

CCN NEWSLETTER

Comhar Comaraigh Network.

December 2024

Successful Seminar



L - R. Catherine Power, Waterford Area Partnership; Richie Walsh, Waterford City & County Council; Ciara Bates, Principal Officer, Dept. of Rural & Community Development; Liam Horan, Connected Communities, Western Development Commission; Minister Mary Butler TD; John Logue, SERI Donegal; Senan Cooke, Dunhill Rural Enterprises CLG; Liam Quinn, CEO, Waterford Area Partnership; Eoin Morrissey, Healthy Waterford, WC & CC; Angela Mulcahy, Kill; Deirdre Woodbyrne, Comhar Comaraigh; Christine Rossi, CEO, Waterford Leader Partnership; Professor Felicity Kelliher, SETU; Liz Riches, Waterford Area Partnership.



Professor Felicity Kelliher SETU, MC

Comhar Comaraigh, the Comeragh Social Enterprise Network in collaboration with Waterford Area Partnership held a unique seminar in Dunhill, Co. Waterford on Friday, October 11th focusing on rural social enterprises and their contribution to our local communities and economy. See Pages 2,3,4.

Inside this issue

**Village News, Achievements, Projects,
Tourism and lots more from the
Comeragh Area**

STRONGER



TOGETHER

INTRODUCTION

CCN TASK GROUP

Our Comhar Comaraigh motto is ‘**Stronger Together.**’ To help keep us together we have produced a first edition of a Comhar Comaraigh Network (CCN) Newsletter. It is hoped CCN can be set up with a full time coordinator who will support our villages, social enterprises and clubs on an individual and collective basis. Following a twelve months period of research from October 2023 we firmly believe that as a network we will achieve many additional improvements in the region by sharing information and learning outcomes. The newsletter will facilitate sharing information on resources, solutions, best practices and achievements. It will be circulated across a network of 22 villages, 30 social enterprises, 25 GAA clubs and other voluntary and community groups. It will also be circulated among local state agencies, politicians, civil servants and relevant others. Our ‘Shared Learning Network’ is committed to working with and helping network members advance their local plans and add value through collaborative engagements. Members are encouraged to contribute interesting news items and photos for each quarterly edition. Every news item may represent a learning opportunity that can be followed up with the provider.

‘We need a fulltime coordinator to work with individual villages, social enterprises, other clubs and organisations to raise levels of inclusion and prosperity across network and region.’

CCN MEETING PLANNED FOR 22ND JANUARY 2025

The CCN team has arranged a network meeting for **Wednesday 22nd January 2025 in Dunhill Education Centre from 7 p.m. to 8.30p.m supported by Waterford Area Partnership.** The aim is to agree the content of a strategic CCN Business Plan, Funding Proposal, Job Description and Co-ordinator Work Plan in order to proceed and make a strong application for the funding for a 3 year CCN Pilot Project. We are convinced that if we can source a full time social enterprise co-ordinator we will make giant strides on a many projects that will play a part in developing an inclusive and prosperous Comeragh Region. We hope every village and social enterprise will send a representative to the meeting. Our network concept has already attracted support from a number of agencies and individuals. These include Council, WAP, Leader Partnership, SETU, SERI, SEWF and others. We need a full time coordinator to work with individual villages, social enterprises, GAA clubs, other clubs and organisations to raise levels of inclusion and prosperity across network and region.

SUCCESSFUL SEMINAR

CCN/WAP-SICAP Seminar held on Friday, 11th October, in Dunhill Education Centre from 9.30a.m to 1 p.m. There were 70 people in attendance from within and outside the network.

Research began in October 2023 on the possibility of establishing a Comhar Comaraigh Network (CCN) to identify many more resources and supports. These can be added to those which communities, social enterprises and clubs in the area will source.



Panel L - R Christine Rossi, Leader; Liam Horan, Mayo Connected Hubs; Liz Riches, WAP; Senator John Cummins; John Logue, Donegal SERI; Ciara Bates, Principal Officer DRCD

Having completed 10 ‘Meet the Expert’ sessions, interviews with local village representatives and a survey of assets available we produced and circulated a very informative report in September 2024. The report was accompanied with 4 minute video. We then organised the Social Enterprise Seminar on the CCN concept in Dunhill on the 11th October.

We had the pleasure of welcoming Minister Mary Butler TD, Senator John Cummins, along with Principal Officer of Department of Rural & Community Development, Ms Ciara Bates; Professor Felicity Kelliher, SETU; Waterford, Liam Quinn, CEO Waterford Area Partnership; John Logue, Donegal, CEO of Social Enterprise Republic of Ireland (SERI); Liam Horan, Ballinrobe, Mayo, Manager of the National Connected Community Hubs; Richie Walsh, Waterford City & County Council; Christine Rossi, Waterford Leader Partnership; Eoin Morrissey, Healthy Waterford; three speakers from CCN communities, Angela Mulcahy, Kill; Aoife McCabe, Ballymacarbry and Alice O'Brien, Clonea – Power; Benny Hurl, Ardboe, Co. Tyrone Chair of Croke Park GAA Demographics Committee (2024-2027); and a wide representative body of members from our network villages and social enterprises attended. The feedback from attendees was excellent. Many thanks to WAP-SICAP who supported and funded the event. Thanks to Professor Felicity Kelliher, SETU, master of ceremonies and to our hosts, Dunhill Multi-Education Centre, its facilities and staff. The local team put in a huge effort and made the occasion as memorable and informative as possible.

