

Media Release

Wednesday, 29th March 2023



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

Our Rural Future: Minister Humphreys announces almost €8 million in funding for community and sports facilities

- ***2023 CLÁR Programme to deliver hundreds of projects nationwide***
- ***Grants for community and sports facilities, youth clubs, playgrounds, sensory gardens, walking tracks and more***
- ***Upgrades to spectator stands at local GAA and sports clubs to be funded for first time***
- ***Supports also for Cancer Care Transport, Community First Responders and our offshore islands***

The Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, has today (Wednesday, March 29th, 2023) announced almost €8 million for community and sports facilities nationwide.

The funding, under the 2023 CLÁR Programme, will support hundreds of projects with a particular focus on areas that have experienced significant levels of population decline.

Under the initiative, **grants of up to €50,000** will be provided to support the development of community and sports facilities, youth clubs, playgrounds, sensory gardens, walking tracks and much more.

And for the first time under the CLÁR Programme, funding will be provided to carry out upgrades and improvements to spectator stands at local GAA and sports clubs.

There will be specific measures to support Cancer Care Transport, Community First Responders as well as our offshore island communities.

Announcing the details of the programme today, Minister Humphreys said:

“The CLÁR Programme is all about supporting rural communities in realising their potential.

“It’s about delivering high quality community and sports projects that will make our towns and villages more vibrant places to live and more attractive destinations to visit.

“So from the likes of astro-turfs, playgrounds, sensory gardens and handball alleys to outdoor Cinemas, walking tracks and community gyms – CLÁR is designed to support a vast array of projects that will benefit people of all ages and abilities.

“And I’m really pleased today to announce that for the first time, funding will be provided specifically to upgrade and develop spectator stands at GAA and other sports grounds in Rural Ireland.

“I know that there are many local GAA clubs out there that would really benefit from funding to support better access for spectators who attend matches at their grounds. So I’m encouraging these clubs to apply for funding under this year’s initiative.”

Minister Humphreys continued:

“Since the CLÁR programme was re-launched in 2016, it has made a very positive contribution to some of our most remote and rural communities.

“The initiative has supported over 2,100 projects with funding of over €57 million under a range of different Measures.

“In virtually every town I visit, there are incredible people doing extraordinary work to bring communities together and I want to encourage and support these efforts under CLÁR.”

The 2023 CLÁR Programme builds on the response to last year's Community Centre Investment Fund (CCIF) which approved over €45 million to 858 projects. The focus of that Fund in 2023 will be on new builds. CLÁR 2023 will provide funding for small scale renovation works to existing community centres who did not receive funding under the CCIF.

The Minister continued:

“I am pleased also of course to continue my support for other worthwhile initiatives under CLÁR.

“The programme will continue to support local voluntary groups to purchase vehicles which ease the burden facing cancer patients and their relatives.

“These vehicles also make life somewhat easier for the elderly needing to travel to day care.

“We will also continue funding for the purchase of vehicles for Community First Responders and Search and Rescue Organisations, as well to support communities on our off-shore Islands, which are a key part of ‘Our Rural Future’.”

- Measure 1 - Community Facilities and Amenities will be administered by the local authorities in consultation with local communities.
- Measure 2 - Mobility, Cancer Care and Community First Responders Transport.
- Measure 3 – Our Islands.

Measure 2 and Measure 3 will be administered directly by the Department.

Full details are available [here](#)

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Photo Caption:

Our Rural Future: Minister Heather Humphreys announces almost €8 million in funding for community and sports facilities under the CLÁR scheme.

Notes to editors:

CLÁR 2023

The CLÁR (Ceantair Laga Árd-Riachtanais) programme provides funding for small scale projects in designated rural areas that have experienced significant levels of de-population.

The scheme was re-opened in 2016 to support the development of remote rural areas through small-scale capital projects involving collaboration between local authorities (LAs) and communities, as well as for other community-based organisations.

Areas targeted under the CLÁR Programme are parts of counties: Carlow, Cavan, Clare, Cork, Donegal, Galway, Kerry, Kilkenny, Laois, Limerick, Longford, Louth, Mayo, Meath, Monaghan, Offaly, Roscommon, Sligo, Tipperary, and Waterford, Westmeath, Wicklow and all of County Leitrim. A national map of CLÁR areas, together with individual county maps is available [here](#).

The measures being funded under the 2023 CLÁR programme are:

- Measure 1: Developing Community Facilities and Amenities (via LA)
- Measure 2: Mobility, Cancer Care and Community First Responders Transport (direct to DRCD)
- Measure 3: Our Islands (direct to DRCD)

Full details of the CLÁR scheme are published [here](#)