



Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall
Donegal County Council

ISSUE 12 FEBRUARY 2018

EU UNIT UPDATE



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WELCOME / FAILTE

This bulletin is produced by the EU Funding and Strategic Policy Unit of Donegal County Council. The EU Unit works with all services of Donegal County Council to proactively target external funding opportunities, influence policy and identify EU networks of benefit to the Council. The Strategic Policy Unit promotes and supports inter-agency networking and partnership across the wider north west region through a range of collaborative structures and projects. This bulletin will provide you with all the latest news in relation to Donegal County Councils involvement in this important area of work.

Liam Ward, Director of Services, Donegal County Council

THE CHANGING FACE OF THE EU

As a consequence of Britain’s decision to leave the European Union, Ireland finds itself in a unique position. Donegal, as a border County, forms a significant part of the only land boundary between the EU and the UK in a post Brexit scenario. The ‘Donegal Context’ and its position in the Northwest Region is unique and therefore requires specific analysis as the “Brexit” negotiations and new arrangements emerge. Donegal shares 93% of its land boundary with Northern Ireland across counties Tyrone, Derry and Fermanagh. This demographic informs our place and our people as the only City region in the UK, Ireland, or across Europe, which straddles an international jurisdictional border.

The established working partnership between Donegal County Council and Derry City & Strabane District Council provided an excellent platform for the work needed to understand the challenges and opportunities that Brexit presents and affords a mechanism to help scope and implement potential mitigations for same. An “Initial Analysis of the Challenges and Opportunities of Brexit for the Derry City & Strabane and Donegal County Council areas – The North West Region” which was published by the two Councils was informed by input from the joint academic

institutions of Trinity College in Dublin, University of Ulster at Magee in Derry and Queens University in Belfast. It provided the two Councils and other key stakeholders with an evidence based and objective view of the situation as it developed. The report provides ongoing guidance to the two Councils, informing the policy making process at local, regional and national level and is based on an objective robust evidence base, examining the areas of Education, Health, Tourism, Enterprise, Construction, Manufacturing, Retail, Agriculture, Marine, Community and Voluntary Sector. The region has greatly benefited from a variety of EU funds from a range of sources. These include ESF, ERDF, Peace I-IV and Interreg. Much of the Community, Voluntary and Social Enterprise sectors are dependent on these resources to continue to provide services, including training, employment supports, counselling and reconciliation work. It is well recognised by government that the partnerships which have developed between the public, private and the Community, Voluntary and Social Enterprise sectors are critical in the delivery of services to those on the margins.

North West Greenways and CatchmentCARE are two of the

most recent EU funded projects bringing almost €30 million to the region, which embodies some of the benefits of EU funding. Many smaller, yet very important projects continue to help groups and individuals, transforming the lives of many through innovative programmes made possible through EU funding.

The establishment of key partnership fora including the North West Strategic Growth Partnership and the North West Regional Development Group is instrumental in the further development of the North West Region.

The North West Strategic Growth Partnership affords the two Councils an opportunity to engage with the key Government Departments North and South, and plays a key role in working with both Governments in delivering planned development of the North West Region.

The North West Regional Development Group comprises Elected Members and is supported by the executive of both Councils. It meets quarterly to drive the development of the region under the three pillars of; regional economic growth, regional physical development; and regional community and social well being.

In this evolving European climate, the EU Unit in Donegal

County Council, working with all directorates of the Council continues to explore opportunities to attract external funding to the region. It is appropriate to acknowledge the achievements of the EU team during this time, in establishing solid relations with international neighbours and European networks and to inform future opportunities. The Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) of 2021-2027 is currently in review, the detail of which will inform future funding programmes.

Seamus Neely, Chief Executive, Donegal County Council.



*Mr. Seamus Neely
Chief Executive of Donegal
County Council*

CatchmentCARE Approved INTERREG VA Project



Location of the Finn, Arney and Blackwater catchment sites.

The Catchment Actions for Resilient Eco-systems Project, also referred to as **CatchmentCARE**, is an EU funded project, to improve freshwater quality in cross-border river basins across three cross-border catchments. The project was awarded €13,792,436.45 (ERDF + Government Match Funding) under the INTERREG VA Programme in October 2017, €2.85million of which is allocated to Donegal, acting as the Lead Partner in the partner consortium.

The oversight of CatchmentCARE sits within the Directorate of Water and Environment and is the single largest EU funded project managed by Donegal County Council to date. Four full time and 1 part time members of staff will be allocated to the project, including a Project Manager, administrative support, Data Manager and a part time Environmental Technician. Michael McGarvey the Acting Director of Water and Environment said "Through the CatchmentCARE project Donegal County Council with our partners have identified and agreed actions that go above and beyond those that agencies already have a statutory obligation to undertake. Project actions will address the core challenge of restoring water-bodies in border area catchments by increasing catchment resilience-biophysical, social and economic, and developing stakeholder capacity-community, government and non-governmental organisations, taking into consideration both surface and groundwater. We are delighted to be leading out on a project of this calibre and potential, working on a cross border basis and supported by the Special EU Programmes Body and INTERREG VA programme"

Concentrating on one of the core objectives of the programme, Objective 2.4 **Environmental Initiatives**, the CatchmentCARE project aims to establish 3 water quality improvement projects in the Finn, Blackwater and Arney catchments and install 51 boreholes across the region. Working in partnership, the consortium will develop 3 policy actions, 6 catchment actions and 3 community actions, based on three critical criteria; measurable impact on water quality; transferable beyond the three catchments; and contribute to a project

legacy. The actions selected will address water quality issues relating to hydromorphology, point and diffuse sources of pollution, farm nutrient management practices, characterisation and monitoring of groundwater quality, lag times in response to the implementation of measures and an economic analysis of the cost of achieving the objectives of the Water Framework Directive in the three catchments. Furthermore CatchmentCARE will contribute to achieving good status through the implementation of catchment restoration actions, capacity building of the local community, and crucially will provide a platform for cross-border knowledge exchange between community, governance, policy and scientific stakeholders.

The initial CatchmentCARE Kick-Off meeting was held in Letterkenny in November 2017 where all partners came together to discuss and inform the work programme of events and workshops to follow and in what proved to be a very engaging and informed exchange of knowledge and experience, followed later in November 2017 at the Northern Ireland Water Framework Directive 'Working in Partnership' Stakeholder Conference where Donegal County Council presented the CatchmentCare project. Arrangements to formally launch the project are currently being prepared and the recruitment of project staff is underway. Project partners come with a broad range of knowledge and experience, to bring an added value to the project, further reinforcing the value of collaboration and working together for the good of not only the environment but also for our communities. Local authorities, Donegal County Council (Lead Partner), Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council, working with academia in Ulster University, as well as the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute, British Geological Survey, Loughs Agency Geological Survey Ireland and Inland Fisheries Ireland, bring a rich and diverse skill-set from which to bring the CatchmentCARE project forward.

Contact: Éadaoin Healy, CatchmentCARE Project Contact, eadaoin.healy@donegalcoco.ie for further information.



Left to right: Éadaoin Healy Project Officer, with Maria Ferguson HR Manager formerly of the EU Unit, Michael McGarvey A/Director of Service and Con McLaughlin Senior Engineer



DONEGAL - DERRY NEW NORTH-WEST GREENWAY NETWORK

North West Greenway Network



Interreg
Northern Ireland - Ireland - Scotland
European Regional Development Fund



Comhairle Contae
Dhúin na nGall
Donegal County Council

Department for
Infrastructure
An Roinn Bonncoigir

sustrans
JOIN THE MOVEMENT

Through the North West Greenway Network (NWGN) 46.5km of new cross border greenways will be provided across the Donegal County Council and Derry City and Strabane District Council region.

The development of the North West Greenway Network is led by Derry City and Strabane District Council with the support of project partners Donegal County Council, Transport NI and Sustrans and received formal letter of offer in December 2016 to the value of €14.85 million from the EU's INTERREG VA programme to develop the initiative on a cross border basis. The project is funded through the EU's INTERREG VA Programme which is administered by Special EU Programmes Body, with match funding provided by the Department for Infrastructure in Northern Ireland and the Department for Transport, Tourism and Sport in the Republic of Ireland.