SUCCESSFUL SEMINAR



L-R Michael Behan, Kilrossanty; Nickie Windsor Smith, Touraneena; Margaret Drohan, Kilrossanty and Deirdre Woodbyrne, Comhar Comaraigh



Angela Mulcahy, Kill



Alice O'Brien, Clonea Power



L-R Pat Greene and Dan Cowman, Fenor; Chris Prangnell, Kilmeaden and Donal Lehane, Dunhill



Eoin Morrissey, Waterford Council



Aoife McCabe, Ballymacarbry

PROJECTS

Creating Vibrant Villages

Schools, clubs, hall, scouts, pub, bus routes and even the local shop to survive, need new young families growing up in their communities.

Our proposal is that “interested local communities come together to purchase a few acres of land adjacent to a village and invite the County Council to provide fully serviced sites for family homes”. These sites to be sold at cost to local applicants. The net cost should be significantly cheaper than individual sites, especially when all the servicing expenses are factored in. The income from such sales should be ring-fenced for such re-investment in future years. Funding schemes exist for Government to finance such self-funding projects.

The Comeragh Communities should now produce a compressive plan indicating, what local communities are interested in getting serviced sites for family homes.

Delaying tactics involving the supply of drinking water and wastewater treatment should not be accepted, as low cost, more environmentally friendly solutions of high quality, have been trialed and proved to be more effective and more efficient than current more, expensive systems proposed by big business who influence Irish Water.

The benefits of children walking to school, clubs and other social fixtures should not be underestimated. It probably means a car less for a family.

Comments please to Donal Lehane, Ballycraddock, Dunhill- donalalehane@gmail.com .

Waterford Bioregional Weaving Lab, South East Ireland- Sarah Prosser.

Have you ever heard of a bioregion? Or ‘weaving’ of people, projects and place? It’s all about taking a whole landscape as a kind of container, connecting fragmented initiatives within that, and supporting a ‘portfolio’ of new ideas to drive large-scale environmental and societal change. **The Bioregional Weaving Lab, SE Ireland**, started two years ago and recently moved into their new home at Dunhill Ecopark. Here you will find **Sarah**



Prosser in the position of as CEO and ‘Weaver’ of social and ecological change. From January she’ll be joined by **Keeley McGarr O’Brien** who starts in a new position of Regenerative Business Developer (we’ll introduce her more in the next newsletter). Additionally, **Andrew Mulligan** will start a two-year post-doc at SETU working on holistic value creation and the role of Land Observatory in understanding land-use change and its links to biodiversity. Sign up for their newsletter at bioregion.ie, invite them over to your place or drop by and say hello next time you are in Dunhill.

PROJECTS

Robbie Galvin, Manager Copper Coast UNESCO Global Geopark

We just launched a new website (last week) which includes some new 3d tours (of archaeology) linked here:

[Ballynarrid Fort 3D - Copper Coast UNESCO Global Geopark](#)

We now have a fully bookable tour system (you can book tours of the Geopark through the website and/or download our app): [Guided Tour of the Copper Coast Geopark - Copper Coast UNESCO Global Geopark](#)

We secured a small grant to create a new map of the copper coast for visitors and will be seeking contributions towards the design in the new year. We also have a new visitor map of Bunmahon available in our centre. We are working on one for Stradbally and will also produce one for Dunhill/Annestown. The Geopark team recently finished a series of Science Week events including field trip with local school St. James NS to explore the Geology of the Comeragh mountains.



Heritage keepers

Heritage keepers is a free programme for primary schools and community groups across Ireland. Through a series of online workshops participants investigate their local built, cultural and natural heritage and are then provided with funding and support to allow them to take positive action locally. These actions have included exhibition, heritage trails, tree planting, podcast creation, booklets, wildlife ponds, oral history projects and 'Place Celebration' days. The programme opens in September every year for new participants.



Current groups involved include tidy towns, heritage groups, men's shed, resident associations and sport groups to mention just some. Go to www.heritagekeepers.ie to find out more or check us out on Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/heritage.keepers/> or Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/HeritageKeepersBurrenbeo>

Portlaw

A large scale outdoor development is currently in the works in Portlaw, which includes the construction of playing pitches, an outdoor gym, a sensory area and a large seating area.

Waterford Council recently opened the development for public consultation, outlining in detail the various elements which are planned at the existing public park on Connolly Road in Portlaw.

Included within the plans is the construction of a multi-sport, five-a-side 2G pitch which will cater for a wide range of local sports clubs. The proposed pitch will be located on the footprint of an existing asphalt pitch at the address.

An enlargement and enhancement of the existing play park area is also planned, which will include the replacement of the park's existing mixed surface with a full soft surface play area. Works here include the development of a new sensory area.

A 60x35 metre synthetic playing pitch which will cater for a wide range of local sports clubs is proposed at the site. The proposed synthetic pitch will be located on the footprint of an existing grass-based pitch.

