networking opportunity. You will develop lasting personal and professional relationships. Not only is it a great way to learn about people from all walks of life, different areas, and new perspectives,

but you can also hear about job openings, gather valuable employment information and develop great references.

### Retain or sharpen old skills

As you progress through the cycle of life you may no longer be doing things you used to do and liked. Volunteering is a perfect means for keeping those skills sharp and current.

### Explore new career options

Volunteering is a perfect way to explore new areas. Sometimes a volunteer experience can direct you to something you never thought about or help you uncover a new skill or interest. Volunteering can give you the opportunity to explore new opportunities and expand your horizons.

From the community and organisational perspective;

There are a variety of reasons why involving volunteers could be of benefit to you. Volunteers are a valuable resource bringing with them enthusiasm, skills and experiences, flexibility, and fresh ideas. Whether volunteers can offer a regular commitment, once-off, occa-

sional or seasonal help, every volunteer has a unique contribution to make. Volunteers can be of enormous value to your organisation. Their commitment and enthusiasm, wide range of skills, experiences and interests will make a worthwhile and positive contribution.

In general, volunteers are committed and enthusiastic people with a great variety of skills who give their time, special talents and interests freely. With different backgrounds, ages, life, work and education experiences, volunteers add positively to the diversity of organisations and the services being provided. They may be able to offer their knowledge and skills for projects requiring special expertise.

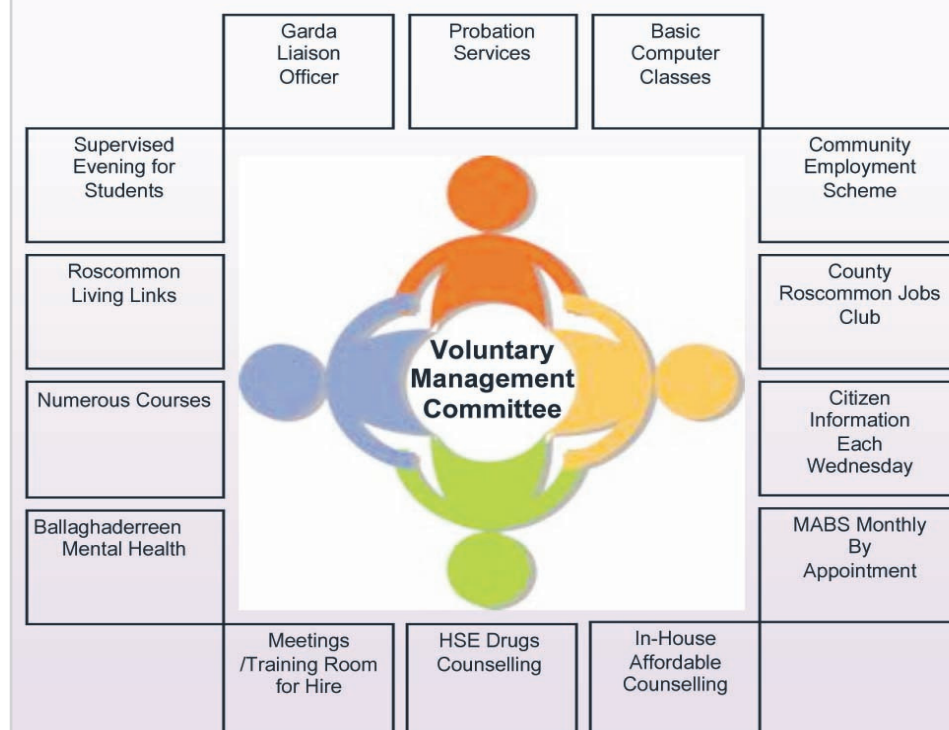
So, whether you are a community, not for profit organisations or a person involved or interested in getting involved in the voluntary sector in County Roscommon, the Roscommon Volunteering Project is there to assist you.

