

**Jonathon Codd**

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**From:** DRCD Press Office [press.office@drcd.gov.ie]  
**Sent:** 27 May 2022 09:50  
**To:** DRCD - Ballina; DRCD - Dublin; DRCD - Islands; DRCD - Regional  
**Subject:** Our Rural Future:: Minister Humphreys launches new funding stream to support Local Authorities to purchase vacant & derelict buildings which can be converted for community use

Good morning,

Please see the below press release issued today from the Department.

Kind regards,

**Sarah Loughlin**  
Press Officer

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

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Media Release

Friday, May 27<sup>th</sup> 2022



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

### **Our Rural Future:**

**Minister Humphreys launches new funding stream to support Local Authorities to purchase vacant & derelict buildings which can be converted for community use**

- *New Building Acquisition Measure supports the purchase of vacant or derelict buildings for development as community facilities*
- *Local Authorities encouraged to engage with Community Groups, Town Teams and Local Chambers to identify suitable properties*

The Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, has today announced a new funding stream to support Local Authorities to purchase vacant buildings which can be converted and developed for community use.

The funding, which is being made available under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme, aims to support the continued regeneration of our rural towns and villages so that they are attractive, vibrant places for people to live and work.

**Announcing the launch of the scheme, Minister Humphreys said:**

*“Our Rural Future, the Government’s ambitious policy for rural development, prioritises the regeneration and repopulation of our rural towns and villages – we want our towns to be attractive places where people want to live, work, socialise and raise a family.*

*“I am providing specific funding to Local Authorities this year to identify and purchase vacant and derelict buildings in rural towns and villages so that these can be taken into public ownership and converted for community use and the public good.*

*“Under the new Building Acquisition Measure up to €400,000 will be available per local authority this year. I am encouraging Local Authorities to engage with communities, identify suitable properties, come up with a proposal for their future use and apply to my Department for the funding.*

*“There are former bank buildings which could easily be converted into remote working hubs. Equally we know there are many community groups and voluntary organisations who need a space for local events and activities so let’s renovate and repurpose some of our old town centre buildings to accommodate them.*

Priority will be afforded to projects that align with the objectives of “Our Rural Future” with a focus on:

- Purchase of vacant properties/sites for community use
- Enabling vacant and derelict buildings to be repurposed as community spaces / digital hubs
- Developing vacant sites in towns and villages into parks, green spaces and recreational amenities
- Development of Outdoor Dining Spaces/Plazas in town centres

The Scheme typically funds rural towns and villages with a population of up to 10,000 people.

Larger rural towns with a population of up to 15,000 people may be eligible where the application is particularly strong and the project will have a significant impact on the town in question.

Full details of the Scheme will be published on the Department's website in the coming days.

Today's announcement forms part of the Our Rural Future Work Programme for 2022, which continues the focus on the renewal of our towns and villages and the continued expansion of our remote working hubs under the [ConnectedHubs.ie](https://connectedhubs.ie) platform.

[The Work Programme is available here.](#)

## **ENDS**

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## **Notes for editors:**

The new 2022 Building Acquisition Measure will form part of the overarching Town and Village Renewal Scheme structure. This will provide up to €400,000 to each local authority to purchase vacant and derelict buildings for future development as community assets. Each local authority will be invited to apply to purchase up to two such buildings within the €400,000 available.

Full details of the new Building Acquisition Measure will be published on the Department's website along with the details of the wider Town and Village Renewal Scheme on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

## **Our Rural Future**

*Our Rural Future* is the whole-of-Government policy for rural Ireland for the period 2021-2025. It represents a new milestone in the approach to rural development policy for Ireland.

The policy's objectives will be achieved through the delivery of 161 measures, to be implemented progressively over the life of the policy across a range of Government departments and

agencies. Annual work programmes enable new actions to be added over the policy's lifecycle, to respond to the emerging needs of rural communities.

Delivery of actions in the 2022 Work Programme will be monitored through the publication of six-monthly Progress Reports.

*Our Rural Future* is underpinned by multi-billion euro investment across Government through the revised National Development Plan in areas such as the roll out of high-speed broadband, remote working facilities, job creation, town centre regeneration, community development, improvements in regional and local roads, new cycling and walking infrastructure, expanded rural transport services, funding for tourism, culture and heritage projects, and a just transition to a climate-neutral society.

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