Also planned is the installation of bench seating suitable for 90 people into embankment, four electrical car charging points and the installation of an outdoor gym area to be installed at the northeastern corner of the site. Additional proposals include hard and soft landscaping works, surface paving, planting, boundary treatments and all other associated site development works and services.

The project will be open for public consultation until February 5, 2025.

PROJECTS

Research Project and New PhD Researcher Comhar Comaraigh - STRONGER TOGETHER: A Model of Community-Led Rural Village Regeneration' project

This four-year research project centring on the Comhar Comaraigh initiative is a very important opportunity to contribute to knowledge and practice in rural regeneration. Guided by the Dunhill Rural Enterprise team as an exemplar of a successful rural social enterprise community, our SETU PhD scholar, Hannah Foley will be embedded in the Comhar Comaraigh community. The impactful and important results from this project will include a community-led rural village regeneration model which will offer guidance to communities, rural stakeholders, rural social enterprises and policy makers.



Introducing Hannah Foley

My name is Hannah Foley and I have been lucky enough to have been chosen to research the Stronger Together: A Model of Community-Led Rural Village Regeneration project. My academic journey began at University College Cork, where I pursued studies in English and Geography but there was always something drawing me back to business. This motivated me to continue my studies in South East Technological University where I completed my Masters in Business in Management. During my Master's programme, I had the opportunity to grow and develop academically and I found my passion my research.

What I hope to achieve through this project is to address the gaps within the current body of research that will in turn positively benefit the Dunhill community and wider Comaraigh district. As someone who holds strong affinity and links with Dunhill and the wider DFBA locality with my grandfather being from Boatstrand and my mother from Annewstown being able to give back to this community is truly humbling. I am also someone that believes that there is an extraordinary amount of potential and entrepreneurial spirit that lies within rural ecosystems, and I hope to contribute to the understanding this over the next four years of my PhD studies.

Beyond my academic interests. I have many interests that encourage me to explore Ireland and all of the amazing opportunities it has to offer. I frequently go swimming with friends, and I view this as a way to recharge and take time to myself. Additionally, I am an avid reader which has significantly supported my academic journey. Frequently reading has deepened my understanding of diverse topics but also enhanced my research skills and the ability to foster critical thinking.



Dunhill Squash Club, founded in 1969 over 50 years ago. It is an all-inclusive club located in the village of Dunhill. It caters for males and females of all ages and standards. There are three quality heated courts onsite with ladies and gents dressing rooms. We run several internal sponsored leagues each season. The junior section of the club is very active and continues to produce players who represent the club at provincial and national levels. Squash provides an excellent cardiovascular workout that compliments and enhances the hand eye coordination skills base of a variety of sports such as hurling, camogie, handball, hockey and tennis. The club accommodates members from Comhar Comaraigh Village Network communities. New members are very welcome. **If interested contact John Day 087-9608945.**

Comeragh GAA Clubs Championship Successes in 2024.

Hurling. Kilrossanty won county junior hurling championship and were beaten in Munster Final

Football. Rathgormack won senior football championship and were knocked out of Munster Club championship at semi-final stage by Dr Crokes, Killarney, Kerry champions after a great game on the score of 0-9 to 0-8.

Fenor won county junior football championship and were beaten in Munster Club championship by Furies, Kerry champions.

Camogie St Annes (Dunhill, Fenor, Kill, Bunmahon, Newtown) won Minor A championship beating De La Salle by one point. St Annes beat Clonea in junior B championship

Ladies Football. Comeragh Rangers won the senior football championship for first time beating Ballymacarbry. Ballymac had achieved an amazing record of winning 42 championships in a row up to 2023.

Clonea - Power



Minister Heather Humphreys enjoying a chat with John Cummins and volunteers at Clonea Power old School recently. We take this opportunity to wish Heather well in the future and John in his political career representing Waterford. Happy New year all

Fenor

2024 has been a very successful year for Fenor Community. Our beautiful church which is 125 years old, in the heart of the village, has been painted inside and out and the Grotto blessed and dedicated to the Immaculate Conception. All the area around the Church has been planted with pollen-friendly spring bulbs.

In Fenor Bog a record number of visitors were recorded, as well as school groups, both primary and secondary who use the area for environmental science projects. In August for Heritage Week, guided tours of the bog took place and were an outstanding success. Teagasc (Kildalton, Piltown Co. Kilkenny) are also using the bog for adult education.



Fenor Playground in which there is a new unit for children with specific needs, in daily use, Winter and Summer and the School now has two new autism units with two new teachers and SNAs pro rata. Work has begun on the new Scout Hall for Copper Coast Scouts in Ballyscanlon.

800 beach trees were planted in Fenor in 2024. In the Tidy Towns adjudication, Fenor scored 334 marks which is an improvement of 10 marks since last year. 2024 has been a busy year for our community. Ms Rita Byrne

The Gealach Gorm Theatre, Kill

All the children attending the weekly drama classes in The Gealach Gorm Theatre at Kill Community Centre were treated to a lovely Santa Show performed by the 12/13 years old members of the group last night. Parents and siblings also attended and everyone got to meet Santa get their picture taken and were given a present. It was a lovely festive night very much enjoyed by all. The Gealach Gorm Theatre is a unique cultural facility within Kill Community Centre.