Derry City and Strabane District Council as Lead Partner working with Donegal County Council, are supported by a total compliment of eight staff and will develop the North West Greenway Network to include 3 routes: just over 32km Bunrana/Derry via the Tooban junction (including a spur from the Junction to Newtowncunningham), Bridgend into Pennyburn/Derry, from Muff village into Derry via Culmore over 10km and almost 4km from Lifford into Strabane via the Lifford Bridge, forming a base from which to explore further potential in route development.

The Donegal County Council partnership of the NWGN is managed through the Directorate of Roads and Transportation, with three staff members working on the project. Ronan Gallagher, Communications Officer, Trevor Gordon Project Engineer and Patrick Brennan Assistant Engineer are based in the Lifford offices and continue preliminary works necessary to inform the development of the

project. A further four staff are employed by the Lead Partner Derry City and Strabane District Council and an Active Travel Officer commenced this month employed by Sustrans. This is a significant investment in cross border employment alone with seven new posts amounting to a value of €2m employed by both Councils to support the development of the NWGN.

In 2015, Donegal County Council and Derry City and Strabane District Council working together published the *North West Greenway Plan: a Vision and Action Plan for Greenway Development* which was compiled by Sustrans on behalf of the two councils. It identified 567km of potential greenway routes as highlighted in the North West Cross Border Regional study area. This vision subsequently formed the basis for the development and implementation of the North West Greenway Network. In this regard greenway and cycle lane provision form an important element of Donegal's County Development Plan 2018-2024, and is also referenced in the Draft Seven Strategic Towns Local Area Plan 2018-2024. Apart from allowing people to consider an alternative transport system for work, school and leisure, the provision of greenway and cycle lane bring numerous health, economic, social and tourism benefits to the County, and in this regard the support provided by the SEUPB through the INTERREG VA funding programme reinforces the Council objectives in developing greenways across the county.

Underlining the importance of the project Gina McIntyre Chief Executive of the SEUPB, said: "The INTERREG VA Programme has awarded funding to this greenway project to help lower greenhouse gas emissions in this region, in line with the European-wide framework known as the Europe 2020 Strategy. By encouraging people to get out of their cars and walk it will

reduce our collective carbon footprint. The greenway will also help to deliver upon one of the key objectives of the EU's INTERREG VA Programme which aims to increase the number of cross-border journeys made by walking and cycling by up to 10%. I look forward to hearing more about the project as work begins in earnest."

The official launch of the project is scheduled for 26th February 2018 in the An Grianan Hotel. Following on from the launch, a public consultation programme is envisaged which will see a series of meetings held to inform the general public of the proposed plans, thus allowing interested parties to feed into the route selection process.

Contact: Ronan Gallagher, Communications Manager, **North West Greenway Network** Donegal County Council, Lifford, County Donegal. Tel: 0749153900

Twitter: @nwgreenway;
Facebook: nwgreenway



Ronan Gallagher and Patrick Brennan of Donegal County Council inspecting a section of the proposed route near Newtowncunningham.

ATLANTIC ON BIKE LAUNCH TAKES PLACE IN CÁCERES, SPAIN



Atlantic On Bike, a cycle tourism development project was successfully launched in September 2017 in Cáceres, Spain. At the launch, Donegal County Council was represented by the Cathaoirleach Gerry McMonagle and Barney McLaughlin, Community Development Division.

Based on the transnational cycle route EuroVelo 1 (the Atlantic Coastal Route), Atlantic On Bike aims to achieve positive economic outcomes by increasing visitor numbers, boosting local economies, creating new activities and creating new jobs within the tourism industry. Its rationale is to stimulate, to structure, to

promote and to take part in the development of a cycle touristic offering along the EuroVelo 1.

Donegal County Council is working closely with the 22 European Partners to promote the EuroVelo 1 cycle route which stretches the length of the continent and passes through Norway, United Kingdom, Ireland, France, Spain and Portugal. Irish Partners, Donegal, Sligo and Mayo County Council are utilising the project to advance the EuroVelo cycle route along the Wild Atlantic Way. This will involve the erection of signage at various locations throughout their respective counties and within Donegal the project will connect Bridgend to Derry as part of the North West Greenways Project and on the



southern border, Bundoran will be connected to Leitrim. As well as promotional events and website development, other activities to be delivered by Donegal County Council will be the hosting of the EuroVelo Route Inspectors Training Course on the 23rd & 24th April 2018 in Letterkenny and the Project Steering Meetings on the 25th, 26th & 27th April 2018. It is anticipated over 50 participants will attend both the training and the Project Steering Meetings.

Atlantic On Bike is a three year Project funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) through the INTERREG Atlantic Area Programme under Priority 4: Enhancing biodiversity and the natural and cultural assets. Further information on the Project can be obtained by contacting Caroline Britton, Project Officer on cbritton@donegalcoco.ie



EU CAPITEN PROJECT

Donegal County Council understands the importance of continuing to develop and promote Donegal as a quality marine tourism destination on the Wild Atlantic Way. Targeted involvement in EU projects with partnership networks across Europe is a vital way of ensuring that Donegal is at the forefront when EU funding becomes available for sectors such as tourism.

Donegal County Council recently received the positive news that the 'CAPITEN' project has been successfully funded to a total of €3 million between all partners over the next three years. CAPITEN is an EU Interreg funded project under the AAP (Atlantic Area Programme) in which Donegal County Council is an important partner. This new and innovative marine tourism project called CAPITEN was launched on 10th November 2017 in Rennes, France by the lead partner, the Regional Council of Brittany. The partnership consists of 18 partners and spans five European countries including Ireland, Scotland, France, Portugal and Spain.

The CAPITEN project seeks to develop a number of exciting new elements including new marine product innovation, environmentally sustainable marine tourism, inshore and sea-

going navigation aids, port information points and marine tourism itineraries. Donegal County Council is specifically managing the events element of the CAPITEN project.

CAPITEN will encourage local communities and visitors to experience coastal maritime activities and will seek to deliver a viable portfolio of events to attract visitors to Atlantic Area partner regions, to enhance Donegal's international profile as a maritime destination of excellence, to strengthen our maritime sporting activities, provide support for activity

providers and to maximise the economic, social and environmental benefits of events to all partner regions.

Projects such as CAPITEN provide employment, increase social well-being and increase economic development of coastal communities while at the same time protecting the local coastal environment through the introduction of sustainable maritime activities.

For further detail please contact Joy Harron on 0749153900



CAPITEN launch event in the Regional Council of Brittany offices in Rennes, Barney McLaughlin and Joy Harron attended on behalf of Donegal County Council.



WAOH! ROUTE

The European Union is supporting Wildsea Europe's Partners in a new €375,000-initiative designed to develop a Sustainable Diving Route connecting "flagship" diving sites & ecotourism destinations along Europe's Atlantic coastline.

The Wildsea Atlantic Ocean Heritage Route ("WAOH! Route") will be the first, European, Sustainable Diving Route connecting world-class diving sites from the extreme south in Portugal and Spain to the far north, encompassing Ireland and the UK. The WAOH Route will connect world-class "flagship" diving sites and destinations that will encourage, create and unite synergy between water sports and Europe's unique, Atlantic marine heritage of landscapes, wildlife and habitats in combination with a range of maritime cultural heritage.

The Route will seek to enhance synergy of nautical sports (diving & snorkelling and kayaking) with upcoming marine ecotourism opportunities. It will notably promote synergy with Europe's renowned maritime archaeology, museums, underwater tourism and gastronomy at the seaside, leading to an innovative offer of new, transnational tourism products.

The Project will run from January 1st, 2018 to December 30th, 2019 and is a joint initiative of Partners from 4 European countries (Spain, UK, Ireland & Portugal).

The project kick off meeting will be held in Spain in February hosted by the Turismo de Galicia.

For further details please contact Barney McLaughlin on 074 9153900.