For further information or to register your interest please contact the Roscommon Volunteering Project on 090-6630252 or 087-9118624

The Shambles, Market St, Ballaghaderreen Co. Roscommon

Phone 094 9862565/9862548, Email northwestroscommoncdp@yahoo.ie

### SERVICES AVAILABLE LOCALLY AT THE SHAMBLES





## Volunteering

# Voluntary Car Scheme providing transport for elderly proving a huge success

ROSCOMMON LEADER Partnership in conjunction with Roscommon Rural Transport have developed a pilot social car scheme aimed at improving access to local services by bringing key stakeholders together ensuring a better more coordinated and accessible transport service in the County.

The pilot social car scheme 'Need a Lift' was launched in November 2011 for one month's duration. The pilot was very successful and RLP are in the process of refining and embedding the scheme with an extension of the pilot phase to August 2012 with one additional pilot area in operation.

'Need a lift' is an organised form of transport or lift service which is arranged through a call centre coordinator in

Ballaghaderreen and Keadue, where volunteer drivers give of their time and use their own transport to provide door to door journeys. The scheme operates as a demand responsive, flexible service aimed at senior members of the community over 65 years and the holders of a free travel pass experiencing difficulty sourcing rural, public or private forms of transport to access pre-arranged non-emergency medical appointments such as doctor's clinics, hospital appointments and any other non-ambulance/non-emergency HSE service.

Volunteer drivers collect Service Users at their own home and deliver them to the relevant HSE facilities in the county or to the nearest public transport (for HSE services

outside the county) and return the Service Users to their home following the appointment. The service also facilitates the collection of medical prescriptions.

**Overview**  
Creating a vibrant Open community structure for the aged is not a matter of luck, but the result of careful strategic planning and an integrated vision. Together we can develop a strategy to make County Roscommon an even greater place to grow old.

Roscommon Leader Partnership acknowledges the wealth of understanding and expertise within the county and we welcome all advice and guidance to deliver a balanced, multifaceted, workable strategy for older people in County Roscommon working with all

stakeholders.

To date RLP have engaged with community groups, men's groups, travellers groups and active age and active retirement groups across the entire county. All of these groups have actively engaged and participated in giving positive, valuable and vibrant ideas on their concept of and aspirations for a workable age strategy for County Roscommon. RLP have also initiated an Older Peoples Network which meets bi-monthly and have engaged with the key service providers within the county and representatives of the Ageing Well Network. The pilot social car schemes are progressing in the areas of operation with an interim-review scheduled for mid-May 2012.

### Volunteering Opportunities within Roscommon LEADER Partnership

#### My Line

Helpline for young people, operated by young people in Roscommon town

#### Youth spaces in Rural Areas

Roscommon LEADER Partnership are currently looking to recruit volunteers for Youth Spaces in Arigna and Curraghboy.

#### Roscommon Friendly Call Service

Free and confidential telephone service for people living alone in County Roscommon.

#### Social Car Scheme

Social car scheme aimed at improving access to local services for over 65 years. Volunteer drivers donate their time and use their own transport to provide door to door journeys.

**For further information on any of the above volunteering opportunities, please contact Roscommon LEADER Partnership on 090 6630252.**

## Variety of programmes on offer for over 55s



ROSCOMMON LEADER Partnership has a number of programmes running for the over 55s.

**Basic Computer training:** A 7 week beginners level computer class for over 55 is ran on Monday's mornings from our Ballaghaderreen office

#### Older people network

Roscommon Leader partnership has assisted in setting up a network for older people in the County. The aim of the network is to provide a voice for older people and to raise concern and issues as identified by the network with relevant agencies and bodies.

Membership of the network is open to all organisations and individuals committed to improving the quality of life for older people in the county. The next meeting of the network will on Wednesday 23rd May 2012 at 11.00 in the Boardroom of Roscommon Leader Partnership offices, Roscommon town. All are welcome!

# Recruitment of Volunteers for the Development of Youth Spaces in Rural Areas

ROSCOMMON LEADER Partnership is currently looking to recruit volunteers for Youth Spaces in Arigna and Curraghboy.

A youth space is a safe, secure and alcohol free venue where young people can relax and socialise with their peers. The most important thing about a Youth space is that it is set up by young people for young people, with adult support. Youth spaces provide much needed recreational outlets for young people within our communities, offering an alternative to hanging around the streets.