Dunhill Ecopark is a rural Enterprise Centre whose main focus is on supporting enterprise, innovation and entrepreneurship within a community setting. Dunhill Ecopark is home to over thirty businesses ranging from education and training to food production, professional services with office and commercial space available for start-ups, small to medium sized enterprises, entrepreneurs and remote workers.

We are community owned and strive to support rural through providing serviced offices and enterprise spaces to rent. For more details contact Alison 0877586849

www.dunhillecopark.com

Waterford Suir Valley Railway

Christmas is always an exciting time at Waterford Suir Valley Railway. You can visit Santa following a trip on a real train for the best Santa experience. Santa is enjoying meeting all the boys and girls and their families at Kilmeadan Station this Christmas.

The Santa Express Experience

You will set off on an exciting journey on a real train beside Waterford Greenway and by the majestic River Suir to meet Mrs. Claus and friends in the Magic Wood. The Fairies in the Magic Wood have been busy making the magic dust to help Santa find your house on Christmas night. Mrs. Claus has some for every child. The train journey and visit with Mrs. Claus takes about 30 minutes.

Return to Kilmeadan Station to take photos at the many photo opportunity props around Kilmeadan Station, including Santa's lead reindeer, Dasher. Meet the Mayfield Birds of Prey (except Wednesday) or enjoy a hot chocolate with Mrs. Claus's home baked treats at the Whistlestop Café.

There is no queueing as Santa will call you when it's time to visit him in Santa's Railway Cottage. All families enjoy a private visit with Santa. Children will have a little chat with him and as they are on the Nice List, receive a good quality present. There will be an opportunity to take a photo with Santa. A printed photo memento of the visit is optional and costs €10.00 payable on the day.



Kilrossanty GAA Club: A Legacy of Community and Excellence



Nestled in the heart of County Waterford, Kilrossanty GAA Club stands as a beacon of pride, tradition, and community spirit. Since its founding in 1885, the club has been a central part of local life, fostering generations of players, building community connections, and serving as a hub for sporting excellence. The parish of Kilrossanty-Fews with John Mitchels GAA club nearby located mainly in Fews-Kilmacthomas area with an overall population of over 2000.

A Rich History of Sporting Success

Kilrossanty GAA Club has a storied history in Gaelic games, particularly in Gaelic football, where it has achieved notable success. The club has competed passionately across all levels, from juvenile teams to senior championships (16 titles), with countless players representing both club and county with distinction. The dedication and hard work of volunteers, coaches, and players have helped Kilrossanty maintain its reputation as one of the most respected clubs in Waterford.

State-of-the-Art Facilities

Today, Kilrossanty GAA Club is more than just a sports club; it is a modern community hub with state-of-the-art facilities that cater to a wide range of sporting and recreational needs. The club's commitment to development and inclusivity is evident in the comprehensive amenities it offers:

Astroturf Pitch: A 50m x 25m all-weather Astroturf pitch, providing a top-class training surface for players year-round.

Floodlit Walkway: A fully lit 1.25-kilometer walkway encircling the grounds, offering a safe and scenic route for walkers, joggers, and fitness enthusiasts.

Floodlit Playing Pitches: Two fully floodlit playing pitches, allowing for evening training sessions and matches, regardless of the season.

Spectator Stand: A 300-seat spectator stand overlooking the main pitch, ensuring comfort and a great viewing experience for supporters.

Juvenile Pitch: A dedicated juvenile pitch where the next generation of players can develop their skills in a safe environment.



GAA CLUB IN FOCUS

Gymnasium: A modern gym, equipped with everything players and community members need to maintain peak physical condition.

Inclusive Playground: A fully accessible playground that caters to children of all abilities, making Kilrossanty GAA a truly inclusive space for families.

A Community Hub for All

Kilrossanty GAA Club is more than just a home for Gaelic games. It is a vibrant community centre that welcomes individuals and groups from all walks of life. The club's facilities are also home to Kilrossanty/Brickeys ladies football, Kilrossanty mothers & others and K.C.K. Athletics Club, a thriving athletics organization that uses the grounds for training and events, further strengthening the partnership between local sports clubs.

The inclusive and welcoming atmosphere at Kilrossanty GAA Club ensures it is not just a place for athletes but a space where the entire community can come together. Whether it's cheering from the stands, walking the lit pathway, or watching children play in the inclusive playground, Kilrossanty GAA Club is a place where memories are made, and community bonds are strengthened.

Looking to the Future

As Kilrossanty GAA Club continues to grow, it remains dedicated to preserving its rich history while embracing the future. Ongoing improvements and community initiatives including the recently completed biodiversity planting and solar panel installation ensure that the club reduces its carbon footprint and embraces nature. The club's aim is to remain a focal point for sport, fitness, and social interaction for years to come.

We invite everyone to visit Kilrossanty GAA Club, experience our facilities, and become part of the proud legacy that has been built over generations. Whether you're an athlete, a supporter, or a community member, Kilrossanty GAA Club is your club—where tradition meets progress, and everyone is welcome. Kevin Lonergan.



ACHIEVEMENTS

Entrepreneur Awards

Congratulations to Stradbally's Sharon Cunningham, CEO of Shorla Oncology, and Orlaith Ryan, CTO, who were named 2024 EY Entrepreneurs of the Year. The announcement was made at the annual awards ceremony held in the Powerscourt Hotel, Co. Wicklow in the emerging category at this year's awards. It's the latest accolade for Sharon, who was Entrepreneur in 2019.