Wildsea Divers



Co-funded by the COSME programme of the European Union

ASCENT: PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE ACCESS TO UPLANDS AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS



ASCENT

Promoting Sustainable Access to Uplands & Natural Environments



Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme
2014-2020



EUROPEAN UNION

Investing in your future
European Regional Development Fund

The ASCENT (Apply Skills and Conserve our Environment) journey began with the successful launch of the project on October 20th 2016 by An Cathaoirleach of Donegal County Council, Cllr Terence Slowey. The launch took place in Dunlewey, in the shadow of Errigal Mountain which is one of seven ASCENT sites that are facing challenges associated with increased visitor numbers and unregulated access.

Funded by the Northern Periphery & Arctic Programme (2014-2020), Donegal County Council is leading out in a partnership with the Soil Conservation Service of Iceland, Metsähallitus Park and Wildlife in Finland, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council and the Mourne Heritage Trust in Northern Ireland and Hordaland County Council in Norway and associated partners including Údarás na Gaeltachta, Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust, Mossfellsbaer Municipality and Skafárhreppur, in delivering the project objectives and outputs.

In September 2017 project partners attended the third steering committee meeting which was hosted by our Finnish partner Metsähallitus Park and Wildlife in Hossa, Finland. This coincided with a thematic seminar where the partners learned about The Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) System - a framework for establishing appropriate resources and social conditions in recreational settings, in response to the

needs of managers for a means of coping with increasing demands on recreational areas in a visible, logical fashion.

Work is progressing on a multifaceted front across the project during the second reporting period, with key focus being applied to the teacher/learner principle in living laboratory study visits and through partners undertaking international learning and knowledge exchange and transfer across the partner regions.

During this period, Donegal County Council have continued to demonstrate ongoing stakeholder engagement through

coordinated events which highlight common challenges and solutions at other sites in Ireland while successfully installing visitor monitoring equipment at Errigal to capture and monitor visitor numbers and develop an events register to monitor the impact of unregulated access.

Connect on Facebook at: **AscentProjectNPA**

For further information please contact Charles Sweeney

Donegal County Council Tel.: 074 9153900, charles.sweeney@donegalcoco.ie



ASCENT Steering Committee at Hossa, Finland in September 2017 with Rosita Mahoney, Margaret Fitzgerald and Paddy Doherty from Donegal County Council

LADDER PROJECT

LADDER stands for Local Authorities as Drivers for Development Education and Raising awareness. It is a 3-year project co-funded by the EU under the DEAR programme with the aim of increasing the role of local authorities in the development of education and awareness of global issues within the EU. The LADDER project is now in its final year and a number of activities have been implemented or are in the planning stage.

Part of the LADDER project involves a job-shadowing programme with the aim of promoting cooperation and exchanges of learning amongst the 27 co-applicants from the various partner countries. A Donegal County Council staff member was hosted by the Croatian County Association in Zagreb in early December which proved to be a valuable and enjoyable experience and Donegal County Council welcomed Ms. Hatice Erkan, a representative from the Marmara Municipalities Union in Turkey, to Donegal in early May 2017 to job-shadow with us.

The LADDER re-granting scheme which aims to fund local grassroots projects that raise

awareness and promote engagement with global development issues is also underway. Two projects from Donegal were successful in the first round. These were the WEAR project, run by Donegal Women's Network and Féile Dóchas, run by the Amazing Grace Festival in Buncrana. Evaluation of the applications from the second round is currently being coordinated by the lead partner and we hope to have the results soon.

Donegal County Council organised a two day workshop in Dublin on the 4th and 5th May 2017. Aiming to increase cooperation



between Local Authorities and community educators in order for them to act as drivers for development.

Information on the project can be found on the LADDER website: www.ladder-project.eu



REVISITING INTERREG I/B ATLANTIC AREA PROGRAMME 2ND CALL

As part of the European Union's Cohesion Policy, INTERREG Atlantic Area supports transnational cooperation projects in 36 Atlantic regions of five countries: France, Ireland, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom, contributing to the achievement of economic, social and territorial cohesion. The Programme overall objective is to implement solutions to regional challenges in the fields of innovation, resource efficiency, environment and cultural assets, supporting regional development and sustainable growth. With a total budget of EUR 185 million, which comprises a fund allocation above EUR 140 million from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the Programme focuses on four main priorities axes and specific objectives related:

- Priority 1: Stimulating innovation and competitiveness
- Priority 2: Fostering resource efficiency
- Priority 3: Strengthening the territory's resilience to risks of natural, climate and human origin
- Priority 4: Enhancing biodiversity and the natural and cultural assets

Donegal County Council demonstrates a successful track record through the Atlantic Area programme and in this regard a number of projects are currently under further review with the intention to submit a Stage 1 application when the second call is announced

in the 1st semester of 2018. Two projects at an advanced stage are Trail Gazers and Tides of Time, both of these projects were unsuccessful in the 1st call and were confirmed as such in June 2017. Further to discussion with the National Contact Point from the North Western Regional Assembly in September 2017 it was agreed to revisit the applications with a view to resubmit in the 2nd call.

TRAILGAZERS PROJECT

Led by Donegal County Council through the Research and Policy Unit, the Trail Gazers partnership sets out to develop and test a transnational framework to enable the future management and promotion of trails across the Atlantic Area. The framework will use digital technologies and indicators to develop trails in an environmentally friendly, sustainable, cost effective and highly innovative manner. The project will analyse existing levels of activity on chosen trails by establishing a common set of economic, social and environmental indicators; by utilising innovative technologies and systems (sensors, GIS, augmented reality) to capture information on trails activity and by displaying these metrics via a 'Trails Dashboard', exploring how new technologies such as Go Pro cameras, drones and Talking Heads can be used to showcase trails to Atlantic tourist visitors via virtual experiences.

For Further information please contact:
Loretta McNicholas Donegal County Council,
Tel.: 074 9153900
email lmcnicho@donegalcoco.ie

TIDES OF TIME PROJECT (TIDES)

The TIDES project will develop new types of transnational tourism packages based on connecting and jointly marketing maritime sites, museums and historical archives in Atlantic regions related to the same historical period or event, e.g. Napoleonic Wars, World Wars or Atlantic migrations. The project will facilitate communities to create new local jobs, attract tourists, create synergies with existing tourism providers, and improve economic and social well-being in project regions. The lead partner is ERNACT working in partnership with Donegal County Council and our EU partners.

The EU Unit will continue to work with both project officers informing the project detail for the 2nd call for funding applications through the Atlantic Area likely to be announced in the second quarter of 2018.

For further information please contact:
Barney Mc Laughlin Tel.: 0749153900
email barney.mclaughlin@donegalcoco.ie



HIKING EUROPE HOLDS FINAL CONFERENCE IN THE PEARL OF THE ADRIATIC



Discovering Rural Europe

The Hiking Europe Project has championed the development of a transnational network of rural touristic hiking routes located across Donegal (Ireland), Catalonia (Spain), Emilia-Romagna (Italy) and Dubrovnik-Neretva (Croatia). Within Donegal the project provided small and medium sized local businesses (accommodation, restaurants, shops, transport providers, experience companies etc.) located on or within close proximity of the Bealach na Gaeltachta routes with the opportunity to market their services and products to visiting hikers.

The Hiking Europe Closing Conference took place in Ston (Dubrovnik-Neretva) in September 2017 and was attended by all the Project Partners and a number of Destination Management Company representatives. Donegal was delighted to be joined by three local Donegal Walking Tour Companies who shared their experiences and visions for the

future. Roadbooks promoting walks within the north and south of the county were launched at the conference and distributed to a wide audience.

Although the Hiking Europe Project has come to an end, the partnership between the European Partners is strong with future project proposals based around SME's capacity building, branding, marketing and commercialisation of the European Hiking products with Destination Management Companies being considered.

The Hiking Europe Project was an 18 month project supported by the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises programme (COSME) of the European Commission.

Further information on the Project can be obtained at www.hikingeurope.net or by contacting Caroline Britton, Project Officer on cbritton@donegalcoco.ie



Co-funded by the COSME programme of the European Union



CINE: SEE THE PAST - IMAGINE THE FUTURE

Connected Culture and Natural Heritage in the Northern Environment-CINE, is a collaborative digital heritage project between 9 partners and 10 associated partners from Ireland, Norway, Iceland and Scotland. The project is funded by the Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme (ERDF) under Priority Axis 4: Natural and Cultural Heritage, Objective 4: Increased capacity of remote and sparsely populated communities and sustainable environmental management. Judith McCarthy Museum Curator in County Museum within the Directorate of Housing,

Corporate & Cultural Services is working with the Lead Partner Museum Nord in Norway exploring the potential of the project. CINE started in April 2017 running towards completion in March 2020 with a partner allocation of just over €168,000.00 and overall project total of €2million.

