



ANNUAL REPORT

TUARASCÁIL BHLIANTÚIL

Comhairle Contae Mhuineacháin

Monaghan County Council



Comhairle Contae Mhuineacháin
Monaghan County Council

2024

www.monaghan.ie

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Foreword

We are pleased to present Monaghan County Council's Annual Report for 2024. This Annual Report showcases the wide variety of services provided by Monaghan County Council which include not only the core services of housing, roads, fire and emergency services but also our supports to local communities in the areas of the arts, libraries, heritage, conservation, age friendly and economic development.

During 2024, the Council continued to make strong progress, delivering significant efficiencies and innovation, while focusing on its leadership role to drive local, community and economic development. Aligned with the Corporate Plan 2019-2024, and indeed the updated Corporate Plan 2024-2029, our efforts are focused on ensuring that Monaghan remains an attractive place to live, work, do business, and visit.

In November 2024, Monaghan County Council hosted the IPB Pride of Place Awards, a prestigious competition that celebrates the work of communities across Ireland. Over five hundred people gathered at a gala awards night in the Hillgrove Hotel, where Monaghan's own Oram village came away with top prize in the smallest population category. The significant breadth and depth of community development services provided by the Council demonstrates our central role as a strong and reliable community partner.

2024 was a significant year for housing delivery with 120 new homes provided by the Council to individuals and families on the social housing list. In December 2024, Monaghan County Council signed one of its largest housing contracts for the development of 72 houses across two sites in Monaghan town. Utilising an accelerated design and build contract with modern methods of construction, the Council is planning to have these homes completed within 12 months.

In 2024, the Council prepared an ambitious 5-year Tourism Strategy and established a county-wide Tourism and Recreation Forum, with an independent chair, with a focus on implementing the objectives of the strategy using a partnership approach. The Council's Tourism Section was awarded the 'Supporting Tourism' accolade at the 2024 Excellence in Local Government Awards, recognising their outstanding efforts in transforming Rossmore Forest Park into an excellent recreational amenity.

2024 was an important year in supporting enterprise and economic development in the county. The new C:TEK II Enterprise Hub was opened in Carrickmacross towards the end of last year. This €3.9 million state-of-the-art business centre was funded by the Department of Community and Rural Development and Monaghan County Council. The hub aims to retain and attract business and social innovation talent in South Monaghan, providing a modern and comfortable space for remote working and also for new start-ups and expanding businesses and enterprises. The facility offers affordable office space, high-speed broadband, reception and meeting rooms.

The Monaghan Peace Campus opened in May 2024 and has delivered significant benefits for users by fulfilling the Council's vision for a dedicated and enhanced cross-community and cross-border hub. The Peace Campus delivers impactful town centre regeneration and offers a shared space for cultural, heritage and social activities, promoting unity. The design encourages social interaction and adaptability, greatly enriching the broader community experience.

The Council's Climate Action Plan for the county was unanimously adopted by Councillors in February 2024. Developed through extensive stakeholder consultation, the five-year plan contains over 150 climate actions across five themes: governance, built environment and transport, natural environment and communities and sustainability. This initiative underscores the Council's commitment to tackling climate change and ensuring a sustainable future for Monaghan's residents, communities and businesses.

Phase 2 of the Ulster Canal Restoration project was officially opened in Clones in June 2024. This phase focused on the restoration of the canal between Clones and Clonfad in County Monaghan, including a canal basin marina and amenity area in Clones. The project was led by Waterways with funding of €24 million

secured to complete this phase from the Shared Island Fund, Department of Rural Development and Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage.

2024 was a milestone year for local democracy in the county with local elections taking place on Friday, 7th June 2024, with 36 candidates contesting 18 seats across the three electoral areas of Ballybay-Clones, Carrickmacross-Castleblayney and Monaghan. Fourteen sitting members were re-elected to Monaghan County Council. Four new Councillors were also elected – Sinéad Flynn in the Ballybay-Clones electoral area, Paul Gibbons in the Carrickmacross-Castleblayney electoral area and Pauric Clerkin and Bronagh McAree in the Monaghan electoral area. It is also appropriate to acknowledge the contribution to public service of Councillors who retired or did not get re-elected last year, namely Brian McKenna, Hugh McElvaney, Podge Connolly and Aoife McCooley.

Following the election of Cathy Bennett and David Maxwell to the Dail in November 2024, Cllr Niamh McCooley and Cllr Alan Johnston were selected by their respective parties to be co-opted to Monaghan County Council to fill the vacancies created.

We would like to commend the Members of the Strategic Policy Committees, the Corporate Policy Group and the Local Community Development Committee and to acknowledge all the work that is carried out at Municipal District Level and by the various other hardworking committees. These committees are invaluable in assisting the Council in pursuing its objectives and getting through its business. The commitment of the Councillors and external members is evident from the activities outlined in the report.

We express our appreciation for the dedication and hard work of the Elected Members, the Management Team and Staff of the Council, for their continued support to the delivery of a high-quality service to the public in 2024. Much of what we do can only be achieved by working in partnership with our various stakeholders and we would like to take this opportunity to thank every one of them for their on-going support and co-operation.

We are grateful to Councillor David Maxwell, outgoing Cathaoirleach, and Councillor Pat Treanor, outgoing Leas Cathaoirleach, for their commitment and cooperation in the delivery of the Council's high-level goals in 2023/2024. We are confident that the work of the Council and the progress achieved will enhance the quality of life for the people of Monaghan.

Finally, we thank the people of County Monaghan. Your sense of pride, community spirit, leadership, entrepreneurship and volunteerism are what drive our initiatives forward. Your contributions make a significant impact on our communities.

We commend this Annual Report for adoption by the Elected Members. It provides a comprehensive overview of the Council's achievements in 2024 and highlights the extensive range of activities undertaken for the benefit of County Monaghan and beyond.



Paul Gibbons
Cathaoirleach Monaghan County Council



Robert Burns
Chief Executive of Monaghan County Council

District Map



Our Vision

**A thriving,
entrepreneurial,
and vibrant
community
supported by a
prosperous
economy and a
sustainable
environment.**

Our Mission

**Delivering high-
quality people-
centred services**

Our Values



DIGNITY & RESPECT

We treat everyone with
dignity and respect



PEOPLE- CENTRED

We put people at the
heart of all that we do



INTEGRITY

We do the right things in
the right way



INNOVATION & EXCELLENCE

We work to do things better



LEADERSHIP

We bring others on our
journey



DEMOCRACY

We represent and
serve the people



SUSTAINABILITY

We protect the future for
Monaghan



WELLBEING

We look after our people

Elected Representatives

The following are the Elected Representatives for the County of Monaghan:

BALLYBAY-CLONES MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



Cllr Seamus
COYLE (FF)



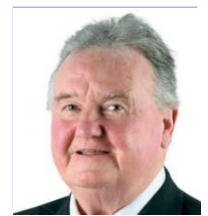
Cllr Richard
TRUELL (FG)



Cllr Sinead
FLYNN (SF)



Cllr Sean
GILILAND (FG)



Cllr Pat
TREANOR (SF)

MONAGHAN MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



Cllr Raymond
AUGHEY (FF)



Cllr Seamus
TREANOR (IND)



Cllr Seán
CONLON (SF)



Cllr Pauric
CLERKIN (FG)



Cllr Bronagh
MCAREE (SF)



Cllr Alan
JOHNSON (FG)



Cllr Niamh
MCCOOEY (SF)

CARRICKMACROSS-CASTLEBLAYNEY MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



Cllr Noel
KEELAN (SF)



Cllr Aidan
CAMPBELL (FG)



Cllr PJ
O'HANLON (FF)



Cllr Colm
CARTHY (SF)



Cllr Paul
GIBBONS (SF)



Cllr Peter
CONLON (FG)

Finance

Reconciliation of Statement of Financial Position (SoFP) and review of Statement of Comprehensive Income (SoCI)

The Finance section carry out regular reconciliations and reviews of balances on the SoFP, thus adhering to best practice recommendations. This ensures that debts are collected as quickly as possible, funding for capital projects is identified and transactions are monitored and reviewed on a timely basis, loans are reconciled to statements and fixed assets are reconciled to other available registers such as iHouse and the Property Asset Register. In addition to this, Finance carries out a quarterly analysis of actual versus budgeted revenue expenditure and income to ensure that all expenditure and income are accurately posted and are recognised in the correct period.

Cumulative Surplus

The Council achieved a cumulative surplus in 2023 of €531,313. The Council hope to retain a surplus going forward. An annual surplus is achieved through accurate budget preparation, cost reduction awareness and careful monitoring of actual spend versus budget.

Treasury Management

In order to maximise interest receivable on excess funds, Finance staff monitor the bank balance and transfer excess funds to the HFA who pay 1.5% on investments up to three months and 2% on investments over three months.

Rates Collection

Monaghan County Council's Rates collection excelled again in 2024. The final collection rate is estimated at 99%. Monaghan County Council's high rate of collection is due to early and accurate billing, experienced staff, multiple payment options for customers and use of specialist legal firms.

Reduce Rates write off

In an effort to address the level of vacant properties in urban areas, the Elected Members adopted a resolution at the Budget 2023 meeting to reduce the Rates write-off on commercial properties from 100% to 80% for 2023 (and also for 2024). This has resulted in a reduction in vacancy. Since the introduction of the write off reduction, a number of properties have been delisted, relet, converted for domestic use or are undergoing refurbishment.

Impact of Retained Fire Officer Cost

The implementation of the workplace relation commission's proposals for retained fire fighters fell to be implemented with effect from the weekly/fortnightly pay cycle closest to 1 July 2023. The agreement provided fire fighters with a fixed income starting at €18,050 per annum for new recruits. There will be a minimum crew of 12 in every fire station which necessitated the recruitment of 12 new firefighters and an assistant chief fire officer in County Monaghan. A recruitment campaign commenced in Q4 2023 and continued into 2024. The additional retained fire service costs for 2025 are estimated at approximately €609,904.

Uisce Eireann – Stranded Costs

A Memorandum of Understanding was issued during 2023 by DHLGH in relation to payments to Local Authorities for stranded costs arising from the Water Services Transformation programme. For the period 2024 to 2026 which is the period foreseen in the framework for withdrawal of local authority staff from the provision of water services, Central Management Costs (CMC) relating to Water services are recouped from DHLGH instead of Uisce Eireann as was previously the case. This has resulted in a reduction in this income stream as the majority of this recoupment will be based on 2022 CMC costs.

Budget Preparation

During Q3/Q4 2024, the Finance section prepared the 2025 annual Revenue budget. This provides for €93m of income and expenditure. Rates income is budgeted at €16.7m (ARV 0.2518) and LPT funding at €13.242m which includes 15% increase on the base rate. Budget 2025 funding has increased by 5% viz a vis budget 2024. This represents an additional €4.1m of income and expenditure for Monaghan County Council for 2025. The Budget has been prepared with an objective of providing funds for the continuation of existing service levels despite the challenges of rising costs.

Increased Cost of Business grant (ICOB) and Power up grant

As part of Budget 2024, the Government signed off on a package of €257m for the Increased Cost of Business (ICOB) Grant as a vital measure for small and medium businesses. Monaghan County Council, funded through Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE), managed the rollout of the grant to qualifying businesses. Eligible businesses received a once-off grant payment. The amount of the grant payable paid to eligible businesses was based on the value of the Commercial Rates bill the business received in 2023. Monaghan County Council processed 1,823 ICOB grants in 2024 to a value of €3.158m.

The power up grant was available to qualifying businesses as a contribution towards the rising costs faced by businesses. The grant was intended to aid businesses but not intended to directly compensate for all increases in wages, or other costs, for every business.

Monaghan County Council processed 761 Power up grants 2024 to the value of €3.044m

Housing & Building

Housing Delivery 2024

A total of 117 additional social housing units were provided in 2024. These homes were delivered through a mix of new build and acquisitions.

The Department of Housing target set for Monaghan County Council for 2024 was 57 social housing units, this target was exceeded by 105%. The new build projects were the main focus of the capital expenditure programme for 2024.

Monaghan County Council completed 40 new homes at Knockcarrick, Annyalla, 17 homes at Coill An Ri, Carrickmacross and 4 homes at Cnoc Na Griene, Tydavnet. Monaghan County Council have acquired 4 new homes at Gleaan Droimnin, Carrickmacross under Part V negotiation.

As a Local Authority we have an excellent working relationship with Approved Housing Bodies and continue to collaborate with them in the delivery of social housing units. In conjunction with Tuath Housing, 16 homes have been delivered at Kilnacloy, Monaghan and 2 An Radhairc An Bhri, Castleblayney. North and East Housing Association have delivered 7 new homes at Hall Street, Castleblayney and 10 homes at Coolshannagh, Monaghan.

In 2024 Monaghan County Council completed the purchase of 13 houses, these comprise of 4 Tenant in Situ and 9 Exit from homelessness / prevention of homelessness.

Through the Mortgage to Rent scheme a further four houses are now being managed by "Home for Life". These properties are officially recorded under the "Leasing" heading as they might eventually return to the ownership of the occupiers. However, they are currently in the ownership of "Home for Life" to allow occupiers to remain in their homes in spite of financial issues.

Casual Vacancies / Voids

Monaghan County Council dealt with 78 Casual Vacancies in 2024 at a cost of €1,322,539 and recouped €648,628 towards the costs from Department of Housing & Irish Public Bodies. The houses were prepared for reletting at an average cost of €16,955.63 each and completed in an average time of approximately 16.67 weeks, which is a small increase on 16.22 weeks in 2023. Typical reletting works are new kitchen, flooring, electrics, painting, heating system, bathroom upgrades and fencing. Monaghan County Council does not have any long-term vacant houses (Voids).

Housing Maintenance

In 2024, €1,217,405 was spent on Housing Maintenance, exceeding the budget allocation of €1,075,000 provided for response & planned general maintenance of the Council's housing stock. €102,645 was recouped from the Department of Housing and the remaining balance was covered by Internal Capital Receipts. The increase in costs was due in part to the increasing Housing Stock and also additional urgent unforeseen works during year captured by inspections.

The Housing Section received and logged 2,026 repair requests in 2024, small increase on 2023 figures of 1,904. The key areas of housing maintenance for occupied dwellings include:

1. Response Maintenance which involves responding to tenant emergencies and reported repair requests. Housing Section continues to engage with tenants to provide appropriate information in relation to these responsibilities.
2. Planned Maintenance involves the delivery of targeted programmes for specific improvement and replacement works.

In 2024 targeted planned maintenance works were focused on external works including

wastewater treatment systems, boundary replacements, window and door replacement and roof replacement.

County Council Tenancies

In 2024 Monaghan County Council had 172 new tenancies commenced plus an additional 23 persons from the Council's housing list were offered tenancies with an AHB.

Please see below tables for 2024 MCC Allocations.

Allocations by Municipal District

Monaghan County Council Properties – 2024

Clones/Ballybay	42
Monaghan	51
Carrickmacross/Castleblayney	79
TOTAL	172

Allocations by Property Type

Monaghan County Council Properties – 2024

1 Bedroom	15
2 Bedroom	72
3 Bedroom	68
4 Bedroom	15
5+ Bedroom	2
TOTAL	172

Homeless Services

In 2024, Monaghan County Council received 185 enquiries either directly from households themselves or from others on their behalf, reporting homelessness. 91 children were noted to be implicitly impacted as a result.

Following a Homeless Assessment, 33 of those households were deemed as homeless, including 2 children implicitly impacted and required a placement into Homeless Emergency Accommodation. The remaining 152 enquiries were experiencing accommodation related difficulties or were at risk of homelessness, but not homeless.

In respect of all homeless enquiries support and guidance was provided by the Council's Homeless Services. There are 6 individuals

currently engaged with the Housing First Programme in county Monaghan. They are accommodated in a mixture of Local Authority and Approved housing units and are supported by a wraparound support service provided by Peter McVerry Trust.

Traveller Accommodation

Monaghan County Council has prepared its Traveller Accommodation Programme 2025 to 2029. Traveller social housing support will be provided through the provision of Social Housing, Approved Body Housing, Traveller specific accommodation and HAP assistance.

The 2024 estimate of Traveller families living in County Monaghan is 168 families. 108 households live in a house rented from the Local Authority, 20 families live in a house purchased with the assistance of the Local Authority, 2 families live in a house acquired without any Local Authority assistance, 11 families live in private rented accommodation, 10 of these families receive support with their rent, 2 families live in Approved Bodies housing, 2 individuals live in other state supported accommodation, 11 families are sharing accommodation, 11 families are living in Traveller specific accommodation, 1 family on the roadside. The Local Authority will consider the existing and projected accommodation needs during the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2025-2029.

Housing Assistance Payment

HAP continues to play an important role as a form of social housing support for those with a long-term housing need. 104 tenancies commenced in 2024 and there was a total of 474 active HAP supported tenancies at 31st December 2024.

HAP Shared Services Centre based in Limerick City and County Council has the responsibility for all financial transactions, collection of rent from tenants and landlord payment at month end. Rental Accommodation Scheme. The Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) is a support to people who have a need for long term housing.

The total number of tenancies in receipt of RAS rent support at 31st December 2024 was 216.

66 households in Private rented accommodation and 150 households in AHB properties.

The monthly landlord rent costs for all tenancies at 31st December 2024 was €87,396.25.

Housing Grants – Private

In 2024 Monaghan County Council received an initial allocation of €1,199,930 and following requests to the Department it was increased to €1,953,903 due to the continued high up take of housing grants in the County. Housing Section approved 352 housing grant applications, paying out on 258 applications and recouping in full on 253 applications. Monaghan County Council continues to be at the top of the Departments ‘drawdown table’ for 2024, a testament to the great work being undertaken by all involved in promoting and delivering the various grant schemes.

Disabled Person Grants – LA Properties

In 2024 Monaghan County Council carried out disabled works to 26 properties, these works consisted of level access shower, ramps, handrails, stair lifts and extension. These works will enable the tenants to remain independent and self-sufficient and remain in their homes.

Climate Change

Monaghan County Council is committed to reducing the negative effects of Climate Change on its social housing stock. Monaghan County Council Housing department staff are committed to delivering the actions identified in the Monaghan County Council Climate Action Plan (2024-2029)

All social housing projects are being designed to either mitigate against or adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Monaghan County Council engages consultants to carry out Habitats Directive Screening reports, Environmental Impact screening, Terrestrial Mammal surveys and Ornithological surveys at pre-planning stage that inform the Construction Environmental plans and the Resource and Waste Management plans for housing developments.

Climate action measures including biodiversity corridors, wetlands, over kerb drainage into swales/detention basins, porous paving, grass-crete, green retaining structures, wildflower meadows and green procurement are being designed into new social housing developments.

Eco-friendly products and materials are being used by our Craftworkers and Contractors such as cleaning products, paints and fillers, mould removers and Lower Embodied Carbon solutions for building materials such as Roof Panels.

Flood Risk Screening Assessment of social housing in 15 areas carried out by McCloy Consulting in November 2024.

Energy Efficiency Works

Building on the success of the Energy Efficiency Programme in previous years, Monaghan County Council again surpassed its allocation of 68 properties from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for 2024 and delivered upgrade works to 127 properties at a cost of €4,379,779.

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage funded 98% of these costs (€4,318,000). The works included new windows and doors, internal or external wall insulation (if required) and heat pump installation. Works also include removing old, inefficient heating systems, upgrading flat roof insulation, closing existing chimneys and all other works necessary to achieve a minimum B2 Building Energy Rating (BER).

Following the success of 2024, the allocation for 2025 has increased to 101 properties but Monaghan County Council aim to surpass this with another ambitious programme. The programme of works for 2025 will continue to target the poorest performing housing stock but will have a mix of properties from across a range of Building Energy Ratings to ensure homes which need significant expenditure are balanced out by those needing lesser spend ensuring the best possible return on the average funding provided.

Housing and Disability Steering Group (HDSG)

As part of the role of the Housing and Disability Steering Group, Monaghan County Council has continued to work with all agencies in the provision of services to people with disabilities.

As a Housing Authority, focus has been placed on the provision of suitable quality housing to those applicants and tenants wishing to be accommodated in more appropriate housing. Subgroups of the HDSG have been established with the HSE Disability sections i.e. Mental Health, Physical/Sensory and Intellectual.

MCC carried out a full inventory of the Social Housing Waiting List and a number of meetings were held with the various HSE Disability Sub-Groups to identify and prioritise those individuals/households in need of specific housing to meet their disability needs. As a result of this Housing Section completed 58 new allocations to our own stock for people with disabilities and a further 15 were accommodated within AHB stock. This was a substantial increase from 2023 and exceeded our target of 20% to 37% of total new tenancies (MCC & AHB).

Health and Safety Unit

Operational Plan:

In line with the Annual Service Delivery Plan (ASDP) developed for 2024, the Head of Health & Safety developed the 2024 HSU Operational Plan. This plan set out the work targets to be achieved in 2024. The Head of H&S reviewed the Operational Plan on a weekly basis to ensure achievement of the plan. The operational plan was successfully achieved (some work contained in the original plan was replaced with higher priority unplanned work required).

The following is a summary of the main elements of work conducted by the Head of H&S in 2024:

- Annual Service Delivery Plan developed on time and implemented.
- Operational Plan developed on time and delivered.
- Corporate Plan Progress Report issued on time.
- Corporate Risk Register reviewed, updated quarterly and report issued.
- A detailed review of the HSMS was conducted in Jun and Dec 2024.
- Corporate Safety Statement reviewed/updated three times in 2024.
- Two H&S Procedures were reviewed / updated.
- HSSP29 Electric Bike Procedure developed and issued.
- HSSP06 Violence and Aggression at Work Procedure developed and

issued to the Management Team for review / approval.

- Two Section H&S Manual Audits were conducted in 2024 (Finance and IT Sections). Detailed reports along with a summary reports were issued for each audit.
- HSU Monthly Reports issued on time.
- Attendance at five LASOG Meetings and (including the National Conference).
- 15 x Safety Briefings developed and delivered to all employees.
- National Workers' Memorial Day 2024 took place on Sunday 28 April 2024. On Monday 29 April 2024 information was issued to staff and members of the public via social media and email to observe the day.
- Daily events delivered for Health and Safety Week in October 2024.
- Bi-monthly defibrillator testing, maintenance and cleaning carried out.
- New Defibrillator fitted to Peace Campus.
- Safety Link Newsletters were developed and issued in June and December 2024 with positive feedback from employees.
- The Health & Safety Authority conducted an unannounced inspection of the Glen County Offices in August. A Report of

Inspection was issued to Monaghan County Council following the visit by the HSA Inspector. The Head of H&S co-ordinated the response to the inspector and issued a detailed report.

Inspection Programme:

The following table outlines the spot checks completed by the Head of H&S (no target was set as checks were conducted on a time allowed basis). Table below lists inspections conducted:

Inspections Conducted:	Number Conducted:
Roadworks/ Bridge Repair	21
Hedge/Grass Maintenance	07
Fencing Construction	05
Housing Construction	03
Playground Construction	03
Litter Pick and Collection	02
Landfill	01
Total:	42

The building assessment for the new Peace Campus was conducted. This was a time-consuming assessment that produced an extensive detailed H&R Assessment Report. This assessment comprised of the main building (including grounds and car parks), new library and new museum.

Hazard and Risk Assessment:

The following table outlines Hazard and Risk Assessments completed by the HSU in 2024:

Assessment Type:	Number Conducted:
Playparks and Fitness Equipment	29
Building	15
Depot	03
Basketball Court and Pitches	03
Graveyard	01
Dog Park	01
Total:	52

Water Services

Uisce Éireann Transformation

Uisce Éireann is responsible for the operation of all public water and wastewater services including:

- Management of national water and wastewater assets
- Maintenance of the water and wastewater system
- Investment and planning
- Managing capital projects
- Customer care and billing

Uisce Éireann is also responsible for all of the capital investment decisions and implementation of the capital programme delivery across the country.

With the Master Co-operation agreement signed by Monaghan Co. Council and Uisce Éireann in 2023, Uisce Éireann assumed responsibility for the management and direction of all eligible water services staff in Monaghan County Council.

Many members of staff have transitioned permanently to Uisce Éireann and Monaghan County Council would like to thank these members of staff for all their hard work over the years and wish them continued success in their careers.

Monaghan Co. Council continues to have oversight of the Rural Water Program, which is unaffected by the transition of public services to Uisce Éireann.

Rural Water Programme

The Rural Water Programme in County Monaghan is administered by Monaghan County Council. The programme provides measures to address deficiencies in:

- Group Water Schemes
- Group Sewerage Schemes
- Private Water Supplies where no alternative group or public supply is available.

- Private Domestic Wastewater Treatment systems (DWWTs) where the applicant qualifies under the Housing (Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems Financial Assistance) Regulations 2020.
- Private Water Supplies where the applicant qualifies under the Housing (Domestic Lead Remediation Grant) Regulations 2022.

Subsidies

There are 12 group water schemes in the county. The 12 Group Water Schemes supply approximately 43% of the population of County Monaghan. An integral part of maintaining and improving the quality and reliability of rural water supplies is the annual subsidy, administered by Monaghan Co. Council, towards the operational and management costs of group water schemes supplying water for domestic use. The aim of the subsidy is to ensure principles of equity of treatment and equivalent financial support equally between households on public water supplies (Uisce Éireann) and those on group water schemes.

€4.5m in subsidy payments were made to twelve group water schemes in 2024 by Monaghan Co. Council.



White Lough Stranooden GWS

Multi Annual Rural Water Programme (MARWP) 2024-2026

In early 2024 The Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage announced the launch of the next cycle of the Multi-annual

Rural Water Programme which covers the three-year period from 2024 to 2026.

The Programme provides for €125 million of capital investment in rural water infrastructure under eight different funding measures.

The measures of the 2024-2026 funding cycle reflect the key challenges currently facing the rural water sector - from catchment to consumers (source – treatment - distribution). A key objective is to prevent water contamination and ensure that drinking water is safe and meets quality parameters of the Drinking Water Regulations on a consistent long-term basis.

Monaghan Co. Council's Rural Water Section submitted a total of 56 bids under its MARWP 2024-2026 application, seeking funding across a range of measures, including Source Protection, Capital replacement, Water Treatment Improvements, Improvements to Network infrastructure, Extensions to networks and Innovative Demonstration Projects.

An Expert Panel established by the Department evaluates MARWP applications and makes recommendations to the Department on the suitability of projects for funding, based on the objective criteria set out in the Framework document. To date, the Expert Panel has completed their work for five of the eight measures in the programme. A total allocation of €685,471 was notified for County Monaghan, in response to some of the smaller bids submitted. This allocation is to assist Group Water Schemes (GWS) in the completion of Safe Yield Assessments of their sources, Completion of source protection plans, Cryptosporidium risk assessments and to assist in capital replacement in treatment plants.

In addition, some of Monaghan's larger bids are still under consideration by the Expert Panel. The Rural Water section, in collaboration with GWSs and the National Federation of Group Water Schemes, submitted further information that was sought

by the panel, and now awaits the decisions of the Expert Panel. The Panel is continuing its work in its evaluation of the applications received under the remaining three measures.



Corduff/Corracharra GWS Treated Water Reservoirs, Reservoirs are in need of repair and have been added to the MARWP 2024-2026

Well Grants

In 2024 applicants could claim €1,000 towards treatment of their private water supply, €3,000 towards the upgrade/remedial works and €5,000 for the installation of a new well-private water supply.

The purpose of the Wells grant scheme is to assist households in rural areas that are dependent on a private water supply (individual well) for their household use, by financially assisting them where they incur capital expenditure, to carry out improvements to the supply to ensure that the water supply is safe for consumption.

In 2024 Rural Water Section has inspected, reviewed, and approved a total of 21 well grants.

In 2024 a total of €22,552 in grant aid was paid to applicants towards upgrade/remedial works or the installation of treatment systems to their private water supply.

Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems

Under the Water Services Amendment Act 2012 Monaghan County Council undertakes inspections of Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems (DWWTSs). On 1st January 2024, the Domestic Wastewater Treatment

System Grant schemes were updated. The grant increased from €5,000 to €12,000 and the qualification criteria changed, removing a previous requirement for domestic systems to be registered. The grant is available towards the repair, upgrade, or replacement of certain domestic wastewater treatment systems. The grant funding is 85% of the cost of the repairs to the system or a new system, up to a maximum of €12,000. There are 3 different types of septic tanks grant schemes in Ireland, **The septic tank grant is not a universal grant. To qualify for grant the household must meet the criteria for one of the categories below:**

- DWWTS grant under the National Inspection Plan - In order to be eligible for this grant, works to the DWWTS must arise directly from an inspection carried out under the National Inspection Plan, and the subsequent issue of an Advisory Notice to the householder by the local authority. Monaghan County Council is required to carry out a minimum of 41 inspections annually, under the EPA's National Inspection Plan. The Council's inspections are targeted in areas where there is the greatest risk to human health and water quality from DWWTS. Monaghan County Council will carry out additional inspections where there is evidence that individual DWWTS or clusters of DWWTS are causing particular water quality problems in an area.
- DWWTS grant in Prioritised Areas for Action - In order to be eligible for this grant, the DWWTS serving a house must be situated in a Prioritised Area for Action in accordance with the current River Basin Management Plan for Ireland, and the applicant must have received a letter from the Local Authority Waters Programme Office (LAWPRO) confirming eligibility to apply for a grant.

- DWWTS grant in High Status Objective Catchment Areas - In order to be eligible for this grant, the DWWTS serving a house must be situated in a High-Status Objective Catchment Area in accordance with the current River Basin Management Plan for Ireland. The applicant can apply to the local authority for a DWWTS grant.

In 2024, under the National Inspection Plan (NIP) 48 domestic wastewater treatment system (DWWTS) inspections were undertaken by Rural Water staff, resulting in 16 compliance notices and 32 advisory notices being issued to householders. 8 grants amounting to €74,149 were paid to eligible applicants for remedial/improvement works to DWTTS in 2024.