Headquartered in Clonmel, Shorla Oncology is a specialty pharmaceutical company that develops and commercialises innovative oncology drugs for orphan and paediatric cancers.

Ivor Queally from Kill, CEO of the QK Group, South Africa was named 2024 EY International Entrepreneur of the Year. QK Group South Africa operates across a number of different sectors such as meat processing, cold storage and warehousing, frozen foods manufacturing, pet food manufacturing and the processing of animal by products.

Well done to both Sharon and Ivor for doing their County Waterford communities proud.



Salon Belleza in Kilmacthomas was

named Local Salon of the Year (Munster) at the Irish Hair and Beauty Awards in October. Congratulations to Gillian Norris and her team on scooping this prestigious accolade. Gillian, a former dancer with Lord of the Dance, has been in business for over 20 years on Main Street in the village and has built up a popular and respected establishment which is an integral part of the Kilmacthomas business community.

Tidy Towns Success

Tidy Towns groups in the area performed exceptionally well in this year's competition when the results were announced recently. Huge congratulations to Stradbally on winning a Gold medal and being named Best in County. This is all the more impressive given the challenges which the group faced the village this summer when all their equipment was stolen from their shed. Despite this setback, they bounced back strongly and have received huge support from the local area.

Congratulations also to Dunhill on winning the Endeavour Award in Waterford.

Food Producer Success

The National Organic Awards were held at the Bord Bia Global Hub in Dublin in October. Flahavan's of Kilmacthomas took home the award for Best Irish Organic Export Product for their Flahavan's Organic Porridge. Congratulations also to artisan ice-cream producers Freezin' Friesian from Ballyhussa, Newtown on being named Dairy Producer of the Year at the Good Food Ireland Awards at The K Club, Kildare.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Book Launch

'Bloodshed in the Comeraghs' by Kilrossanty man David Prendergast was launched in Dungarvan Library in November. It delves into the controversial circumstances surrounding the death of Thomas Keating who was killed near the end of the Civil War. The book is part of the Waterford History Series and the launch featured well-known local historian Sile Murphy as guest speaker. The book is available to purchase locally.

Volunteer of the Year

Congratulations to Eilish Norris who was named Junior Volunteer of the Year at the Waterford Public Participation Network (PPN) Community and Voluntary awards held at The Park Hotel, Dungarvan in November. Eilish was nominated by Clonea Power camogie club for her work with the club and the IPAS Centre in Ballynevin.

St Anne's Church, Ballylaneen

In July, St Anne's Church in Ballylaneen celebrated its bicentenary with a weekend of celebrations. The impressive history of this beautiful church and the local area are recorded in a wonderful publication entitled 'St Anne's Church, Ballylaneen 1824-2024'. During the weekend, a special presentation was made to former Parish Priest Fr Michael Enright to mark 50 years since his ordination.

Farming for Nature Ambassadors

Shane Fitzgerald and Kate Curran have been announced as Farming for Nature Ambassadors. Shane and Kate are farming in partnership with Shane's father John at



Kilmagemogue near Portlaw. They are passionate promoters of good environmental practices and hosted King Charles on their farm during his visit to Waterford in March 2022. It's been a busy time for Shane and Kate as they also recently celebrated their wedding day - wishing you many years of health and happiness.

Comeragh Villages Excel in National Tidy Towns Competition, 2024.

Twenty one villages/towns from Co Waterford participated in the National Tidy Towns Competition in 2024. Nine entrants from Comhar Comaraigh Network participated and achieved outstanding results. There were 3 categories A, B and C.

In Category A. Ballymacarbry scored 377 marks and were awarded a silver medal, Fenor scored 344 marks, Bunmahon 275 marks and Clonea – Power 267 marks

In Category B. In Category B -Stradbally came first in the county overall with 383 marks and were awarded a gold medal, Kilmacthomas 329 marks, Kill 252 marks and Dunhill 248 who were awarded an Endeavour Award

In Category C. Portlaw scored 304 marks. Well done to all our network villages.

ACHIEVEMENTS

National Bravery Awards

Two men received National Bravery Awards recently for their heroic work in two separate incidents in the local area which could have easily become tragedies.

Thomas Shaw Hamilton was awarded a silver medal and a Certificate of Bravery for his actions on Clonea Strand in June 2023. Thomas was near the shore with his mother and sister when he saw two boys in difficulty in the water. They had been caught in a strong rip current and were being pulled further out to sea. Thomas entered the water and swam out to the boys who were a good distance from shore. He managed to bring them back to safety.



Shaw Hamilton



Daniel Dwan

The following month, Daniel Dwan rescued a man from the sea at Stage Cove near Bonmahon. A strong swell had swept a swimmer out to sea. Daniel was on the shore when he saw the man struggling in the water. He grabbed a kayak from a neighbouring garden and was able to reach the man and get him back to shore. He was awarded a bronze medal and a Certificate of Bravery.



1983 Michael Power Memorial Swim

Michael Power Memorial Swim

It's all systems go for the Michael Power Memorial Swim which will be held at Kilmurrin Cove on Christmas Day. This has been a popular local charity event for over 40 years.