Connected Culture and Natural Heritage in a Northern Environment (CINE) aims to transform people's experiences of outdoor heritage sites through technology, building on the idea of "museums without walls". New digital interfaces such as augmented reality, virtual world technology, and easy to use apps will bring the past alive, and allow us to visualise the effects of the changing environment on heritage sites, helping us

imagine possible futures. CINE will develop content management toolkits - enabling curators, archivists, historians, individuals and communities to make innovative heritage projects to create unique on-site and off-site customer experiences in specific locations.

More broadly CINE will explore the social, economic and political role of heritage within our remote communities and develop best practice to shape relevant environmental policies.

Contact: Museum Curator at County Museum Letterkenny Judith McCarthy at jmccarthy@donegalcoco.ie or Tel: 074 9153900.



MalinWaters^o

The MalinWaters brand continues to develop and is recognised as an important marine tourism brand in the partner regions of Northern Ireland, North West Ireland and Scotland. Annually traffic to the website www.malinwaters.com continues to increase. EU funding for this project ended in 2015 but as testament to the success of the partnership dynamics and the marketing activity, MalinWaters partners agreed to continue to fund the project themselves for 2017.

The MalinWaters partnership forms important links between Donegal, Sligo and Northern Ireland in addition to continuing to maintain vital connections with Scotland. The

partnership consortium is well placed to look at future project applications for EU funding to continue to build on the success of this project.

An extensive Marketing Plan was implemented in 2017 including elements such as e-mail marketing, social media campaigns, 3rd party collaborations with for example Sail Scotland, promotional events and much more. This year partners have also decided to explore the cruise tourism market potential further by developing a joint collaborative campaign to promote the MalinWaters regions as ideal destinations for cruise ships. All MalinWaters partner regions have been featured in the Welcome Anchorages 2017 publication, which also features a special editorial piece

about the new small craft harbour in Killybegs on the Wild Atlantic Way.

The MalinWaters project also provides marketing and financial support for a range of festivals and events in all the regions. For 2017 a total of 14 festivals and events were successful in receiving funding from the MalinWaters project. These festivals and events will also be listed on MalinWaters.com and will be promoted via social media and e-mail marketing campaigns.

For further information please contact: Joy Harron at joyharron@donegalcoco.ie or Tel 074 9153900.

COOL ROUTE ENGAGE WITH COASTAL ENTERPRISES



Up to 30 new marinas and pontoons have been developed on the Cool Route in the last two years and the project is now turning its focus to coastal enterprises. The main objective of the project is to bring new marine tourism opportunities to a wide range of coastal enterprises. These can be directly in the marine sector such as marinas or boatyards or in the general business and tourism sectors, ranging from restaurants and pubs to activity operators such as walking tours, local museums or craft centres.

Currently, areas of the Cool Route only attract about 2% of potential business. Growing this business is important, especially for local enterprises. Too often there is little interaction between the pontoon operator and local enterprises, who potentially are the main

beneficiaries of the port facility. How often do we see a local pontoon crammed with local small craft with no room left for larger visitors?

Cool Route hosted a stakeholders meeting for coastal enterprises on the 26th April 2017, at the Carrigaline Court Hotel in Co. Cork. The meeting addressed the potential for coastal enterprises to become more proactive in maximising the benefits of pontoons, marinas or visitor moorings to the local economy. These facilities can not alone accommodate visiting yachts, but can also attract small liners and superyacht visits, provided they can get safe access for tenders.

The clear message from Cool Route research is that we have terrific local products to offer, but enterprises need to proactively market their local ports as places worth visiting.

Donegal County Council continues to deliver a successful social media campaign with the growing influence and reach of the Cool Route Facebook and Twitter pages. PR campaigns, e-mail newsletters, press releases and blog articles also continue to be produced and are raising awareness of the Cool Route project across a wide audience. A range of new promotional materials has also been produced.

The project merges all aspects of the practical logistics and business potential to establish a bi-directional yacht cruising route along the offshore areas of the Northern Periphery Area, stretching from the South of Ireland, to the UK (Northern Ireland and Western Scotland) and onwards to Norway.

Donegal County Council is a key partner in the Cool Route project with responsibility for project communications including the development of the project website www.sailcoolroute.eu. There has been an extraordinary level of engagement and buy-in by key sectoral actors and project awareness is growing in all regions. The Cool Route project received INTEREG VB funding under the Northern Periphery & Arctic programme 2014-2020 by lead partner Cork Institute of Technology.

For further information please contact Joy Harron on 074 9153900



Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme
2014-2020



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SECURE: TAKING STOCK AT HALFWAY POINT



As it reaches its half way point, the EU funded SECURE project has taken stock of achievements to date with a view to agreeing the way forward in achieving its overall objective of transferring and implementing innovative energy solutions for housing and public infrastructure across seven Northern Periphery and Arctic regions.

Donegal is one of eight project partners involved in the SECURE project, including ERNACT as Lead Partner, Ecology Action Centre Canada, Leitrim County Council, Derry City and Strabane District Council, Umhvorisstovan Environment Agency in the Faroe Islands, Association of Local Authorities in Vasternorrland in Sweden and Karelia University of Applied sciences in Finland. SECURE which is funded by the Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme 2014-2020

was launched in May 2016 and will run until April 2019.

Low carbon services directory project partners have already developed a transnational low carbon services directory. This element of the project was led by Karelia University of Applied Sciences in Finland enabling regions to implement innovative services that have been previously tried and tested in partner locations providing a platform for information exchange. Developing Energy Action Plans SECURE partners are sharing experiences in implementing low carbon actions for housing and public infrastructure. The Association of Local Authorities in Vasternorrland in Sweden is leading the action and measuring the direct impacts and potential cost savings for each energy action, Project partners are also sharing this information with local communities and policy makers.

Through SECURE five of the partner regions will develop Energy Action Plans EAP for housing and public infrastructure. These EAP's will see actions implemented in a structured integrated way allowing the systematic monitoring of efforts in achieving policy targets. Furthermore

EAP's will become an instrument for local authorities to communicate to stakeholders and to encourage local citizen participation.

The projects third thematic seminar 'Low Carbon Policy Benefits' in County Leitrim examined current and future energy policy challenges and solutions. Policy experts at a European and International level participated in this seminar to disseminate transnational good practices and to increase awareness of technologies and solutions for energy efficiency. Topics covered include energy policy, public sector energy efficiency, renewable energy solutions, community energy initiatives and implications for local economies. Leitrim County Council also hosted the fifth meeting of the project in November 2017 and those attending had the opportunity to experience and visit examples of efficient local energy practices in County Leitrim.

SECURE is managed through the Directorate of Corporate Housing & Cultural Services for further detail please contact Paddy Mullen Facilities Manager at Tel 0749153900 or paddy.mullen@donegalcoco.ie



European Union
European Regional Development Fund
Investing in your future



Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme
2014-2020

WATERPRO



WATERPRO

The Waterpro Project is supported by the Interreg VB Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme and will develop sustainable systems to protect water quality from diffuse agricultural and mining pollution.

Donegal County Council is partnering with Savonia University of Applied Sciences Ltd, Finland, (Lead Partner), Geological Survey of Finland, Agricultural University of Iceland, Lulea University of Technology, Sweden, Agricultural Agency, Faroe Islands, Lough Neagh Partnership, Magherafelt, Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute, Belfast and Heriot Watt University, Edinburgh.

The Waterpro Project is developing eco-efficient tools and models for managing Agricultural runoff including potential pollution from leachate and mine waters, thus establishing strategies to mitigate water quality deterioration. The main objective of the project is the removal of nutrients from wastewater, runoff from agriculture and extraction industries. Through the weekly sampling of different pilot sites data has been monitored and accumulated across all European sites involving Waterpro project. The next tier of the project involves a work package which will deliver good management practices and communication platforms.