Grant applications relating to 2024 advisory notice requirements will continue to be submitted in 2025 by householders, as improvement works are completed and inspected.



Example of works carried out on a Domestic Wastewater Treatment System

Drinking Water Compliance

In 2024 the compliance rate in Monaghan for private group water schemes and small private supplies was 99.1% for 1621 parameters analysed.

There were 22 exceedances noted on private water supplies in the year and the HSE was consulted where relevant. The main exceedances were for THMs and Manganese.

The 22 exceedances were identified through Monaghan Co. Council's own sampling programme, subsequently notified by the lab, and then to the scheme. Among the corrective actions taken by the schemes to close out exceedances were repeat sampling to verify compliance, investigations into treatment plant processes and escalation to a site audit if necessary.

In addition to the regulatory sampling program, there is also a program of raw water monitoring of the group water scheme sources. This is in addition to the daily samples taken by the schemes themselves. All raw water samples taken by MCC in 2024 provide additional information in respect of substances of interest such as herbicides and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH). Additional Raw water monitoring for 2 schemes that are undergoing assessments for upgrades where also completed in 2024. This data will be used to contribute towards reporting when required.

There was 1 'Do Not Consume' notice issued on a small private supply in December 2024 to a small Primary School. This notice will remain in place until remedial works are carried out on the well. The notice relates to excessive manganese and iron levels above public health guidance values.

In addition to the sampling and monitoring work as outlined above Monaghan County Council carried out 4 audits of private GWS treatment plants and several visits to some small private supplies during 2024. The visits were selected on priority, based on their last date of inspection or a particular water quality issue.

The audits identified some operational issues regarding plant performance, plant processes, and available treatment. Some of the recommendations detailed in the audit reports and being implemented by the GWSs include:

- Installation of additional coagulation, flocculation & clarification CFC controls.
- Review of alarms and inhibits.
- Review of monitoring carried out at plant and network.

In 2024 a comprehensive review was carried out of the county's public buildings (schools, creches, community buildings) and commercial premises to identify additional Small Private Supplies (SPS) that may not be on the Local Authority's register. Two premises were identified and added to the SPS sampling programme. The SPS register will be reviewed and updated regularly.

Asset Transfer

Section 12 of the Water Services (No. 2) Act 2013 provides for the transfer of Water Services Assets to Uisce Éireann. The legislative provisions have been given effect by Ministerial Order. To date 90 folio numbers have transferred to Uisce Éireann. An additional 22 are awaiting a Ministerial Vesting Order.

There are approximately 46 folios yet to be transferred as some assets contain more than one folio.

Detailed work is ongoing preparing supporting material for the transfer of these assets including the subdivision of folios and associated mapping, the registration of unregistered sites, the establishment of legal rights of way and the resolution of outstanding title anomalies.

Environmental Protection

During 2024, the Environmental Services section of Monaghan County Council was again tasked with implementing EU and National Environmental Policy and legislation aimed at ensuring the promotion of the Environment.

As per Goal Four “A Sustainable Future” of the Monaghan County Council Corporate Plan 2024-2029, the work of the Environmental Services Unit in 2024 was focused on the implementation of awareness, regulatory, and enforcement work programmes in the areas of water quality, air quality, litter, and waste management in line with national environmental enforcement priorities.

Water Quality

During 2024 there were 5 full time environmental officers working in water quality. Two of these positions were funded by the DHLGH under the 2024 National Agricultural Inspection Program (NAIP). In December 2023, the National Water priority works areas relating to water quality were communicated to all local authorities through correspondence issued by the EPA.

The water priorities on which our water quality work in 2024 was focused on included:

- Pressures from Agriculture (slurry/soiled water collection and storage)
- Pressures from Agriculture (slurry and fertiliser spreading)
- Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems / Septic Tanks
- Discharge Licences/Misconnections
- Local Priorities and Water Quality Monitoring

Under the 2024 RMCEI Enforcement and inspection plan that was prepared in February in line with these national priorities, Monaghan County Council’s water quality team continued its program of water quality sampling of designated rivers and lakes in

conjunction with the EPA, carried out investigative assessment work on other selected river and lake waterbodies, undertook a comprehensive farm inspection program, monitored non designated bathing waters in the county, investigated a significant number of water pollution incidents, regulated effluent discharges through licensing, and worked with the Local Authorities Waters Program (LAWPRO) with the aim of improving water quality in areas designated as priority areas for action under the Water Action Plan 2024 -A River Basin Management Plan for Ireland. This national plan sets out the actions that Ireland is taking with the aim of improving water quality and achieving ‘good’ ecological status in water bodies (rivers lakes, estuaries and coastal waters).



Water Quality Team assessing water quality in River

Some of the inspection work carried out by our water team in 2024 included the following:

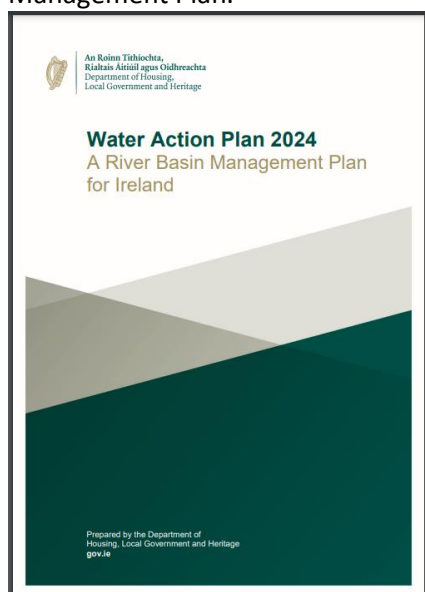
- 131 water pollution complaints investigated.
- 117 Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) farm inspections carried out.
- 240 samples taken as part of Water Framework Directive monitoring on rivers and lakes.

- 251 Investigative River samples taken.
- 78 Discharge licence inspections carried out.
- Assessed approximately 150 planning inspections from a water quality point of view.
- 42 bathing water inspections carried out at non designated bathing water locations in the County.

During 2024 our water quality team further progressed the Lough Muckno Road to Recovery project. Under this phase of the project the aim was to complete a Paleolimnological study of the lake sediment to reference trophic changes and predict lake recovery times. Sampling work on the Lough Muckno project was completed during 2024 and a final report on the findings is to be issued in Q1 2025.

Initial findings from the project suggest that even after the external loads of phosphorus have been reduced sufficiently from tributaries feeding into Lough Muckno, given the loading contribution from the existing lake sediment, it is expected that it will take a minimum period of 12 years for any improvements in water quality to take place.

Following a formal request from Monaghan County Council to the DHLGH, Lough Muckno is now included as a “Catchment Project Area for Action” in the new national River Basin Management Plan.



Waste Enforcement and Regulations

During 2024 our RMCEI Environmental work plan in waste was prepared in line with the National enforcement priorities (NEPs) which were communicated to all local authorities via correspondence issued by the EPA in December 2023.

This correspondence set out the following waste priorities for 2024:

- Tackling significant illegal waste activity.
- Construction and demolition Waste.
- End of Life Vehicles and metals.
- Household and Commercial waste.
- Producer Responsibilities.

During 2024 there were three full time Waste Enforcement Officers and Monaghan County Council recouped €192,000 from the Department of Environment Climate and Communications for costs associated with waste enforcement activities including staff costs. In addition, there was one full-time environmental patrol warden.

Whilst a significant portion of the enforcement staff workload was involved in dealing with the National Enforcement Priority (NEP) work areas, staff were also engaged on other activities such as the investigation of waste complaints, the processing of Certificate of Registration and Waste Facility Permit applications, the assessment of planning applications to ensure waste management compliance, and ensuring that waste activities taking place within County Monaghan were being carried out in compliance with waste management legislation through the appropriate certification and permitting regime.



Unauthorised waste site investigated by waste team

In delivering on these priorities in 2024 Monaghan County Council completed the following:

- Carried out over 1,000 inspections, including 99 waste facility permit inspections and 28 Certificate of Registration inspections, 74 Producer Responsibility Initiative inspections, and 18 Multi-Agency Inspections with An Garda Síochána.
- Investigated 375 waste complaints.
- Initiated 257 enforcement actions including the issuing of 114 warning letters, 37 notices under the Waste Management Act, and 8 Fixed Penalty Notices under the Waste Collection Permit Regulations.
- Assessed approximately 150 planning applications from a waste management perspective.



Waste Enforcement Team participating in Multi-agency Inspection.

During 2024, the dumping of diesel laundering waste remained problematic with 20 incidents of diesel wash recorded during the year, again primarily in the south of the county near the Northern Ireland border. The cost incurred in dealing with diesel wash waste in 2024 was €99,940 which was subsequently recouped from the Department of the Environment Climate and Communications.

During 2024 work was completed on the construction a new storage compound at Scotch Corner for the temporary storage of diesel wash waste pending its subsequent

removal offsite for subsequent treatment at a



licensed hazardous waste facility. The erection

of the storage compound will result in less contaminated liquid waste being generated on site which in turn will result in a reduction in the overall treatment costs. The construction of the compound was funded because of a successful grant application lodged by Environmental Services to the Department of Environment Climate and Communications.

During 2024, Environmental Services also secured €110K to deliver a range of projects under the Anti-Dumping Initiative program. Projects delivered included:

- Cleanup of waste dumped in River Blackwater at Moybridge.



Waste In River Blackwater prior to Cleanup Project

- Cleanup at Foxfield estate.
- Subsidised Bulky good Collection Month at Carrickmacross and Scotch Corner Recycling Centres.
- An agricultural Hazardous waste collection event at Scotch Corner.



Hazardous Agri waste being collected from Scotch Corner

Air Regulatory work

In relation to air enforcement during 2024 over 60 routine air quality inspections were conducted under the Solid Fuels Regulations, the Petroleum Vapour Regulations, the Solvent Regulations, the Air Pollution Act and The Decorative Paints Regulations. By the end of 2024, the following facilities were regulated under the following air regulations.

- 27 car-refinishers were authorised under the Decorative Paint Regulations.
- 5 dry-cleaning facilities and one industrial premises were authorised under the Solvent Regulations.
- 27 petrol stations were authorised under the Petroleum Vapour Regulations.
- 1 macadam manufacturing facility licenced under the Air Pollution Act.



Environment Staff who appeared on the Wider View on Northern Sound discussing the Solid Fuel Regulations.

Waste Management Facilities.

During 2024 Monaghan County Council continued to operate a comprehensive recycling facility infrastructure network in the county comprising of two recycling centres at Scotch Corner and Carrickmacross and 26

strategically placed bring centres located in our county towns and villages.



Carrickmacross Bring Facility

The two recycling centres are operated under a concession contract, which generates income for the Council. This contract remains in place until 2027.

In relation to the landfill facility at Scotch Corner further small-scale infrastructural improvements were progressed including surface water management works, leachate management works, and additional groundwater and surface water investigations.

During 2024 monitoring and sampling works continued to ensure compliance with our waste licence for the Scotch Corner facility. In October 2024, a team of inspectors from the Environmental Protection Agency visited the facility to conduct an annual environmental audit. This was a positive audit, and the Agency noted the excellent work being conducted by our landfill team in striving to ensure full compliance with our licence. No non-compliances were identified during the audit.

During 2024 our team in collaboration with the council's horticulturist worked closely with Coillte and the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine to progress a native tree planting project on approximately 8 acres of land at Scotch Corner. A planting application was prepared in late 2024 for subsequent submission to DAFM and simultaneously a Technical Amendment was lodged with the Environmental Protection Agency in respect of the proposed Tree planting project. It is hoped that both applications will be approved during 2025, and that planting could commence on site as soon as Q4 2025.

Historical Landfills.

During 2024 Monaghan County Council secured €50k funding from the Department of Environment Climate and Communications to progress further works Under the Waste Management (Certification of Historic Unlicensed Waste Disposal and Recovery Activity) Regulations 2008.

The regulations apply to closed landfill sites that were previously operated by local authorities during the period 1977 to 1997. Under these regulations local authorities are required to conduct an environmental assessment of the closed landfill sites, seek a waste authorisation from the EPA for each site and subsequently carry out remediation works at each site. Most of the costs incurred by Local Authorities can be recouped from DECC.

Progress made in 2024 in respect of these closed landfill sites included the following:

- Securing of Sec 177AE Planning approval from An Bord Pleanála for remediation works at the Killycronaghan closed landfill site outside Smithboro.
- Completion of site investigation works and preparation of draft Certificate of Authorisation application for the Tiragarvan closed landfill site outside Carrickmacross.
- Submission of Sec 177AE planning application to An Bord Pleanála for remediation works at Killycard closed landfill outside Castleblayney.
- Reply to further information request from the EPA in respect of the old, closed landfill adjacent to the licenced landfill at Scotch Corner.

Litter Control and Environmental Awareness

In 2024, the Environmental Patrol Warden and the Environmental Awareness Officer continued patrolling, investigating, promoting, supporting, funding, and raising awareness of new and existing environmental initiatives with tidy towns, schools, community groups, and other stakeholders. Projects rolled out in 2024 include: -



Relove Fashion is a Sustainable Fashion competition open to young people of secondary school age across the Republic of Ireland.

The aim of the programme is to create a sustainable and wearable outfit using clothing from the treasure troves of charity shops, swap shops, or reused items already available at home. There was a huge response with 71 Students having now received sewing machine training.

Tidy Town Support

The Environment Section continues to provide litter pickers, bags, and skips to community groups who participated in the promotion of clean up events e.g., Spring and Autumn Clean ups.

Environment Fund 2024

We supported local community groups to enhance and maintain public spaces. The total budget for 2024 was €70,000 and 86 groups received funding under the scheme.

An Taisce – Green Schools

We continued our support and promotion to both primary and secondary schools through the Green Schools Programme with the awarding of flags to successful schools in 2024 at a regional award ceremony in Dundalk.

RepairMyStuff.ie

Monaghan County Council continues its collaboration with the EPA on repairmystuff.ie website through the national stakeholder body

called the National Reuse & Repair Network which aims to

- Build reuse and repair skills within the population
- Remove barriers to reuse and repair
- Support effective communications on reuse and repair

IBAL Survey 2024

We have sustained our success in 2023 as Monaghan Town continues to rank top 5 on the IBAL ladder and currently sits in 3rd place out of the 40 Towns and Cities surveyed in 2024.

Monaghan Town received “Cleaner than European Norms” ranking in the survey.

Green Business Hub

Monaghan has been selected on a pilot programme to provide intervention through the Monaghan Green Business Hub project. The aim of this project will be to work with businesses and secondary schools to support staff within these entities.

- To prevent and reduce waste generated, including food waste.
- To segregate waste efficiently into general waste, recycling, and food waste
- Reduce littering.

Graveyard Grant 2024

A new checklist to streamline the approval of funding for 10 graveyards in County Monaghan was drawn up and approved by the Heritage Officer in 2024. This new checklist was used by the EAO in determining allocations from the Graveyard Grant 2024. To raise awareness of their obligations regarding graveyard conservation, the “*Care and Conservation of Graveyards*” Booklet has been circulated to each of the 10 grant recipients in 2024.

Green Your Festival Initiative

Monaghan Co. Council has now rolled out its “Green Your Festival” initiative. We have provided signage to encourage festivals to provide 3-way waste stations at various locations during festivals. The scheme was

piloted at the Muckno Mania Festival in July 2024. It has also been implemented in the



Castleblayney Show, Blayney Faughs Festival and The Monaghan Street Food Festival.

Going forward, all festivals under the remit of Monaghan County Council will be required to provide waste stations rather than one-off bins for the duration of their festivities.

Clones Youth Reach

The Environmental Awareness Officer and the Engineering Staff of Clones/Ballybay MD have been working closely with Clones Youth Reach Group to design and produce an outdoor vape disposal bin to tackle the issue of litter caused by vapes and encourage safe disposal.

Funding for this project was secured through the Cavan/Monaghan Science Festival Funding stream which has reached out to community groups to become more engaged with the festival.

The group has been working on this project for some time and their findings formed part of the Family STEM Day during Monaghan Science Week in November, 2024.

Picker Pals Programme



Monaghan County Council is delighted to announce that 22 schools in the County have signed up to the Picker

Pals Initiative 2024/25. The programme is aimed at 6–9-year-olds and is focused on

stewardship, learning and fun. The programme is a 3 step roll out: -

- Classrooms receive the Picker Pack
- Each week a different child brings home the Picker Pack
- Children share their stories with their classmates

We are proud to say that every school in the County who expressed an interest in joining the programme has been facilitated though funding provided by both the Department and Monaghan County Council.

Litter Awareness Campaign

Environmental Services Section has been engaged in an awareness campaign to highlight the problems surrounding illegal dumping and fly tipping throughout the county.

The following ad has been circulated in the media and on social media sites and we have been actively encouraging members of the public to come forward and report any incidences of illegal dumping they observe.



Additional Awareness campaigns which were worth noting for 2024 are listed below:

- Roll out of waste segregation stations to all MCC Corporate Buildings

- Burning of Agricultural Waste Awareness Drive - Monaghan County Council launched a campaign to make all farmers aware of the prohibition on burning agricultural waste.

Dog Control and Veterinary Service

The Council employs one full-time Dog Warden for the county. Shelter facilities for the detention and care of stray and unwanted dogs are provided on behalf of Monaghan County Council by Carrick Dog Shelter in Lisdoonan.

The number of dogs admitted to the Dog Pound in 2024 was 456, all but 2 of these dogs were either reclaimed or rehomed to members of the public or dog rescues. 2 dogs were put to sleep on suspicion that they had attacked sheep.

The number of dogs licenced in Monaghan in 2024 was 5,888, which is a slight increase on the number licenced in 2023 – 5,847. Approximately one third of licences were bought online. The Council continued its advertising campaign to highlight the danger of straying dogs to sheep.

Finally, the transfer of Local Authority Veterinary Services to the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine (DAFM) occurred on the 1st January 2025. The service contract between Monaghan County Council and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland to provide official food controls ended on 31st December 2024. Brendan Smyth, County Veterinary Inspector, has given exemplary service for over 20 years to Monaghan County Council and we wish him well in pastures new with DAFM.

Climate Action Unit



Monaghan County Council Climate Action Plan (2024-2029)



The Climate Action Plan was adopted unanimously by councillors at the February 2024 full council meeting. The plan, developed through extensive consultation with stakeholders was prepared to meet the increasing challenge of climate change for our county.

To secure a sustainable future for the citizens of Monaghan, the 5-year plan contains over 150 climate actions across the 5 themes of: Governance, Built Environment & Transport, Natural Environment, Communities & Sustainability.

Four key targets of the plan are:

- 50% improvement in the Council's energy efficiency by 2030.
- 51% reduction in the Council's greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.
- To make Monaghan a climate resilient County, by reducing the impacts of

future climate change-related events; and

- To actively engage and inform our communities on climate action

Examples of actions the council completed during 2024 are:

- Embed Climate Action into all Council plans, policies and strategies. ✓
- Procure 100% renewable electricity. ✓
- Complete a Feasibility Study for Alternative Fuels for Council HGVs ✓
- Retrofit social housing to achieve a minimum Building Energy Rating of B2. ✓
- Establish a cross departmental DZ Taskforce to lead & drive the DZ implementation Plan. ✓
- Hold an annual one-stop-shop event to promote retrofitting of private buildings ✓
- Empower communities to achieve their sustainability and climate goals through climate-related educational and awareness programmes ✓



Council wide Climate Action Team

To ensure that delivery is timely, the implementation of the Climate Action Plan is monitored by the Climate Action Unit via an in-house monitoring system. The cross

departmental Climate Action Team meets quarterly to drive the implementation of the Council's Climate Action Plan. These meetings are attended by the Senior Management team in conjunction with representatives from all council functions working on climate action.

The implementation of the plan is a corporate priority for the council and depends on the collective efforts of all sections of the organisation. The collaborative spirit will continue as the team meets quarterly to review progress, tackle obstacles, and seize new opportunities.

LGMA 2024 Climate Action KPI data collection



The Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) Climate Action KPI data collection is used to track, measure and report on progress in delivering effective climate action at local authority level across the country.

The Climate Action Unit completed the 2024 return by the end of January 2025 deadline. The submitted report demonstrated that considerable progress was made in progressing the measures and actions contained within the Climate Action Plan.

As of the end of 2024, 60 of the plans 153 actions were completed, 51 in progress with 42 yet to start. (47 of the completed actions are annual, which means they have been completed for year 1 and will be worked on continuously each year).

Community Climate Action Fund



Glaslough Development Association – installation of solar panels

A total of seventeen groups in the county are funded as part of the community climate action programme. In 2024 funding of €392,000 was secured to support 11 local climate action projects across County Monaghan.

In addition, nearly €398,000 was secured for the Shared Island Climate Action initiative to support collaboration between 6 Monaghan communities and their counterparts in Northern Ireland, fostering collective efforts to meet climate and energy targets across the island.

Funded by the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications, the projects focus on the climate action themes of energy, transport, food & waste, shopping and recycling, and local environment and climate action.

The overall objective of the Community Climate Action Programme is to support and empower communities, in partnership with Monaghan County Council, to shape and build low carbon and sustainable communities in a coherent way to contribute to national climate and energy targets.



Clontibret O'Neills GAA – installation of water refill station

In December the first drawdown claim under the fund was made by Monaghan County Council to the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications.

There were five groups that had completed elements of their climate action projects by that time.

Works included installation of solar panels and battery storage, water refill stations, composting bins, wall insulation and purchasing of equipment for a community garden.



Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council - community garden elements

Climate Action Week 2024

14 – 18th October 2024



Monaghan County Council Leading on Climate Action

Monaghan County Council hosted its first Climate Action Week from 14th – 18th October.

Monaghan Climate Action Week offered a range of ways for people to connect, learn, share, and engage with initiatives and activities which aimed to build a brighter future for everyone.



Launch of Climate Action Week with school poster competition

Twenty events were held over the week with over 600 attendees in total. Events ranged from biodiversity & sustainability workshops, information on green business grants & supports, to climate conversations with all ages.

Monaghan Climate Action Week was designed to inspire action and drive positive changes at local level and to highlight some of the initiatives underway across our County.

The week's events aimed to raise awareness on climate actions and measures we can all take at a personal and local level.

Retrofit Roadshow in Monaghan Town



Images from Retrofit Roadshow

The Climate Action Unit partnered with Monaghan Institute (CMETB) to host the Retrofit Roadshow from the 30th of September - 2nd October. Raising public awareness and engagement on Climate Action is a key component of the Monaghan County Council Climate Action Plan.

There was good interest from the public in the no-nonsense practical advice on offer at the Retrofit Roadshow. The roadshow consisted of a fully equipped mobile Nearly Zero Energy Building (NZEBS) unit, (an initiative of LOETB & Mount Lucas training facility) which provided advice and training to the public on energy upgrades and retrofitting.

The retrofit rig was located in the car park of Monaghan Institute where participants had the opportunity to learn about the principles and practices needed to effectively retrofit homes to reduce energy demand and carbon emissions while improving comfort and saving money.

The public drop-in clinics proved very popular while an additional 30 people availed of workshops over the three-day event that included: Introduction to Circular Economy, Retrofit for Homeowners and NZEB Fundamentals.

County Heritage Office

The new Heritage Officer commenced the position at the beginning of 2024 and her main focus throughout 2024 has been the implementation of Monaghan's Biodiversity and Heritage Strategic Plan 2020-2025. The Heritage Council supports the activities of the Heritage Section with funding towards the implementation of actions contained within the County Heritage Plan as well as outreach and awareness support and coordination of the National Heritage Week event.

The Heritage Office has a Clerical Officer who provides admin support for both the Biodiversity and Heritage Officers.



The Heritage office sits within the Directorate of Climate Action, Environment and Water Services.

The Heritage Office continued to deliver heritage services, implement heritage and biodiversity policy and practice locally and coordinate and deliver heritage and biodiversity awareness and events in the county as well as administering and delivering funded heritage and biodiversity projects.

Funding was awarded from various sources including the Heritage Council, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, and Creative Monaghan towards the implementation of the following projects.

Heritage Forum

The County Monaghan Heritage Forum is a multi-stakeholder forum with representatives from civil society, elected representatives, state agencies and organisations and Monaghan County Council staff. The secretariat is provided by the Monaghan Heritage Office. Its' chairperson is Kevin Mulligan.

The forum advises on the development and implementation of the County Monaghan Biodiversity and Heritage Strategic Plan and will be a major driver behind the creation of a new County Heritage Plan for 2026-2030. The forum met on its usual quarterly basis in 2024.

Community Monuments Fund

This scheme from the National Monuments Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage is administered by the Heritage Office.

The fund is for the care, conservation, maintenance, protection and promotion of archaeological monuments. Two applications for funding were successful in 2024.

1. Old Errigal Truagh

The old church ruin at Errigal Truagh is dedicated to Saint Meallán a seventh century saint from County Down. The church and other associated monuments are on the record of monuments and places held by the National Monuments Service of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and as such are protected under National Monuments Legislation.

In follow up to conservation works carried out under the Community Monuments Fund in 2022 and 2023 a further phase of work was funded to clear vegetation from the Singleton and Anketell burial enclosures and to provide a condition report and specifications for their consolidation and conservation.

The Singleton and Anketell burial enclosures belonged to two important landowner families in the area. They date to the 19th century and feature detailed ironwork.

2. Tydavnet old graveyard Conservation Management Plan

Funding was also awarded for the creation of a conservation management plan for Tydavnet old graveyard, and a community workshop took place to invite the views of the local community in creating the plan.



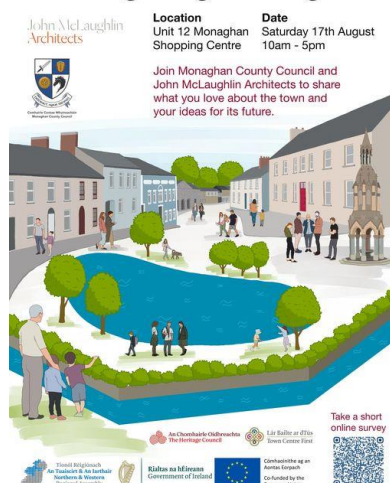
HTI Historic Towns Initiative

The Heritage Section was awarded €50,000 funding from the Heritage Council through the Historic Towns Initiative for the development of a Heritage Led Regeneration Plan for Monaghan Town.

John McLaughlin Architects Ltd were appointed to deliver this plan and working closely with the Heritage Officer and the Regeneration Team they consulted widely to create a comprehensive plan which includes a set of prioritised actions.



Reimagining Monaghan



Heritage Council- County Heritage Plan Funding

The Heritage Officer applied for and was successful in gaining €37,500 funding from the Heritage Council for the Implementation of the County Heritage Plan. Through this the Heritage Section have been able to deliver several projects including the Heritage Week Grant Scheme, The Field Names Pilot Project, Publishing the Holy Wells Book and the fifth series of Heritage Podcasts as well as awareness and community outreach.

Pilot Field Names Project

This pilot project was a huge success and saw several workshops and lots of outreach and collection activity across the county. Grace Moloney of Clogher Historical Society was appointed as coordinator and oversaw the work of community groups at Corduff/Raferagh, Doohamlat and Tyholland. Over 1300 names were collected in the pilot phase and these have been uploaded to Meitheal Logainm and a report produced, and it is hoped that this project can continue in the years to come subject to funding.



Outreach

Heritage at the Heart Podcasts.

Funded by the Heritage Council, a fifth series of podcasts on heritage and nature in Monaghan was presented by the Heritage Office and recorded onsite. They present interviews with local people, custodians, and heritage specialists, with lots of lively discussions and stories about the places and their value. Each podcast is accompanied by specially commissioned music by distinguished Monaghan composer Michael Gallen. The podcasts are available on all usual podcast platforms and the Heritage Section of the council website.

Series 4:

Episode 1 – The Plunkett Kenny Vault with Larry McDermott

Episode 2 – Mullan Mills

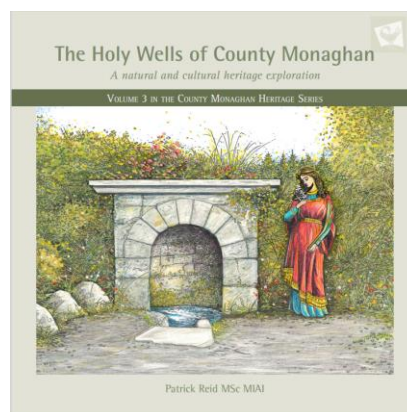
Episode 3 – Shanco Church

Episode 4 – A lost route from Clogher to Clones

Episode 5 – Killeevan Abbey

Holy Wells

A previously commissioned holy wells survey and report for County Monaghan by Patrick Reid was published as the third volume in the Monaghan Heritage Series. This is a fantastic addition to the series and is being launched in February 2025.



Heritage Week 2024

A very successful Heritage Week was run by the Heritage Office from August 17-25th. The Heritage Office coordinated and organised and contributed to a packed schedule which saw over fifty events delivered over the two-week period. The theme this year was Connections, Routes and Networks. Many of these events were directly supported by Monaghan County Council and the Heritage Council via the Heritage Week Grant Scheme which distributed over €6000 to different community group to assist in the delivery of their events.



The Heritage Office alongside Dáglán Ó Doibhlinn and Brian Mac Domhnaill won the award for best Irish Language event in the National Heritage Week Awards for our event Air Thóir Airghíalla – In Search of Airghíalla.



Biodiversity

Having commenced the post of Biodiversity Officer in mid-2023, the key focus of the role in 2024 was to coordinate the Council's response to the challenge of the global biodiversity crisis for the county, and improve awareness of biodiversity loss, in collaboration with colleagues across the organisation. Embedding biodiversity awareness in all aspects of council function continues to be a priority. The Biodiversity Officer administers a fund of €100k from NPWS and a further €20k from the Heritage Council.

