



Rialtas
na hÉireann
Government
of Ireland

Ár dTodhchaí
Tuaithé
Our Rural
Future



Our Rural Future: Minister Humphreys announces new €13 million Fund to tackle vacancy and dereliction in Rural Ireland

- ***Major initiative will see dozens of old buildings transformed into multi-purpose community facilities***
- ***Local Authorities to be provided with €500,000 in funding to purchase up to three properties each for re-development***
- ***Minister Humphreys: “This is about tackling vacancy and dereliction in our rural towns and villages”***
- ***2023 calendar of capital investment schemes also published today***

Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, has today announced a new **€13 million Fund** designed to tackle vacancy and dereliction in Rural Ireland.

Under the initiative, each local authority can apply for funding of up to **€500,000**, which they can use to purchase up to three properties to re-develop into multi-purpose community facilities.

The funding, under the **Town and Village Renewal Scheme**, is designed to make our towns and villages more attractive places in which to live, visit, invest and raise a family.

Funding previously announced under the scheme saw old banks, court houses, garda stations and FCA halls all purchased and re-purposed for 21st century use.

In opening the call for applications today, Minister Humphreys encouraged councils to work with communities in pinpointing buildings that are suffering from vacancy and dereliction.

Minister Humphreys stated:

"This initiative is already having a hugely positive impact right across Rural Ireland.

"With the support of my Department, councils have been given the resources they need to purchase buildings that have been lying idle for years.

"From old garda stations, bank buildings and former courthouses – these properties are now being given a new lease of life and re-purposed for 21st century use.

"Given the success to date, I'm delighted today to announce further funding of €13 million.

"Today, I'm inviting all eligible local authority to submit up to three properties for purchase and we will provide them with funding of up to €500,000 to do so.

"The properties that will be purchased will be taken into public ownership and, most importantly, will be turned into spaces where the local community can gather and hold events.

"This is all about building on the momentum that 'Our Rural Future' has delivered. It's a huge opportunity for us all to work together in tackling the scourge of dereliction and transforming old run-down buildings into facilities that will benefit communities for generations to come."

Ireland's **Town Centre First Policy** recognises there is no one-size-fits-all solution to regeneration, so actively supports a place-based approach to town regeneration. Since the launch of the Town and Village Renewal Scheme, over €149 million has been allocated to more than 1,600 projects.

The Scheme is having a transformative effect on towns and villages throughout Ireland and has made an important contribution to supporting vibrant and sustainable communities. Details of the 2023 Building Acquisition Measure can be found on the Department's website [here](#).

Additionally today, Minister Humphreys has announced details of when the main capital investment schemes will be opening in 2023.

The Minister continued:

"There has never been as many opportunities for local community groups to access funding for rural and community development projects.

"I am anxious to make this funding as accessible as possible, and with this in mind I am now publishing the details of when the main capital investment schemes will be open for applications in 2023.

"This will help community groups and local authorities to see what funding is available and when, and will assist them in the planning of their applications".

Examples of buildings acquired under last year's measure are available in Appendix A. The calendar of 2023 schemes is available on [the Department's website here](#) and is attached below.

ENDS

Contact:

The Department of Rural and Community Development Press Office

01-773 6843 / 087-1734633

Press.office@dracd.gov.ie



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

The table below sets out details in relation to the main Department of Rural and Community Development investment supports available in 2023.

It is intended that this calendar will assist stakeholders by providing timeframes in which to develop highquality and impactful funding proposals.

Stakeholders should assess the suite of supports as a whole and plan their applications on that basis.

Visit www.gov.ie/drcd for further information

January
• €50m Community Recognition Fund open for applications
February
• Financial allocations under 2023 Local Improvement Scheme announced • Walks Scheme expansion process opened
March
• 2023 Building Acquisition Measure to open for applications under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme • 2023 CLÁR Programme to open for applications • Community Centre Investment Fund to open for applications for new build centres • Call for proposals to open under Community Services Programme
April
• Call for proposals under the Libraries Capital Programme 2023-2027 • Libraries Measure Call under Dormant Accounts Fund to open
May
• Call for Local Authority Action Plans under PEACE Plus • Call for applications under the PEACE Plus Reimagining Communities Investment Area – Large Capital Spaces. • 2023 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme to open for applications
June
• Town and Village Renewal Scheme to open for applications – main scheme and Project Development Measure
November
• Category 1 call for applications to open under 2023 Rural Regeneration and Development Fund

Notes to editors:

Our Rural Future

Our Rural Future is the whole-of-government policy for rural Ireland for the period 2021-2025. It offers a blueprint for a thriving and inclusive rural Ireland and adopts a more strategic, ambitious and holistic approach to investing in and maximising opportunities for rural areas.

Town Centre First

The *Town Centre First* Policy, launched on 4th February 2022, provides a co-ordinated, whole-of-government policy framework to proactively regenerate towns across Ireland. The policy is underpinned by funding available through schemes such as the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF), the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF), the Croí Conaithe (Towns) Fund and the Town and Village Renewal Scheme (TVRS).

Town & Village Renewal Scheme (TVRS)

The Town & Village Renewal Scheme (TVRS) provides funding for projects that make our towns and villages more attractive and sustainable. The scheme is administered through the Local Authorities, who are required to work closely with local communities and local businesses to develop and implement proposals that can make a lasting impact in revitalising rural towns and villages across the country. Applications for funding are submitted to the Department of Rural & Community Development through the Local Authorities.

Closing Date for Applications

Applications under the Building Acquisition Measure must be submitted by 28 April 2023.

Full details of the scheme are available on www.gov.ie

Appendix A

Buildings acquired under last year's measure include:



- Former Garda Station, Ashford



- Former Bank of Ireland Building – Lismore Co. Waterford



- Former Bank of Ireland Building – Lismore Co. Waterford



- Presentation Convent, Bagenalstown, Co Carlow



- Moyvane Garda Station, Co Kerry



- Former Courthouse – Ballymote Co. Sligo



- Former Bank of Ireland, Monasterevin, Co Kildare



- Parochial House, Feohanagh, Co. Limerick