Donegal County Council attended a recent partner meeting in Iceland at the start of November 2017, and will attend a further partners meeting in Faroe Islands in May 2018.

For Further Information contact:
 Joanne Holmes, Donegal County Council, jholmes@donegalcoco.ie Tel: 0749153900
 Fionnuala Bonner, Donegal County Council, fionnualabonner@donegalcoco.ie
 Tel: 0879819989



LAUNCH OF CLEAN PROJECT

The CLEAN project – Technologies and Open Innovation for Low-Carbon Regions – was officially launched in Naples in Italy in March 2017, along side EnergyMed 2017, when nine regions formally came together to address a common challenge – How can we meet the EU energy efficiency building targets in our regions?

The CLEAN project is a five year project supported by European Union Interreg Europe co-operation programme, a programme which helps regional and local governments to develop better public policies by creating an environment for sharing solutions between regions. With a total partner budget of €1.6million, the project will study the relationship between low carbon solutions, energy efficiency, information communications, ‘carbon tech’ and mobile technologies and how these elements can be employed to positively change citizen energy behaviours, sharing best practices for smarter and more energy efficient regions, to improve low carbon policies in the participating regions and increase energy efficiency in the built environment.

At the launch project partners met, many for the first time, to discuss project management and communication, roles and responsibilities and contributions required. ERNACT as Lead Partner are working with partners from Spain, Sweden, Romania, France, Italy, Greece, Finland and Slovenia.



LANCASTER UNIVERSITY MEET WITH DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

Lancaster University through Dr Eddie McKeever, Management and Business Development Fellow in the Department of Entrepreneurship, Strategy and Innovation ESI in the Lancaster University Management School contacted Donegal County Council to discuss partnering on project work in the County, with a focus on entrepreneurial and social learning. Lancaster University’s history of business engagement has given rise to a suite of programs with a simple underlying philosophy of bringing together businesses, entrepreneurs and managers in a supportive but challenging environment.

Dr McKeever, originally from Inishowen, argues “when entrepreneurship in the broadest sense is embedded in societies and communities we get both economic and social outcomes. When businesses, communities and public servants come together in a spirit of local betterment and development – the sum is much greater than the parts”.

In this regard representatives from the EU Unit, the Local Enterprise Office, Tourism, Community and Enterprise and LYIT met with Dr Edward McKeever to explore and further discuss the opportunities for collaboration and project development with a view to establish and formalise links between the university and County Donegal.

For further information please contact Claire McCallan in the EU Unit Donegal County Council on 0749153900 or cmccallan@donegalcoco.ie

DONEGAL DIGITAL

Donegal Digital is a public-private partnership composed by 8 organizations, companies and institutions with the vision to “Digitally literate communities co-building sustainable enterprises and societal services” which started in March 2014 and will run to April 2019. Donegal Digital has three objectives: increase digital research and innovation in County Donegal, build strong Donegal digital communities and deepen the Letterkenny digital cluster.

In doing so Donegal County Council with ERNACT and project partners continue with a programme of workshops through the Donegal Digital Action Plan to support small businesses to enhance their online trading

presence. A series of workshops are available to book throughout 2018 dealing with a range of relevant topics, at Donegal Local Enterprise Office (LEO). These workshops will allow participants to assess where they currently are with their online trading. They may be already trading online in a small way or have yet to build online trade into their revenue model. The programme will take participants on a full journey equipping them to build the skills, awareness of available supports, the language and confidence to build a practical and effective online trading strategy for their business.



BRYDEN

CENTRE FOR ADVANCED MARINE AND BIO-ENERGY RESEARCH

Donegal County Council through the EU Unit and working locally with our colleagues in LYIT, engaged with partners across Northern Ireland and Scotland to examine the opportunities and challenges faced by local industry, exploring how working with academia through research can inform the solutions faced by industry challenge, for example in wave and tidal energy. This engagement which started in early 2012 culminated in the Bryden Centre, formerly CAMBER. Funded by the EU's INTERREG VA Programme, managed by the SEUPB, the Bryden Centre for Advanced Marine and Bio-Energy Research will recruit 34 PhD students across the marine and bio-energy disciplines. Match-funding for the project has been provided by the Department for the Economy in Northern Ireland and the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation in Ireland. This research includes the use of tidal power at Strangford Lough and the North Antrim Coast, ocean energy sites in Western Scotland, as well as the potential for wave and tidal power generation in Donegal.

Donegal County Council will provide the conduit between local industry and academia supporting and reinforcing essential links between commerce and research to inform the future sustainable development of the County. There is no direct budget allocation retained by the local authority, though Donegal County Council recognise the value of academic reference informing an ever evolving commercial climate particularly in the coastal county of Donegal.

A €9.7 million cross-border research centre for renewable energy projects opened at Queen's University Belfast in January 2018. Speaking at the launch of the Bryden project in Belfast, Irish Government Chief Whip and Minister of State, Joe Mc Hugh TD, said: "The Irish Government is delighted to be co-funding this exciting project which will help advance valuable research into various renewable energy technologies. I am particularly pleased that this project brings together expertise from colleges and other partners in Northern Ireland, Ireland and Western Scotland.

"The results of such broad ranging co-operation and utilisation of high-level skills will bring shared benefits to all three administrations, as it drives the pursuit of renewable energy research to a new level. We all share the ambition that practical benefits for sustainable future energy development will flow from this project".

Through the Bryden Centre, Nuala Carr Queen's University PhD student from Donegal and based at LYIT is focusing on ensuring that marine renewable energy is accepted socially in communities right across Ireland. "There are many challenges facing the marine renewable energy industry. Through the Bryden Centre I have been given the fantastic opportunity to work with both industry and government to enhance acceptability and boost renewable energy across Northern Ireland and Ireland. Ms Carr commented and went on to say:

"I will also have the chance to make a positive impact by assisting in the implementation of marine spatial planning - a process that brings together users of the ocean to make informed and coordinated decisions about how to use marine resources sustainably."

For further information please contact the EU Unit on Tel. 0749153900.



Claire McCallan EU Unit in DCC with Paul Hannigan and John Doran LYIT and partners of the Bryden at the Project Launch in Belfast.



Institiúid Teicneolaíochta Leitir Ceanáin
Letterkenny Institute of Technology



NICHE PARTNERS VISIT DONEGAL

On the 28th November 2017, partners and stakeholders on the NICHE project met in Donegal, to review the draft action plans for the project and to learn more about the good practices from Donegal and Derry. At the peer review meeting, partners and stakeholders got to hear about two good practices, the Donegal Food Coast and the Foodovation Centre at North West Regional College. Eve-Anne McCarron from the Local Enterprise Office Donegal presented the objectives and activities of the Donegal Food Coast initiative and Brian McDermott from North West Regional College presented the model and activities of the Foodovation Centre. A number of project partners are planning to adopt these two good practices into their action plans and implement in their region.

As part of the visit to Donegal and Derry, partners and stakeholders had the opportunity to visit a number of innovative companies in the region. The first company visit was to the new state of the art brewery entitled 'K2' in Letterkenny. On day two of the peer review visit, partners visited the Nomadic Dairy in Killygordon which produces a range of innovative yoghurt products. They also visited

Inishowen Mushrooms in Muff who are one the largest agricultural businesses in Donegal. In the afternoon, the visiting partners and stakeholders visited the Foodovation Centre and learnt about a range of innovative food products that have recently been developed at the centre.

Earlier in the year stakeholders from Donegal participated in staff exchanges in Romania, Finland and Poland.

In May, businesses from the food sector in Donegal attended the staff exchange in West Romania to visit an Artisan bakery, raw sprouted food manufacturer, and a food brokerage event. In June members of the food steering committee travelled to Finland to learn how companies there are innovating.

The visit to Finland included a visit to a brewery, a food development company, a gluten free bakery and the Food Business Summit. In September two Donegal food producers and an advisor from Teagasc attended the staff exchange in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie region of Poland to talk to food producers about policies to increase production and demand for organic produce.