Drafting Monaghan County Council's new Biodiversity Action Plan (2025-2030)

As an action under the 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan, local authorities are obliged to prepare and adopt a Biodiversity Action Plan by end 2026 which is required to be updated every five years.

A Discussion Document was published in May 2024 and went out for public consultation in June. Public Consultation sessions were held in all five libraries in June. Presentations were made to each MD in November. Funding has

been received from the Heritage Council in 2024 to assist with the initial delivery of the draft plan (€20k).

Biodiversity Week- May 2024

Monaghan Biodiversity Week
17-26 May 2024

Monday 20 May
14.00-15.00 **Inniskeen River Walk**
Come and walk with Monaghan Heritage Forum along the River Fane and learn about its biodiversity.
Tower, Inniskeen
20.30-21.30pm **Bat Walk & Talk with Bat Conservation Ireland**
Join Bat Conservation Ireland staff in an informative walk and talk identifying bats in Rossmore Park.
Rossmore Park, Monaghan

Tuesday 21 May
10.30-11.30am **Nature in Irish Folklore**
Join Storyteller Francis McCarron for a children's story telling session - Nature in Irish Folklore. (limited schools only)
Peace Campus, Monaghan Town
14.00-18.00pm **Scotstown Blue Dot - Community Water Day**
Community launch of the Scotstown Blue Dot Project - talks & interactive sessions on water quality - aquatic life in the Scotstown river. Suitable for all the family!
19.30-20.30 **Invasive Species Webinar with Colette O'Flynn NBDC online at** <https://tinyurl.com/4tnt3dhd>

Wednesday 22 May
10.00am-15.00pm **Open Day at Knocknagrove Environmental Centre**
Tydavnet, H18 EE08
Everyone welcome to explore the water displays & biodiversity garden.
13.00-14.00 **Launch of Biodiversity Citizen Science ESKER Box Kit**
The ESKER box contains all the equipment you need to explore your local biodiversity and can be borrowed from your local library.

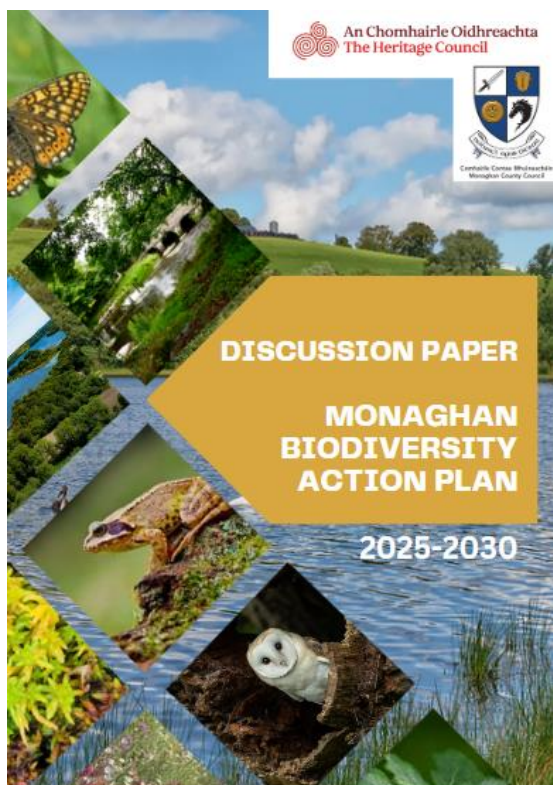
Thursday 23 May
19.30-20.30 **Barn Owl Talk with John Lusby, Birdwatch Ireland** - come and hear all about the elusive Barn Owl and find out how you can help with the Monaghan Barn Owl Survey currently taking place in the county.
Carrickmacross Library

Friday 24 May
Hillgrove Hotel
9.30-15.00pm **Monaghan's First Youth Biodiversity Conference**
An exciting programme of interactive presentations and workshops with scheduled Primary and Secondary School Green Teams.

Saturday 25 May
11.00-13.00 **Farm Biodiversity Walk**
Join Siolta Chroí for a walk through a mini model regenerative food system.
Siolta Chroí, Carrickmacross, A81 C988
11.00-12.30pm **Mountain Water Sampling Event** - get your hands wet with Emyvale TT as they demonstrate what lives in the Mountain Emuvalle Water Stream.
Emuvalle

Sunday 26 May
14.00-15.00 **Citizen Science and Biodiversity record reporting**
Join the Irish Wildlife Trust for a talk on citizen science - how to record your biodiversity finds with the NBDC. A classroom session followed by a practical demonstration at Lough Muckno.
Gate Lodge, Castleblaney
From 20.00 **Join the Yarnspinnners** for a very special Biodiversity Week storytelling session - Nature in Irish Folklore.
Market House, Monaghan

More Info
NPWS Biodiversity@Monaghancoco.ie
Irish Environmental Network
An Chomhairle Oidhreachta The Heritage Council



A key feature in the calendar in May is **Biodiversity Week** with thirteen hugely successful events run by the Biodiversity Officer taking place across the county. This week, dedicated to biodiversity in all its forms, provides an opportunity for the public to get up close to nature, get their feet wet and feel connected to the biodiversity around them.



Junior Biodiversity Conference – May 2024



A Youth Biodiversity Conference was held in May. This conference, the first of its kind in any county in Ireland, gave the youth of Monaghan a voice in biodiversity issues in their county. A total of ten schools participated with 60 students in attendance. A variety of topics were discussed with children presenting their thoughts and concerns on biodiversity topics to the whole group. Feedback on this conference was exceptional from all participating schools.

Biodiversity Working Group (BWG)



A Biodiversity Working Group was formed as a specialist group under the already long-established Heritage Forum in July. The group is a mix of internal and external stakeholders who are helping shape and implement the County Biodiversity Action Plan. The first meeting of the group took place on July 18th and meets quarterly.

Swift Nest Box Provision



Fourteen **swift boxes** were installed on the Peace Campus at the end of May just in time for the returning swifts from their winter migration to Africa. A protected species, swift numbers are in huge decline across the county. A wonderful example of how biodiversity can be accommodated in architectural projects with no loss to overall design, and considerable benefit to a red-listed species such as the swift.



Common swift (Apus apus)

Heritage Week -August



A number of very successful natural heritage events were held by the biodiversity officer during Heritage Week including a farm walk, community water day and barn owl talk.



These events were hugely well attended, and feedback was excellent.

Monaghan's Biodiversity Conference - November

Monaghan's second Biodiversity Conference took place in the beautiful surroundings of the Ballybay Wetland Centre. A large crowd attended on the day and a variety of speakers took to the podium to talk about Biodiversity and Nature relevant to Monaghan, with talks on barn owls, frogs, urban bog gardens and farming for nature along with citizen science,



mapping the Dromore River and the flora of the county. The inaugural Fearghal Duffy Memorial Award was presented to Dr Rory Sheehan for his extensive recording of biodiversity in the county.



Attendees at Monaghan's 2nd Biodiversity Conference



Excellence in Local Government Awards

The Council's Biodiversity Officer and Horticulturalist were delighted to be nominated for their collaborative project the 'Bog Garden' in the Excellence in Local Government Awards. While the project was not a winner on the night it cast a spotlight on this unique project with Monaghan MD to bring the sights and sounds of Sliabh Beagh to an urban corner of Monaghan Town.



Fire & Civil Protection

Monaghan Fire & Civil Protection (MFCP) faced numerous challenges in 2024, particularly with the implementation of the WRC agreement for retained firefighters. This required significant adjustments to administrative systems, including recruitment efforts, training, HR policy alignment, standardization of pay, and transitioning to fortnightly pay runs. These changes added a considerable workload and will impact future budget considerations.

Despite these challenges, MFCP continued to provide essential services to the citizens of Monaghan. Such services included, responding to emergency calls, community support, and collaboration with other emergency services to enhance major emergency planning, along with fire safety and building control functions, inspections for compliance with fire safety regulations, licensing inspections, and community fire safety promotion.

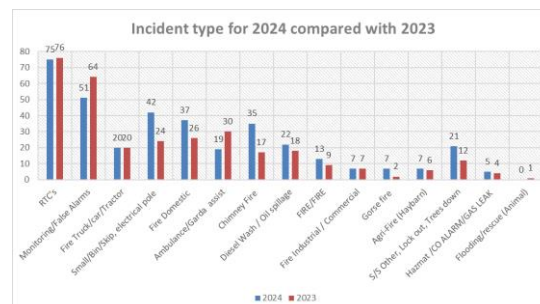


Recruit Fire-Fighter Class July 2024

In 2024, Monaghan Fire Service responded to 364 incidents, marking a 15% increase in first attending responses compared to 2023. The most common incidents included road traffic collisions, alarm activations, domestic fires, and small fires. Notably, there was a decline in chimney fires.

A breakdown of total calls in 2024 per station area as follows

Fire Station	1st Turn Out	2nd Turn Out
Ballybay	49	8
Carrickmacross	70	2
Castleblayney	73	18
Clones	39	3
Monaghan	133	11



Fire Service Incident in 2024 compared to 2023

Road Traffic Collisions remained the highest call out type for 2024 representing 25% of incidents attended.



MFCP receiving Leading Lights Award 2025

In 2024 Monaghan Fire and Civil Protection were recognised at the RSA Leading Light Awards for road safety promotion work undertaken with transition year students. The roadshow delivers a strong message to students with the aim of reducing the number of deaths and injuries on Monaghan roads.

Training

The training programme in 2024 incorporated an Initial Recruits and Breathing Apparatus Course for new Fire-Fighter entrants, which was complemented by Flood First Responder, Emergency Service Driving Standard (ESDS), and Emergency First Responder.



Fire-Fighters during Water Awareness Training April 2024.

Monaghan County Council carried out Hazard Material training at Monaghan Fire Station. Training development includes QQI (Quality and Qualification Ireland) accredited course which has been developed by the Local Authority Services National Training Group (LASNTG) in collaboration with the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management (NDFEM).



QQI Hazmat Training in Monaghan March 2024

MFCP's training needs assessment incorporates the requirement at national, regional, and local level, and includes the ongoing station training programme, and is periodically reviewed to align with MFCP's safety management system, and to capture emerging trends and priorities.

Health & Safety: MFCP Occupational Health and Safety Management System is governed by ISO 45001 Accreditation. The associated audit process with ISO 45001 has previously identified improvements in terms of asset management.

WRC Agreement implementation: A successful recruitment campaign was held in early 2024 to attract additional fighters in Ballybay, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney and Clones, as part of the WRC agreement.

Monaghan were the first Local Authority to introduce the national standardisation of retained Fire-Fighter pay, and the transition from quarterly to fortnightly pay in 2024. Retained Fire-Fighters are now aligned with all Local Authority staff in terms of policy and procedures associated with remuneration.



Fermanagh & Omagh District Council Visit to Monaghan Fire Station Nov 2024

Fire Safety:

Fire Prevention: Our Fire Prevention Section reviewed and processed all valid fire safety certificate applications received and provided advice on achieving compliance with Part B of the Building Regulations (Fire Safety). Fire safety inspections were carried out on a range of building types including licensed premises, residential care homes, preschools, flats, petrol stations and community buildings.

The recent increase in the number of conversions of various building types to multi-occupancy residential buildings continued in 2024, however there was a notable slowdown of such applications in the latter end of 2024.

Fire Safety Week focused on fire safety in the home, encouraging all homes to have a working smoke alarm. Several intensive fire safety campaigns were held during the year, targeting elderly and vulnerable people, along with seasonal campaigns at Easter, Halloween, Christmas and Fire Safety Week.

A total of 186 Fire Safety & Building Control inspections were conducted in 2024, and 141 planning referral reports completed. All notified licensing referrals for pubs, clubs, dance halls etc were assessed by a fire officer and recommendations issued to the Court Service.

The processing and issuance of Dangerous Substance Licences remained buoyant in 2024.

Building Control

Monaghan Building Control Authority received a total of 210 valid Commencement Notices in 2024, a decrease of 9% from 2023. An inspection rate of 34% of new builds was achieved this year. In addition, there were 90 applications for Fire Safety Certificates and 52

Disability Access Certificate applications under Building Control legislation.

Monaghan Fire & Civil Protection successfully held a Building Control Workshop in May 2024. The purpose of the workshop was to engage with stakeholders on current issues and allow opportunities for learning.



Building Control Agents Workshop April 2024

The level of one-off houses 'opting out' of statutory certification has continued to remain relatively high. In opting out of the requirements for statutory certification the homeowner is making the decision to refrain from having their dwelling included on the Certificate of Compliance on Completion register.



Building Control Inspection Scoil Mhuire National School Rockcorry: July 2024.

Community Fire Safety

A range of fire safety initiatives were delivered focusing on both schools and community groups. Smoke detectors were distributed as part of the Community Smoke Alarm Scheme and the key messages of Carbon Monoxide Awareness Week and Fire Safety Week were promoted via local and social media platforms. The Primary Schools Programme was again delivered by a pre-recorded video and fire safety awareness information was issued to the Traveller Community.



Fire Safety talk to Castleblayney Community Group May 2024

Emergency Management:

The Severe Weather Assessment Team monitored several potential severe weather events during the year with regular briefings from Met Eireann, most notable in 2024 included Storm Darragh.

Major Emergency Management: MFCP continued in 2024 with assistance from both An Garda Síochána and the HSE to test our response capabilities associated with procedures to ensure an effective interagency response, communication and media processes, and interoperability.

Multi-Agency Major Emergency Management involves maintaining plans, systems, procedures, and training, and to enhance the capability of all stakeholders.



Regional MEM Exercise January 2024

Cross Border Emergency Planning: The Cross-Border Emergency Management Group (CBEMG) continue to review and enhance multi-agency engagement to ensure procedures are in place to enable an effective response from agencies on both side of the border.

Monaghan County Council as the lead authority launched a report on Cross Border public safety messaging. 'Advancing a Focused Cross-Border Approach to Public Service Messaging in Emergency Management' was

launched by Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage of Ireland, Darragh O'Brien in Clones Fire Station, Co Monaghan.



Shared Island Report launch in Clones Fire Station June 2024

A second successful submission has enabled a research project to commence in relation to ensuring that relevant Cross Border agencies are adequately prepared for the recovery phase of emergencies.

Capital Investment in fleet and equipment:

There was again significant capital investment in 2024 with the delivery of new Class B Fire Appliance for Carrickmacross Fire Station, and equipment Sub Pumps, Eco Boards, TICs, BA Cylinders, and a 4 x 4 personnel vehicle, funded by the National Directorate for Fire & Emergency Management.

Capital works: Works have been completed on the installation of new integrated lockers in both Carrickmacross and Clones Fire Station. An appliance shelter has been erected in Monaghan Fire Station to protect vehicles exposure to weather.

Construction of a new Fire Station in Ballybay continued in 2024 and is envisaged to be completed and fully operational mid-2025.



Construction of New Ballybay Fire Station Nov 2024

Monaghan Civil Defence

Monaghan Civil Defence made significant strides in 2024, showcasing their dedication to community service and emergency preparedness.



Civil Defence Volunteers at the National Services Day parade in Drogheda September 2024

Key activities and accomplishments throughout the year included:

Community Support Initiatives

- Providing essential medical support at various outdoor events.
- Volunteers delivered food and medication to those in need, ensuring that vulnerable individuals received the assistance they required.
- Proactive during severe weather events, supporting local communities and mitigating the impact of emergencies.

Training and Skill Development:

With 52 multi-skilled volunteers, Monaghan Civil Defence training focused on critical areas such as:

- Casualty First Aid
- Search & Rescue, including boating and water incidents
- Auxiliary Fire Service
- Welfare and Communications
- Radiation Monitoring & Radio Communications



Civil Defence Volunteers exercising medical care at RTA: Dec 2024

Training Courses were held at various levels, enhancing skills through opportunities at local, regional, and national training facilities.

Collaborating with An Garda Síochána, the volunteers engaged in missing persons searches, significantly improving the effectiveness of their operations through Sonar Scanning and specialized training.



Monaghan Civil Defence Volunteers attending their annual Conference

Recruitment: Monaghan Civil Defence saw a boost in volunteer numbers in 2024, attributed to:

- Comprehensive training programs
- Opportunities for personal growth and teamwork
- Skills development in areas like Technical Rescue and Emergency First Response
- Community engagement through local and national events

Fleet Enhancement: A New Patient Transport Vehicle was secured in 2024 that will enhance accessibility for various community members, improving overall service delivery.



New Civil Defence Transportation Vehicle: July 2024.

Monaghan Civil Defence HQ continued to serve as a vital centre for coordinating local support and collaboration with Principal Response Agencies, ensuring effective emergency management.

In summary, Monaghan Civil Defence's proactive approach in 2024 ensured they were well-prepared for future challenges, emphasizing their commitment to community welfare and volunteer development. Their focus on training, collaboration, and support has positioned them as a key player in emergency response and preparedness in the region.



Civil Defence Volunteers at Monaghan St. Patrick's Day Parade 2024

Community Development

LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LCDC)



Monaghan LCDC plays a co-ordinating role at county level helping to ensure that there is a coherent approach to local and community development in the county. In 2024, the LCDC met 8 times and operated effectively in managing various programmes including SICAP, LEADER, PEACE, Community Enhancement Fund, Community Recognition Fund and Healthy Ireland Fund.

LOCAL ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY PLAN (LECP)

Monaghan LECP 2023-2029 was launched in June 2024. Working groups have been established to oversee delivery and monitoring of the Plan.

PEACEPLUS

In 2024 Monaghan County Council had its application for funding under Theme 1.1 Local Community Action Plans approved. The application for €4.57m will see a number of projects delivered over the next 5 years under the themes of 'Community regeneration & transformation', 'Thriving and peaceful communities' and 'Building respect for all cultural traditions'. The local peace action plan will be overseen by the LCDC and managed by the Peace Plus Partnership Board. Projects will be delivered by Monaghan County Council, Cavan Monaghan ETB, Monaghan Integrated Development and Global Action Plan.

SOCIAL INCLUSION COMMUNITY ACTIVATION PROGRAMME (SICAP)

The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2024 -2028 provides funding to tackle poverty and social inclusion at a local level through local engagement and partnerships between disadvantaged individuals, community organisations and public sector agencies.

Monaghan LCDC approved funding of €863,692.27 to deliver actions outlined in 2024 SICAP Annual Plan.

MONAGHAN LEADER PROGRAMME 2014-2022



Monaghan LCDC was the Local Action Group (LAG) in this programme and was the decision maker in respect of project applications. The LAG met eight times in 2024, and approved projects recommended by the IEC members.

€7,790,508.19 was the total allocation for the LEADER Programme 2014-2022 for County Monaghan providing funding to 134 projects. The final LAG meeting took place on December 2024.

MONAGHAN AGE FRIENDLY PROGRAMME

The Monaghan Age Friendly Programme continues to work to provide access to key services and opportunities for older people to participate in community activities.

AFRICA DAY 2024

Africa Day is designated by the African Union as an annual celebration of the continent's unity and falls on May 25th each year.

Africa Day has a strong tradition of being celebrated in Monaghan with events taking place in both Monaghan and Castleblayney.

MONAGHAN SOCIAL INCLUSION WEEK

Monaghan Social Inclusion Week 2024 was organised by the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) Equality Subgroup.

The theme of Social Inclusion Week was "Respect & Connect."

The week was a wonderful opportunity for local groups to highlight the diversity, strength and unity within our communities.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUND 2024

The Community Development Fund continues to provide funding to local community groups which assist them with projects that enhance their local areas. €90,000 was allocated to ninety-six community groups in 2024.

PEACE HEROINES' EXHIBITION

Monaghan County Council proudly supported the Peace Heroines Exhibition.

WCI Blayney Blades celebrated International Women's Day 2024 by opening the Peace Heroines exhibition. The exhibition tells the inspirational story of the pivotal role that women played in the Northern Ireland Peace Process.



Pictured: Launch of the Peace Heroines Exhibition

DEPARTMENT OF RURAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUNDING SCHEMES

The funding received from the Department of Rural & Community Development (DRCD) and Monaghan County Council plays a crucial role in improving the quality of life for residents in our rural towns and villages.

CLÁR

CLÁR is a targeted investment programme for rural areas that aims to provide funding for small infrastructural projects that have experienced significant levels of depopulation.

€620,491.51 was allocated to Monaghan County Council under the Measure 1 for 15 community-led projects.

St. Tiarnach's Primary School MUGA



Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme

The funding is aimed at supporting outdoor recreation tourism, which have economic spin-off benefits for our rural towns and villages.

Monaghan County Council was allocated **€1,179,296** in 2024 for 10 projects under Measures 1, 2 and 3 under the 2023 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme.

The 2024/2025 scheme was advertised seeking Expressions of Interest on 14 November 2024.

ORIS Projects completed in 2024

Upgrade of Angling facilities at Lough Nagarnaman



Town & Village Renewal Scheme

The Town & Village Renewal Scheme supports the revitalisation of rural Ireland through a renewed focus on town centre regeneration and enhancing economic and social vibrancy in line with the Town Centre First policy.

Monaghan County Council secured **€100,000** in funding for two Project Development Measures. This funding will facilitate the planning and design of strategic projects, ensuring readiness for future capital investment.

Town & Village Projects completed in 2024 Corrybrennan Playpark



Fermanagh Streetscape & Micro Garden



Community Recognition Fund

This fund aimed to support the development of community infrastructure and facilities in recognition of the contribution being made by communities across the country in welcoming and hosting significant numbers of new arrivals from Ukraine and other countries. Monaghan County Council received funding of **€545,378** for 6 projects in 2024.

Belgium Park Refurbishment



LOCAL ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME

This fund was managed by Monaghan LCDC on behalf of Department of Rural and Community Development. The fund was open to groups seeking funding for small capital projects and the purchase of equipment. 102 groups were awarded funding to a total of €130,960.

All successful groups were awarded their Letter of Offer by Minister Heather Humphreys Department of Rural and Community Development at a special event held in Corcaghan Community Centre in April.

MONAGHAN LOCAL AUTHORITY INTEGRATION TEAM (LAIT)

The new local model of integration centers on a national network of four-person Local Authority Integration Teams (LAIT), funded by the the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY), in each of the 31 Local Authorities.

The teams provide support to:

- International Protection Applicants (IPA)
- People with Refugee, Subsidiary Protection or Permission to Remain Status
- Programme Refugees as part of the Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP)
- Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (BOTP)

Monaghan LAIT, consisting of an Integration Co-ordinator, Two Integration Support Workers and an Assistant Staff Officer took up duty in March and April 2024. The team provides support via outreach clinics throughout the county and by email and telephone. In 2024, the team responded to over 1,000 requests for support from individuals, families and groups and provided guidance, one to one support, signposting to other services, workshops and activities. Monaghan LAIT also organised workshops on various themes for local agencies.

MONAGHAN COMMUNITY INTEGRATION FORUM

Chaired by the Director of Services for Community and Rural Development, the forum consists of representatives of service providers within the county and held four meetings in 2024.

OFFER A HOME

During 2024, the offer a home scheme placed an additional 58 Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection in 25 pledged properties. All leases signed in 2023 were renewed.

At the end of December 2024, there were a total of 177 Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection in 59 pledged Offer a Home properties across the County of Monaghan.

HEALTHY MONAGHAN

The Round 4 2022-2025 Healthy Ireland Fund is an outcomes-based programme with two priority outcomes identified in County Monaghan.

In 2024 over 2,500 participants engaged in HI funded initiatives which included programmes for children and young people, people with a disability, ethnic minorities, members of the LGBT community, new parents, older adults, as well as several other initiatives aimed at all cohorts of the community.

Eleven programmes were delivered mainly through cross collaboration of several agencies all working towards the shared goal of increasing physical activity levels and decreasing negative mental health of people of all ages across the county.



COMHAIRLE NA NÓG PROGRAMME

Monaghan County Council was awarded €25,000 from Department of Children,

Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth for the 2024 local Comhairle na nÓg programme of work. The key topic the young people worked on in 2024 was "Lack of Infrastructure".

Monaghan Comhairle na nÓg facilitated a "Let's Talk" event in the run up to the local elections. Over 60 young people attended the event to participate in discussions and workshops with prospective candidates.

Comhairle members attended the November Council meeting and delivered a presentation to members.

The Annual Youth Conference gave Monaghan Comhairle na nÓg the opportunity to highlight the vast amount of work they completed and gave the young minds of Monaghan the opportunity to select the key topic in which they wished to work on in 2025 which will be "Youth Mental Health".



Monaghan Public Participation Network with support from Monaghan County Council continued to develop as the main link through which the Local Authority connects with the Community, Social Inclusion and Environment Sectors across the county. MPPN has commenced the re-registration process of our 680 PPN groups to ensure that contact details are up to date.

Representation

54 community representatives represented the PPN across 16 various decision-making committees, putting the community firmly at the heart of local decision making. 16 new PPN representatives were elected on the Council's Strategic Policy Committees in 2024.

Training

The PPN delivered free training to our members on the following: -

- Writing Funding Applications
- Social Media & Graphic Design

- Biodiversity & Climate Change

We also hosted Meet & Greet Your Local PPN staff coffee mornings.



Presentation to PPN Representatives to mark 10th Anniversary of PPNs

Monaghan PPN Secretariat and Staff marked the 10 Year Anniversary of PPNs.

A presentation was made by the Chief Executive Mr. Robert Burns, to existing and past PPN representatives at this function.



Public Consultations

MPPN liaises with different departments in relation to public consultations, be they local, regional or national and were involved in the following consultations in 2024

- Corporate Plan 2024-2029
- Feasibility Study for proposed Swimming Pool & Leisure Centre in Carrickmacross
- Scheme for establishment of Strategic Policy Committees



The Monaghan Women's Assembly in collaboration with the LCDC Equality Subgroup organised a series of Women's Safety Audits to highlight specific safety concerns faced by women in the centres of our large towns. The key objective is to provide safer spaces for women of all ages to walk in our towns.

Walking Safety Audits took place in Clones, Ballybay, Monaghan, Castleblaney and Carrickmacross during 2024.

The findings of the surveys will be circulated to the relevant MDs for follow up.

MONAGHAN SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

MSP delivered over 300 activity programmes, events, initiatives and training courses during 2024 to keep our communities active and engaged, with over 10,000 participants including children and young people, adults, older people, people with a disability and migrant populations.

Community-based Programmes:

Facilitated Active Adults (50+) activities in local community centre locations across the county in both indoor and outdoor events.



Supporting National Events/ Initiatives:

Organised and delivered events across 2024 with over 300 participants to celebrate national initiatives at a local level, such as; Women In Sport Week, Men's Health Week, National Bike Week, Social Inclusion Week, HER Outdoors Week, Positive Ageing Week, EU Week of Sport



Children & Young People:

A range of activity programming to support Schools based and community based physical activity and peer learning, engaging with over 50 Primary schools.

Inclusive Sport & Physical Activities – supporting sport and physical activity for people with a disability

Delivered specialised programmes for children attending autism supported classes in activities like cycling, gymnastics, soccer and multi-sport community activities working alongside local disability groups, with over 150 children accessing new opportunities.

MSP supported adult disability day services to provide access to sports activities.



Education & Training:

MSP provided 19 training and education courses for 239 participants, (including 14 Safeguarding in Sport workshops for 165 sports club volunteers). MSP also delivered 7 sports leadership courses for 170 Primary and Post Primary students.

2024 Sports Club Grants Funding Programme:

MSP administered €25,600 in funding support to 56 sports clubs under 2 measures for sports equipment and training & education.

Sports Activity Hubs

Specific location areas of community sports participation at Kilmore-Drumsnatt and Doohamlet / Tullycorbet environs with more than 600 unique participants, adults and children participating in sports events.

Pop Up Pool (Carrickmacross)

Swim Ireland initiative in 2024 supported by Monaghan County Council, based at Carrickmacross. The pop-up pool opened in September 2024 and by end of year, over 400 people have availed of the pool for swim lessons, exercises classes, special activity and rehabilitation. MSP supported opportunities for older people and people with a disability to avail of pool activities.

MSP Committee

The Sports Partnership Committee met on 6 occasions throughout 2024, overseeing the progression of actions from the operational plan and delivery of projects as detailed above.

PRIDE OF PLACE

Monaghan County Council hosted the 22nd annual IPB Pride of Place competition in association with Co-Operation Ireland. Over five hundred people from communities north and south gathered at a gala awards night in the Hillgrove Hotel to find out the results of the judging. Monaghan's own Oram village came away with top prize in the smallest population category.

The awards were one event in a weekend of fixtures designed to showcase all that Monaghan has to offer. A workshop on the benefits of participating in the Pride of Place competition took place in the new Peace Campus building and was followed by a performance of Pat McCabe's new play, 'Little White Lies'.



Planning

Development Plan

The County Development Plan provides an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of County Monaghan and is consistent with both national and regional spatial planning policies and objectives. It sets out the land use, infrastructure, environmental, amenity and development objectives and policies of the County's planning authority for a six-year period. The current Monaghan County Development Plan covers the period 2019-2025. Spatial planning through the development plan objectives and policies endeavours to achieve a balance between the common good and the interests of individuals.

On the 11th of May 2023 Monaghan County Council gave notice of intention to review the existing Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025, and to prepare a new Monaghan County Development Plan for the period 2025-2031 for the functional area of Monaghan County Council. The review will take up to two years and will conclude with the adoption of the Monaghan County Development Plan for the period 2025 – 2031 in mid-2025.

Following the pre-Draft Development Plan consultation undertaken over an eight-week period in mid-2023, a Draft Development Plan was formulated based on the responses received during the pre-Draft consultation period and the strategic directions issued by the elected members. The Draft Development Plan was a cumulation of extensive consultation and discussions with the elected members.