Both Youth Spaces are in early stages of development and would benefit greatly from additional volunteers.

We are currently looking into the need to having a Youth Space in Frenchpark; anyone interested please contact the Youth Development Officer. In the Youth Spaces, volunteers are involved at management level, service planning and day to day running of the facilities. Training and upskilling of volunteers is ongoing to suit the ever changing demands and needs of the role. The involvement of volunteers demonstrates community endorsement

and investment in the project and what it is trying to achieve. This continued support leads to a better chance of sustaining the Youth Spaces into the future. Involving volunteers is also a way to tap into the viewpoints of people who may feel freer to be critical and express themselves than paid staff, new ideas and fresh insight is vital to sustainability and growth of the service. Volunteering in the youth space offers a rewarding experience, a sense of belonging and helps members to contribute in a positive way to their community. In the current

economic climate community projects need volunteers to survive and also with so much uncertainty and insecurities promoting community spirit, involvement and well-being should be a priority.

Roscommon LEADER Partnership delivered this work with Youth Work Ireland, and we wish to thank them for all their assistance with this project.

Contact: Gail Murray  
Youth Development Officer - 0906630252 ext 226 / Mobile 086 8532915 / gail@ridc.ie

## HELPLINE SERVICE for young people in County Roscommon

**MY LINE** is Roscommon's Peer Listening Service which offers a confidential and supportive helpline service for young people who may want to chat and

share a problem. This is operated by young people who have undergone the necessary training and is aimed at 12 to 25 year olds. The young person can either call text or

email which caters for whatever medium is most comfortable for the caller. Opening hours are Friday evenings 7 to 9pm. Lo Call 1850 588599, Free Text:

Myline to 50015 or email mylineros@gmail.com. If you would like to volunteer for this helpline and are between the ages of 18 to 25 years of age please

contact Teresa on 086 0291215 or email teresa@ridc.ie. This is funded by Dormant Accounts as part of the Suicide Intervention Programme.



## Friendly Call Service providing a lifeline for elderly people

ROSCOMMON FRIENDLY Call Service offers a telephone service to older people who are living alone in County Roscommon. The service offers a free and confidential telephone call at a time which is suitable for the client to chat, or if they would like information on a

local service. You can arrange to take the call as little or as often as you like.

If you would like to receive a call from Roscommon Friendly Call Service or would like to volunteer a few hours to the service, please contact Sandra on 090 6630252.



## Support Programme for Parents in Elphin

TO HELP parents to cope with the challenges of daily life and the added pressure of parenting of school-going teenagers, Roscommon LEADER Partnership Company are running WRAP for parents (Wellness Recovery Action Planning). This programme gives the tools to deal with these challenges. Geared towards parents of secondary school-going children in the Elphin area, the programme is delivered through a very informal setting with discussions and the completion of a workbook.

This will be held in September, dates and venue to be confirmed. We would hope to select dates and times to suit parents interested. If you would like to register or want more information, please contact Teresa on 086 0291215 or [teresa@ridc.ie](mailto:teresa@ridc.ie).

## Major plans to develop Rural Men's Groups programme

Ireland traditionally had a male culture where men didn't talk about feelings and emotions. Unlike women, men can be reluctant to talk openly about how they feel and that often means they usually don't ask for help.

For the last ten years, Roscommon LEADER Partnership (RLP) has been successfully working with Roscommon Rural Men's Groups but now this social inclusion initiative is set to evolve into a globally recognised model called the Men Shed's project.

A 'Men's Shed' is a community-based organisation open to men of all ages who meet up in specially adapted sheds or local community centres. The primary activity is the provision of a safe, friendly and inclusive environment where men are able to gather and/or work on meaningful projects at their own pace, in their own time and in the company of other men. The primary objective is to advance the health and well-being of the participating men and importantly, there is no pressure. Men can just come and have a chat and a cup

of tea if that is all they're looking for. To kick-start the initiative, RLP, in conjunction with Roscommon VEC, are now running a FETAC Level 5 Community Development Course that will equip local people interested in setting up such projects throughout the county. For those interested in participating this training in its next phase, please contact us and we will have you registered. Places are limited so it is first come, first served.