Last year Donegal County Council was responsible for documenting good practices from each of the participating regions. The staff exchanges are an opportunity for the stakeholders in each region to experience the good practices first hand.

For more information on the NICHE project contact: patrick.devine@leo.donegalcoco.ie or by visiting www.interregeurope.eu/niche.



Michael Tunney, Patrick Devine, Loretta McNicholas, Catherine McLaughin from Donegal County Council and the Local Enterprise Office introduce Niche project partners and stakeholders to Libby Carton of Kinnegar Brewing at the Kinnegar Brewery in Letterkenny.



HERICOAST “COASTAL EXPERIENCE IN DONEGAL”

The International Steering Group Meeting and Workshops for the HERICOAST project took place in the Castille y León Region of Spain in May 2017, and again in October 2017 in Italy where partners came together to review examples of best practice in relation to coastal management. Discussion referred to the GIS mapping and spatial data interrogation used by Donegal, this and Fanad Lighthouse have been selected as two of four international examples to be included in a best practice report to inform policy making in the European Partner Countries.

The Donegal project team also presented to a workshop as part of a Marinescape forum in Poole, England in May, hosted by Dirk Gotzman Director of Civilscape, an advisory partner of the HERICOAST project, as part of an exchange of experience event. This was attended by **Dr Brian Smith**, Secretary General of HERITAGE EUROPE and co-author of the EU HORIZON 2020 project, and **Michael Dower**, Professor of European Rural Development and co-author of the European Landscape Convention; both presented on Built, Cultural, Ecological and Heritage Planning in the context of the wider landscape. **Professor Michael Dower** was employed by the Ministry of Local Government in Ireland and part of the team of *An Foras Forbartha*, the National Institute of Physical Planning and Construction Research and was responsible for writing the **Donegal County Development Plan in 1965-7**, the first development plan in Ireland, and which was subsequently used as a model of best practice throughout Ireland.

Work is ongoing on the compilation and interrogation of spatial data to inform the project and a process for crowd sourcing of data was launched on the 25th January 2018 to widen the net for information gathering facilitating public input into the project. Joe Mahon of Lesser Spotted Ulster launched the Hericoast app and engaged with children from local schools along with members and officials from Donegal County Council exploring the shared experiences along the coast of Donegal.

International partners will visit Donegal in April 2018 over two days, engaging in workshop, and meeting with stakeholders to further inform the project outputs.

For further information please contact the Project Officer Aideen Quinn at Hericoast@donegalcoco.ie



Joe Mahon, of Lesser Spotted Journeys with Alana Greene Project Lead Leas-Chathaoirleach Cllr Noel Jordan and Director of Service Liam Ward at the launch of the Hericoast App in Donegal.



Loreto Convent Transition Year Students at the Launch of the Hericoast App



PEACE IV ACTION PLAN FOR COUNTY DONEGAL

Donegal PEACE IV Partnership is a sub-committee of the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) and has responsibility for leading the development and implementation of a two stage Peace IV Action Plan for County Donegal. This Plan will address a targeted and locally based response to the needs that have been identified in the PEACE IV Cooperation Programme 2014 – 2020. The Donegal PEACE IV Action Plan was allocated an indicative budget of €5.5 million to deliver a range of actions under the following 3 objectives:

- Children and Young People
- Shared Spaces & Services
- Building Positive Relations

The Donegal PEACE IV Action Plan (Stage One Submission) was approved by the SEUPB Steering Committee on 12th September 2016 and subsequently Donegal County Council was invited to submit the Stage 2 application. The Donegal Peace IV Action Plan (Stage 2 Submission) was submitted to the SEUPB on 23rd September 2016.

A letter of offer in the amount of €4,047,626 was received on 11th July 2017 and has been signed and returned to SEUPB.

The PEACE IV secretariat is currently working on a number of conditions attached to the Letter of Offer which have to be submitted

to the SEUPB prior to commencement of the projects. It is envisaged that procurement process for some of the projects will commence in Q1 2018.

A re-bid application has also been submitted to SEUPB for the unapproved balance of €1.5m. It is understood that a decision on this re-bid application will be communicated and finalised by early 2018.

For further information please contact: Caroline McCleary, Tel: 074 91 53 900 E-mail: cmcleary@donegalcoco.ie



Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall
Donegal County Council



RIVERINE - AWAITING DECISION

RE: PEACE IV FUNDING APPLICATION UNDER OBJECTIVE 3 SHARED SPACES AND SERVICES.

Engagement with local communities in the Lifford and Strabane areas to inform the regeneration of the local area has continued from 2009, with a number of initiatives consolidating community engagement on a cross border basis. In this regard and during the second quarter of 2016 Donegal County Council and Derry City and Strabane District Council formally engaged in partnership to revisit the opportunities and challenges presented through a number of previous projects in the Lifford and Strabane areas, with a view to making a further application to the SEUPB Peace IV funding programme.

Working with a team of consultants, and assisted by the former Riverine Forum a Stage 1 funding application was lodged to the Special EU Programmes Body under the Peace IV Programme by Donegal County Council as Lead Partner and supported by DCSDC under Objective 3 Shared Spaces and Services in late January 2017. The Stage 1 application outlined the proposal to develop a 35 acre park across two sites one in Lifford and one in Strabane connected with a pedestrian bridge across the River Foyle and supported by a programme of activities managed by a community engagement project officer. Notification was received by Donegal County Council in late March confirming of Stage I approval to progress to Stage II, subject a number of necessary revisions.

These notified revisions were duly considered, with the revised proposal to provide for a 28 acre Parkland shared across two sites in Lifford and Strabane linked by a pedestrian bridge across the River Foyle supported by Park building facilities and shared space provision, the detail of which to be informed by engagement with the community and design team. This Stage II Business Plan Application was submitted to the SEUPB in May 2017, thereafter a summary of points of clarification were requested, all of which have been addressed up the end of July 2017. Most recently, in October 2017 the SEUPB appointed a team of external consultants to provide an external review of all the Stage II applications to the Peace IV programme under Objective 3, and to inform the decision making process in awarding 8 of the 13 applications funding to progress project proposals. In this regard, a team of financial consultants met with representatives from both Donegal County Council and Derry City and Strabane District Council at a meeting in Lifford to discuss the detail of the Riverine proposal.

The SEUPB anticipate a decision forthcoming in the latter half of the first quarter of 2018, for further information please contact the EU Unit on Tel: 0749153900 or cmccallan@donegalcoco.ie



LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE LOCAL ENTERPRISE WEEK

The Donegal Local Enterprise Office (LEO) hosted a series of seminars during Local Enterprise Week in March 2017 which were well received across the region. Representatives from the EU Unit attended a number of seminars specifically 'Doing Business on a Cross Border Basis' and 'European Opportunities for Export', providing an informed forum for discussion and information exchange with local business and state agencies. Local businesses spoke of the value of collaboration and working together on a cross border base providing services for the people of the area rather than observing a boundary condition, in this regard the complexities and differences in, for example licensing and land law across two jurisdictions were referred. Deirdre McPartlin of Enterprise Ireland presented at the seminar 'European Opportunities for Export' and referred to the diversity of service from tech to craft across the region and the unique value this brings to the North West Region when exploring opportunities for export.

The EU Unit and Local Enterprise Office continue to work together in exploring the challenges and opportunities across the region and to inform targeted funding possibilities, reinforcing the value of cross directorate and cross sectoral engagement and collaboration for the sustainable economic development of the North West.



DONEGAL TOURISM

The EU Unit attended a half day seminar on 'Donegal Tourism', an event organised by Donegal County Council and Donegal Tourism with the objective being to provide those who are operating in the tourism sector in Donegal with the necessary skills to enhance the competitiveness of tourist management.

The event provided an excellent platform for tourism providers to engage with industry experts and learn how to grow their businesses and for those in the tourism sector to come together, to network with their peers, to look at the tourism sector as a whole and develop the tourism product that Donegal as a County has to offer both nationally and internationally.