The Draft Development Plan was placed on public display for a period of ten weeks from 5th September to 14th November 2024. In addition to being placed on public display in the Council's offices and libraries across the County, the Draft Development Plan was published on the dedicated web page set up on the Monaghan County Council website to host and make information publicly available, and to act as a 'hub' for interaction throughout the two-year plan making process. A new consultation portal was also established to

allow submissions and comments to be submitted online in addition to the options of making comment via e mail and postal submissions.

Draft Development Plan consultation was carried out with prescribed and non-prescribed bodies, service providers, primary and secondary schools, and planning agents on the planning mailing list. Monaghan County Council commissioned a series of regular radio advertisements on Northern Sound which was aired twice daily to publicise the display of the Draft County Development Plan and invite members of the public to the public consultation workshops. Notices were also regularly published on the Council's Facebook and Twitter/X page. A total of ten public information evenings in the months of September and October were held in Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, Clones and Ballybay. A total of forty-six people attended the sessions, with the highest attendance recorded in Carrickmacross, Castleblayney and Clones.

The Draft Development Plan consultation process attracted one hundred and forty-nine submissions from a wide range of public bodies, other organisations and individuals. The comments received covered a broad range of issues within the topics of Environmental Assessment & Monitoring, Core Strategy, Housing Strategy, Climate Change and Flooding, Environment & Heritage, Economic Activity, Infrastructure & Services, Community Services / Facilities, as well as a range of other issues that did not fall within the foregoing topics and included submissions regarding the zoning of lands. A Chief Executive's Report on the submissions received during the Draft Development Plan consultation period was subsequently prepared for issuing to the elected members for their consideration in early 2025.

Residential Zoned Land Tax Mapping

The Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT) was introduced in the Budget 2022 under the provisions of the Finance Act 2021 and amended under the Finance Act (No.2) 2023. The purpose of the proposed measure is to activate existing

planning permissions and zonings where housing is permitted and where the land is connected to, or has access to services (road infrastructure, footpaths, public lighting, surface water, wastewater & water supply), but remains undeveloped. The legislation clearly sets out that land in scope for the tax will be zoned for residential development or a mixture of uses including residential.

Although the RZLT will be administered by Revenue Commissioners, all local authorities are required to undertake mapping to identify the lands in scope for the tax in their respective functional areas. The RZLT mapping is required to be carried out on an annual basis.

The applicable date for lands zoned and serviced to be liable for the tax was 1st January 2022 with the final date for inclusion of lands on the first Draft Map being 1st October 2022. Local authorities were required to undertake mapping to identify the lands in scope for the tax in their respective functional areas and publish the first Draft Map by 1st November 2022.

Following a period for consultation and comment on the inclusion of lands on the Draft Map ending on 1st January 2023, determinations on submissions were made by the planning authority on the issues raised in the submissions by 1st April 2023. Following a period up to 1st August 2023 to appeal the planning authority determinations to An Bord Pleanála, the Final Map indicating those properties liable to pay the RZLT in 2024 was published on 1st December 2023. The planning authority is required to review, update and publish this map annually.

The Draft Map indicating those properties liable to pay the RZLT in 2025 was published on 1st February 2024. Interested parties (landowners and members of the public) were able to make comments on the published maps by 1st April 2024 indicating errors or omissions or detailing why the lands should or should not be in scope for RZLT.

Four submissions were received and determinations in respect of these were made by the planning authority by 1 July 2024, on whether the lands should remain in scope for RZLT. One determination resulted in lands being subsequently excluded from the Final Map for

2025 due to be published on 31st January 2025. No appeals of the remaining determinations were made to An Bord Pleanála following the issuing of these determinations.

Housing Provision Review

KPMG Future Analytics consultants were engaged by the Planning Section to carry out a Housing Provision Review to determine the issues affecting the delivery of private housing in the towns and villages. The report comprises a review of housing delivery under the aims and policies of the current Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 combined with reflections on the outputs from the HNDA and the findings of a consultation exercise including owners of land zoned proposed residential, planning agents, local developers and estate agents, approved housing bodies, financial institutions, as well as the Housing and Planning Authorities of Monaghan County Council.

The purpose of this review was to provide information to the Council on what might be the key barriers to private sector residential delivery. The report incorporates a review of progress on the delivery of housing on lands zoned in the County Development Plan 2019-2025 that quantifies the level and type of housing development within County Monaghan, identifies the issues affecting the delivery of private housing, and makes recommendations for future housing provision in Co. Monaghan. The final report was published in October 2024.

Development Management

The Planning Authority received 608 planning applications, 24 extensions of durations of planning permission, and 142 exempt development applications during 2024. Exempted Development Applications have more than doubled from the same period last year and quadrupled from the same period in 2022, primarily as a consequence of the introduction of the Croí Cónaithe Grants Scheme which require a declaration from the planning authority that the works proposed to improve the building are exempt from requiring planning permission. The number of applications increased by approximately 12% compared to the number of applications received in 2023.

Planning Applications Received in 2024	
Full Permission	489
Outline Planning	13
Permission Consequent	1
Retention	105
Extension of Durations	24
Exempt Development Applications	142
Part VIII Proposals	6
Total Applications Received	780

Whilst the majority of applications received were for single dwellings, home extensions and agricultural development, a number of significant and complex applications, (many of which were accompanied by Environmental Impact Assessment Reports and/or Natural Impact Statements) were submitted in 2024. Applications of note submitted in 2024 include;

- 2460130 - Aldi Stores (Ireland) Limited, Permission for development consisting of the construction of a single storey discount food store, Macartan Road, Monaghan.
- 2460270 - Mullan Lighting, Permission for extension to the existing factory and change of use to a restaurant/café including kitchen and lounge areas, Mullan Village, Emyvale.
- 2460390 - IJM Timber Engineering Limited, Permission for construction of 2no. Industrial units together with ancillary staff facilities, Old Armagh Road, Latlorcan.
- 2460254 - TD Freight Ltd, Permission to construct warehouse and offices, car park, and commercial yard for storage of freight vehicles and trailers, Lough Egish, Castleblaney.
- 2460012 - A&M Commercials, Permission for new vehicle sales showroom, Kilcrow, Clontibret.
- 2460070 - ASI The Alzheimer Society of Ireland, Permission for a new daycare centre, Rooskey Vale Monaghan.
- 2460427 - Cavan & Monaghan Education and Training Board, Permission for a new two-storey building extension and Alteration works to existing school building, Inver College, Carrickmacross.
- 2460309 - GEDA Construction Company Ltd, Permission for housing development

comprising 49 no. dwelling units, Tully, Monaghan.

- 2460265 - Garvagh Homes Ltd, Permission new housing development comprising 24 no. dwelling units, Coolshannagh Monaghan.
- 2460437 – Tullylagan Properties Ltd., Permission for the construction of 51no. Dwelling Units, Drumconrath Road, Carrickmacross.
- 2460456 - Clarlan Limited, Permission for Construction of 34 No. dwellings, Killygowan Monaghan.
- 2460478 - Colm Herron, Construction of 37 no. two-storey dwellings, Drumbear House Monaghan

Planning Applications Statistics for 2024	
Invalid	88
Granted	448
Refused	31
Withdrawn	20

Eight decisions were appealed to An Bord Pleanála in 2024, which represents 1% of the applications received in 2024.

Compliance with Conditions

The Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2018 (Commencement) Order 2021 (SI 714 of 2021) brought section 23(4) of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2018 into operation on 17 December 2021. This legislation requires the Planning Authority to deal with any compliance submission in respect of a condition(s) attached to a planning permission which requires the written agreement of the Planning Authority within a time limit of eight weeks. The 103 compliance submissions received by the Planning Authority in 2024 which is a slight increase from 2023. There were 220 planning search requests in 2024, a decrease of 11 from the previous year.

Eplanning Portal

79% of the planning applications were received online in 2024 this is a significant increase from 56% in 2023 as more agents are now using the portal. The Planning Section is still dealing with a dual system of both hard copy and online applications since February 2023 when the online system went live. The Local Government Management Agency continues to provide daily support in relation to the operation of the portal.

Planning permissions granted for housing

The breakdown of types of housing granted in 2024 are set out below. In addition to the figures below a further 72 houses were consented through Section 179A of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

Planning Permissions granted for 2024	
Houses (excluding one-off houses)	29
Apartments	14
One-off Houses	138
Total	181

Taking in Charge

Ten estates were taken in charge in 2024, and public advertisement took place with regards several other estates which could be formally taken in charge 2025. A significant number of estates were progressed through various stages of the taking in charge assessment process in 2024.

The Planning Section will continue to progress the Taking in Charge of residential developments in 2025.

Planning Enforcement

When the Planning Authority becomes aware of a breach of planning permission or unauthorised development, discussions with offender(s) are often sufficient to ensure remedy. However, where issues are not addressed by the offender then formal enforcement action is taken. Continued development activity throughout the County has meant enforcement complaint numbers have increased from 2023. Enforcement statistics for 2024 are set out below.

2024 Enforcement Statistics	
New cases opened	122
Cases closed	142
Ongoing enforcement cases	147

A significant number of cases from previous years were closed in addition to cases from 2024. A significant number of enforcement cases are at prosecution stage.

Built Heritage

Monaghan County Council's Planning Section administer two annual heritage grant schemes annually, the Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) and the Historic Structures Fund (HSF).

Built Heritage Investment Scheme

The Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) encourages the investment of private capital in small-scale, labour-intensive projects to repair and conserve historic structures and to support the employment of skilled and experienced conservation professionals, craftspeople and tradespersons. County Monaghan received an overall allocation of €96,000 in 2024.

In 2024 nine projects were awarded funding under the BHIS, with seven availing of same as follows:

- St. Sillian's Church, Tyholland
- Freame Mount Demense, Dartry, Cootehil
- St. Joseph's Old Cemetery, Latlorcan
- St. Patrick's Church, Donaghmoynne
- St. Patrick's Church, Broomfield
- Hilton House, Hilton Park, Clones
- John Anderson's, Drum

A total of €82,645.45 was awarded to the seven applicants.



Hilton House before stonework was cleaned Sept. '24



Hilton House after stonework was cleaned in Oct '24

Historic Structures Fund

The primary focus of the Historic Structures Fund (HSF) is on conservation and enhancement of historic structures and buildings for the benefit of communities and the public. It aims to enable conservation works to be carried out on heritage structures which are deemed to be significant and in need of urgent support. Total funding under the HSF for 2024 was €205,000.

In 2024 six projects were awarded funding under the HSF as follows:

- St Macartan's Cathedral, Monaghan
- Church of Ireland, Drum
- Shanco Church, Emyvale
- Old School Magherarny
- Patrick Kavanagh Centre
- Greenan's Cottage, Rockcorry (deferred from 2023)



St Macartan's Cathedral, Monaghan

Section 57 Declarations

Under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) works which would normally be considered exempted development under Section 4(1)h of the Act may not be exempt in respect of a Protected Structure or a Proposed Protected Structure.

Section 57 of the Act allows for the owner or occupier of a Protected Structure or a Proposed Protected Structure to make a written request to the Planning Authority to issue a declaration as to the type of works which it considers would or would not materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure, thereby clarifying which works would be considered exempted development and those which would require planning permission. Monaghan County Council received four Section 57 Declarations in 2024.

Capital Projects

Monaghan PEACE Campus



The Monaghan Peace Campus opened in May 2024 and has delivered significant benefits for users by fulfilling the Council's vision for a dedicated and enhanced cross-community and cross-border hub. This achievement is realised through a mix of multi-purpose halls, meeting rooms, and common spaces. The Peace Campus delivers impactful town centre regeneration and offers a shared space for cultural, heritage, and social activities, promoting unity. The design encourages social interaction and adaptability, greatly enriching the broader community experience.



MPC - Opening May 2024

A celebration event was held on Friday 10th May to mark this achievement, with over 200 people in attendance to acknowledge the significant levels of support from all those involved in the delivery of the project building.



MPC – May 2024

Since May, Monaghan Town Library, Monaghan County Museum, and multiple anchor tenants have commenced providing a host of new cultural and community services.

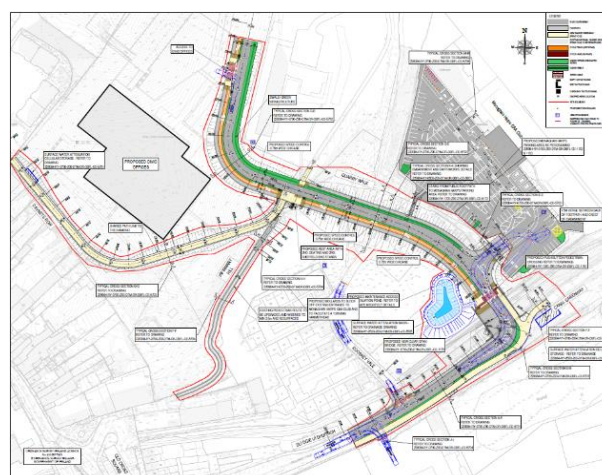


MPC – Branch Library

Proposed Roosky Lands Access Road

The Part 8 Planning was approved for the proposed Roosky Lands Access Road by the Elected Members in April 2024.

The Design is complete, and the proposed Access Road was advertised on eTenders in December 2024. Monaghan County Council are reviewing Tender proposals with a view to awarding the works contract in Q2 2025.



Roosky Lands Access Road and Active Travel Links

Proposed new Civic Office Headquarters

The Part 8 Planning was approved for the proposed Monaghan County Council Civic Office Headquarters at Roosky, Monaghan by the Elected

Members in April 2024. In addition, the Fire Safety Certificate and Disabled Access Certificate have also been approved.

The procurement process began in Q2 2024, and the project team has shortlisted potential works contractors. Detailed design and tender documents for the works contract are being finalised for advertisement on eTenders in Q2 2025.



3D Birdseye CGI image of the proposed new Civic Offices at Roosky



Front elevation CGI image of the proposed new Civic Offices at Roosky

Dublin Street & Backlands Regeneration Project

Dublin Street South Regeneration Project

RPS Design Consultants progressed design proposals for the regeneration scheme during 2024. In December 2024, An Bord Pleanála (ABP) granted planning approval for the project which marked a significant milestone in the Council's progression of strategic regeneration ambitions for the Dublin Street environs.

Avison Young (Valuation Office) continued engagement and negotiations with affected property owners throughout 2024 and negotiations will continue in 2025. The Council expects that a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) process for properties not acquired by agreement will be progressed during 2025.

Preparation of final detailed designs and draft tender documentation are scheduled to be progressed in early 2025.



Architectural Image – View of proposed Pedestrian Civic Plaza from Dublin Street



Architectural Image – View of proposed Pedestrian Civic Plaza towards Dublin Street

Dublin Street North Regeneration Project

The Capital Project Unit is also continuing to progress proposals for the regeneration of the Dublin Street North area of Monaghan Town. The design has been developed in preparation for a Planning Application. All investigations and surveys were completed in 2024 to prepare the Environmental Impact Assessment Report. All planning documents are now complete in anticipation of applying for Approval to An Bord Pleanála in Q1 2025, subject to Department of Housing Planning and Local Government approval.



Plan view of Dublin Street North Regeneration proposals



3d Birdseye view of Dublin Street North Regeneration proposals and potential for future development

Castleblayney Market Square Regeneration Phase II – Castleblayney Market House & Market Square.

A Category 1 RRDF grant application was submitted in February 2024 for the project implementation phase. Grant funding of just over €10.7m was approved by the DRCD in May 2024. The project secured *Decision Gate 1 – Approval in Principle* in Q3 2024 and is currently at *Decision Gate 2 – Pre-tender Approval* stage.

Stage 1 of the procurement process in relation to prequalification of contractors through suitability assessment was completed in Q4 2024. Subject to satisfactory compliance with the DRCD project stage approvals, it is expected that construction works will commence in Q3 2025.



Architectural Image – Refurbished Market House



Architectural Image – Lower Ground Floor

Hope Castle, Annex & Adjacent Outbuilding in Lough Muckno

Structural inspections of Hope Castle, Annex & Adjacent Outbuilding were completed in Q2 2024. Following the inspections, the Council engaged a contractor for clear-out works consisting of internal debris removal and removal of any unstable elements and finishes from the 3 buildings. The clear-out works for all 3 buildings were completed in November 2024. Following completion of the clear-out works, survey companies were procured in late 2024 to carry out relevant surveys of the buildings in early 2025 to inform design proposals for remedial protective works.



Hope Castle Building



Annex Building

Proposed Swimming Pool and Leisure Complex in Carrickmacross Town

Consultants S3 Solutions were engaged in Q2 2024 in relation to the preparation of a Feasibility Study and Strategic Assessment for a proposed Swimming Pool and Leisure Complex in Carrickmacross. Public consultation surveys were completed in Q3 2024, and relevant data was reviewed in relation to the needs and demand analysis. The consultants also completed financial and economic appraisal of potential project options. The draft Feasibility Study and Strategic Assessment Report was completed in Q4 2024. It is expected that the project will be progressed in 2025 to the next stage of the project lifecycle, preliminary business case development.

Newbliss RRDF Digital Enterprise Hub

Monaghan County Council secured RRDF funding from the Department of Rural and Community Development to deliver the Newbliss Enterprise and Digital Hub. This transformative project is converting the former Courthouse in Newbliss into a state-of-the-art remote working, enterprise, and digital hub.



Newbliss - Rear

The Hub is poised to be a cornerstone for the sustainable regeneration of Newbliss Village. By

increasing footfall and addressing dereliction through the refurbishment of a vacant listed building, will serve as a catalyst for economic recovery in the area. Managed and operated by Enterprising Monaghan.



Newbliss- Stairs & Landing

Lowry Construction Ltd. were selected as the successful Contractor and construction commenced in June 2023. Substantial completion is anticipated in Q1 2025.

Blackwater Valley Rural Enterprise Hub

The facility will consist of a remote working /hot desking area, a meeting room, a commercial kitchen, a cafe/shop, a multi-purpose community space, 2no. Training rooms, 6no. Offices for rent, two clinical rooms for rent. (Total floor area is 920m²).

Planning approval for the project was received in February 2024 and the detailed design phase followed. Departmental approval to proceed to tender was obtained at the end of Q1 2024.

Departmental approval was received to award the contract in October 2024. McKelvey Construction Ltd was subsequently awarded the contract. The works are programmed to start in Q1 2025.





Clones Regeneration Hub Project

In August 2024, MCC received confirmation of funding for the Clones Regeneration Hub Project.

The project consisted of the development of two hubs in the town, one on the site of the Old Cinema Site on Fermanagh St and the other on the site of Lennard Arms.

The Capital Project Team are responsible for the delivery of the Fermanagh St. Business Hub. The building when complete will provide circa 632sqm for office use and associated facilities over two floors. It includes for the provision of car parking as well as the development of a new public realm space, which includes for the construction of an accessible ramp and stairs to the north of the site and retention of existing public pedestrian route to Fermanagh Street, adjacent to the site.

In November 2024, Craftstudio Architecture was awarded the contract to bring the project through the remaining stages of the Capital Works Management Framework.



Fermanagh St Regeneration

Rockcorry Community Centre

In May 2024, Monaghan County Council received a Letter of Offer from the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) in relation to the construction of a new Community Centre facility in Rockcorry through the Community Centre Investment Fund (CCIF).

The Community Centre, when complete, will include for a large multi-use hall, a small kitchen for catering, along with small-medium sized rooms suitable for meetings/various multi uses that will be available to the community for any meetings/functions required by the community. The centre will be located on the site of Rockcorry GAA.

In August 2024, a Design Team was procured to bring the project through the remaining stages of the Capital Works Management Framework. A steering Committee consisting of an Elected Member of Monaghan County Council, 3 no. Community Representatives and 4 no. Staff from the executive of Monaghan County Council was also established to assist in the delivery of the project.

Since then, the Design Team has been working in conjunction with the Steering Committee to deliver this project.

Construction is expected to be completed in Q3 2026.

Shared Island Project – Development of SME innovation clusters across five Local Authorities

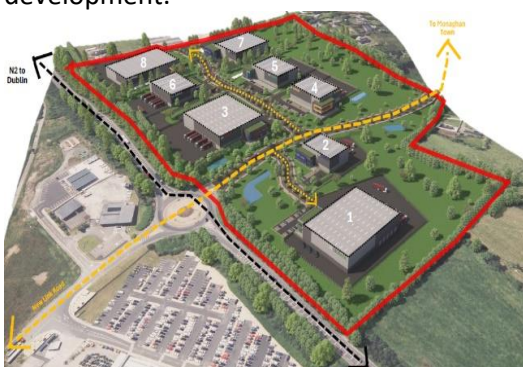
Monaghan County Council are the lead in a joint partnership with four other Local Authorities, Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council, Mid Ulster District Council, Cavan County Council and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council on a Shared Island Project to investigate the feasibility of developing SME innovation parks in each local authority area and ascertain the synergies that can be accomplished by project partnering. In November 2024 Monaghan County Council successfully delivered the final Feasibility Study and Masterplans on behalf of the 5 local authority partners for issue and consideration by the Department of the Taoiseach. The Monaghan County Council site focuses on a 49 Hectare site east of Annahagh roundabout on the N2 in Monaghan.



Monaghan County Council's Feasibility Plan for the Shared Island Project Feasibility Study at Annahagh & Knockaconny.

Industrial Zoned Lands, Annahagh, Monaghan

In November 2024 Monaghan County Council completed Feasibility Plans for lands zoned industrial/Enterprise/Employment on a 15 Hectare site west of Annahagh Roundabout on the N2 in Monaghan. These Plans have provided the basis of design for providing infrastructure to service industrial sites. Monaghan County Council have appointed a Design Team to prepare a Part 8 Planning Application for consideration by the Elected Members for roads and services infrastructure in Q2 2025. Concurrently, Monaghan County Council advertised for Expressions of Interest from interested businesses to purchase plots on the available lands for economic development.



Feasibility Plan for development of industrial sites at Annahagh, Monaghan

Monaghan Leisure Complex

Coral Leisure Ltd manages Monaghan Leisure Complex on behalf of Monaghan County Council. Coral Leisure has operated the facility since 2006 and are one of Ireland's leading service providers – managing eight publicly owned leisure facilities nationwide. In 2024, the complex held a membership base of 1,211 members and recorded 199,303 individual visits.



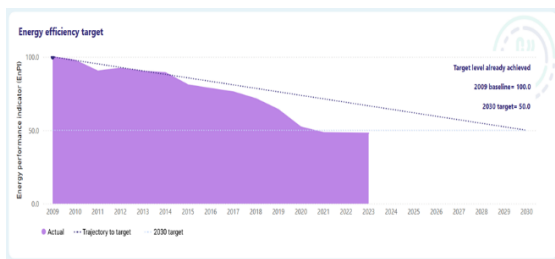
Pictured below: Monaghan County Council staff taking part in an 8-week workplace wellness initiative in Monaghan Leisure Complex.



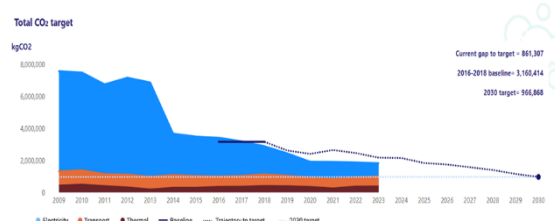
Energy

Overview: Monaghan County Council's Capital Projects section monitors energy usage in line with the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024, adopted in September 2019. This strategy aligns with the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015 and the National Adaptation Framework 2018.

Annual Reporting: All public bodies must report annual energy data via the SEAI M&R platform, managed by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC). This ensures compliance with national and EU climate goals, targeting a 51% reduction in energy-related greenhouse gas emissions and a 50% improvement in energy efficiency by 2030.



SEAI M&R Report 2023 – Energy Efficiency Target of 50% achieved ahead of schedule



SEAI M&R Report 2023 – Total CO2 target of 42% achieved to date

Achievements:

- **Energy Efficiency:** Monaghan County Council has achieved a **52%** energy improvement by the end of 2023, making it one of the best-performing local authorities.
- **Public Lighting Retrofit:** First to complete a full LED retrofit, reducing energy and carbon by 54%. Shortlisted for the LAMA All Ireland Community & Council Awards 2024.
- **Partnerships:** Collaborates with SEAI and CARO for clean energy and energy management development.
- **Border Energy Unit:** Formed in 2022 with Leitrim and Cavan County Councils to address common energy issues.
- **Pathfinder Programme:** Focuses on deep retrofit solutions for Monaghan Leisure Centre, Carrickmacross Civic Offices, and Clones Library Headquarters, aiming for a 33% reduction in fossil CO2 emissions.

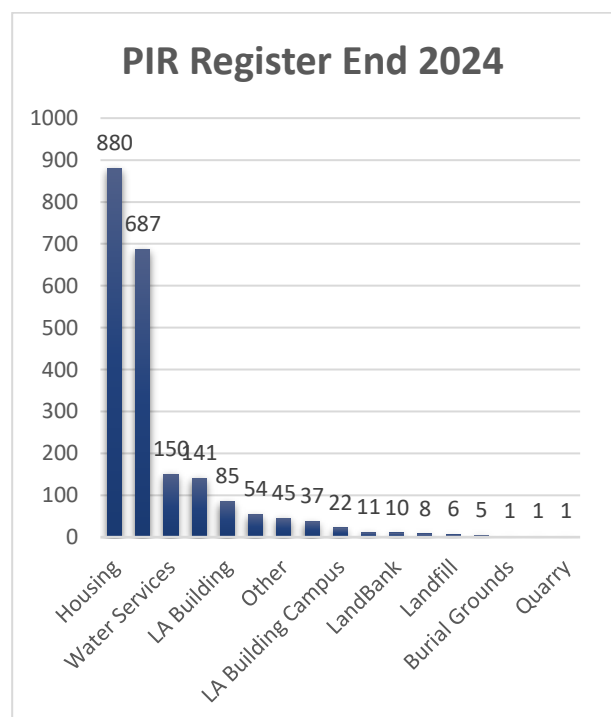
Monaghan County Council is committed to achieving the 2030 target of a 51% reduction in carbon emissions through these initiatives.

Property Asset Management

The Council's Property Interest Register (PIR) records and tracks all land and building assets under the control of the Council. This ensures good Governance and effective management of our property portfolio and links to the Financial Assets Register (FAR).

As of December 2024, Monaghan County Council currently has 2,144 Assets in the Property Interests Register including 85 buildings.

Asset Type	PIR Register End 2024
Housing	880
Roads	687
Water Services	150
Amenity	141
LA Building	85
Car Park	54
Other	45
Land	37
LA Building Campus	22
Acquisition in Progress	11
Landbank	10
Depot	8
Landfill	6
Heritage	5
Burial Grounds	1
Playgrounds	1
Quarry	1
Total	2144



Town Regeneration Section

Carrickmacross Town Centre First Plan

Monaghan County Council commissioned Paul Hogarth Company in August 2023 to develop a Town Centre First Plan for Carrickmacross.



Following a series of consultation events the initial draft of the Town Centre First plan for Carrickmacross was made available during mid November 2023 and further public consultation, consisting of a number of in person events and online surveys was held during December 2023.

The finalised plan was launched in March 2024. The plan maps out a series of transformative projects specifically tailored for Carrickmacross, encompassing a spectrum of scales and ambitions. The Town Centre First Plan is a live document, remaining responsive to ongoing input and feedback, ensuring its adaptability to the evolving needs and aspirations of Carrickmacross.

Monaghan Town Centre First Plan

A Strand 1 application was made for grant aid under the THRIVE – Town Centre First Heritage Revival Scheme Programme in April 2024. MCC were notified in June 2024 that they had been awarded €199,341 for the development of a Town Centre First Plan for Monaghan Town, the development of proposals for a vacant heritage building in public ownership to be brought back into use, and the carrying out of citizen engagement in association with these projects.

Following a tender process, John McLaughlin consultants were appointed, and work was commenced in July 2024.

The initial engagement process, including open days, online surveys, engagement with the Town Team, targeted groups, elected representatives and sections of the County Council were held in August/September 2024.



Following completion of the initial consultation a draft regeneration plan for Monaghan Town and masterplan for St Louis site was presented in November 2024. This included a full day drop in event, presentation area in Monaghan County Council Offices for a fortnight, online portal for information distribution and receipt of comments, and further meetings with Town team, targeted groups and Monaghan County Council elected representatives.



Reimagining Monaghan

St Louis Option Paper

DRAFT 07.11.2024



It is expected that the final document will be completed in February 2025 and will lead to the submission of a grant application for the St Louis

Convent Lands under THRIVE Strand 2 funding and ORIS funding streams.

Ballybay Town Centre First Plan

The procurement process for the appointment of a consultant to prepare the Town Centre First plan for Ballybay was initiated in Q4 2024. The successful consultant, The Paul Hogarth Company (Ireland) Ltd were appointed and commenced consultation process in September 2024 and the draft plan is anticipated for issue in April 2025.



This project is being funded by an allocation from the Department of Rural and Community Development.

Regeneration Plan for town centre lands in Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan

Shaffrey Associates were appointed in April 2024 to carry out a Castleblayney Town Centre Lands Regeneration Plan for the lands identified below



The aim of the study was to deliver a series of design solutions identifying opportunities for development in this area as well as provide a guidance document for future development in this area.

Various stages have been initiated including two consultation periods with key landowners, Town

team, and Councillors in May and December 2024.

The plan has identified various design scenarios which are intended to provide a framework for the regeneration of the area and offer the public and private sector direction in creating an enhanced physical environment and creating more active use of buildings and spaces. In addition, it will provide for a more pleasant and easily connected environment



The final plan is anticipated to be presented to members in March 2025.

Town Centre Health Checks and Town Team Capacity building

Monaghan County Council were awarded funding of €10,000 to undertake Town Centre Health Checks and Town Team Capacity building for each of the towns of Clones, Castleblayney and Monaghan.

Queens University, under the auspices of the School of Planning were appointed to undertake the Town Centre Health Checks for the three towns. The initial survey work consisting of online questionnaires and in person surveys commenced in September 2024.