In June of this year, the Men's Sheds project will be extended to involve

members of the Travelling Community. This is a pilot project which will be based in Ballyforan where a number of activities will be part of this project.

RLP would like to invite all Travellers living in Ballyforan area to be part of this project. Its success will mean that such a project will be replicated to cover other areas with Travelling Communities. For those who would like more information please call Joseph Nyirenda Tel: 090 6630252 (Ext: 220) Mobile: 086 3801701

## Employment & Training Opportunities

### Roscommon Leader Partnership supporting Employers in County Roscommon

ROSCOMMON LEADER Partnership recognises the difficulties employers have been going through since the economic downturn.

That pressure on businesses is exacerbated by lack of access to funding, rising costs. Additionally for small local businesses, the domestic market remains weak so now is a very important time for employers to be aware of and have up to date information on incentives available to them.

In conjunction with Roscommon Employment Inter Agency Group to support businesses, we are continuing to hold a number of 'Employer Recruitment Incentive Seminars' throughout the county. The seminars will make participants aware of the many incentives available such as Employers Job (PRSI) Incentive Scheme, Revenue Job Assist Incentive and JobBridge National Internship Scheme

Our next seminar will be held in Roscommon town in early June (date TBC) and all businesses in

the area will be invited to attend. We have already held very successful seminars in Ballaghaderreen and Castlerea, attended by more than 30 businesses.

Businesses are very supportive of what we like to describe as the 'one stop shop' approach to providing information on all the incentives available at the one event. This approach is also supported by Cathal Lavelle business development manager in Ballaghaderreen and Castlerea who said: "The events are very beneficial in terms of providing local employers with all the relevant information and the confidence to enable them take on people under the various schemes for jobs and work experience. I would recommend future events of this nature to employers as they will help them maximise all the state benefits available when taking on people."

At the upcoming Roscommon seminar, details will be available on the more recent changes to the Employers Job (PRSI) Incentive

Scheme

We are also developing an information pack for employers with more detail on all the incentives available to employers and we are hoping this pack will be ready to launch at the Roscommon event. Employers availing of this pack will be requested to provide us with feedback on any uptake of incentives which will help us to further develop our services. So if you are an employer in the Roscommon Town area, keep an eye out for details of our upcoming seminar which will help inform you about incentives that could help your business. This seminar will be held on 7th June in Roscommon Town, from 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. in Roscommon LEADER Partnership Conference Room, Unit 12, Tower B, Business Park West, Golf Links Road, Roscommon. To register your interest, please contact; John Tonra Employer Liaison Officer, Ballaghaderreen Office 090 6630252 Email [jtonra@ridc.ie](mailto:jtonra@ridc.ie)

### RLP and Citizens Information Service to stage series of information events across county

ROSCOMMON COUNTY Citizens Information Service Ltd. and Roscommon Leader Partnership are holding a number of community education programme events throughout the county starting in Elphin in May.

The aim of this programme is to deliver specific and relevant information to targeted groups. The information topics are chosen by the groups themselves, for example an Active Age Group could receive information on the following:

- State Contributory and Transition Pensions
- State Non-contributory Pension
- Retirement from work
- Income supports for older people and

- Household Benefits
- Older People and Tax
- Warmer Home Schemes
- Housing Grants and Schemes

The programme also covers a range of information in other areas for groups who would like information on:

- Disabilities
- Family and families support
- Work - starting work or losing your job
- Employment Rights and Law
- Social Protection (Social Welfare) Payments
- Education
- Housing
- Money and Taxation

Each information session takes approximately 2 hours to complete and can be deliv-

ered either during the day or in the evening.

The Community Education Programme information sessions are free to all and are organised by the Roscommon Leader Partnership and delivered by Roscommon Citizens Information Service.

Anyone who are interested in availing of this service should contact: Patricia Madden at the Roscommon LEADER Partnership on: Tel No - 090-66-30252 Ext. No. 269



# Supporting Roscommon Employers to create local jobs



WHEN RECRUITING, an employer looks for the most suitable person to do the best job at the best price while equally, the job-seeker wants to be given an opportunity to prove he or she is the best person for the job. Therefore, the approach operated by Roscommon LEADER Partnership is to identify employers' requirements and upskill jobseekers to meet them while at the same time ensuring employers are aware of the qualities and skills job seekers already have.