The welcome address was given by Mr Seamus Neely the Chairman of Donegal Tourism. The event speakers were of a high calibre and delivered an excellent event which was extremely well attended and supported. The speakers included Cathaoirleach of Donegal County Council, and CEO of Donegal County Council and Chairman of Donegal Tourism, Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland, and Pol O Conghaile Travel writer for the Irish times provided an fresh look at what Donegal has to offer. Later in October 2017 a further seminar welcomed Matthew Jackson Publisher and Managing Director of National Geographic Traveller along with Michael



www.govisitdonegal.com

Collins, Founder and Managing Director of TravelMedia.ie were some of the speakers at the event.

The EU Unit continue to work with Donegal Tourism in exploring funding opportunities to inform the sustainable management of the County.

For more information please contact: Donegal Tourism at sarah@countydonesaltourism.com

DONEGAL CONNECTIONS CEANGAIL DHÚN NA NGALL

The latest edition of the "Donegal Connections" ezine was published in December 2017 and continues to go from strength to strength, evidenced in the engagement with our worldwide diaspora. The Donegal Diapsora Team welcome feedback from our diaspora all over the world and welcome all opportunities to engage and to promote "your" stories! The latest edition of Donegal Connections features a welcome message from An Cathaoirleach Cllr Gerry McMonagle. Nominations for the prestigious Tip O'Neill Irish Diaspora Award are now being sought and details of the process can be found in the e-zine or on our website: donegaldiaspora.ie.



For further information look to facebook at www.facebook.com/DonegalDiaspora and on Twitter @donegaldiaspora or contact Joanne Kilmartin at jkilmart@donegalcoco.ie or Tel Donegal County Council on 074 9153900

DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL ADDRESS BREXIT CONFERENCE IN CARDIFF

Donegal County Council, through the EU Unit were invited to make a presentation at the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) Brexit conference, "European Co-operation Beyond Brexit" hosted by the Welsh Government in Cardiff in November 2017. This international conference brought together key regional political representatives to discuss concerns about the potential impacts of Brexit on regions, and to underline the importance of regional cooperation post-Brexit.

Seamus Canning from the EU Unit accompanied Cllr John Sheamais Ó Fearraigh, the nominated representative from Donegal County Council to the CPMR, to Cardiff, where Cllr O'Fearraigh presented at the event. In his presentation to the conference, Cllr O'Fearraigh highlighted the interconnectedness of the people of Donegal and the counties of Derry and Tyrone. He outlined the value in how two local authorities in the North West Region, Donegal County Council and Derry City and Strabane District Council continue to work closely to mitigate the potential negative effects of Brexit, promoting and developing the area as the North-west City Region.

The Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions brings together some 160 Regions from 25 States from the European Union and beyond. Through its extensive network of contacts within the EU institutions and national

governments the CPMR, since its creation in 1973, focuses mainly on social, economic and territorial cohesion, maritime policies and blue growth, and accessibility. European governance, energy and climate change, neighbourhood and development also represent important areas of activity for the association.

Donegal County Council with the Northern Western Regional Assembly are the only Irish members of the CPMR in the geographical commission of the Atlantic Arc.

For further information please contact the EU Unit on 074 9153900.



Cllr O'Fearraigh along with international political representatives at the CPMR Brexit Conference in November 2017

AGE FRIENDLY ALLIANCE

Further to a request from the Chair of the Age Friendly Alliance, and the Programme Coordinator Charles Sweeney presentation was made in May 2017 by the EU and Strategic Policy Unit outlining our role within the Council and across the North West working on a cross sectoral cross directorate base.

23% of Ireland's population are over 65 years old, in this regard healthy ageing is not only a global, but also a national and regional challenge. Responding to this challenge provides an opportunity to develop new ideas and solutions; systems; and processes built around people which can improve health and care outcomes, and create sustainable economic growth.

Referencing the Donegal Age Friendly Strategy/Straitéis Aoisbhá Dhún na nGall and working with our European colleagues through CORAL Community Of Regions for Assisted Living, the EU Unit are looking to the various Directorate General (DG) of the European Commission (EC) who are pursuing silver economy policy initiatives, e.g. on eHealth, active and healthy ageing, senior tourism and age-friendly housing, and the EU Unit were available to provide information on the Silver Economy and the role the EU can play in supporting healthy aging. The Silver Economy is closely linked to current trends in Europe's demographics, and the effects on older adults' quality of life and on the wider European economy and is the part of the economy that concerns Europe's older citizens. It includes all the economic activities relevant to the needs of older adults, and the impact on many sectors, for example,

health and nutrition, leisure and wellbeing, finance and transport, housing, education and employment all of which will go some way in informing the priorities of future funding.



SEUPB ELIGIBILITY OF EXPENDITURE TRAINING

Representatives from the EU Unit attended a workshop in Templepatrick in December 2017 with a focus on Eligibility of Expenditure for projects to the PEACE IV programme.

The Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) with responsibility for the PEACE IV and INTERREG VA programmes in Ireland, through the Financial Control Unit of the SEUPB organises regular training workshops for new projects to the PEACE IV Programme, and these are focused on eligibility of expenditure, procurement rules and the claims process. These workshops are delivered by Alistair MacKenzie, SEUPB Financial Controller.

The most recent workshop held in Templepatrick included presentations from the Financial Control Unit (FCU) within SEUPB, practical exercises and a question and answer session. The SEUPB explained the FCU will check to ensure that projects are achieving their objectives and are maximising eligible expenditure, referencing specifics of reporting periods, claims process where for example; expenditure not claimed in the first reporting period can be included in the next period. However if not claimed by the second reporting period said expenditure will not be funded. The SEUPB urged all partners to monitor very closely their responsibilities throughout the reporting cycle.

and is used by multiple Interreg Programmes across Europe and is now a requirement for all EU projects.

All reporting and payment claims are made through the eMS system. Payments are calculated at partner level and are made to the Lead Partner. The Lead Partner then will reimburse each of the project partners. A nominated user from each partner will sign off on the submission of reports through the eMS system.

There was a strong emphasis on the key responsibilities for Lead Partners in the delivery of outputs, on ensuring eligibility of expenditure and partner reporting, and on ensuring compliance with audit requirements. Key documentation in this regard is the Letter of Offer from the SEUPB, the Standard Conditions of Grant, the Programme Rules, the Output Indicator Guidance and the eMS manual.

For information please contact Seamus Canning in the EU Unit on seamus.canning@donegalcoco.ie

Further information can also be found on the SEUPB website. www.seupb.eu



Special EU Programmes Body
Foras Um Chláir Speisialta An AE
Boord O Owre Ocht UE Projects

EMS - ELECTRONIC MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
The eMS (Electronic Management System) went live on SEUPB projects on 1st March 2017

ACTIVE AND HEALTHY AGING BIOPARK - NORTH WEST

Donegal County Council were invited to attend a workshop in the Co-Lab in LYIT in July 2017 to explore the possibility of establishing a Bio Park in the North West.

The workshop was well attended with representatives from Udaras, Inter-trade Ireland, the LEO, Randox, DCSDC, Invest NI, a number of healthcare technology companies, and provided a forum to test the proposal and scope out the opportunities provided in the location of a Bio-Park in the North West. Aidan Gough the Director of Strategy and Policy of Inter-trade Ireland made presentation examining the value of cross border engagement, referencing the value of 'sectoral ecosystem' or clustering and the economic value of collaboration, referencing the all island cancer trial network. The business model a North West Bio-Park could follow, with a further European link providing a transnational cluster or technology corridor, is that of the Swedish Denmark collaboration referred to as Medicon Valley – which is one of Europe's strongest life science clusters with a large number of life science companies within a relatively small geographical area.

In this regard representatives from Donegal County Council met with the project promoters to discuss the proposal further. Donegal County Council is involved in and supportive of this project, and work is ongoing and progressing, and with the promoters are examining funding streams to develop the project and establish a virtual centre of excellence in the North West in relation to active and healthy aging.

ENTERPRISE EUROPE NETWORK EEN

The Enterprise Europe Network, EEN, is supported by funding through the COSME Programme 2014-2020. The Local Enterprise Office in Donegal County Council, based in Letterkenny is the Lead Partner on behalf of the 31 LEO's across Ireland where Network Co-ordinator Eileen Kelly is based. The EEN helps businesses when expanding into another country, and shares a database of thousands of company profiles through which potential opportunities or partners can be identified, also providing advice in technology transfer, access to finance, advice on EU law and standards, intellectual

property rights and funding options. The EEN has completed its first two year programme of events and workshops around Ireland exploring for example the microbrewery sector and food sector in Ireland, organising brokerage events across the country, assisting local enterprise in developing and marketing business profiles with a view to extend into the international markets.