It is envisaged that the health checks will be completed in March 2025.

Town Team Capacity building for Clones, Castleblayney and Monaghan are currently being undertaken by MCA consulting and will be ongoing through Q1 2025.

Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) Call 3

The Unit is progressing the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) Call 3 for Monaghan Town. This involves actively engaging with property owners, where possible, to address the long-term vacancy and dereliction of 50 properties within the town. The potential acquisition of properties has been approved and resources provided by the Department Housing Local Government and Heritage for these properties, either compulsorily or by agreement, and to place them on the open market for sale to buyers that will bring the properties back into active use. This funding is committed to 2030.

Under the provision of URDF Call 3 one property has now been vested and is in the ownership of MCC. The property has been put on the open market for sale which is attracting substantial interest.

The Council were also able to acquire a property under the Derelict Sites Act 1990 to enable the commencement of the Dublin Street South Regeneration project funded under URDF Call 2.

Under the provisions of the URDF call three schemes there are maximum price thresholds beyond which it is necessary to secure prior approval from the department of housing prior to purchase. Due to the form, nature, and size of the Assembly Rooms on Dawson Street the valuation exceeded the thresholds, so sanction was sought and approved for the acquisition of the property.



Assembly rooms has been derelict for over 20 years and is now going to be purchased by agreement

One property has been identified for CPO Activation which will start Q1 2025.

Monaghan County Council have entered 2.no properties onto the derelict site register which have since been sold. We have engaged with these new owners, and they have issued a programme of works to make the properties non derelict.

11.no properties have been listed for sale/sale complete. The property owners have been afforded some time to complete sale, these will be entered onto derelict site register if sale is not complete by Q2 in 2025

Through intervention, 2.no derelict properties have now been brought back into use and are functional commercial businesses and 2.no properties have applied for the Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant.



24-26 Market Street. Property was fire damaged in 2017. MCC have progressed towards Compulsory Purchase Order proceedings

Countywide Dereliction Programme Update

117.no Section 8(2) notices (including URDF programme) have been issued by Monaghan County Council in 2024. This notice advises the property owner that the Council considers that their property is derelict and invites them to submit proposals within a reasonable timeframe to address the dereliction issue.

Resulting from this engagement, in 2024, a further 43.no properties have been entered on to the Derelict Site Register as detailed below:

There were 30.no historical properties on the Derelict Site Register. After surveying these properties, the Council were able to remove 11.no from the register leaving a total of 62.no properties on the Derelict Site Register at present.

CPO Activation Programme

In addition to the Monaghan Town URDF Call 3 Scheme, the Council has acquired two properties utilising its powers as detailed in the Derelict Sites Act 1990. Both properties were purchased for the Housing Section to develop.

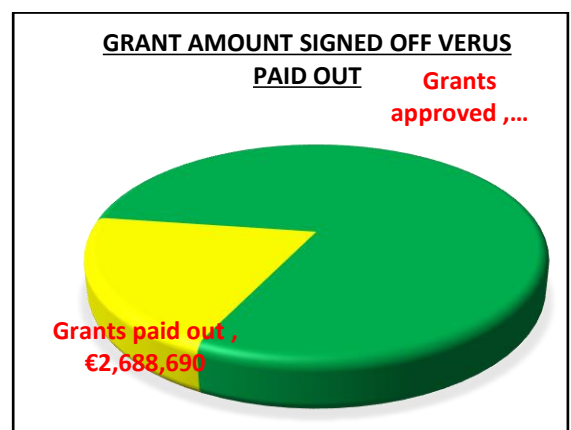
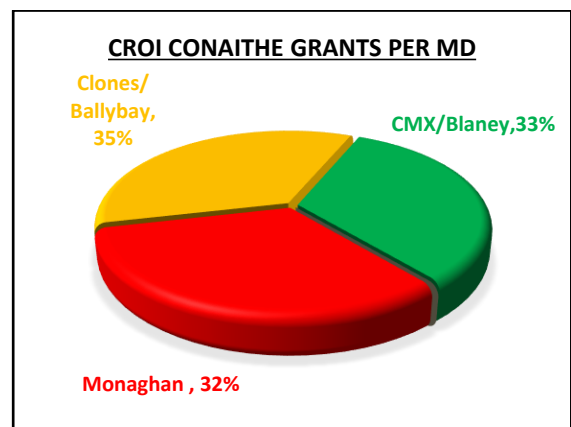
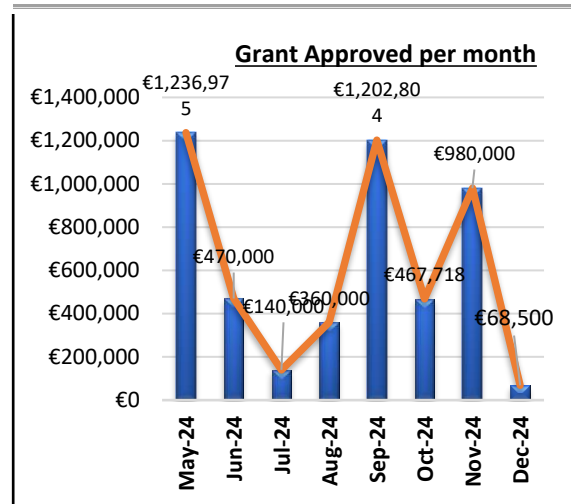
The CPO process has begun on one additional property, and we have received approval from the Senior Management Team to commence the CPO process on a further eight derelict properties in County Monaghan and this process will begin in Q1 2025

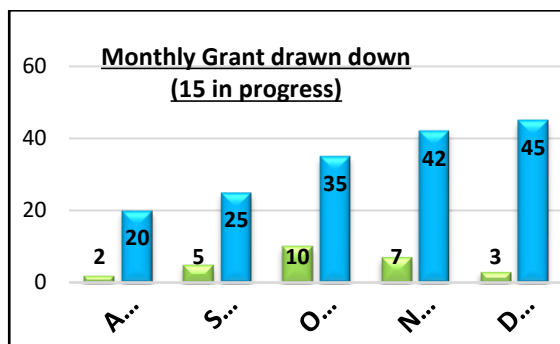
Croí Cónaithe Property Refurbishment

The total grant approved up December 2024 is €10,764,555 with an average grant approval

amount of €60,817. There have been 45 grants drawn down with a total amount of €2,688,690.

There have been 279 Croi Cónaithe grants received, and 182 grants approved with only 13 rejected.





Examples of Properties that have been recipients of the Croi Connaithe Grant

1)



2)



3)



Monaghan County Libraries

2024 in numbers

Visitors	348,343
Outreach events	1,531
Event attendance	24,443
Items borrowed	156,632
Online loans	43,572
Local history queries	2,151

Libraries make lives better

We published 'Libraries make lives better' the Monaghan County Libraries Development Plan 2024-2028. The plan sets out the priorities for the development of library services in county Monaghan over the next five years. It was developed over the course of 18 months in 2023 and 2024; a period of significant change for the library service. The plan identifies four high-level aims that will guide the delivery of library services to enable and support everyone to be informed, connected, literate and skilled for life. The plan was presented at the Council Meeting in December 2024.



Updates from the branches

Library services are delivered from five branches across the county. Here are some highlights from each of the branches.

MONAGHAN TOWN LIBRARY

Monaghan Town Library moved to a new location at the Peace Campus

Monaghan Town Library opened in the Peace Campus in May 2024 and the new space has been very well-received by the community. More than 100,000 people visited in the first five months and the branch is showing consistently high visitor numbers.



Yarney Army & Knit & Chat groups

Monaghan Town Library established two very busy knitting/crochet groups every Wednesday. They are both very well attended and attract all age groups.



Tummy, Toddler & Teatime

The group proves very popular with new parents. It gives them an opportunity to meet up in a safe space in a neutral setting, share advice and enjoy a cup of tea in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere.



Adult tabletop games

Weekly games nights are held for adults interested in board games, dice, role playing and those with a passion for in person tabletop experiences. There are very successful, popular and most of all fun!



Chess classes

Weekly chess classes are held in Monaghan Town Library which cater for different age groups and skill levels, providing an inclusive learning environment and an opportunity for social interaction.



Book Clubs

Monaghan Town Library serve 9 monthly Book Clubs for children and adults, including Authorly, Women's Book Club, Chapters at the Castle, Monday Night Book Club, U3A, Reading between the Spines, Inkwell Explorers, Classics Book Club and Club Leabhar.

CARRICKMACROSS LIBRARY



In February Carrickmacross library established its Ciorcal Comhrá to promote and grow the Irish language in Carrickmacross. The group meets weekly with an average of 18 attendees.

We also launched our Book of the Month series. The monthly curated series acts as an informal book club for those who want a good read. This has seen increased loans and interest from members.



My Open Library continues to be an extremely popular service particularly for Leaving Certificate students in particular who use the branch outside staffed hours for their studies.



At Easter Carrickmacross branch hosted its inaugural Library Quiz. Eight teams of four entered on the day and everyone did well to answer some very tough questions!



For social inclusion week Carrickmacross Library had the pleasure to host our regular *Steadfast House* members this morning for a Christmas arts and crafts workshop.



The Carrickmacross branch secured funding for a paint and renovation of the branch. Works took place over the Christmas break at the end of the year.

CASTLEBLAYNEY LIBRARY

In September we celebrated our first birthday in our premises; Gate Lodge 2 at the entrance to Muckno Park. We had a weekend of celebration with cake!



Since the move we have been busy establishing new groups, activities and resources for the community of Castleblayney and surrounding areas. Our regular monthly activities now include Crosswords and Croissants, Mindful adult colouring, Baby book club, Local history talks and book clubs. Other weekly activities include a dedicated study space on Wednesdays, a Pokémon club and Ciorcal Comhrá. The library also now has a dedicated, bookable sensory space.



In March, we celebrated World Book Day in style by dressing up! For Easter we engaged with number of businesses in Castleblayney for an Easter book hunt. Over 150 children took part in this event. Local businesses noted an increase in their footfall during this time frame. In May, we took a step back in time to the era of dinosaurs.

Schools and the public were invited to meet a number of baby dinosaurs and witness a live egg hatch. We had a volcano and a dinosaur hunt and fossil dig in the library too!



July saw the 25th anniversary of the Muckno mania festival in Castleblayney. The library ran a colouring competition in conjunction with the festival and took part in the parade through the town.

In August we hosted *Castleblayney Connections* exhibition as part of Heritage week. The public were asked to submit pictures and artefacts relating to Castleblayney. We had a fantastic response from the public and collected a huge amount of material which was displayed across two days. Along with local visitors we had a group in all the way from the US.



Christmas at Castleblayney was a most wonderful time of year. There was a cheeky elf that children were asked to find as he caused havoc amongst

the shelves. We had crafts for both adults and children. We even caught Santa on our cameras as he delivered individual letters to the children who has posted their letter in our post box.



Castleblayney library hosted a number of competitions throughout the year including colouring competitions for each season. We held a Lego competition over the summer with a book theme, and a very competitive Harry potter quiz which came down to a nail-biting tie break!

CLONES LIBRARY

Clones Library continued to host regular activities in the branch partnering with community groups and others including the CMETB, Music Generation, Creative Monaghan and the Citizens Information Service.

We were delighted to host our regular groups in Clones Library including Crafts and Chatters, Creative Writing classes and the Clones and Cross Border Art Group. Our popular 'Borrow a Librarian' service continued throughout the year.

In August, we were delighted to host musicians from Classical Kids as part of the summer programme.



In October and November, we hosted a series of free Parent and Child yoga classes, delivered by Yoga Buds Ireland. All participants got a yoga certificate and learned about the amazing benefits of yoga for all ages.



We were delighted to continue to host the Fáilte Isteach programme at Clones Library (which is also held at other libraries across the county). It continues to see strong attendance as a meeting point for unstructured learning and intercultural exchange.



BALLYBAY LIBRARY

Ballybay Library opened in a new location in the town and our members were delighted when services resumed after a short closure. We're all looking forward to extending our services with a brand-new library building coming soon with the Ballybay Market House refurbishment project.

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

Right to Read programme

- **Ireland Reads**

Monaghan County Libraries celebrated Ireland Reads 2024 with a series of author and illustrator workshops. We were visited by Úna Woods, Niamh Sharkey, Fiona Longmuir and Sadhbh Devlin who brought books to life for both young and old.

- **Summer Stars**

Almost 3,000 children from across the county signed up to take on the Summer Reading Challenge 2024. The reading challenge was supported by a programme of events across the summer months which included a Roald Dahl science series, Classical Kids concerts, Circus Skills workshops, Core Kids movement and literacy

workshops, storytimes, book clubs and much more.

- **Children's Book Festival**

Children's book Festival is a highlight of our year. In 2024 we hosted 29 in-person events and 4 online events with authors & illustrators from across Ireland and the UK, including journalist David McCullagh who visited Carrickmacross library to talk about his children's book 'The Great Irish Politics Book'. 4,185 people took part in a Children's Book Festival event, including our inaugural Comic Con.



TechKnow

We continued to work with CMETB and Europe Direct Clones to provide one-to-one digital literacy skills session to adults. There was a high demand for these workshops, and we offered more than 300 appointments to support people with digital communication, online shopping, online banking and other questions.

Sensory supports and services

Castleblayney library opened a dedicated sensory room in the library in 2024. This is a follow-on from the development of a sensory room in Clones library. Library sensory spaces provide a suitable environment for neurodivergent individuals, those with sensory processing differences, and anyone who benefits from a calm atmosphere. These thoughtfully designed areas feature adjustable lighting and tactile objects that allow users to self-regulate their sensory experiences while still accessing the library's resources.

Pages of Possibility

In 2024, Monaghan County Libraries were awarded funding from the *Adult Literacy for Life (ALL) Collaboration & Innovation Fund* to develop a series of family literacy events aimed at encouraging and developing reading for pleasure as a habit in the home. The ALL-Strategy states that “Literacy is not just about the ability to read and write”. It involves speaking, listening, reading, writing, communicating, comprehending, and making informed choices.

A Family Literacy programme can combine all of these elements to make learning a positive and engaging activity. This Family Literacy project will demonstrate to both generations that literacy is at the heart of everything we do at Monaghan County Libraries. The Pages of Possibility programme will be piloted in Monaghan Town branch library before being rolled out across our library network in 2025.

Cavan Monaghan Science Festival 2024

The Cavan Monaghan Science Festival ran from 11-17 November 2024. This was the 9th year of the festival, which is funded by Research Ireland (formerly Science Foundation Ireland). The theme for 2024 was ‘Regeneration’. The programme included more than 50 events for adults and children covering a wide variety of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects. The highlight of the programme was the annual Big Family STEM Day at Monaghan Institute, which was attended by more than 1,700 people. The Cavan Monaghan Science Festival is organised by Monaghan County Libraries in partnership with Cavan Libraries.



Comi Con 2024

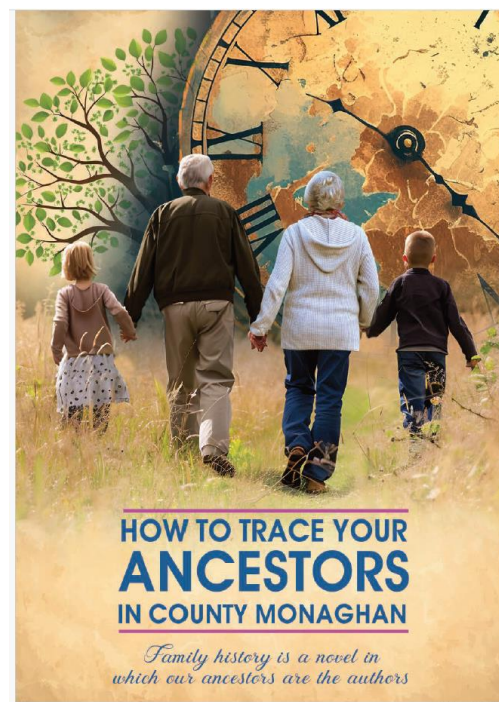
Monaghan’s first-ever Comic Con was held on Saturday, 26 October at the Peace Campus, Monaghan town. There were lots of activities for all ages including guests from movies, cosplay,

workshops, talks, comics, artists and collectibles. This event was organised by Monaghan County Libraries in partnership with Cavan Monaghan LCYP and Mini-Con Ireland.



LOCAL HISTORY AND GENEALOGY

We continued to respond to local history and genealogy enquiries from all over the world. Our extremely useful guide on genealogy services at Monaghan County Libraries has been updated. Check out the new version of ‘How to trace your ancestors in county Monaghan’ on our website or pop into any branch to pick up a printed copy.



PARTNERSHIP WITH ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND

FOOTBALL



We continued our partnership with the Football Association of Ireland by developing an activity book to celebrate the European Championships in 2024. This successful literacy project promotes literacy and reading in a fun interactive way as part of the national Right to Read programme. With funding from the FAI 10,000 copies of the book were distributed among library authorities across the country for use as part of their Summer Stars campaign.

EUROPE DIRECT CLONES



EUROPE DIRECT Clones

Clones Library continues to be the home of Europe Direct for the Cavan, Louth and Monaghan region. The network gives information, advice, assistance and answers to questions about the EU and in particular about the rights of EU citizens, the EU's priorities, legislations, policies, programmes and funding opportunities. In 2024, we hosted a number of events through the Europe Direct programme, including:

Europe Direct public speaking competition

The Europe Direct Soapbox competition 2024 was held on 15 November at the Peace Campus,

Monaghan town. This is an annual event that raises awareness of topical issues in Europe and provides people with the opportunity to have their say.

This year the theme for the public speaking competition was **"A.I. is not a threat to humanity"**. More than 50 students entered the competition this year, which was chair by MEP Maria Walsh. Winners went on to compete in the National Final in the Royal College of Physicians Dublin on Tuesday, 26 November 2024. Our regional winner, Cian Smyth, won the national award of €1,000. Congratulations to Cian on this fantastic achievement!



Europe Direct food waste workshops

In December 2024, we hosted a series of free workshops on reducing food waste in the home over Christmas in libraries across the county. The workshops were delivered by Voice Ireland, and were funded through Europe Direct Clones, as part of our commitment to encourage European citizens to actively look at ways in which their behaviours impact on the environment, and the impacts of climate change on their locality. The sessions focused on giving practical advice and tips, and feedback from attendees was extremely positive.

Communicating Europe

In 2024, Monaghan County Libraries secured funding for a range of events and resources through the Communicating Europe Initiative. The focus of this initiative is to communicate European issues, the role of the European Union and Ireland's place in Europe. This was important in the year of the European Parliament elements.

Branches across the county facilitated a wide-ranging programme targeting all members of the

community. Some highlights included former head of the European Information Office, Mr Francis Jacobs, presenting an engaging talk and discussion on what was at stake in the 2024 European Parliament elections. It provided a wonderful opportunity for attendees to discuss the operations of the European Union.



In July 2024 the multi-award winning ArtsEkta facilitated a celebration of European culture in the newly opened Monaghan Peace Campus. Over 40 primary school aged children participated in engaging arts and crafts workshops that also delivered education to children about other countries traditions, values and cultures.



In October, we invited students from all of the secondary schools in Co Monaghan to participate in our Europe morning. Taking place in the Monaghan Peace Campus students first had a presentation from guest speaker Alex Donovan from the European Youth Parliament. Alex presented on the workings of the youth

parliament and how students could get actively involved. Following this a competitive quiz on all things European Union took place with prizes presented to winners by former MEP Matt Carthy. Deputy Carthy also gave a talk on his previous role in the EU and the importance of the European Union in Ireland.



EUROPEAN PROJECT ON DEMOCRACY AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Monaghan County Libraries are partners on a European project (named FUTU4U) that aims to help young adults connect with their communities, understand how society works, and develop critical literacy skills to enable better civic participation. Over the lifetime of the project, we will work with project partners in Finland, Italy and Slovenia to design and deliver a series of workshops for young people on democracy and civic engagement as European citizens. Locally, we are working with a wide range of partners including CMETB Youthreach, Monaghan Institute, Cavan Institute, Monaghan Integrated Development and the National Learning Network.

In November 2024, we delivered a number of workshops that focused on encouraging young people to vote. The workshop reached more than 50 young people across the Cavan-Monaghan constituency working with CMETB, Cavan Institute and Monaghan Institutes. Future workshops in the programme will focus on highlighting opportunities for post-election civic and democratic participation.



SCRAP project

The SCRAP Project launched in Carrickmacross Library on Wednesday, 16th October 2024 as part of Monaghan County Council's Climate Action Week activities. SCRAP is a sustainable fashion project aimed at young people and the wider public. The project will promote eco – fashion, sustainable fashion, recycling, upcycling, repurposing as tangible alternatives to 'fast fashion' which causes extensive damage to the planet and exploits workers. SCRAP will engage local creatives to develop and deliver a series of workshops that will encourage secondary school students to slash, sew, shred, embroider, embellish, print and dye second hand clothing to create unique and wearable fashion pieces. Materials used for the workshops will be eco – friendly.

As part of the project Creative Monaghan and Monaghan County Libraries will establish sewing machine hubs in library branches throughout the county to support local schools taking part in the Relove Fashion Competition. This competition was developed in response to the devastating environmental and social impacts of the fashion industry, the need for change, and the recognition of young people's pivotal role in shaping innovative solution.



Monaghan County Libraries and Creative Monaghan win national award for age friendly community innovation

Monaghan County Libraries and Creative Monaghan were honoured to win a national award for their *Creative Cafés* project in November 2024. The *Creative Cafés* project was shortlisted in the highly competitive 'Community Innovation' category and the award was sponsored by the Department of Rural and Community Development.

Creative Cafés are an opportunity for older people and isolated members of our community to engage in creative activities such as painting, crafting, photography, creative writing, music and dance. The project is a collaboration between Monaghan County Libraries and Creative Monaghan, supported by Healthy Monaghan, the Shared Island initiative and Monaghan County Council.



Creative Monaghan 2024

In 2024 Monaghan County Council received €374,319 in funding from Creative Ireland. Through the Creative Monaghan programme 274 Creative Practitioners were engaged to develop and deliver a diverse range projects, events and activities.

11 projects supported individuals who are vulnerable and marginalised. Examples include 'Lullaby Leaf', a sensory programme for children with complex needs. 'Memories and Melodies', a reminiscence music and storytelling show for residential care homes that comprised of 18 visits to 6 care settings in County Monaghan. A drama, storytelling and filmmaking project for young people from new communities (including those living in direct provision), running over 6 days. A short film made by the young people can be viewed here:

<https://www.facebook.com/CreativeMonaghan/videos/425139866566110>

8 projects responded contributed directly to actions set out in Monaghan County Council's Climate Action Plan. Examples include the 'Capturing Nature Through Eco- Art' workshop series facilitated by local artist Grace Haynes and Dr Patricia McCreesh, MCC Biodiversity Officer. The 'Creative Roots' workshop series developed by local artist Dervla McElvaney provided an opportunity for women to explore the themes of nature through textiles art.

A jam-packed programme for Cruinniú na nÓg provided 1,794 children and young people with the opportunity to engage in a wide range of creative projects and events. Here is a link to our Creative Monaghan Cruinniú 2024 brochure: https://issuu.com/monaghancountylibraries/docs/cruinni_booklet_2024

Creative Monaghan was successful in securing funding for 2 cross border projects under the Shared Island Initiative. The Border Beats Cruinniú project engaged children and young people from Co. Monaghan and Co. Fermanagh in a series of music themed activities. The Creative Cafes project brings opportunities for creative engagement to communities in the Monaghan/Fermanagh border region. A short video of our cross border Creative Cafes event in Monaghan Peace Campus can be viewed here:

<https://www.facebook.com/CreativeMonaghan/videos/968676288423338>

In addition to supporting projects at the grass roots of our community, Creative Monaghan have supported projects with significant international scope. These include 'The Wilde Sisters' film short, directed by Monaghan native Táine King and 'Ways of Disappearing' a ground-breaking contemporary opera by Castleblayney born composer Michael Gallen.

In 2024, Creative Monaghan had an overall audience engagement figure of **11,757**.

Audrey Wilson (Creative Communities Engagement Officer)



Monaghan County Museum

Preparing to Move to The Peace Campus

Prior to opening, the museum's move to its new home required careful organisation and logistical planning. We would like to share a couple of images from this period.



The arrival of our new exhibition cases to the Peace Campus

All objects had to be handled and packed by our Collections Team. This involved moving more than 5,000 objects and artefacts to fill the new exhibition cases and the bespoke store. We are glad to report that every object arrived successfully. The strategic planning paid off and the move went without a hitch.



The Cross of Clogher being removed from the old museum building and protectively packed for transportation.

Peace Campus Opens

After years and months of organising, we are in our new home in the Monaghan Peace Campus. On the 24th June 2024, Monaghan County Museum opened to the public, and launched their new displays including the exhibition, ***Bordering Realities – Monaghan People and Stories***. For the staff this has been a moment we have planned and been excited for over several years.



Opening day for the new museum. (left to right) Pauline Tilson, Helen Doherty, Denise Henry, Theresa Loftus (Monaghan Co. Museum staff), Olga Mc Connon; Director of Services Monaghan County Council, Liam Bradley; Curator of Monaghan County Museum, Robert Burns, Chief Executive, Monaghan County Council, Anna McCann and Patricia Barbour (Monaghan Co. Museum Staff).

Bordering Realities

The new *Bordering Realities* exhibition at the museum explores the evolving narrative of life on the border. Told through the idea that Monaghan's story is born from both naturally occurring and imposed lines. Lines that have bent, branched and entwined in response to changes

over time, and in doing so, have created a beautiful mosaic of cultural diversity and historical richness that is County Monaghan today. The exhibition challenges visitors to stop and think about the things that delineate their own lives, and to explore the question: Do our borders define us or do we define our borders?

Highlights of the new exhibition include:

The Story of the Ulster-Scots – working with cross-borders partners in the Ulster-Scots Agency as well as organisations representing the Ulster-Scots or Scots Irish story in the US. This dedicated space chronicles the journey of shared cultural ideas and identities and explores the story and rich culture of the Ulster Scots community in Monaghan.



Exhibition of the Ulster-Scots including some of the commonly occurring surnames in this region.

Video interviews with well-known Monaghan people, including Caitriona Balfe, Barry McGuigan, Ardal O'Hanlon and Tommy Bowe, in which they each speak candidly about their own unique, personal experience of growing up on the border.



The gallery with the video recordings of well-known Monaghan people.

50th Anniversary of Monaghan County Museum

On 21st September 2024 Monaghan County Museum marked its fiftieth birthday. From our

earliest inception at the Monaghan Court House in 1974, the museum's aim has been to serve the people of the county by displaying Monaghan's rich culture and heritage. The decades have seen us move temporarily to the old CBS School and then to our Hill Street home in August 1986, all the time diversifying to match the changing needs of our community. Now at its new home at Monaghan Peace Campus the museum continues to keep community foremost, and for our first major event chose to celebrate its half century with the people of the area by having a great big party.



Monaghan County Museum staff with Tommy Bowe who kindly cut the cake on the day.



Members of the public waiting to meet Tommy Bowe

Gallery Visitors



Life imitating art – or exhibit!
Tommy Bowe visiting the museum's 'Crossing Borders' section in which he appears.



Josie McCusker watching herself on video recounting her memories of the spitfire crash.



Visitors in the museum



Monaghan Murals

Monaghan Murals latest artwork 'Borders' was created on Plantation Road in Monaghan Town early this summer. The concept behind the new mural was to develop a piece of public art that considers both the concrete and abstract borders that encompass our lives. Positioned next to the Monaghan Peace Campus building, the mural introduces the core idea behind the Campus as a space to bring communities together irrespective of borders. The artist responsible for this beautiful mural, Friz, was inspired by the idea of borders. Her design includes images of people of varying ages facing in different directions representing life bordered by birth and death. She also included migratory birds and flowers that are not constrained by borders and move freely across the world. Her use of distinct colours which blur and create new shades where they meet represent the possibility that something unique and beautiful can be created where borders merge.



Plantation Road Mural

Monaghan Murals is funded by Creative Monaghan through the Creative Ireland programme. Many thanks to Kieran McMahon Tyres for allowing their wall to be used for this artwork.

Arts Office

It is our role to assist and nurture Artists within the County and The Arts office continue to **assist individual Artists** e.g., Writers, Theatre Practitioners and Visual Artists. Some have been awarded grants from both the Arts Council and Culture Ireland. It ranged from travel assistance to material purchases and direct funding matched with secured Arts Council funding. We offer the facilities of The Market House to Artists throughout the year.

The Arts Office continued to adopt a proactive approach to their 2024 Programme for Arts.

Arts Development Objectives: 2024

Keeping our Programming and funding model to the 3 strategic goals of our framework agreement with the Arts Council 2020-2027 was a key objective again in 2024, in the understanding that the Council's delivery and commitment of the Arts in County Monaghan can be more sustainable this way. These three key objectives were the key elements of our efforts to maintain a fulfilling role for the Arts in the creative community within Monaghan.

[SPC Extract From Framework Agreement 2020-2027](#)

Some of the updates in our 2024 delivery are as follows:

1. **Supporting the Artist:** Value and support the work of artists and extend the range of opportunities for artists to develop their practice.

Our Value-Added Scheme 2020-2027 contributed financially 4 Artists which at its core is a commitment to support the Professional Artists who have been awarded a **bursary** from bodies such as **The Arts Council/Culture Ireland**.

<https://monaghan.ie/arts/value-added-scheme-2020-2027>

In addition, the Artist Support Scheme which we ran in 2024 awarded a total of **€15K** to **17 Artists**, both as Emerging Talent & Established Artists.