As part of this process, one to one meetings with employers in the relevant sectors continue to take place to identify key information such as;

- What and where are the employment opportunities in your business?
- What level of skill must an individual have to secure employment in this area?
- What background experience would be most desirable for the job?
- What other factors/training could be included to increase job seekers competitive position in the employment arena?

An Employment Inter Agency Group, consisting of the Department of Social Protection, FÁS, VEC, County Development Board, County Enterprise Board and Roscommon LEADER Partnership, was established with a view to developing job creation programmes based on research findings. Clearly, a need to upskill and reskill the long term unemployed in the above sectors is a priority and work in providing accredited training has commenced. Care is taken to ensure no duplication of resources exists. Throughout

training regular contact is maintained with employers who were consulted to keep them in the loop and this is mainly for two reasons. Firstly, those potential employers are aware that individuals are being trained in their area of work and ready for employment on completion. Secondly, this approach may encourage an employer to create a job opportunity based on the knowledge that skills to carry out the work are available locally. From a trainee's point of view, they are aware at least there is potential employment in their chosen area as it is research led. Furthermore, work experience is built into training programmes and this allows for trainees to experience working in the area. It is envisaged that working closely with employers and trainees that a 'matching of skills' and suitability for the job may develop into a win-win for both. The entire process of engaging with employers both on a one to one and through the employer incentives and supporting job seekers to gain employment will open opportunities through work experience, interns, part-time, seasonal and hopefully fulltime employment including self employment.

## **Future Options Programme - accredited programme supporting unemployed people into employment.**

Over the years some land has been planted which has often been of poor quality or located in isolated areas on their farms. Now some of the plantations require maintenance or harvesting and in cases this is proving difficult as the size or location of the plantation may not allow or justify for mechanical equipment to operate. Therefore, the only way to operate on

such plantations is by manual labour and use of chainsaw. Forest owners realise the value of timber and this method is seen as more favourable for smaller sites as less damage and loss occurs especially at harvesting.

Against this backdrop for the need for expert chainsaw operators, 13 unemployed ex-construction workers undertook a 14 week accredited training programme in chainsaw operation in forestry, which was funded by Department of Social Protection. Held last September, the programme content included: level 31 chainsaw operation, occupational first aid, health & safety, dealing with change, personal development, on site work experience to mention but a few. On completion, 8 trainees advanced to level 35 in chainsaw operation. This qualification allows individuals to operate on sites where multiple wind blow tree are felled. Currently, trainees are actively seeking work in this area with some success while others are exploring self employment as an option.

Karol Quinn was one of 12 participants who completed the 14 week accredited programme (delivered 3 days per week) in chainsaw operation. On completion, Karol along with 6 other trainees advanced on to successfully completing an advanced level (CS35) in chainsaw operation. Karol Quinn added "I worked in construction since finishing school. Outdoor physical type work was what I was happiest at. I went to FÁS looking for work or training in machine operation or some type of outdoor skill. Luckily, one place left on a chainsaw course which I jumped at. This was the first course I participated in since becoming unemployed. Initial-

ly I daunted by the length of the course and more over when I learned a lot of time had to be spent in a classroom, but the weeks flew by and for me and the rest of the lads it was completely different than expected. The diversity of topics covered, the contacts made, the different tutors, the respect and bonding with others, the fun and banter and above all learning and contacts made in an area of work that I had no previous experience in."

"I was amazed at the amount of stuff covered on the course from occupational first aid, health and safety and manual handling all pitched at FETAC level 5, other elements included, idea generation, computers, time management, career development, on site visits, employer visits, environmental & renewal energy, and lots of other short but useful topics. The course finished with two weeks work experience in chainsaw operation and this was great."

Starting the course my confidence was low but after the 14 weeks I am a different man, more confident, up skilled and ready for work. I have complete confidence in finding work especially since I completed the advanced training along with new contacts I made.