For further information please contact Eileen Kelly Enterprise Europe Network Co-ordinator on Tel: 074 9160735, eileen.kelly@leodonegalcoco.ie



CENTRE FOR CROSS BORDER STUDIES ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2017

The Centre for Cross Border Studies' 2017 Annual Conference took place at the Armagh City Hotel in late February 2017, facilitating informed discussions on the theme of 'Building and maintaining relationships: within, across and beyond these islands after the Referendum'.

A representative from the EU Unit attended the event and listened to speakers from across Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland, England including Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Charles Flanagan TD who addressed the conference on Thursday afternoon and Mr Michael Russell Minister for UK Negotiations on Scotland's Place in Europe on Friday morning. Speakers referred to a number of themes including the potential impact of Brexit on Northern Ireland and the Border Counties, the future challenges for education in shaping the future of relationships, the need to diminish inter-communal boundaries, cross border innovation, and the threat to social cohesion in border areas. Commendation was made by Minister Charlie Flanagan to the ongoing and sustained positive engagement at a local authority level between Donegal County Council and Derry City and Strabane District Councils and what can be achieved working together in partnership.

The CCBS Annual Conference 2018 will refer to 'The Good Friday Agreement in all its parts: safeguarding the totality of relationships' in Dundalk on 8th and 9th March 2018.

For further information on any of the above please contact the EU UNIT on: Tel: 0749153900

INTERREG I/B FUNDING SEMINAR NORTH WEST EUROPE PROGRAMME

The EU Unit attended the North West Europe Programme Northern Ireland/Ireland Information and Networking Seminar in March 2017 in Enniskillen organized by the Southern Regional Assembly and the Special EU Programmes Body. The conference provided an opportunity to learn more about the Interreg programme, how to apply, and most importantly, the opportunity for sharing project ideas and networking with other partners from Northern Ireland and Ireland. Donegal County Council engaged with representatives from the Programme Joint

Secretariat and the Irish and UK National Contact Points to discuss project ideas and scope out potential future partners, and engaged with colleagues from neighbouring councils in Mayo County Council, Omagh and Fermanagh District Councils and Derry City and Strabane District Councils.



NWRA EUROPEAN ENTREPRENEURIAL REGION 2018

Representatives from the EU Unit were invited to attend a European Entrepreneurial Region (EER) 2018 stakeholder meeting in the Northern and Western Regional Assembly (NWRA) headquarters in Ballaghaderreen in March 2017. Relevant agencies and organisations including representatives from GMIT, LYIT, Mayo County Council, the NWRA, Udaras, Westbic, Western Development Commission and ourselves, interested in shaping the vision for the EER 2018 award attended. The workshop provided a forum for discussion, exchange and information transfer scoping out the potential of the Region in informing the EER Bid. The European Entrepreneurial Region designation is awarded through a competitive process to identify EU regions that demonstrate innovative entrepreneurial strategies. Regions, cities or

any other local or regional institutions with a suitable entrepreneurial vision – irrespective of their size or wealth – are invited to apply. This EU label can be used by all Enterprise Development Agencies, Higher Educational Institutes and Local Authorities in the Northern and Western regions if the bid is successful. In this regard the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) selected the three most forward-thinking and promising visions submitted, where each selected region is designated as a "European Entrepreneurial Region 2018" (EER); a coveted, year-long title.

Further to our meeting, an application, built around the 10 principles of the EU Small Business Act was lodged in early April and formal notification was received by the NWRA of a successful outcome in September 2017.

The Northern and Western region is home to the *Best Micro City in Europe*, *Cooldest Place on the Planet* and *Best Place to Live in Ireland*. All of which helped secure the Title of EER 2018.

For further details please contact the EU Unit on 0749153900



Northern & Western Regional Assembly

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE NETWORK OF EUROPEAN REGIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE AND COMPETITIVE TOURISM NECTSOUR



Donegal County Council were invited to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Network of European Regions for Sustainable and Competitive Tourism NECTSOUR and the following Thematic Session in the Framework of the International Year for Sustainable Tourism Development, as an external observer to see directly what the network are doing and the commitment of the Regions for a Competitive and Sustainable Tourism. Consulting with Donegal Tourism the EU Unit attended the AGM and conference in Seville at the end of March and

listened to the keynote speaker the Secretary General of the World Tourism Organization Taleb Rifai outline how tourism can foster peace and peaceful relations through the sharing and experiencing of cultural diversity fostering respect and understanding of others. Donegal County Council met and engaged with members from Brittany, Spain, Scotland, England and Portugal reinforcing already established networks and international relations. The conference referred to tourism as the 3rd largest economic driver within the Union and the value of performance

indicators in informing future investment and sustainable development connecting Europe through innovation and digitization. The potential of island culture was referred, culture, people and communities and the local food offering are only a number of the topics presented. The value of linking marine tourism with spatial planning was examined, an initiative already considered as part of the Hericoast Interreg funded project managed through the Central Planning Unit and working with Donegal Tourism.

POLICY WORK

ATLANTIC ACTION PLAN

The annual Atlantic Stakeholder Platform Conference ASPC offers a great transnational publicity opportunity to deliver the Atlantic Action Plan AAP key messages and further promote awareness of its achievements. The annual conference is the central hub for stakeholders of the Atlantic Strategy to meet, seek ways of co-operation share information and identify funding opportunities and partnerships for their projects. Representatives of the EU Unit attended the one day event in Glasgow in this regard and met with fellow attendees and speakers.

The specific theme the ASPC 2017 is on topics related to **Priority 4 of the AAP to "Create a socially inclusive and sustainable model of regional**

development". More specifically, the conference focused on the theme of regeneration and issues and topics such as health benefits and environmental improvements to coastal communities, best-practices in social inclusion, workforce development for blue skills, recreation and tourism projects, preservation and protection of tourist attractions and the seasonality challenge in the tourism sector, to name just a few.

The conference was moderated by Niall McDonough of the Marine Institute and Ms. Ciara Delaney, Director, EU Policy; European Union Division, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Ireland was one of the speakers during the day.



TOWARDS A MARINE SPATIAL PLAN FOR IRELAND – A ROADMAP FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF IRELAND'S FIRST MARINE SPATIAL PLAN

Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government Eoghan Murphy and Minister Damien English published *Towards a Marine Spatial Plan for Ireland* – a roadmap for the development of Ireland's first marine spatial plan in December 2017. Marine Spatial Planning is a way of looking at how we use the marine area and planning how best to use it into the future. MSP will try to balance the different demands for using the sea including the need to protect the marine environment. It's about planning when and where human activities take place at sea. It's about ensuring these activities are as efficient and sustainable as possible. Maritime spatial planning involves stakeholders in a transparent way in the planning of maritime activities. The MSP for Ireland, which will be developed over the next 3 years, will provide a coherent framework in which specific sectoral policies and objectives can be realised. It is intended

to become a decision making tool for regulatory authorities and policy makers into the future in a number of ways including, decisions on individual consent applications which will have to have regard to the provisions of the plan in the same way that terrestrial plans form part of the decision making tool-kit in the on-land planning process. It is also intended to form a key input to the development of future sectoral policies, similar to role of the National Planning Framework, *Ireland2040*, in terms of terrestrial sectoral policy development.

In this regard and in reference to the number and diversity of marine related EU funded projects across the council directorates, the EU Unit will continue to engage with our colleagues in Planning, Environment and Tourism to inform the future sustainability of the marine area of the northwest region and targeting relevant funding programmes.



EU Unit Contact Details

EU Unit & Strategic Policy Unit Manager -

Claire McCallan

e-mail: cmccallan@donegalcoco.ie
Tel: +353 (0) 74 915 3900

EU Unit Funding Officer -

Seamus Canning

e-mail: seamusc@donegalcoco.ie
Tel: +353 (0) 74 915 3900