<https://monaghan.ie/arts/2024/12/19/artist-support-scheme-tacaiocht-do-ealaiontoiri-2025/>

We facilitated a Book Launch "**Our Dear Dark Mountain with The Sky Over it**" – The James Whiteside Collection in March here in The Market House, an import new book of Traditional Music, by Ballinode native Dr Seán McElwain. It explored the life and musical activities of James Whiteside and presented a snapshot into the region's rich musical and song tradition.

We also co funded with the Arts Council and in association with arts officer association the biannual Platform 31 bursary which is awarded in competition form to an artist in mid-career wishing to engage in new and exciting work award sum **€8K**.

<https://monaghan.ie/arts/2022/02/28/platform-31-artist-support-scheme>

The Clones Artists' Studios is the Councils most public investment in advocating to the significance that artists make to our locality. The artists in the studios deliver artist led Workshops in 2024 and other more publicly accessible events and have been a bridge to some integral projects within the area. The Council's commitments to artists in 2024 were remarkable.

<https://www.facebook.com/ClonesArtStudios>

2. **Young people and the Arts;** opportunities for children and young people to create, access and participate in great art.

Contribution to **Music Generation** in 2024 of 30K which is the Music Education Service providing opportunities for children and young people to have access to instrumental tuition locally and great opportunities. Many of our schools and young people benefit greatly by being involved in this initiative.

The Cavan Monaghan Youth Arts Bursary for 2024 was launched in March and supports young people to participate in short youth Arts Projects in collaboration with a Professional Artist and within Youth work and non-formal Education

Settings. 6 Bursaries worth €1,600 each are awarded, 3 to County Monaghan.

<https://www.youth.ie/articles/cavan-monaghan-youth-arts-bursary-call-for-applications/>

We each contribute financially to its operation which in turn assists schools in both counties to achieve the status of being in the **Creative Schools Programme** under the auspices of the Arts Council. We aim to support them and enhance their Programme, and we now have many Schools in County Monaghan who have achieved and participated in the programme.

We also provided €6,500 to Tradoodle Festival, a traditional Arts Festival featuring Music and Workshops for young audiences in 2024.

Over 60 Free Arts and Cultural Events took place countrywide as part of this year's **Culture Night** and County Monaghan was very much a part of it around various venues supported by our office.

Our Local Arts in Education Partnership (LAEP) is a joint commitment to the Arts with a particular emphasis on young people and opportunities for them, which we share with Cavan County Council & CMETB.

Video Nasty, the new series – **filmed in County Monaghan** and produced by **Monaghan Producer** Ailish McElmeel was screened on TV3 recently. This Deadpan Pictures Production is a darkly Comic drama with a strain of Murder Mystery. We assisted the Production and Research Crew with the use of our building and advised on local Locations for filming.

As we also fund many other Arts centre, Festivals and Venues in the County we ask them through our funding programmes to also follow up on the advocacy programme that we commit to in realising the potential of every child and commit to supporting young people in the Arts.

3. **Creating Capacity** Investing in the professional development of venues, festivals and organisations providing high-quality arts experiences.

The Council awarded through its **Arts Partners Scheme** a total of **€75K** to the below named eight recipients.

The Garage Theatre

Féile Oriel

Íontas Theatre

Féile Patrick Byrne

Muckno Mania

Castleblayney Drama Festival

Clones Film Festival

N/East Musical & Dramatic Society

Tourism Section

The role of the Tourism Unit within Monaghan County Council is:

- To raise customer awareness of the Monaghan area as a tourism destination
- To develop and contribute towards the development of the county's tourism product

The **Key Tourism Development Initiatives** progressed in 2024 included the following:

Establishment of Tourism & Recreation Forum

At end 2023, Monaghan County Council adopted a new and ambitious Tourism Strategy (2023- 2028) for County Monaghan, to help address deficits, capitalise upon opportunities, and grow new partnerships within the county's tourism and recreational sectors. A key action in the strategy was the establishment of a Tourism & Recreation forum of stakeholders to support its implementation and nominations were sought from different sectors and tourism focused organisations. In April, the inaugural meeting of the Forum was held, with quarterly meetings thereafter.



TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

In 2023/2024 the section was successful in being awarded funding from a number of sources and planning/design and/or capital works were carried out to progress a number of projects.

Completed Projects

Church Square Performance Space – €497,962 was received from Failte Ireland to deliver a multi-use events space in Church Square, Monaghan with match funding provided by Monaghan County Council. The official launch event was held on 20th September. Development works included hard and soft landscaping, provision of services connections and feature lighting.



Dromore River Blueway Pre-development Project – €50,000 was awarded under the ORIS funding programme to work up plans to develop a proposed Blueway from Ballybay to Lisalong. Subsequently, €500,000 was secured under the 2023 ORIS programme for capital works and this will only progress when the An Bord Pleanála planning determination has been made.

Monaghan Way walking Trail – Inniskeen to Annadrumman (Castleblayney) - Upgrade works on the Monaghan Way from Inniskeen to Annadrumman were completed and the trail was officially re-opened by Minister Heather Humphreys at a launch event on 22nd March, at which a new Walks Scheme for the trail was also announced. The Monaghan Way featured as part of the Tracks and Trails (RTE TV series) in 2024.

Activity Provider at Clones Marina – Monaghan Tourism has worked in partnership with Waterways Ireland and Fáilte Ireland to establish an activity provider at Clones Marina. This provider operates Ulster Canal Adventures, offering water-based activities that enhance outdoor recreation in the area. The Tourism unit continues to promote and support Ulster Canal Adventures at every opportunity.



Projects Progressed

Dartrey Forest Enhancements - €400,000 ORIS funding was secured for recreational enhancements to Dartrey Forest, and construction commenced on site in Q2 2024, with all works completed in December.



Black Island Lough Muckno - €500,000 ORIS funding was granted to MCC to enhance the recreational facilities on the island. Planning permission for these upgrade works was granted in September and a procurement process was undertaken thereafter. Construction works will **commence** on site in Q1 2025.

Rossmore Playpark Extension - MCC was awarded €150,000 under the Community Recognition Fund to extend the existing playpark at Rossmore and provide play equipment which is suitable for older children. Works commenced on site in September and the new extension was opened to the public in December.



Sliabh Beagh – Following a Shared Island funded feasibility study in 2023, the completed report and associated studies were used as the basis for seeking funding for proposed works. Capital funding of €6M has now been secured under the Shared Island programme and project delivery will commence in 2025.

TOURISM PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The section was very active in promoting tourism in 2024 and delivered a number of successful initiatives including the following:

C'Mon to Monaghan - A series of unique and quirky videos (20 in total) was developed to showcase the diverse tourism and food offering in



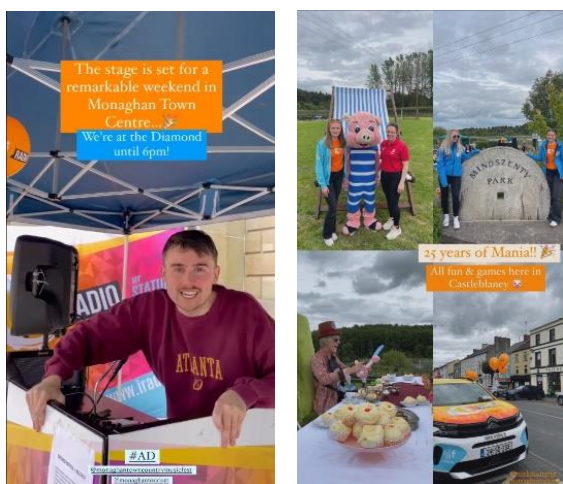
county Monaghan, rolled out via social media sites.

Radio Campaigns - Three outdoor broadcasts were organised to promote and support the following festivals in 2024:

- Muckno Mania, 5th - 7th July



- Monaghan Town Country Music Festival, 18th - 21st July
- Clones Film Festival, 24th - 27th October



Influencer Posts - The Tourism Unit collaborated with influencer Helen Drumm to showcase key activities across the county, which were then promoted to her extensive following across Tik Tok, Instagram and Facebook.



Monaghan Dublin Business Networking Event (MDBN) - To demonstrate support for its diaspora the tourism unit assisted in organising an MDBN event in the Peace Campus on 20 September which was supported by Monaghan County Council. To coincide with Culture Night, the event had a cultural theme and was very positively received with a good attendance on the night.



Digital Visitor Information

Point – A Failte Ireland digital tourist information kiosk has now been installed in the main foyer of the Peace Campus and contains general tourism literature.



Failte Ireland Digital Visitor Information Point in main foyer of Peace Campus

Events Supported – Monaghan Tourism promoted its Festival Funding Scheme in May 2024, supporting a variety of local events. Funding was allocated to key festivals, enhancing cultural, musical and seasonal celebrations across the county. These events played a vital role in attracting visitors and fostering community engagement.



Trade Workshops – The Tourism Unit successfully hosted three trade workshops in 2024, bringing together key stakeholders from various sectors. These workshops provided valuable networking opportunities, fostered collaboration and showcased Monaghan's tourism offering. The Tourism Unit has plans for continued trade engagement in 2025.

Local Enterprise Office

Introduction

In 2024, LEO (Monaghan) celebrated its tenth anniversary. In co-operation with Enterprise Ireland, it continues to play a vital role in facilitating sustainable economic growth through supporting micro-enterprises and promoting a pro-enterprise culture within Local Authorities.

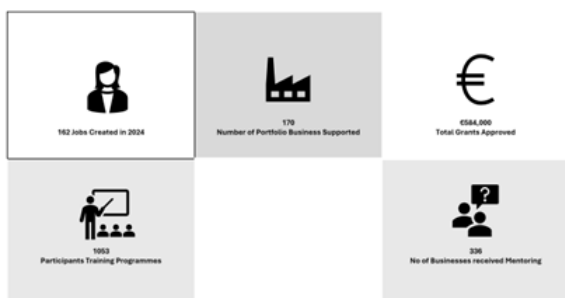
The Local Enterprise Office:

- promotes entrepreneurship,
- fosters business start-ups and financially assists existing micro and small businesses to drive job creation.
- delivers economic activities under the Local Economic & Community Development Plan, and County Development Plan.
- Undertakes actions to meet objectives within the Climate Action Plan through programs like the ESG (Environmental Social Governance) Cluster.

Financial Supports & Job Creation

During the year LEO Monaghan approved grant aid €583,774 to 109 local SME's that collectively employ 1,006 individuals.

These grants allowed companies to undertake feasibility studies for new product and market development, start new enterprises with priming grants and helped grow established business through Business Expansion Grants.



LEO Monaghan 2024 Highlights

Training

In 2024, our main objective was to offer enhanced support and services tailored to promote the growth of new startups.

LEO Monaghan remained committed to assisting established businesses expand and address

various challenges such as sustainability and digitalisation.



Information Session Funding Supports

A total of 1,053 people comprised of Businesspeople, entrepreneurs and individuals aspiring to start or grow their business engaged in training sessions and workshops organised by LEO Monaghan, including specialised "Start Your Own Business" courses, Financial, Digital Marketing and other bespoke workshops.

Mentoring

The Mentor Program matches the knowledge, skills, insights, and entrepreneurial capability of experienced practitioners with small business owners / managers who need practical and strategic confidential advice and guidance.

One-to-one mentoring support is available to established companies and in some cases to new business start-ups to address specific management needs on an individual company basis.

2024, demand for mentoring sessions reached an all-time high with mentoring provided to 336 clients covering themes such as IT, HR, Sales, and Marketing.

Lean for Micro

Aligned to one of the LEO Monaghan core strategic pillars of 'Competitiveness' – the LEAN For Micro support is designed to provide support to implement LEAN principles, achieve savings and improvements in capability.



Our target for 2024 was to deliver 13 projects - but this was exceeded with 18 projects delivered with commitments of €88,656.

Trading Online Vouchers

The Trading Online Voucher provided qualifying businesses with funding to develop a new ecommerce website or enhance an existing one. Throughout 2024, there remained a strong demand for this program, resulting in the approval of 35 vouchers. This scheme has now been discontinued and has been replaced with the Grow Digital program.

Digital Start - Grow Digital Program

Small businesses need to maximise every advantage and implementing a digital strategy can give businesses a real edge.



Digital Start supports manufacturing and international trading service clients. 5 client companies received financial support totalling €23,584 in 2024 under the Digital Start program.

This support helps them prepare and implement adoption of digital tools and techniques across their business.



To support the digitalisation, program a "Grow Digital" Voucher scheme was introduced in 2024. The scheme offers a grant covering 50% of eligible costs, up to €5,000 to cover e-commerce,

customer relationship management (CRM), accounting software and training costs.

Green Business

With a continued focus on climate action and sustainability, LEO Monaghan took the lead in developing adaptation strategies and fostering awareness among local businesses in Monaghan.

The aim is to promote the transition of businesses towards becoming low-carbon entities.



Following on from the Go Green Network Series, LEO Monaghan delivered a successful pilot program in 2024 with 21 Small and micro businesses through the ESG (Environmental Social Governance) Cluster. This program provided local companies with "ESGo" an easy-to-use digital tool that assists businesses in tracking and managing their responsible Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) journey.



ESG Applicants Award Ceremony



In addition, 11 businesses were approved for the Energy Efficiency Grant in 2024, enabling businesses to get financial support towards the implementation of energy efficient measures.

In July, Enterprise Ireland announced changes to the level of funding available to enterprises under the Energy Efficiency Grant.

The updated Energy Efficiency Grant supports investment in the sustainability projects of Irish enterprises. Up to 75% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of €10,000 can be supported following the completion of a Green for Business, Green Start or a SEAI Energy Audit.



Two events were held with Environment as part of Climate Action week 2024 in October. The first took place in Concra Wood and the

second in Rossmore Golf Club. Over 70 businesses attended these events to get information on the Energy Efficiency Grant and on the Mywaste.ie campaign.

Get Exporting Program

Government policy aims to increase the number of first-time exporters by 2000 companies by 2030.



In 2024, 4 local enterprises engaged in Get Exporting program which is designed to support companies at every stage of their journey to achieve new export sales. The program aims to simplify the export journey and help build the knowledge, confidence and strategies needed to succeed in global markets.

In 2024, Monaghan LEO assisted 9 local companies with funding to exhibit their products at an international trade event.

Student Enterprise Awards

Every September, through the Local Enterprise Office Monaghan, secondary school students with an entrepreneurial spirit embark on a real-world business journey as part of the Student Enterprise Programme.

This initiative, which aligns with the business studies curriculum at both Junior and Senior levels, offers students a rewarding opportunity to research, establish, and operate their own

businesses. Participants have the flexibility to develop their business concepts individually or as part of a team.

In 2024, over 311 students from schools across County Monaghan participated in the programme.

Supported by Local Enterprise Office Monaghan, the students won prizes for entries to the competition titled “My Entrepreneurial Journey” in the Junior and Intermediate categories and a SMART Business Award in the Junior category.



Student enterprise Awards 2024

The programme supports students to create, design and market their own business, all with the hope of reaching the National Final.

In the Intermediate Category, Clodagh Carey, Kamile Virganaviciute and Emma McCaul, CKE Candles from Largy College represented the county at the Final.

In the Senior Category of the competition, Monaghan was represented by Alex McVicar from Drip Feed at St Macartans College.

In the “My Entrepreneurial Journey” category open to junior and intermediate students, Aine Carragher and Bella O’Neill from Our Lady’s Secondary School Castleblayney represented Monaghan in the National Final.

Local Enterprise Awards

Nomad Counters from Corduff were chosen as winners of the 2024 Monaghan Local Enterprise Award and represented Monaghan at the National Enterprise Awards.

The company headed by Allen & Julie McAdam, is a leading provider of automated pedestrian and vehicle counting equipment for the urban and rural environment.



Their customers include state bodies, local authorities, government departments and their clients span the tourism, entertainment, leisure and local development sectors.

Local Enterprise Week

Local Enterprise Week 2024 celebrated the spirit of innovation and sustainability with a special focus on the Circular Economy, organised in collaboration with IMR's Circular Economy network, CIRCULÉIRE, RevolveFleet (Castleblayney), along with the Monaghan Local Enterprise Office.



The event served as a platform for knowledge sharing and collaboration among industry experts,

local businesses, and community leaders, aiming to accelerate the transition towards a net-zero carbon circular economy in County Monaghan.

Over 50 attendees had the opportunity to engage with CIRCULÉIRE experts, local companies such as IJM and Revolve, and gain insights into the LEO Monaghan ESG Cluster's efforts in promoting sustainability, circular economy principles, and innovation.

Monaghanhubs

In 2024, a marketing campaign to showcase the unique attributes and offerings of remote working hubs in County Monaghan was completed by Monaghan LEO through the Town and Village Renewal Scheme.



This campaign promoted County Monaghan as a destination for remote working and business establishment and provided the hubs within the county with digital marketing content such as videography and photography for future marketing campaigns.

National Ploughing Championships



Monaghan LEO was represented within the Local Enterprise Village 2024 National Ploughing

Championships by Tec West and by Tigercomb in the Enterprise Ireland Innovation Arena.



TecWest Produce chemical free fertilisers using chicken manure as the main ingredient.

With products sold and distributed through Garden centre, Nurseries, Hardware shops and Agri stores.

Employer Support Event

In June, LEO Monaghan in partnership with the Cavan and Monaghan Education and Training Board (CMETB), the Department of Social Protection (DSP), and Regional Skills, hosted a successful Employer Supports event in the Monaghan Institute at which 70 businesses attended.



Employee Support Event Monaghan 2024

The overwhelming response underscored the importance of such initiatives in supporting the local business community's employment and training needs.

Monaghan Women in Business Network

Monaghan Women in Business launched their network for 2024 during Enterprise Week.



The network held several events through 2024 including flagship event for National Women's Enterprise Day on October 17th in collaboration with Cavan Women in Business network, this was a remarkable success with over 120 attendees from both counties coming together for an evening of inspiring speeches and networking to build new connections and contacts.



The Christmas Showcase event was held in November with twenty-one exhibitors taking part.



The event proved a lively and engaging gathering, fostering a vibrant atmosphere that brought the network together. It provided an excellent opportunity for exhibitors and attendees to support one and other through purchasing and networking, strengthening ties within the community.

Information Systems

The Information Systems Section is responsible for ICT and Digital Transformation in Monaghan County Council. We provide modern and secure ICT infrastructure, systems, and solutions to enable efficient service delivery.

Applications and Digital Transformation

The Applications and Transformation unit is responsible for digital transformation and for the Council's extensive suite of software applications. The team continued to redesign and automate manual paper-based processes and develop online forms for a number of public facing services including:

- Green Dog Walk Initiative
- Festivals & Events Funding Programme
- Cruinniú na nÓg
- Community Development Fund
- Environment Development Fund
- Gaeltacht Scholarship Application Form
- County Development Pre-Draft Form
- Brennan Paper files on public portal
- Salt-bin application
- Northeast Region Homeless Assessment

We also carried out upgrades to several business applications including the online expenses system, iReg, iHouse and iPlan.

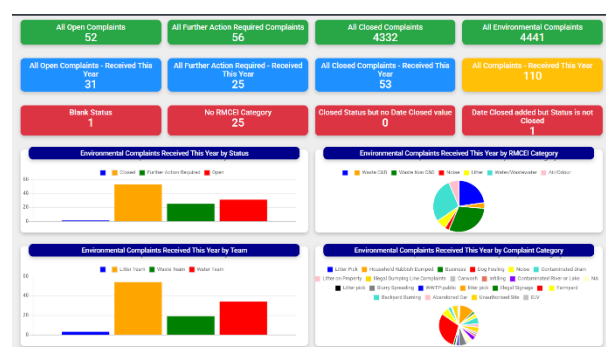
Capital Programme Dashboard

With project tracking previously reliant on spreadsheets, managing and reporting on progress across Departments was time-consuming and lacked real-time insights. To address this, the Capital Programme Power BI Dashboard was developed, providing a centralised, interactive, and user-friendly solution for monitoring projects. By integrating with Agresso for live financial updates and ensuring GDPR compliance, the dashboard enables staff to efficiently update and track project data, improving oversight, collaboration, and decision-making across the organisation.



Upgrade Environment Complaints and Inspection Software

To leverage the latest technology and ensure systems are security and robustness, we transitioned the Environment Complaints and Inspection Korec software from an on-premises solution to a cloud-based solution. We conducted a data cleansing exercise before migrating the refined data to the cloud. This upgrade includes an enhanced desktop application as well as a more robust mobile application for field workers. The new cloud solution also facilitates the development of bespoke dashboards, providing a more user-friendly and efficient method of analysing data and fulfilling data return requests from the Department.



Uisce Éireann

A data cleansing exercise was completed on the data held by the Water Services Dept and then this data was successfully and securely transferred to Uisce Éireann. We also ensured that all MCC staff were set up and had the capability of accessing this data then on the Uisce Éireann network, from their MCC equipment.

VEX Robotics and STEM Development

Monaghan's commitment to fostering digital literacy and STEM engagement grew stronger in 2024. Working closely with the Department of Rural and Community Development, the Broadband Officer advanced digital activities within the BCP network and across primary and secondary schools.

There are several digital thematic programmes which are available to all of the BCP network through the Department of Rural & Community Development. We held three coding workshops in the BCPs through the Our Kids Code programme during 2024, introducing computer coding into a family environment which required parents as well as children to participate. Other online workshops were also held through The Ark and Children's Books Ireland in a number of BCPs.

In Autumn 2024, Microsoft launched the first Dreamspace TV programme within the county through the primary school network. This programme was supported by Monaghan County Council and sees us join a small number of counties participating in the Dreamspace TV initiative. It focuses on students developing sustainability ideas and solutions, using digital methods to test and to demonstrate various sustainable projects. These projects will be put on display in Microsoft One Dreamspace headquarters in June 2025.

Monaghan County Council has worked closely with MTU Cork to roll out the VEX Robotics programme, collaborating with CMETB as well as benefiting from MTU's expertise and support to enhance the learning outcomes for Monaghan students. This is a hands-on initiative which culminated in an inaugural countywide competition, celebrating the creativity and teamwork of participating schools. Participating teachers attended training sessions at local BCPs, equipping them to guide students in building and programming robots collaboratively. The VEX Robotics programme provides students with valuable exposure to STEM fields, fostering innovation, communication and collaboration.

Following the successful launch of a primary school initiative in 2023, the VEX IQ robotics programme expanded across 16 primary schools in 2024. In April we held the first ever Vex Robotics

IQ competition. In the same month, we also staged the first ever Vex Robotics V5 competition for secondary schools- an initiative which also included a number of Youthreach groups from across Monaghan and Cavan.

Monaghan County Council IT section also participated in the Cavan- Monaghan Science festival in November, featuring a Vex Robotics showcase, a workshop demonstrating how computer components are used to build PCs and laptops, a VR demonstration and additional STEM development workshops.



Cyber Security Initiatives

Cyber security remains a top priority for Monaghan County Council. As the threat landscape evolves, it is crucial to stay ahead of emerging threats. Our security program improvements for 2024 included:

- **Monthly Phishing Simulations and Training:** Conducted throughout the year to enhance staff awareness and resilience against cyber threats.
- **Cyber Security Awareness Month (October):** Weekly training videos, phishing simulations, and security tips were shared on the intranet.
- **Bi-Monthly Security Features:** Contributed to the staff newsletter to keep everyone informed.
- **Cyber Security Presentations:** Delivered two presentations to employees who joined Monaghan County Council in the past two years.

- **Public Sector Cyber Security Baseline Standards (PSCBBS) Audit:** Conducted with the assistance of a third party to manage cybersecurity risks and identify gaps in our security posture.
- **Cyber Security Steering Committee:** Established to meet bi-weekly with project leaders from Networks, Applications, and GIS areas to discuss known security issues, vulnerabilities, and remediations.
- **Information Security Committee:** Set up to meet quarterly to oversee and guide our information security program.
- **Network Monitoring Tool:** Implemented to monitor IT infrastructure, assist in troubleshooting issues, and manage the configuration of networking devices.
- **Password Manager:** Set up to manage secure credentials for the IS Department.
- **Penetration Testing and Server Review:** Procured third-party services to conduct internal/external penetration tests and server review/baseline configurations to identify vulnerabilities requiring remediation.
- **Policy and Procedure Updates:** Revised and renewed security policies/procedures, including the Acceptable Use Policy, Elected Members Acceptable Use Policy, Security Incident Management Policy, and Security Incident Response Plan.
- **Firewall Review:** Conducted to ensure alignment with best practices.
- **Patch and Vulnerability Management:** Continued efforts to maintain a robust security posture.
- **Collaboration with Local Authorities:** Continued collaboration through the National Information Security Officers

Group (ISOG) for information sharing and learning.

- **Communication Channel with NCSC:** Part of a communications channel with all Local Authorities and the NCSC for sharing threat intelligence, cyber alerts, and incidents, enabling quick responses to emerging threats.

These initiatives demonstrate our commitment to maintaining a secure and resilient cyber environment for Monaghan County Council.

Networks and Infrastructure

The Networks and Infrastructure team is responsible for managing the Council's ICT systems and services, on-premises and in the Cloud, and for managing the local and wide area network infrastructure in over 35 offices and buildings throughout the county.

Project in this area completed by the team in 2024:

- **Completion of Monaghan PEACE Campus:** This was a very technically challenging job for the Infrastructure Team to provide all ICT needs of a multi occupancy building, housing both staff and third-party agencies. Some of the work involved:
 - The procurement of a fully managed wi-fi solution, providing free public internet throughout the building and outside seating areas.
 - The installation of multiple high-speed connections into the building to accommodate both Monaghan County Council Staff and third-party agencies.
 - The procurement and installation of digital display screens and smart screens.

- Installation of new public access PC's and Lapsafe units in the branch library.
- Upgrade of Carrickmacross library and Planning Department to high-speed SIRO connection.
- New managed wi-fi solutions installed into two refugee accommodation centres.
- New Uisce Eireann Wi-Fi solution implemented to support UE staff.
- Several MPLS fibre sites were de-commissioned and replaced with SD WAN's, providing better visibility across all Council sites and cost saving for the Council.

Technical Support Team

The technical support team continued to deliver a high-quality technical support service to over 400 staff and elected members.

In addition to supporting over 500 laptops & desktops, the technical support team are responsible for setting up and supporting all mobile phones and tablets. Last year alone there were over 100 new phones setup for staff.

The number of issues logged in 2024 was 7,562. This was a 38% increase from 2023.

Call Statistics	2024	2023	2022	2021
Total Calls logged	7562	5488	4417	5892
Average Calls per month	630	457	368	491
Average Calls per Day	29	22	18	23
Resolved within 24 hours	88%	68%	49%	57%

The technical support team had the pleasure of providing network/technical support to host the national Pride of Place awards hosted by Monaghan County Council in November which was live streamed globally.



MyCoCo

MyCoCo is a cloud-hosted multi-tenanted platform for delivery of local authority services online. The concept originated in Monaghan County Council in 2021 and since then MyCoCo has been successfully scaled up. As of 31st December 2024, 17 local authorities were live on MyCoCo delivering one or more services to their customers.

Local authorities have been tasked with delivering 90% of services online by 2030. MyCoCo will help all local authorities achieve this goal. As MyCoCo has been recognised by the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform as a building block of reform in *Better Public Services - A transformation strategy to deliver for the public and to build trust*, it was able to quickly scale up to deliver the national Power Up grant application issued by the Increased Cost of Business (ICOB) scheme to the public from a single platform. This removed the need for each local authority to design and process applications for their area.



Roads & Transportation

Major Schemes

N2 Clontibret to Border Road Scheme

The project commenced in 2018. In 2021 a 400m Preferred Route Corridor was identified, and the next phase of the design process (Phase 3; Design & Environmental Evaluation) commenced. The project received no funding in 2022, and all design work was suspended. In early 2023 Monaghan County Council made an application for funding to the EU's Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) fund, with CEF grant funding of €2,335,005 secured in October 2023. Match funding is being provided by the Department of Transport. Design work and environmental surveys recommenced in late 2023. Ground investigation works and archaeological surveys started in Autumn 2024. It is expected to have the engineering design of the project completed by late 2025.

N2 Ardee to Castleblayney Road Scheme

Funding was suspended for this project in 2023, and no design work was undertaken on this project in 2024. Funding has been requested for 2025.

National Roads

N54 Tullybryan Road Realignment Scheme

The Roads Department continues to work in partnership with TII to upgrade a 3.1km section of the N54, which will enhance road safety and east/west connectivity. Following on from an Oral Hearing in October 2023, the CPO was confirmed in April 2024. Works progressed throughout 2024 in implementing Phase 4, Statutory Processes of the Project Management Guidelines. Construction is anticipated to commence in Q1 2026, subject to provision of funding.

N53 Ballynacarry Bridge

The Ballynacarry Bridge is located on the border with Northern Ireland on the N53 National Secondary Road and A37 in County Armagh. The main objective of the new bridge project is to address safety issues, by improving alignment and incorporating road widening into the design. Works continued throughout 2024 as detailed design and environmental reports were finalised

and submitted to TII in Q4 2024. Extensive discussions were had with Newry, Mourne & Down District Council and their stakeholders to facilitate and inform the preparation of the NI planning documentation. Subject to obtaining TII approval, planning applications in both NI and ROI will be lodged in Q1 2025.



Schematic of proposed bridge design at Ballynacarry.

Safety Schemes (National Roads)

A Feasibility & Options Report was approved by TII in 2024 to address the current road safety issue along the N2, entering Emyvale Village (North). A design consultant was appointed to progress the scheme through detailed design, planning approval and procurement. Construction is programmed to commence in Q2/Q3 2025.

Funding was secured from TII to address a road safety problem on the N12 at Skinnagin Corner, where vehicle run off was a regular occurrence. Existing road levels were adjusted and the carriageway reprofiled by provision of a pavement overlay to improve the safety at the bend.

A funding allocation of €100,000 was used to implement low-cost safety measures along the N2, Castleblayney to Ardee. These included upgrades to VRS's (crash barriers), signage relocation and vegetation removal at junctions.