More programmes like this should be run, people should go on courses like this, for me I am now qualified for working a chainsaw when the work comes along. I gained new skills and have a wider skills base which I hadn't got 6 months ago. I missed the course and meeting the other lads when it finished but at least we still keep in contact and support one another. My aim is to gain experience in forestry work and down the line to become self employed in.

## **Youth Unemployment Information Events**

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT is now described as a scourge right across the EU with the average unemployment rate among 16 to 24 year olds to be over 21%. Here in Ireland the rate is closer to 30% while in Spain it's getting close to a whopping 50%. With those kinds of figures, governments, communities and Local Development Organisations are trying to come up with strategies to tackle the issue.

In Scotland where youth unemployment is over 23% the Government has appointed a Minister for Youth Employment. Her name is Angela Constance MSP, and in her foreword recently in the Draft Scottish Youth Employment Strategy, she said: "The journey from education to employment is one of the key moments in a young person's life. It is a journey that for all too many is broken by the lack of employment opportunities". Here in Roscommon that is a statement many young people would identify with as they experience difficulties in finding employment.

In response to youth unemployment, Roscommon Leader Partnership continue to host a number of 'Youth Employment Information Events' around the county. The next event is now at the planning stage and will take place in Boyle. At an earlier event held in Castlerea we had presentations from FÁS and the VEC around educational and work experience opportunities. We also gave a presentation on the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance. For the Boyle event we are hoping to build on the presentations and make the session as interactive as possible.

Working with employers to identify labour market needs is something Roscommon Leader Partnership is developing. Some recent research with employers through the CDP Resource Centre in Ballaghaderreen discovered that a considerable number of work experience opportunities remain unfilled due to a lack of applicants with the required skills. More details on this research and the opportunities it presents will be available at the Boyle event which will also look at some career planning and confidence building opportunities.

In conclusion, John would be delighted if any unemployed young people reading this article wanted to contact him to become involved in organising or suggesting ideas for the event. He would also like to invite all young people in the Boyle area to watch out for details of the event and to make sure to come along to it. The Government's new policy statement on labour activation 'Pathways to Work' has five strands aimed at tackling unemployment. The 'Youth Employment Information Event' in Boyle could be your first step on the pathway to work. It will be held on Tuesday May 29th 2012 in the Family Life Centre, Boyle. Please contact Louise Moran in Boyle Family Life Centre - 0719663000 or John Tonra, Employer Liaison Officer at Roscommon LEADER Partnership, Ballaghaderreen Office, phone 086 8192651 or email jtonra@ridc.ie

## **Food & Catering Course to commence in May**

COMMENCING IN May, an accredited 'Food and Catering' course will take place to upskill individuals in areas such as food catering, cookery, food preparation, food hygiene, health and safety along with training in IT skills, communication skills, CV and interview skills, work experience and much more. In September an accredited training programme will be delivered around employment opportunities in the tourism sector. For further information contact Anthony Dockery, Rural Development Officer; Tel: 090 6630252 or email Anthony@ridc.ie



## Roscommon LEADER Partnership Training Calendar For 2012

### Future Options

Accredited training programmes to support people into employment

**Farm Diversification Training Programme**  
Non-accredited training programme, promoting enterprise creation and employment

### Work Life Skills

Preparation course for people seeking employment

**(Computers) Online Service Training**  
On line service training for farmers

**Rural Enterprise Skillnet Training**  
Training support for member of our farming community

**Idea Generation Academy**  
Training workshops for potential Back to Work Enterprise Allowance participants

**Social Economy Training Programme**  
Business and financial management training for social economy groups

**Employer Recruitment Incentive Seminars**  
Information and training on employer recruitment incentive schemes

**Youth Employment Information Event**  
Information on training and employment opportunities for youth

**Computer courses for over 55 years**  
Basic computer training for people over 55 years

**WRAP for Parents in Elphin**  
To help parents to cope with the challenges of daily life and the added pressure of parenting

**If you are interested in any of the courses or want to find out more, please contact Helen at 090 6630252, or email us through our website [www.rosleaderpartnership.ie](http://www.rosleaderpartnership.ie)**

Training Courses will be delivered subject to demand and full details will be available on our website

# TÚS - a new beginning for the unemployed'

TÚS IS a new initiative launched in 2011, providing short term community work placement for people who are unemployed. Roscommon LEADER Partnership has been allocated 80 Participant places and 4 Supervisory places to service County Roscommon. All of the Participants placed make a huge contribution to community, voluntary and sporting organisations throughout the County.