In 1982, local man Michael Power and a small number of friends decided to n

go swimming on Christmas Day. The following year, the swimming enthusiasts swam more frequently from summertime, throughout autumn and up to Christmas Day.

More people joined their endeavours and so the first official Christmas Day Swim at Kilmurrin took place in 1983. The 13 swimmers who took part on the day were Michael Power, Lennie Bell, Tom Whelan, Mary Mooney, John Walsh, Ger Mooney, Darren Power, Buddy Mooney, Tom Power, Adrian Kirwan, Johnny Murray, Brendan Power and Tony Murphy. They raised £600 for the Waterford Asthma Society.

In 1984, the event was geared up to be bigger and better and much effort had gone into its organisation. Tragedy struck on December 17th when Michael Power died suddenly aged 40. However, the annual swim has continued as a poignant memorial to Michael and has also raised thousands for various charities and causes.

This year's recipient is Boatstrand Sea Safety Centre. The swim gets underway at midday on December 25th and is a wonderful way to work up an appetite ahead of Christmas dinner

ACHIEVEMENTS

Kilmacthomas GAA Club

Kilmacthomas GAA recently refurbished their dressing rooms which were originally built in the 80's with the help of a sports capital grant. They've also upgraded their floodlights from halogen to LEDs which are more environmentally friendly. They were the first club in the county to have floodlights back in 2006. They've also obtained funding for an astro turf development. Pictured right Club Chairman Tyrone Power who recently graduated in BEng Building Services Engineering, Technology University Dublin.



Sliabh gCua Playground

After the culmination of 7 years of community prioritisation and voluntary involvement the community of Sliabh gCua and beyond came together in unity to celebrate the Official Opening of Sliabh gCua Playground on Saturday July 6th 2024.

The red ribbon was finally cut by Deputy Mayor of Waterford, Councillor Adam Wyse. Senator John Cummins who was instrumental in attaining the 50k Clár grant and newly elected Local Councillor Niamh O'Donovan together were in attendance and offered us best wishes and support in the future of our playground and in further ventures. Tara McGourty, Chairperson of The Playground Committee gave the opening speech and welcomed Deputy Mayor, Councillor Adam Wyse, who went on to commend the community on their superb achievement.



Comhar Comaraigh Network- Population – 21,000

Villages-22	Social Enterprises-30	GAA/Camogie/L Football-25
Annestown	Anne Valley Walkway& Wildlife Sanct	Ballyduff Lower- H & F
Ballylaneen	Ballyduff Lower Community Hall	Ballydurn -Hurling
Ballymacarbry	Ballymacarbry CommunityCentre/Hostel	Ballymacarbry -Ladies Football
Ballyduff Lower	Bonmahon Community Group	Bonmahon Football
Boaststrand	Copper Coast UNESCO Global Geopark	Clonea -Hurling /Camogie
Bunmahon	Copper Coast Scouts Education Centre	Comeragh Rangers – L Football
Carrickbeg	Comeragh Development Kilrossanty	Clanna Gael (3 clubs u13-20)
Clonea Power	Cluain Caibre Housing Ballymacarbry	Dunhill -Hurling/ Football
Dunhill	Clonea Old School Community Centre	Fenor -Football/Football
Faha	Dunhill Community Hall CLG	Fews- John Mitchels Football
Fenor	Dunhill GAA/Centre/Childcare	Fourmilewater- Hurling
Fews	Dunhill Multi-Education Centre	Kill- Football
Kill	Dunhill Rural Enterprises CLG	Kilmacthomas -Football/Hurling
Kilmacthomas	DFBA Community Enterprises CLG	Kilrossanty -Football/Hurling
Kilmeaden	East Waterford Beekeepers	Kilrossanty/Brickeys– L Football
Kilrossanty	Fenor Development Group (Bog etc)	Newtown -Football
Mothel	Kill Community Centre/Theatre	Portlaw -Hurling/Football
Newtown	Kilmacthomas Charity Shop	Rathgormack- Football
Portlaw	Kilmacthomas Social Enterprise Group	St Mollerans, Carrickbeg -H/F
Rathgormack	Kilmacthomas – Rainbow Hall	St Marys Kill/Bonmahon-AdultH
Stradbally	Kilrossanty-Comeragh Dev Group	Sliabh gCua /St Marys H/F
Touraneena	Naoimra Childcare	St Marys (4 clubs) Under age H
	Portlaw, Community Enhancement Grp	Stradbally -Football/Hurling
	Rathgormack, Community Dev Group	St Olivers-Naomh Brid -U-age
	St Mollerans, Carrickbeg GAA Complex	The Nire - Football
	Stradbally GAA Community Centre	
	Sliabh gCua/Touraneena Centre	
	Waterford Trout Angling	
	Waterford & Suir Valley Railway	17

HEALTHY WATERFORD



Healthy Waterford Hosts Health and Wellbeing Network Meeting in Kill

Healthy Waterford recently hosted a successful Health and Wellbeing Network meeting at the picturesque Gardenmorris in Kill. The event brought together a diverse group of community members, healthcare professionals, and local organisations to discuss and collaborate on improving the health and wellbeing of communities.