N12 Road Safety Improvement Scheme on N12, Skinnagin.

National Road N2 Cycle Paths

Detailed design of the N2 Cycle Paths (Emyvale Village and Corlat to Collegiate) was finalised in 2024. Construction of the Emyvale Village scheme is programmed for Q2 2025, with construction of the Corlat to Collegiate scheme planned for Q4 2025.

Pavement Renewals on National Roads

In 2024, a total of €5.4 million was expended on renewing and maintaining the national road network. Resurfacing work took place at N2 Cremartin to Clontibret and N12 Liscarney to Tullylish.

Pavement Rehabilitation works took place on the N2 (Emyvale, Broomfield, Tirraneill and Tullyvaragh) and the N54 (Clones).

Ulster Canal Greenway

Ulster Canal Greenway (Monaghan to NI Border) – The CPO for the required lands was confirmed in May 2024. Monaghan County Council have requested a 2025 funding allocation from TII to progress the scheme through Phase's 5 & 6 of TII's Project Management Guidelines. It is intended to commence construction of the scheme in Q4 2025.

Ulster Canal Greenways (Smithborough to Clones & Smithborough to Monaghan) – A stage 3 Flood Risk Assessment including flood modelling was completed in 2024, which identified locations along the proposed Greenway routes which would be prone to flooding. These areas of flood concern are currently being reviewed. Monaghan County Council has requested a 2025 funding allocation from TII to progress the scheme through Phase's 3 & 4 of TII's Project Management Guidelines. Programming will be dependent on the outcome of technical design issues and required approval.

Non-National Roads

In 2024, the Department of Transport allocated €17,057,095 under the various Grant Schemes.

Restoration Improvement Grant

In 2024 the Department of Transport provided an allocation of € 7,810,500 under the Restoration Improvement Grant to Monaghan County Council for rehabilitating Regional and Local Roads identified as having a PSCI rating of 1 and 4. The

funding allocated allowed for the resurfacing of over 40km of Regional and Local Roads in 2024.

Restoration Maintenance

The Department of Transport allocated grants totalling €2,002,500 in 2024 for the resealing and restoring skid resistance on the non-national road network. The funding allocated allowed for the surface dressing of over 50km of Regional and Local Roads in 2024.

Discretionary Grant

A grant allocation of €2,071,500 was received from the Department of Transport under the Discretionary Grant. The Municipal Districts use the funding to carry out maintenance works and the winter maintenance programme.

Specific Improvement Grants

Specific Improvement Grant funding for the following schemes was received in 2024:

- R181 Drummillard to Crossduff €50,000
- R162 Glen Rd Culvert €900,000
- Old Cross Square/N2/N12 €50,000
- Drumary Bridge Replacement €500,000

Bridge Rehabilitation

In 2024, the Department of Transport received an allocation of €719,275 for rehabilitating bridges on the Non-National Road network. In total, 10 bridges have undergone rehabilitation, or replacement works in 2024 at approximately €820,000.

Low-Cost Safety Improvement Schemes

An allocation of €259,380 was received in 2024 to deliver ten low-cost safety improvement works throughout the county.

Community Involvement Scheme

An allocation of €354,150 was received from the Department of Transport in 2024, which, together with community contributions, enabled the resurfacing of two roads totalling 1.5km.

Climate Change Adaptation Funding

An allocation of €435,807 was received in 2024 to deliver six climate adaptation and resilience works schemes raising road levels and preventing the reoccurrence of flooding.

Local Improvement Schemes

A total funding allocation of €564,965 was received from the Department of Rural and Community Development. Eight lanes were completed in 2024. A 2025 allocation of €373,479 was announced in May 2024. It is envisaged that approximately 9 lanes (subject to applicant acceptance) will be completed in 2025.



LIS before and after

RAP Pilot Scheme in 2024

The 2024 RAP scheme was widened on a regional basis with MCC as the lead authority and included Louth, Cavan and Cork County Councils. Roads have been completed in Cavan, a Greenway in Cork and works are finishing up in Co. Louth. the works included the resurfacing of over 5.2km of regional and local roads in County Monaghan that had a PSCI rating of 1-4.



Councillors and staff at RAP facility

Machinery Yard

As part of the Machinery yards commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 2 electric vans were purchased.



We are also switching a number of vehicles to a carbon neutral fuel. There are now 12 vehicles using HVO.

Two new multitool vehicles have been purchased and are currently in use in the Castleblayney Carrickmacross and Ballybay Clones MDs. The three MDs now benefit from the introduction of the multitools and are able to improve the efficient delivery of services in the counties towns, villages and parks.

In 2024 there were 72 winter maintenance callouts.

Active Travel

A number of active travel schemes were completed throughout 2024.

Ulster Canal Greenway Link. Canal Street -Works commenced August 2024 in collaboration with RI surfacing works. 3-meter-wide shared surface to be provided with relocation of ESB overhead lines, traffic calming measures, signage, new tarmac finish with high friction surface to be provide.

Monaghan Town Greenway – Canal View/ Oriel Way Section. Works completed on section of the Monaghan Town Greenway adjacent to Canal View to include a Tarmac finish with Street Lighting, drainage stone, additional fencing and Hedgerow.

Monaghan Town Greenway – Black Lane. Works completed on section of the Monaghan Town Greenway on Black Lane to include a Tarmac finish with Street Lighting, drainage stone, additional signage and road markings.

Clones Peace Link Active travel scheme. Works were completed on this scheme in 2024 to include new pedestrian facilities, Retaining wall, new road reinstatement Relocation of Overhead Utilities, new street lighting and pedestrian crossings.



Peace Link Scheme, before and after

Clones Tirnahinch Active travel scheme. Works were completed on this scheme in 2024 to include new pedestrian facilities, Carriageway reinstatement, Relocation of Overhead Utilities, new street lighting and pedestrian crossings.

Lough Egish Village Active travel scheme. Works were completed on this scheme in 2024 to include new pedestrian facilities, Retaining wall, new road realignment, new street lighting and pedestrian crossings.

Road Safety

Phase one of County Monaghan Road Safety Action Plan 2023-2024 is currently under review to examine the status of the 53 actions allocated to the organisations tasked with their implementation.

Phase Two of the Government's National Road Safety Plan is due for publication in April 2025. This will provide the template for the Co Monaghan Road Safety Action Plan 2025-2027. The plan aims to deliver at a local level the national road safety strategy objective of reducing road deaths and serious injuries by 50% by 2030, based on an average of the 2017-2019 figures for fatalities and serious injuries.

The County Monaghan Road Safety Working Together Group is responsible for coordinating and implementing the multi-agency road safety at a local level.

Provisional figures for 2024, released by the Road Safety Authority have shown a decrease in the number of fatal accidents in County Monaghan, during which two people lost their lives. This compares to 2023 when seven lives were lost and 2022 when six road users were killed.

The annual Road Safety Shows for Transition Year students were attended by approximately 700 pupils in the Iontas and Garage Theatres. Organised by An Garda Síochána and sponsored by Monaghan County Council the event featured talks and demonstrations by members of Garda, Fire and Ambulance services together with an A&E consultant among the speakers.

Members of Co Monaghan Fire and Civil Protection were recipients at the RSA Leading Light Awards in Dublin Castle in December 2024. Their award was in recognition of their ongoing contribution at the annual transition year events in Monaghan and Castleblayney.

Operation Guide, a regional road safety campaign lead by An Garda Síochána was launched in County Monaghan in July. Covering the Louth Cavan Monaghan Garda Division it ran until the end of August.

The RSA's 'Check It Fits' child car seat testing service was well attended with visits to Monaghan Town and one to Carrickmacross during 2024. The RSA's Road Safety Promotions Officer visited local schools and business throughout the year in consultation with Monaghan County Councils Road Safety Officer.



Corporate Services

Corporate Services provides support to Senior Management, the Cathaoirleach and Elected Members. It is also responsible for organising and managing monthly Council Meetings, Corporate Policy Group Meetings and Joint Policing Committee Meetings. The section is responsible for the collation of the Corporate Plan, Annual Report, Annual Service Delivery Plan, Monthly Management Report and the review of Risk Register.

Corporate Services also co-ordinates the compilation of the annual NOAC Performance Indicators for the Council and has a significant role in terms of governance, ensuring the Council is compliant with the Ethics Framework, Children First Act, General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), Freedom of Information and Access to Information on the Environment legislation.

Corporate Plan 2024-2029

This Corporate Plan 2024–2029 sets out the strategic framework for the Council for the term of the Councillors elected in June 2024. The Plan has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended by the Local Government Reform Act 2014. In developing this Plan, the Council has taken into account a wide range of regional, national, and international plans and policies relevant to the Council, as set out in the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage 'Local Authority Corporate Plans Guidelines for the 2024-2029 cycle'.

The Corporate Plan 2024-2029 draws together the strategic ambition of the Council and sets out an impressive programme of work over the coming five years to deliver on our vision for a thriving, entrepreneurial, and vibrant community in Monaghan, supported by a prosperous economy and a sustainable environment. This is enabled by our mission and our corporate values.

Local democracy is at the core of Monaghan County Council and the Elected Members and management, and staff of the Council will work together on behalf of the people of Monaghan to make the County the best it can be for all who live,

work, invest, or visit. The Elected Members and Strategic Policy Groups will monitor the progress of the strategic actions within the Plan and will hold the executive to account for its successful implementation.

Register of Electors

Part III of the Electoral Reform Act 2022 has significantly improved the electoral registration process, increasing its integrity and accuracy and transforming it from a rigid, complicated multi-stage annual cycle to a responsive, live, and accessible system. The new processes pertaining to these changes, such as identity verification, Eircode validation, and duplication prevention, were fully implemented and standardised in 2024.

In 2024, the Franchise Team faced three electoral events:

- 8th March - Family Care Bill Referendum
- 7th June - Local and European Elections
- 29th November - General Election

These electoral events led to an unprecedented influx of applications, requiring the processing of high volumes of applications within very tight timeframes which was a significant challenge. Contributing factors included public awareness campaigns from 2023 and the absence of electoral events since 2020. This resulted in many individuals who had moved or came of age since then, having to update or register their details. In addition, the transition to a continuous (rolling) register, which can be updated at any time, and the availability of online forms (facilitated by the PPSN and date of birth cross-check verification) made the process more accessible.

On foot of the electoral events, new election management processes were put in place and standardised. Control measures to minimize processing errors were also implemented.

Additionally, we progressed the data clean-up initiative aimed at achieving the highest quality data set before the scheduled migration to a central database in 2026, as mandated by the Department for Housing, Local Government, and

Heritage. The Department provided funding to local authorities to enhance data quality on the Register and to promote awareness of the www.checktheregister.ie website. Most of the funding was allocated to bolster resources for the Franchise Section but we also executed a leaflet distribution to every household in the county in April and we continued our social media campaign throughout the year.

Based on information from undelivered polling cards, we also carried out a project to remove names from the Register, in compliance with Part 3, Section 106(1) of the Electoral Reform Act 2022, which requires three documented attempts to contact an elector before their name can be removed. As a result, over 2,000 names were removed in 2024, again considerably challenging our financial and staffing resources.

Moreover, Register Field Workers conducted visits to secondary schools to register and pre-register students aged 16-18 and delivered presentations focused on voting participation, encouraging students to communicate the importance of registering, updating, or confirming their details on checktheregister.ie to their families.

In 2024 we also compiled our first Annual Report on management and maintenance of the electoral register for the newly established An Coimisiún Toghcháin. The report was presented to the Houses of the Oireachtas as part of a comprehensive Electoral Register Oversight Report by An Coimisiún Toghcháin.

Our overall progress in improvement of data quality, as demonstrated in the figures provided below, have been noted and commended by the Department.

	<i>Start Year Figures 2024</i>		<i>Year End Figures 2024</i>	
Total Electorate	51,682	%	53,272	%
Electors with DOB	39,238	76%	41,770	78%
Electors with Eircode	23,399	45%	27,977	53%
Electors with DOB & Eircode	19,350	37%	24,061	45%
Electors with PPSN	3,465	7%	9,605	18%

Local Elections 2024

Voting took place on Friday, 07 June 2024 to elect members for the next term of Monaghan County Council. The two-day count, overseen by Local Returning Officer, Carmel O'Hare with excellent support from her election team, elected eighteen public representatives from three electoral areas to Monaghan County Council. A total of 36 candidates placed their names on the ballot papers.

Freedom of Information

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 members of the public have a legal right of access to records held by the Local Authority. **59 requests** were received by the Council in 2024, from members of the media, Oireachtas, business reps and the general public.

Access to Information on the Environment

AIE gives legal rights to those seeking to access information on the environment from public authorities. 10 requests were received by the Council in 2024.

Protected Disclosures

In accordance with Section 22 of the Protected Disclosures Act 2014, Monaghan County Council reports that it received no protected disclosures in the twelve-month period 1st January 2024 to 31st December 2024.

Twinning

Monaghan County Council is officially twinned with the following areas:

- Geel, Belgium (the parish of Tydavnet in North Monaghan is also twinned with this area)
- Prince Edward Island, Canada
- Miramichi, Canada

A delegation from Monaghan County Council visited Prince Edward Island in June 2024 for the Irish Settler Days celebration.

A group of 11 from Prince Edward Island visited Monaghan in October 2024. As part of their visit, they toured the newly opened County Museum in the Peace Campus building and took part in a walking tour of Monaghan.

Civic Reception

Monaghan County Council hosted 3 civic receptions in 2024 to mark the remarkable achievements of the following:

- Mr. Patrick Corrigan, in recognition of his achievement in winning a World Irish Dancing Title. The event was held in the Westenra Arms Hotel, Monaghan Town on 07 May 2024 and a commemorative plaque was presented to Patrick by Cathaoirleach, Cllr. David Maxwell.
- Mr. Stephen Smyth, Firefighter, Monaghan County Council, Mr. Gerard Ward, Firefighter, Monaghan County Council, Mr. Jonny Nelson, PSNI and Mr. Johnny Forsythe, in recognition of their bravery on 18 November 2023 when responding to an emergency incident. The event was held in the Peace Campus, Monaghan Town on 04 June 2024 and commemorative plaques were presented to each recipient by Cathaoirleach, Cllr. David Maxwell.
- Ms. Orla Ní Chorrágáin, Ms. Saorlaith Nic Cionna, Ms. Muireann Ni Fhearchair and Mr. Jack Stevely in recognition of their achievements at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2024. The event was held in the Westenra Arms Hotel, Monaghan Town on 07 October 2024 and commemorative plaques were presented to each recipient by Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Cathy Bennett.

Costs associated with the holding of the above civic honours was €3,733.

Monaghan Delegation's Visit to New York for the St. Patrick's Day Celebrations

For the first time in five years, an official delegation from Monaghan County Council visited New York for this year's St. Patrick's Day celebrations. The delegation was led by Cathaoirleach Councillor David Maxwell accompanied by the Chief Executive who met with members of the Monaghan Diaspora in New York.

They held a series of meetings with key strategic partners and participated in events to showcase all that County Monaghan has to offer economically and culturally as well as promoting

the county as a place to visit, invest and do business. The official delegation from Monaghan County Council which also included Liam Bradley, Curator of the Monaghan County Museum, was joined on the visit by members of Monaghan GAA, including chairperson, Declan Flanagan and vice chairperson Brendan Casey, along with representatives of Enterprising Monaghan, Finbarr Daly CEO and board member, Paul Shortt. A number of prominent business people from County Monaghan were also present on the trip, including Martin McVicar, Managing Director of Combilift; Ciaran Marron, CEO of Activ8 Energies; Sammy Leslie, Owner of Castle Leslie and Trustee of the Leslie Foundation; Michael Mullan, Director of Mullan Lighting; Simon Murray, Director of CameraMatics, and Barry Murray, Director of Universal Graphics.

The centrepiece event of the visit was the inaugural meeting of the Monaghan – New York Business Network which was held on 15th March, in which business and civic leaders from New York, the wider USA, Monaghan and other parts of Ireland came together to explore opportunities for business investment, job creation and tourism in Monaghan. It was also an opportunity for Monaghan-based businesses to look at the potential of investing in or exporting to the USA. Many Monaghan businesses already have a presence in the USA and the event presented an opportunity for them to strengthen their links with clients and customers and potentially expand in the US market.

Annual Awards Ceremony

The Members of Monaghan County Council hosted the 17th Annual Awards Ceremony on 8th April 2024 to recognise those individuals/groups in County Monaghan who, during 2024, have excelled in the following areas:

- Sport and Recreation
- Arts & Culture
- Youth
- Community
- Environment & Heritage

15 individuals/groups were acknowledged for their contribution to our society.

Internal Audit

Internal Audit is an independent, objective, assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve the operations of Monaghan

County Council. Working in partnership with management, the Internal Audit Unit brings a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of internal controls, risk management and governance processes within the organisation. It provides a level of assurance to the Council, Chief Executive, Management Team and the Audit Committee in relation to internal control arrangements within Monaghan County Council.

The following Internal Audit reports were presented to the Audit Committee in 2024: -

- Cash Point Checking (which includes annual stock take in the Motor Tax Office) for the year 2023.
- Audit Report on SICAP for Year 2022.
- Review of a sample of NOAC Performance Indicators for year 2023.
- Machine Yard Store Stock take 2023.
- Public spending code – Dublin Street Regeneration Project 2023.
- Public spending code – Revenue Expenditure Division C05 Administration of Group & Private Installations 2023.

The following Audit Reports were also compiled during the year for referral to the Senior Management Team and Audit Committee:

- Cash Point Checking (which includes annual stock take in the Motor Tax Office) for the year 2024.
- Annual Stocktake in the Machine Yard Store for year 2024.
- Audit Report on SICAP for year 2023.

The Internal Audit Charter was reviewed and approved by the Audit Committee on 28th November 2023 and on 26th November 2024. The Internal Audit Workplan for 2024 was approved by the Audit Committee on 30th January 2024. Internal Audit was able to provide confirmation of its ongoing independence and objectivity to the Chief Executive, Senior Management Team and Audit Committee in 2024, in accordance with the Global Internal Audit Standards of the Institute of Internal Auditors and with NOAC recommendations.

Internal Audit also provides administrative support to the work of the Audit Committee and

participates in the national and regional networks of local government internal auditors.

Meetings in 2024

The following is a summary of the meetings held in 2024:

Council meetings (including AGM & Budget meeting):	15
Corporate Policy Group (CPG)	13
SPC – Economic Development and Enterprise Support	01
SPC – Transport, Community Rural Development	02
SPC – Climate Action and Environment	02
SPC – Housing, Social and Cultural	02
Monaghan Municipal District	11
Carrickmacross-Castleblayney Municipal District	11
Ballybay-Clones Municipal District	11
Audit Committee	04
Museum Advisory Committee	01
Local Sports Partnership	06
Speed Limits Committee	03
Heritage Forum	04
Monaghan L.I.S. Committee	01
An Coiste Logainmneacha	00
Joint Policing Committees (JPC)	00
Coiste Gaeilge	01
Traveller Accommodation Committee	03
Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)	08

Data Protection and GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations)

Monaghan County Council is committed to the protection of personal data and respects the fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals. It collects and processes a significant amount of personal data and Special Category personal data in various multiple formats daily to provide the most effective and high-quality service to meet the needs of the citizens, communities, and businesses within the County.

In 2024, Monaghan County Council continued to develop best practice to ensure compliance and demonstrate accountability under GDPR and data protection. This work included developing and implementing the necessary policies, procedures, and protocols, processing personal data in an open and transparent manner, processing data subject access requests and An Garda Síochána

requests, delivering staff awareness raising and training and notification of data security breaches.

Under GDPR individuals have a number of rights which include a right of access to the personal data the council hold on them. In 2024, the council received and responded to eleven number data subject access requests.

In addition, the Council dealt with the following requests/incidents:

Data Subject Access Requests	11
CCTV requests	40
Data Breach Notifications to the Data Protection Commission	3

Ethics

Section 19 of the Local Elections (Disclosure of Donations and Expenditure) Act 1999 requires each elected member to furnish to the Local Authority, not later than January 31st, a donation statement indicating whether during the preceding calendar year, the member received a donation exceeding €600. 18 completed forms were received on or before the closing date of January 31st.

Part 15 of the Local Government Act 2001 obliges each member of the council and relevant staff to complete a form in respect of their declarable interests held during the prescribed period and furnish the annual declaration to the Ethics Registrar no later than the last day of February. 18 completed forms were received, from elected members, by the closing date of the last day of February 2024. 73 relevant staff were requested to complete a declaration form. 64 forms were completed online before the last day of February 2024, with 6 staff completing a hard copy form; 3 staff who had left the organisation during 2023 did not complete a form.

At the end of 2024 there was one ongoing investigation regarding a possible contravention in respect of Part 15 (Ethical Framework for the Local Government Service) of the Local Government Act 2001 and the Code of Conduct for Councillors.

Communications

Monaghan County Council employs a blend of digital and traditional communication tools to





actively enhance its public image and engagement with key audiences.

To ensure staff remain informed with the latest updates, we use a range of internal communication methods, including the Reach app, which is accessible to all employees, and a monthly staff newsletter.

Our external audiences are kept informed through multiple channels, including our website, social media platforms, local press, broadcasting media, and corporate publications. The Communications team participates in MCC events, launches, and similar activities to capture content and share with our audiences.

In 2024, we undertook a significant upgrade of our website to enhance usability and ensure full accessibility for the public. This project has now been successfully completed, delivering improved functionality and a fresh, modern design. The website can be accessed at www.monaghan.ie

Social Media 2024 Stats

Social Media Platform	Reach - number of times content is displayed	Engagement - likes, shares and comments	New Followers	Total Followers 31/12/24
Facebook 	549.4K (74.1% up from 2023) All organic posts.	27.6K	1,076	14,823
X/Twitter 	274.7K	14.7K	61	5,407
Instagram 	14K	1.7K	221	1,388
LinkedIn 	32K	5K	748	2,775

Facebook - most popular platform
Instagram and LinkedIn - growing platforms

Innovation

In Autumn 2024, we launched our inaugural Chief Executive Innovation Challenge, asking staff across the entire organisation to start a conversation and bring forward ideas on “*how we can minimise our carbon footprint at work*”. This initiative brought together two important focus areas for our organisation, both Climate Action and Innovation. We engaged with staff using online communications and in-person briefings, with the ideas hosted on an online software platform.

We are thrilled with the enthusiastic engagement from our staff, with over 100 ideas submitted and inspiring discussions sparked throughout the challenge. To celebrate this success, we hosted an awards ceremony in the Peace Campus, where we recognised 12 individuals for their winning ideas and outstanding contributions.



Tuarascáil Bhliantúil Coiste na Gaeilge 2024

Díríonn Coiste na Gaeilge Comhairle Contae Mhuineacháin ar úsáid na Gaeilge a chur chun cinn sa Chontae chomh maith lena chinntiú go gcomhlíonann an Chomhairle a dualgais faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla. Is iad Cllr. Aidan Campbell (Cathaoirleach) Cllr. Seamus Coyle, Cllr. Richard Truell, Cllr. Pat Treanor and Cllr. Niamh McCooey atá ina gcomhaltaí den choiste

In 2024 bhí an méid seo a leanas san áireamh i ngníomhaíochtaí an Choiste:

1. Reáchtáil an Coiste 4 chruinniú.
2. D'eagraigh an Coiste ceolchoirm do Nollaig na mBan agus Seachtain na Gaeilge
3. Bronnadh 37 scoláireacht ar mhic léinn chun freastal ar an nGaeltacht
4. Thug an Coiste tacaíocht do Fleadh Muineacháin agus tionóladh Céilí amuigh faoin aer sa Bhoth.
5. Thacaigh an Coiste le Muineachán le Gaeilge chun campa samhraidh Gaeilge a chuir ar fáil.
6. Bhain ocht ngrúpa deag pobail leas as maoiniú Sheachtain na Gaeilge.

Coiste Gaeilge Annual Report 2024

Monaghan County Council's Coiste Gaeilge aims to promote the use of the Irish language in County

Monaghan as well as insuring that the Council fulfils its obligations under the Official Languages Act. Cllr. Aidan Campbell (Cathaoirleach) Cllr. Seamus Coyle, Cllr. Richard Truell, Cllr. Pat Treanor and Cllr. Niamh McCooey are current members of the Coiste.

The Coiste organised the following activities during 2024

1. The Coiste held four meetings.
2. The Coiste organised events for Nollaig na mBan and Seachtain na Gaeilge
3. 37 Gaeltacht Scholarships were awarded to students from the County from the County availing of them.
4. The Coiste supported the County Fleadh and an outdoor céilí was held in Scotstown.
5. The Coiste supported Muineachán le Gaeilge to run Campaí Sproai, which is an Irish language summer camp.
6. 18 groups availed of grants to hold events during Seachtain na Gaeilge

Tuairisc ar chomhlíonadh oibleagáidí faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla

Fuarthas gearán amháin ón gcoimisinéir teanga maidir le dáileadh fógráin ag an gComhairle ar gach teaghlach sa Chontae nár chloígh le forálacha an Achta.

Dúnadh an gearán chun sástachta an Choimisinéara tar éis do Chomhairle Contae Mhuineacháin aghaidh a thabhairt ar na saincheisteanna a ardaíodh.

Report on compliance with obligations under the Official Languages Act

One complaint was received from the language commissioner regarding the distribution of a flyer by the Council to all households in the County which did not comply with the provisions of the Act. The complaint was closed to the satisfaction of the Commissioner after Monaghan County Council addressed the issues raised.

Human Resources

Recruitment

Recruitment	2022	2023	2024
Competitions held	34	49	46
Applications processed	720	1,140	1187
Interviews conducted	506	663	787
Candidates appointed/promoted	107	85	New Staff 87
			Promotions 71

Headcount

The staff complement for Monaghan County Council at 31st December 2024 was: -

Core Staff	Number	Whole Time Equivalent
Managerial	4	4
Clerical/Administrative	219	208.26
Professional/Technical	96	94.9
Outdoor	135	128.45
Total Core Staff	454	435.61
Contract Posts	13	11.65
Temporary/Seasonal	4	4
Retained Firefighters	60	
Non DoEC&LG	4	1.86
Total Other Posts	81	17.51

Retirements/Resignations during 2024

Monaghan County Council had 43 retirements/resignations in 2024.

Apprenticeships

Monaghan County Council employ five apprentices in the following disciplines: -

- 3 Accounting Technicians
- 1 Horticulture Apprentice
- 1 Heavy Vehicle Mechanic

Apprenticeships facilitate blended learning giving the apprentice the opportunity to attend college one day per week and work in their chosen field 4 days per week with the Council. Each Apprentice has a designated Mentor. Monaghan County Council ran a recruitment campaign for Apprentice Horticulturist and Apprentice Heavy Vehicle Mechanic in 2024.



Mr. Cameron McMeel, Heavy Vehicle Apprentice with his mentor Mr. Dessie McBennett, A/Machinery Yard Supervisor.

Graduate Programme

Monaghan County Council and Cavan County Council were lead Authorities for the Regional Graduate Recruitment Campaign 2024 for the Border and Western Region. Monaghan County Council as co-lead authority arranged recruitment of graduates for the following Local Authorities:

- Cavan County Council
- Donegal County Council
- Galway City Council
- Galway County Council
- Leitrim County Council
- Mayo County Council
- Monaghan County Council
- Roscommon County Council
- Sligo County Council

Monaghan County Council recruited a graduate for Economic Enterprise & Business Development.

WAM Programme

The WAM Programme (Willing, Able, Mentoring) was established in 2005 and is currently funded by the Department of Social Protection. The central objective of WAM is to widen access to employment for graduates with disabilities while working with and supporting employers to create more inclusive workplaces.

Over 700 placements have been secured to date in both the public and private sector.

In 2024 Cavan, Donegal, Kerry, Leitrim, Waterford City and County Councils took graduates under the scheme.

Monaghan County Council received special mention for employing two WAM graduates.



Workforce Planning App

In 2024, the second phase of the Workforce Planning App was successfully rolled out, introducing key enhancements that improved usability for HR Users.

The new improved phased of the Workforce Planning App reduces reliance on the full recruitment and appointment of a new appointee, allowing for greater flexibility and efficiency in updating the Workforce Planning Chart for Management to view vacancies within the organisation.

A key enhancement in the second phase of the Workforce Planning App is increased visibility, incorporating the Director of Services of HR's review and recommendation on all Business Cases for new staff member before final approval by the Chief Executive this ensures greater oversight and informed decision making.

In addition to the above, the Organisation Chart was also made available to all staff providing better visibility of Monaghan County Council's Department structures and the staff in each Department.

Future updates are planned for the Workforce Planning App in 2025.



Training & Development

The Human Resources Department engaged with line managers and staff in promoting their personal and career development thus enabling them to reach their potential and contribute fully to the achievement of the Councils strategic and business objectives.

A comprehensive training programme for staff was delivered in 2023 with the main focus this year being on Health & Safety Training, Statutory Training, Empowering our Leaders and Supervisors, Mentoring, Climate Action Training, Public Sector Duty and the development of a new ePMDS system which was introduced in 2023 to assist with capturing training needs and training was delivered to all line managers and their staff on this new system.

A total of 160 Training courses (Face to Face/Online), Seminars, Webinars and conferences were attended by various staff in Monaghan County Council in 2024. This figure includes 31 In-house training courses. Induction Training was delivered to 55 New Entrants.

In 2024, Monaghan County Council attended a total of 133 training courses, seminars, webinars and conferences throughout the year, including 31 in-house courses. These in-house courses are set out in the below table.