The TÚS initiative is managed nationwide by local development companies such as Roscommon LEADER Partnership on behalf of the Department of Social Protection, which has overall responsibility for the scheme. All the work carried out by participants

in the TÚS scheme must benefit the community.

The types of project eligible for the scheme include:

- Energy conservation work in homes and community buildings
- Social care of all age groups and people with disabilities
- Caretaking, securing, supervising of community buildings and spaces
- Renovation of community and sporting facilities, including the regeneration and enhancement of community, recreation and sporting spaces
- Work in support of cultural and heritage activities
- Community administration and community event management

- Coaching for sporting activities
- Repair of equipment for the Third World - for example, farm tools, bicycles, computers, sewing machines, health equipment

The annual TÚS payroll makes a significant contribution to the local economy while also supporting the various communities throughout the area. Community work placements are a valuable route for participants to gain or update experience of the workplace, to learn new skills and to return to the routine of work. While on TÚS, participants are supported in accessing training and employment opportunities.

## Rural Social Scheme - making a real difference in County Roscommon

ROSCOMMON LEADER Partnership has been operating the Rural Social Scheme in County Roscommon since January 2009 following the cohesion of the Arigna LEADER and Mid South Roscommon Rural Development Company Rural Social Schemes.

The Scheme has continued to grow over the past three years and delivers a much needed community service throughout the County. This is demonstrated by the new and existing community groups that submitted worthwhile projects for 2012. At present Roscommon LEADER Partnership has a quota of 149 participants on the scheme with a support team of 7 supervisors. Work is ongoing throughout County Roscommon and provides community-based work on a part-time basis (19.5 hours per week). Participants work on a variety of projects across all measures of work including village enhancement, maintenance and development of walking trails, social care projects including care of adults with learning disabilities, community care for both pre-school and after school groups, maintenance and care taking of community centres and sporting facilities, staffing cultural and heritage centres and community administration



support. The variety of work requested by the local community groups has expanded this year. Various new projects were undertaken with the co-operation of the communities and despite very tight budgets communities have come up trumps with the provision of materials to complete these projects.

The service and benefits that the Rural Social Scheme brings to local rural communities is very well appreciated by all concerned and it is vital that the scheme continues into the future and can then be recognised as one of the mainstays of rural sustainability.

For more information contact: Brenda McDermott on 090 6630252 or [brenda@ridc.ie](mailto:brenda@ridc.ie)



**Left: Grotto completed in Fairymount Cemetary a great example of Environmental Maintenance Work carried out by Rural Social Scheme Participants in the area**



# Call to communities and local business: apply now for your portion of €5m investment fund before 2013 deadline

## Can you meet the LEADER challenge?

LEADER CONTINUES to play an increasingly important role in assisting rural communities meet the economic, social and environmental challenges of the 21st century. The programme provides a unique opportunity to address local business and community challenges.

Roscommon LEADER Partnership's vision is to create a sustainable and dynamic rural economy through investing in new and innovative businesses and enterprising communities and a total of 5 million remains available for invest-

ment in Roscommon before the 2013 programme deadline.

LEADER funding is an excellent resource for local communities and businesses. If you have an idea or a proposal of interest to your local community or would like to grow your business or create a new enterprise, then please get in touch. As you can see from this supplement, there is a myriad of supports and resources at your disposal, and often at little or no cost. With the funding deadline of 31st December 2013 fast approaching, the time to act is now.

Can you help meet the LEADER challenge of investing EU monies for local benefit?

### Funding Streams of LEADER



**LEADER Team  
at Roscommon  
LEADER  
Partnership**

Contact us:

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**Unit 12, Tower B, Roscommon West Business Park, Golf Links Road, Roscommon Town, Co. Roscommon**

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