The Health and Wellbeing Network meeting provided numerous benefits including:

- Improved Community Health:** By identifying and addressing key health and wellbeing needs, the network can contribute to a healthier and more vibrant community.

- Enhanced Collaboration:** The meeting fostered connections and partnerships between community members, healthcare providers, and local organisations, strengthening the local support network.

- Increased Awareness:** Participants gained valuable knowledge and skills related to health and wellbeing, empowering them to make informed choices and support others.

- Community Empowerment:** The network meeting fostered a sense of community ownership and responsibility for health and wellbeing, encouraging active participation and engagement.

Healthy Waterford

Healthy Waterford is a countywide initiative dedicated to promoting health and wellbeing across Waterford. Through collaborative efforts with community partners, Healthy Waterford aims to create a healthier and more equitable future for all residents.

For more information contact Eoin Morrissey
: eoinmorrissey@waterfordcouncil.ie



WATERFORD RURAL TOURISM



Waterford Rural Tourism Network

Connecting communities throughout the Comeragh region in the Comhar Comaragh Network (CCN) is intertwined with the mission and goals of the Waterford Rural Tourism Network (WRTN). Focussed on connecting tourism businesses throughout rural Waterford, The WRTN is comprised of five clusters: the Blackwater Valley, the Gaeltacht na nDeise, the Copper Coast, the Comeraghs, and the Waterford Estuary. The WRTN is funded by Waterford City and County Council and Fáilte Ireland in partnership with network coordinator, Jule O'Brien and her team at Runda Hospitality and Tourism. 2024 was a productive year for the WRTN. A series of fifteen successful in person meetings were held throughout the clusters, and two in-person learning journeys hosted by the Blackwater Valley Cluster and the Copper Coast Cluster.

A Panel Discussion and Networking Event was held at the Majestic Hotel, Tramore on the 7th of November, where businesses shared their insights and feedback on challenges they face, opportunities they foresee, and how to work collectively to make rural Waterford a must visit destination for visitors from abroad and across Ireland. With an emphasis on slow tourism and giving the visitors unique visitor experiences, the WRTN continues to grow with a number of networking opportunities and events planned for 2025. At the core of both the WRTN and CCN is the passion and dedication of individuals, social enterprises, community organizations, and businesses to work together to benefit the region as a whole.

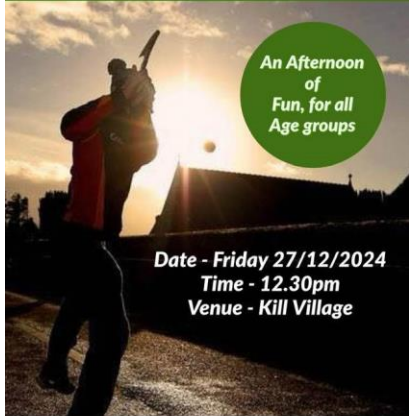
Waterford County Outdoor Recreation Plan

Waterford Sports Partnership and Waterford City and County Council are in the process of developing a County Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) for Waterford, an objective under the National Outdoor Recreation Strategy: Embracing Ireland's Outdoors 2023 to 2027.

The project is being funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development. WCCC have appointed a company called Outscape to assist in the preparation of the plan. On the 25th November, an online consultation was held with members of the Waterford Rural Tourism Network (WRTN) hosted by Sarah Steer of Outscape. The Plan will set out the priorities for the development of recreation and outdoor management in Waterford over the next five years. An extensive consultation process is under way with public consultation planned for January 2025.

UPCOMING EVENTS

KILL GAA CLUB'S
TWENTY SECOND ANNUAL LONG PUCK



An Afternoon of Fun, for all Age groups

Date - Friday 27/12/2024
Time - 12.30pm
Venue - Kill Village

TEAMS OF 3
ADULTS - €10
JUVENILES - €5

LONG PUCK WILL AID A LOCAL CHARITY

Introduction to Beekeeping
EAST WATERFORD BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

Lecture Dates:
Saturday April 5 and April 12, 2025
Time: 10am, Dunhill Education Centre

Course Fee. €150

to include :

- Lectures,
- Apiary Demonstrations,
- Association and Federation Membership,
- Beekeeping Insurance
- An Beachaire Beekeepers Magazine,
- Participation in all Association and Federation Education Programmes.

For more information
www.waterfordbees.com
waterfordbees@gmail.com

win €5K FOR NEW YEARS DAY
with Kilmacthomas GAA

Tickets €50 each

All Money Raised go towards
Kilmacthomas GAA Astro Turf Development

Tickets Limited to 200

Draw takes place at
Danny's Bar
on Saturday 28th December 10pm

Permit Granted

THE AFTERMATH

The Long Shadows
Of The Civil War In Waterford



Screening 18th January at 8.00pm

GEALACH GORM THEATRE
Kill Community Centre

Booking on Powertik or Contact 086 8569358

CHRISTMAS WREATH MAKING WORKSHOP

Friday, 20th December 2024 at 8 PM
Kill Community Centre

Tickets €25 including wreath to take home

Tickets online or
Call/Text 087 2827445

Tea/coffee and mince pie served

Everyone is welcome! Fresh flowers used

Kill GAA Club celebrates Nollaig na mBan

Afternoon Tea

AT GARDENMORRIS ESTATE
ON SATURDAY 4TH JANUARY 2025

Price: €35

Some of the many events coming soon in the Comhar Comaraigh Region

COPPER COAST SCHOOL OF MUSIC

GUITAR LESSONS

CHILDREN, TEEN & ADULT CLASSES

NOW ENROLLING FOR JANUARY 2025 - VOUCHERS AVAILABLE!

Join now

KILL COMMUNITY CENTRE

CONTACT CELINE 087-9742080/ MICHAEL 087-9050190 FOR MORE INFORMATION.

St. Declan's CHRISTMAS Concert

2024

Friday 20th December
11.30AM

Live on our YouTube channel

Search St Declan's Community College on YouTube or follow the link on Facebook

TRACTOR, BIKE & VINTAGE CAR RUN

2 WHEELS OR 4
HIT US UP AT THE DOOR!!!!

GREAT DRIVERS! PRIZES & RAFFLE LATER ON THE NIGHT

SUNDAY 29th DECEMBER

Registration from 11.30am at Whelan's Bar
Parking at Soccer Club

WHELAN'S BAR STRADBALLY

FOOD SERVED
MUSIC 5-8.30 Michael Sheehan
Pete Windle of OLD SKOOL
SUNDAY 9 til Late

Any Queries Contact 087 6884501 (Eamonn Carroll) / 0872951186 (Eamonn Foley) / 0872969692 (Christopher Fennell)

Congratulations from the Comhar Comaraigh Network to the following Elected Officials who represent our region in Dail Eireann.

Contact numbers

Mary Butler TD	087-2921089
David Cullinane TD	086-3725152
John Cummins TD	087-9205729
Conor McGuinness TD	087-9345603

Congratulations also to

Councillor Liam Brazil	087-2119203
Councillor Catherine Burke	087-9214626
Councillor Declan Clune	086-0555007
Councillor John O’ Leary	087-2154519
Councillor Seanie Power	086-2768184

We look forward to working in collaboration with our national and local public representatives in making improvements on a variety of projects in the Comeragh District and County Waterford.



The Social Enterprise World Forum (SEWF) is a global leader in transforming business and co-creating a new economy where people and the planet thrive. Taking a "network of networks" approach, SEWF connects purpose-led enterprises that use sustainable revenue models to deliver impactful social and environmental solutions.

SEWF acknowledges the vital contributions of **Dunhill Rural Enterprises CLG** and the **Comhar Comaraigh Network** to the development of the **Rural Social Enterprise Manifesto**.

Endorsed by the **OECD** and **ILO**, the Manifesto outlines guiding principles, actionable policy recommendations and case studies that empower rural communities worldwide.

The Manifesto was officially launched at **SEWF24's Policy Forum**, where the **Rural Social Enterprise Network** was introduced to further its goals. Additionally, it was presented to the **United Nations Task Force on the Social and Solidarity Economy (UNTSSE)** during the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)**, resulting in an invitation for SEWF to join the UNTSSE—a testament to its alignment with international priorities.

With its network of 22 villages, 30 social enterprises, and 23 GAA clubs, the **Comhar Comaraigh Network** embodies the Manifesto's vision of inclusive, community-driven rural development. Ireland's leadership in this movement, through Dunhill Rural Enterprises and the Network, stands as a model of innovation and collaboration.

Looking ahead to **SEWF25** and the **Rural Gathering in Sabah, Malaysia**, the global community will continue to share knowledge, spotlight best practices and support policy innovation for rural contexts.

Heartfelt Gratitude To:

- Department of Rural & Community Development
 - Waterford & City and County Council
 - Waterford Area Partnership – SICAP
 - Waterford Leader Partnership
 - South East Technological University
 - Social Enterprise Republic of Ireland
 - Western Development Commission – National Connected Hubs Network
 - Tomar Trust Foundation
 - Ten ‘Meet the Expert Guest Speakers’ John Evoy, Grow Remote; Csilla Czilvikker, Waterford Migrants; Donal Lehane, East Waterford Bees; Brid Kirby, Local Enterprise Office; Liz Riches, WAP/SICAP; Damain Howard, Myshall Co Carlow; Helena Dempsey, Social Enterprise Officer Co. Wexford; Martin O Brien, Graignamanagh Co Kilkenny; Professor Felicity Kelliher, SETU; Jenny Beresford, Dungarvan Chamber of Commerce.
 - Angela Mulcahy, Video Producer and Designer of CCN Newsletter
 - Network Organising Committee – Senan Cooke, Angela Mulcahy, Deirdre Woodbyrne, Eoin Morrissey.
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Wishing you all the joys of the Christmas Season and a Beautiful 2025

Please watch our video which highlights some of the many assets and amenities in the 22 villages that are part of the Comhar Comeragh Network in Co. Waterford.



[In Our Own Backyard](#)

Concerning all acts of initiative (and creation) there is one elementary truth the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans.

The moment you commit yourself then providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help you that would otherwise never have occurred.

A whole stream of events issue from the decision raising in your favour all manner of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance which no one could have dreamed would ever come your way.

Whatever you can do, or dream, you can begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic to it. Begin it now!

Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe

(German Philosopher & Poet)