• Abrasive Wheels
• CSCS - Signing Lighting and Guarding at Roadworks
• Derelict Sites and Dangerous Structures
• Dignity at Work Awareness Training

• Defib/CPR Training
• Driver CPC Module 1
• First Aid Training
• Fire Warden Training
• Hazard Identification & Risk Assessment
• Health & Wellbeing Presentation - John Lonergan
• Interviewee Preparation Training
• IOSH Safety Health & Env for Construction Site Managers
• Line Management Training
• Location of Underground Services
• Managing Difficult and Aggressive Behaviour
• Manual Handling
• Mobile Elevated Platform
• Multi Tool with Attachments
• Operation of Lawnmower/Strimmer
• Overview of Planning Law
• Powered Pole Pruner Maintenance and Operation Course
• Retirement Planning Training
• Road Opening & Reinstatement – Advanced
• Road Opening & Reinstatement - Basic
• Road Services Supervisors
• Safe Pass
• Safety Rep Training
• School Warden Training
• Serious Incident Training for Senior Staff
• Staff Awareness Day
• Working at Heights

In addition to attendance at these events, the Council provided financial assistance to 15 employees allowing them to pursue courses of further education. This financial support demonstrates the Council's support for a culture of continuous learning and development in the organisation.

An inclusive Mentoring Programme for Professional, Technical, Administrative staff and Outdoor Staff was piloted by the Council in 2023/2024. Additionally, induction training was delivered to 58 new recruits in 2024, and 32 work experience applications were processed in the period.

Staff Awareness Days



On the 1st and 15th October 2024, Monaghan County Council's Human Resource Management department hosted Staff Awareness Days aimed at integrating newly recruited staff who joined the organisation in 2023 and 2024. The Staff Awareness Day is designed to offer an overview of the Council's wide-ranging services and provide an opportunity for staff to connect with each other.

The day opened with an address by the Chief Executive of Monaghan County Council followed by presentations from the Directors of Service and various Heads of Departments. In the afternoon attendees embarked on a bus tour showcasing projects delivered by the Council. Feedback from attendees was positive, and there are plans to extend similar familiarization events in 2025 to continue fostering staff engagement and awareness.

Health & Wellbeing

Monaghan County Council offered a range of work/life balance schemes to assist staff in achieving a work-life balance, these included Shorter Working Year Scheme, Maternity Leave Scheme, Parental Leave Scheme, Paternity Leave, New Parent Leave, Work Sharing, Career Breaks, Carer's Leave, Exam leave, Blended Working, Force Majeure leave, Bereavement Leave and the Cycle to Work Scheme.

The first Staff Wellbeing Officer was appointed in 2024 as a commitment to the continued promotion of our staffs Health & Wellbeing. A new wellbeing committee was also established to assist in the development of relevant and interesting wellbeing events and activities for staff.

Spectrum Life Employee Assistance Programme offers a 24/7 careline which is totally confidential and offers support and counselling to all Council staff and their families.

The following Health & Wellbeing events were held during 2024.

- Council Games
- John Lonergan, former Governor
- Mountjoy Prison, Motivational Speaker
- Retirement Planning
- Lunchtime wellness walks
- Green Ribbon events
- DSE Assessments for Home/Office Environment
- Staff Awareness Day
- Pilot - master swimming lessons



Gender Pay Gap 2024

Monaghan County Council published its Gender Pay Gap Report for 2024 on the 17th December 2024. The gender pay gap is the difference in the average hourly wage of men and women across a workforce.

The Gender Pay Gap Information Act, 2021 requires organisations with over 250 employees to publish their gender pay gap data before the end of each calendar year and within six months of their reference date. Monaghan County Council and all local authorities in the country chose 30th June 2024 as the reference date.

The information must be published on the employer's website or in some other way that is accessible to all its employees and to the public.

Please see a copy of Monaghan County Council's Gender Pay Gap Report 2024 on Monaghan County Council's website or click here:

[Gender Pay Gap Report 2024 - Comhairle Contae Mhuineacháin](#)

The Municipal District of Ballybay-Clones

Roads Programme 2024

In 2024, Ballybay-Clones Municipal District undertook a substantial programme of road infrastructural development. The Municipal District carried out drainage, bitmac overlay and surface dressing works on five local roads and three regional roads a total of 16km in the district to the value of €3.7 million under the restoration improvement grants scheme. There were a further 33km of roads surface dressed throughout the Municipal District. The Municipal District also undertook extensive general repairs/maintenance to the road network in the district such as gully repairs/cleaning, road patching, hedge cutting, sweeping and scavenging.



RI 2024



RI 2024



Low-Cost Scheme

Low-Cost Safety Improvement Works

Three Low-cost safety improvement projects were completed in 2024 at

Maghernakelly R189/LT22803 JCT,

Lough Mourne School
LP3131/LP4210/LS8200/LP3134 and
Rockcorry – R193/188 JCT

Renewal Programme Playpark Refurbishment

Corrybrennan playground was refurbished utilising funding secured under the Town & Village Renewal Scheme in the amount of €194,570, with match funding of €29,519 provided by the members of the Ballybay-Clones Municipal District. An additional grant of €18,000 was

secured from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) which allowed incorporation of specialised autism features, making this playground even more inclusive and supportive for all children.

The Ballybay Town Park playground also received funding of €120,000 under the Community Recognition Fund which enabled the installation of new play equipment.

The parks were officially opened by Minister Heather Humphreys July 2024.



Corrybrennan Park Playground

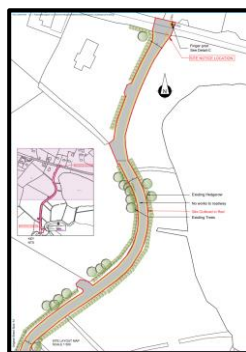


Ballybay Play Park

Outdoor Recreational Infrastructure Dromore River Blueway

Monaghan County Council (MCC) commissioned C.S. Pringle to develop infrastructural proposals for a Dromore River Blueway (Ballybay to Lisalong).

As part of these proposals, MCC and CS Pringle provided members of the public with an opportunity to view the proposals at a public information event which took place in February 2024. This application has been submitted to An Bord Pleanála and a decision on the project will be made before the 9th of July 2025.



Dromore Blueway Public Information Evening

Dartrey Forest

In 2014, Monaghan County Council, in conjunction with Coillte developed 3 walking routes in Dartrey Forest under a cross-border INTERREG project. Since then, the council and the local community have been anxious to build on this investment and to undertake further developments. This was made possible with ORIS funding and match funded by Ballybay-Clones MD for walkway development and signage. The overall project involved:

- Arrival Amenity Enhancement & formalisation of parking
- Pedestrian access from Rockcorry village
- Trailhead map and signage at Cootehill route access point
- Access for all trail
- Waterside views and woodland picnic areas
- Trail Interpretation -Information on what is special about the site, its soil, flora, and fauna.
- Rockcorry Entrance Oaks – Interpretation/Seating
- Deer Park Horse Chestnut – Interpretation/Earthwork/Seating
- Woodland Glade – Informal Play Earthworks/Stepping stones/climbing logs
- Access for all picnic tables to facilitate wheelchairs and prams.

works where completed in 2024.



Dartrey Forest Park, turn of the sod, recreational enhancement – ORIS

Ballybay to Castleblayney Greenway

The Ballybay – Clones Municipal District, and Carrickmacross – Castleblayney Municipal District previously agreed jointly to fund a consultant to carry out a feasibility study and constraints report for a proposed greenway along the line of the old railway line between Ballybay and Castleblayney, connecting Doohamlet. Funding was secured under the Departments Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme to advance the project. Clandillon Civil Consultants were engaged to progress this project through to Phase 2 Option Selection.

The Route Options Selection for the Ballybay to Castleblayney Greenway has now been completed and the Preferred Route Option has been developed. Phase 2 of this project is now completed. As this proposed section of the Greenway forms part of the National Cycle Network, a report was forwarded to both the TII and the NTA to determine how best to progress this project to the next phase. An application for funding to proceed to preliminary design stage has been made to the TII.



Public Consultation

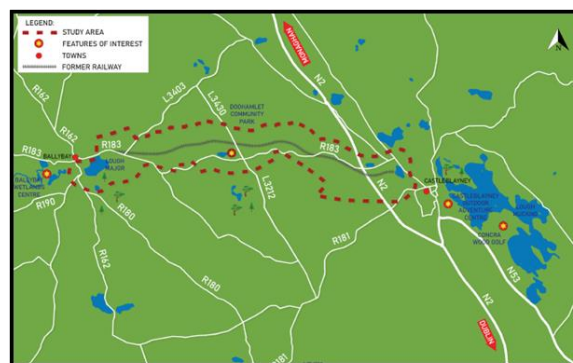
Clones to Smithborough Greenway

Ballybay Clones Municipal District were successful in securing funding through the Carbon Tax Fund 2020 for €100,000 to further develop the proposals for the provision of a Greenway from Smithborough to Clones building on the feasibility study that was completed in mid-2019.

Clandillon Civil Consulting were appointed allowing for the completion of environmental studies, and route selection options. Extensive public consultations were undertaken prior to preferred route selection.

Stage 3 Flood Risk Assessment for the scheme is nearing completion as requested by TII. Outputs from the FRA will be used to inform the detailed

design of the scheme.



Route Options

Public Realm Enhancement & Active Travel Projects

Part 8 Planning is progressing for the Town & Village Scheme 2021, Public Realm Enhancement, which will consist of infrastructural improvements to improve carparking, traffic flow and pedestrian facilities, works will focus on the Ball Alley & Diamond Area in Clones Town.

Ballybay/Clones MD completed 3 Active Travel Schemes in 2024, Clones Peace Link AT Scheme, Clones which had a €75,000 allocation, with €700,000.00 approved by NTA for Construction - Tirnahinch Road Footpath - €323,000. and Clones - Cannons Lane Footpath €56,000.

Urban Mobility/Sustainability AT Plans for Clones Town has been developed and is at consultation stage.

Municipal District Meetings

Following May 2024 Local Elections Ballybay/Clones Municipal District held its first meeting of the new MD Council in June 2024. Cllr Richard Truell was elected Cathaoirleach and Cllr Pat Treanor Leas-Chathaoirleach.



Newly elected Cathaoirleach Cllr. Richard Truell and Leas Chathaoirleach Cllr. Pat Treanor, Elected Members & Staff.

Rural Regeneration Development Fund

Ballybay-Clones Municipal District previously prepared substantial applications for the towns of Ballybay and Clones and were successful in obtaining funding for both towns.

In 2024 Monaghan County Council successfully acquired the Market House in Ballybay through the Rural Regeneration & Development fund Scheme 2023 and have appointed a multi-disciplinary design team to prepare designs. This project was submitted for Part VIII Planning in Q4 2024.



Market House Ballybay, Signing of Contract for Multi-disciplinary Design Team.

The Ballybay Town project presents the opportunity to architecturally restore and develop the Market House, Main Street Ballybay. This structure has been vacant and idle for well over a decade, it has been in a state of disrepair for some time and Monaghan County Council envisage restoring it and utilising the building as a new Library and Community Hub.



Market House Ballybay

Rural Regeneration Development Funds allocated €400,000 to Monaghan County Council for the purchase of the Market House to progress this project.

Ballybay/Clones Municipal District received €5.137m under the Fifth Call for Category 1 for the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) for Clones Regeneration Hubs (Heritage and Enterprise). This application includes the proposed Business Hub on Fermanagh St and the Lennard Arms (Monastic Centre) MacCurtain Street/Analore Street/The Diamond, Crossmoyle.

The Business Hub will go to tender for construction in Q1 2025 and Creative Consultants will be appointed in Q1 2025 to prepare a Product Identification/Visitor Experience Plan and Business Plan in respect of a Visitor Attraction at the former Lennard Arms Hotel.

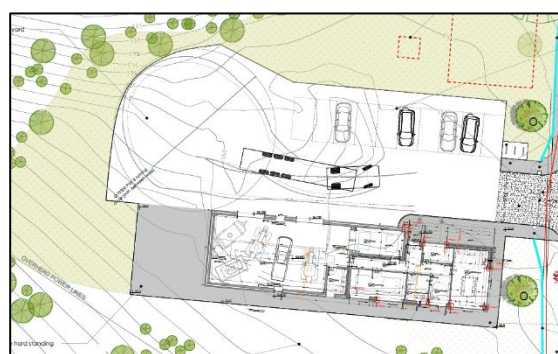
Capital Projects

New proposed MCC Depot at Teehill Clones.

Following SMT approval to progress with the development of a new Outdoor Staff Depot at Teehill Clones, Ballybay Clones Municipal District have appointed a design team, completed on site investigations, secured planning permission and are completing the final design and tender pack to allow for the construction of a new depot.

The Design is for a single storey building of 258sqm to include vehicle and equipment storage area, maintenance workshop, office, welfare facilities, outdoor yard and car parking along the R212 Scotshouse Road in Clones.

Works will be tendered in Q2 of 2025.



Building Design

Community Recognition Fund

The Community Recognition Fund 2023 aims to support the development of community infrastructure and facilities in recognition of the contribution being made by communities across the country in welcoming and hosting significant numbers of arrivals from Ukraine and other countries.

Ballybay/Clones Municipal District are delivering 3 projects through this fund, these include,

98 Avenue Bus Stop: -

A funding allocation of €120,000 has been received. MD Engineering staff and a design consultant have examined the site, to prepare a design proposal. Works to go to tender March 2025.

Outdoor Fitness Equipment Peace Link: -

A funding allocation of €45,000 has been received & works were completed in Q1 2024

New Playground equipment for Ballybay Town Park: -

Received a funding allocation of €120,000 works were completed in Q2 2024.

An application totalling €200,000 was successful for the Upgrade & Refurbishment of Ballybay Multi-use Community Building. Building surveying works have commenced and it is hoped to commence refurbishment works in Q1 of 2025.

Ulster Canal Restoration

the Ulster Canal Restoration project will see the restoration of the canal section by Waterways Ireland from Lough Erne in Co Fermanagh to Clones in Co Monaghan. This is a stretch of approx. 13.5 kilometres.

Phase 2 of the project was officially opened June 2024. This phase focused on the restoration of the canal between Clones and Clonfad in County Monaghan, including a canal basin marina and amenity area in Clones. Funding of €24million was secured to complete this phase from Shared Island Fund, Department of Rural Development and Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage.

Monaghan County Council, in collaboration with Fáilte Ireland and Waterways Ireland, undertook

public consultation to gather input from local residents, community groups, businesses and wider organisations in the preparation of a Vision Plan to present a collective vision for the future of Clones Marina, in the heart of County Monaghan.

Waterways Ireland have advised that the proposed Phase 3 works between Clones and Castle Sanderson will be completed in late 2027 early 2028.



Clones Marina

Municipal District Offices

The Municipal District was delighted to be in a position to take part in the various lighting up of public building events throughout the year. These events were to raise awareness and highlight some very important issues that affect many throughout our communities.



Clones Municipal Offices

The Elected Members of Ballybay/Clones Municipal District are always proud to support

community initiatives and work collaboratively with our local committees.

Hosting events such as the Clones Féile Weekend 2024.

Clones Féile saw the roll out of a family friendly event with appearances from artists such as Tully, Mick Foster and Oriel, children's entertainment took place in Barry McGuigan Park with Songtales

performing. It was a superb weekend for young and old alike.



Ballybay/Clones Municipal District held its annual Community Awards Night in May 2024. The event was in recognition of the important work which community groups undertake throughout the county on an annual basis.

Ballybay/Clones Municipal District on behalf of Monaghan County Council together with Christ Church Aughnamullen and Latton/Bawn Community Groups hosted the 50th Anniversary Commemoration for the life and service of the late Senator Billy Fox in April 2024.



Taoiseach Simon Harris, Minister Heather Humphreys, County Cathaoirleach David Maxwell, MD Cathaoirleach Sean Gilliland, Cllr. Richard Truell and CE Robert Burns.

Clones hosted the 136th Ulster Senior Football Championship Final in May 2024, Ballybay/Clones Municipal District working in partnership with Clones Town Team and Clones St. Tiernach's GAA

Club organised pre match entertainment for match day.

Live outdoor music was located on The Diamond



and street-food vendors were located throughout the town. A Family Friendly Zone was in Barry McGuigan Park with live music, face painting & arts activities for the kiddies.

Co-ordinating with AGS traffic management plans were put in place and additional parking was sourced along approaching roads.

Proposals for 2025

The Ballybay Clones Municipal District contains over 40% of the county's road network. Major investment is required, particularly on the regional road network to ensure that the network is maintained to a satisfactory standard. The Municipal District will continue to work with the elected representatives and staff from other sections in Monaghan County Council to ensure that funding is obtained, and all schemes delivered in 2025. Funding applications have been submitted for Low-Cost safety improvement works and bridge repair works in various locations in the Municipal District.

The Municipal District will continue to advance the projects in Ballybay and Clones, currently being funded under the Rural Regeneration Development Fund and seek to develop schemes for further funding submissions under this programme.

The Municipal District has made comprehensive submissions under the Departments Town and Village Renewal and Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme and will progress these schemes following receipt of funding.

We will continue to support community and business groups in their activities and work closely with the Councils Housing and Planning section to develop solutions and programmes of work to address dereliction within the Municipal District.

The Municipal District of Monaghan

Municipal District Meetings

The Municipal District held monthly meetings on the third Monday of every month except for August. At the AGM in June, Cllr. Seán Conlon was elected Cathaoirleach and Cllr. Seamus Treanor was elected Leas-Cathaoirleach for one year. There were a number of other subcommittee meetings to discuss roads, budgets and other issues and programs within the district.

Community

Rossmore Park

Monaghan Municipal District continued to invest in and maintain the recreation areas of the park. The Municipal District concluded the acquisition of the Lord Rossmore lands within the park including 46 acres and the Rossmore Mausoleum. The match funding for the completion of the Heritage works to the mausoleum was provided by the Municipal District.

A new giant sculpture, Medb, the giant squirrel, was added to the Access for All route, this was joint funded by the Municipal District and Creative Ireland. The Number's Trail funded under ORIS, was commenced in 2024.



The Giant Medb

Bog Garden

The Bog Garden was completed and was officially opened by the Minister for Rural and Community Development Heather Humphreys, TD on the 11th of April.

St. Patrick's Day Parade 2024

Monaghan Municipal District held the Monaghan Town St. Patrick's Day Parade on 17th March with the theme, Monaghan Folklore.

Over 60 entrants took part in the parade, including a large turn out from the Monaghan Vintage Club. There was a good public turnout for the parade.

The Country Music Festival returned in 2024 and was a huge success with record numbers visiting the town over the 4-day event, 18th - 21st of July. The Municipal District planned and operated the road closures.

Town Centre Health Check

Queens University have been engaged to carry out a Town Centre Health Check which will provide a baseline, to help monitor and drive the development of town centres going forward. It will build on previous studies carried out in individual towns.

In addition to the funding for Collaborative Town Centre Health Check, Monaghan County Council has received funding under the Town Centre First Town Team Support Fund for the development of Town Team Capacity building.

Community Recognition Fund

Rossmore Forest Park - Playground Extension, Access for all, Picnic Area

The works to extend the playground in Rossmore Forest Park were substantially complete and the new extension to the play area was opened to the public on the 19th of December 2024.

Belgium Park Football Field

The works under the Community Recognition Fund were completed. The project was officially opened by the Minister for Rural and Community Development Heather Humphreys TD on the 11th of April 2024.



Upgrade to Belgium Park Football Park & MUGA

Outdoor Recreational Infrastructural Scheme (ORIS)

Hollywood Park received ORIS funding of €276,385 which was match funded by Monaghan MD in the amount of €30,710. This project upgraded the infrastructure at Hollywood Park. Works substantially completed in 2024.



Department Playground Funding

Corlat Playground received funding of €15,773 from the Department of Children, Equality,

Disability, Integration and Youth for replacement of the soft play areas and some of the equipment which was match funded by Monaghan Municipal District in the amount of €9,000.

Monaghan Town CCTV System

The installation of the Monaghan Town CCTV system for 43 cameras at 17 locations in Monaghan Town Centre is near complete with a small number of cameras outstanding. Erection of the CCTV signage works to be completed by early Q1, 2025.

The scheme is mostly funded through the income from pay parking and a grant from the Community Based CCTV Scheme from the Department of Justice.

Car Parking

The Municipal District opened 88 car parking bays at the new Broad Road Carpark which includes 66 Long Stay spaces, 18 Short Stay spaces and 4 Disabled Parking spaces. The civil infrastructure has been installed for future EV charging.

The Municipal District continued to promote the 'Pay by App' parking system. This App allows customers to pay remotely online by phone or other devices.

The Municipal District operated free Christmas parking from 12 noon each day and it ran from the 9th of December 2024 to 1st January 2025.

A replacement programme for pay parking machines continued with 6 new machines purchased again in 2024.

Monies raised via Pay Parking within Monaghan Town is reinvested into the Municipal District through the upkeep of Rossmore Forest Park, provision of a Business Executive, supporting the Town Team, and funding of projects/events in the district. This funding is also being utilised to fund the Monaghan Town CCTV system.

50th Anniversary - Dublin Monaghan Bombings

As part of the 50th Anniversary of the Dublin Monaghan Bombings, Justice for the Forgotten planned a number of very successful events to mark the occasion culminating in a special wreath

laying ceremony in Church Square, on Friday, 17 May at the site of the bombing memorial. Wreaths were laid by the President of Ireland, Michael D Higgins, Cathaoirleach of Monaghan County Council, Cllr David Maxwell, Cathaoirleach of Monaghan Municipal District, Cllr Cathy Bennett, Minister Heather Humphreys, Marie Coyle, and Paddy Askin on behalf of Justice for the Forgotten and the families.



Wreath laying ceremony in Church Square – 17th May

Walking Tours

Walking tours continued every Saturday at 12 noon from the 30th of March to the end of September. Walks were free to join and start from the Westenra hotel. Walks funded by Monaghan Municipal District.

Tidy Towns

The President of Ireland, Michael D Higgins visited Glaslough on Saturday 18th May 2024 as a celebration of Glaslough's outstanding achievement of winning the All-Ireland's Tidy Town Award in 2019. The previous visit was postponed due to the Covid 19 pandemic.



Celebration of Glaslough winning the All-Ireland's Tidy Town Award in 2019- Saturday 18th May 2024

Monaghan Municipal District continued to work closely with Tidy Towns Groups within the district on a number of projects. Assistance was also given to Community Groups/Residents Associations throughout the year.

2024 saw another great result for Monaghan Town in the IBAL litter league, who are sitting at 3rd place out of the 40 Towns and Cities surveyed. Monaghan Town acknowledged as "Cleaner than European Norms" with a very positive detailed report.

Public Open Spaces

The Municipal District managed and maintained many of the public open spaces in the district including Belgium Park football field.

Community Grants

The Municipal District and Community Section held a Community Awards Night on Monday 27th May, with over 55 groups receiving awards.

Playgrounds

Monaghan Municipal District carried out weekly inspections and maintained 16 playgrounds in the district.

Destination Towns - Church Square

The works were completed on the south end of Church Square in time for the start of the Country Music Festival in July 2024.

The Monaghan Town Farmer's Market returned to Church Square on Friday 19th July.



Official launch of the redeveloped Church Square on Friday 20th September 2024



Official launch of the redeveloped Church Square on Friday 20th September 2024

Sliabh Beagh Partnership

The first meeting of the Sliabh Beagh Partnership, since the local elections, took place on 4th September. The three Councils, Fermanagh & Omagh District Council, Mid Ulster District Council and Monaghan County Council (Monaghan MD) were represented. Councillor Sheamus Greene of FODC was elected as Chairperson for the year. The group are working together to develop the Sliabh Beagh area and are currently seeking funding to develop the area as an Eco Tourism destination.

Town & Village Renewal Scheme

Works were completed on the Streetscape Enhancements of Market Street and Park Street. This was a joint project between MCC and the Tidy Towns.

Total Project Cost:	€ 166,950
Grant Aid:	€ 136,635
Match Funding:	€ 30,315

The project was match funded by property owners with a supplement of €3,075 from the Municipal District.

Roads

2024 Roads Restoration Improvement Program

Drainage works commenced in the district in February. A total of 5.8km of Local roads and 2.5km of Regional Roads were drained and re-surfaced under the Road Restoration, 2024 program.

Restoration Maintenance Program

A total of 32km of local roads and 1.8km of regional roads were surface dressed under the Restoration Maintenance 2024 program.

General Road Maintenance

6 verge slippages were repaired on local roads. Damage to a number of bridge parapet walls were repaired. Verge trimming on National Roads was completed twice in 2024, including litter and Ragwort. Tree cutting works were also completed on national roads.

The Municipal District completed a program of hedge cutting works on Council owned property and in strategic locations within the district as part of road safety.

The Municipal District completed a Roads (large patching) contract on regional and local roads.

Footpath replacement works were carried out in a number of areas within the district. Road marking works were completed on regional and local roads within the district. Drainage works were completed on regional and local roads throughout the year.

Winter Maintenance program commenced on 14th October 2024 and will continue until end of April 2025.

Retail Strategy for the Town / District – Town Team

Monaghan Municipal District as part of the Town Team continued to support and promote the county town.

Monaghan Town Voucher

The Monaghan Town Voucher reached two milestones in 2024:

€10 million sales point in Dec 2024 from its inception in 2016.

Over €2,000,000 sales in one year.

Total voucher sales in 2024: €2,051,400

The MD has commenced procurement for a digital solution to the current paper voucher with the tenders having been evaluated for the first stage. The full tender process to take 4-5 months, and it is hoped to have a solution by Q2, 2025.

Monaghan Town Team/Monaghan Municipal District continued to promote and highlight the shops, businesses and hospitality which accept the town vouchers through social media channels, radio advertising and town events.

Town Promotions

The Monaghan Town Team is a collective of local business owners, community group representatives, a coordinator funded by Monaghan County Council, and a representative from Monaghan Municipal District. Their primary aim is to enhance footfall, bolster business activities, and foster community spirit in Monaghan.

Additionally, the Monaghan Town Team collaborates with Monaghan County Council and other partners on heritage-led regeneration projects such as 'Reimagining Monaghan', an initiative which aims to develop a comprehensive plan for the town's revitalisation.

2024 became a significant period for our town, marked by numerous festivals that contributed to a substantial increase in tourist numbers. These events played a crucial role in boosting local tourism, enhancing the town's economy, and promoting cultural engagement. Amongst those festivals were:

Muireann's River Toy Boat Race took place on Saturday 15th June. There were over 100 children involved with very positive feedback from families on the day and following the event.

The first ever Monaghan Town Mushroom Festival took place on 28th September. A successful first year, with plans to grow this event in years to come.

The event was funded through Creative Ireland, Monaghan Mushrooms and Monaghan Tourism through an Agri-Tourism grant and supported by Monaghan Municipal District.



The Street Food Festival Committee which includes members of the Town Team, and the Municipal District staff organised a very successful Street Food Festival, on 24th August, with an estimated footfall of approx. 5,000 people on the day.



Monaghan Street Food Festival 24th August 2024

The MD provided funding support to the Festival of Dracula which took place on the Bank Holiday weekend in October, in Church Square. The event went well despite very heavy rain. It was a good start for building on the festival for the future. The intention is that this event could become a great attraction for Dracula fans worldwide and put Monaghan on the map due to our unique connection.

The Friends of Rossmore Park committee held a very successful 'Haunting of Rossmore Forest Park' on Friday 25th and Saturday 26th October with large numbers attending both nights and very positive feedback.

The Christmas Street Food Festival and the Crocus Christmas Grotto Festival joined up to provide a weekend of events in Monaghan town on Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th December. The events brought great activity and life into the new plaza in Church Square and the Diamond areas.

The Town Team launched a video on social media promoting the town and 'Shop Local' for the Christmas Season.

Monaghan Municipal District along with the Committee held a very successful Christmas Lights Switch-On event on Sunday 7th November. The MD provided and managed the Christmas lights and Christmas tree for Monaghan town.



The Christmas Lights Switch-on

The Féile Oriel Committee organised a great line up of events for the Féile Oriel Festival 2024 which took place on 3rd to 6th May. The Municipal District provided sponsorship for the event.



Féile Oriel May 2024



The Municipal District of Carrickmacross-Castleblayney

Road Infrastructure

Regional and Local Roads:

In 2024, the Municipal District (MD) managed an investment of €4.5million in the Regional and Local Road network. Some 14km of the non-national road network was strengthened under the Restoration Improvement Programme and a further 28km was resealed under the Restoration Maintenance Programme.

The Climate Adaptation and Resilience Works Programme 2024 provided for the completion of Phase 2 flood mitigation works to the LP3720 at Annadrummond and funding received under the 2024 Safety Improvement Works on Regional and Local Roads programme enabled the implementation of safety improvement measures at 4 No. locations within the District.

Elsewhere, monies secured under the Former National Road Rehabilitation Grant provided for the completion of resurfacing and drainage works on York Street/Dublin Road in Castleblayney.

Active Travel:

The MD continued to work closely with the Active Travel Unit throughout 2024. There are currently 6 No. schemes on going in the District, with a combined value of €530,000.

Regenerating our Town and Village Centres

The MD remained actively involved in facilities investment throughout 2024.

C: TEK 2:

In Carrickmacross, the new C: TEK 2 Co-working Enterprise Hub officially opened in early November and is now fully occupied.

At a total cost of €5 million, the Hub has provided a workspace for business start-ups, re-locating enterprises and co-workers seeking to locate in Carrickmacross Town.



New C: TEK 2 Co-working Enterprise Hub, Carrickmacross

Carrickmacross Workhouse Community, Tourism and Arts Hub:

Monaghan County Council, in partnership with Farney Community Development Group (FCDG), plan to restore in full the Carrickmacross Workhouse site.

In May 2024, a multi-disciplinary design team was engaged to complete detailed plans and costings for the restoration and re-development of the rear derelict buildings, including the provision of a multi-purpose Community Hub. It is envisaged that a Part 8 planning application for the project will be submitted in Q2 2025.



The Workhouse, Carrickmacross

Funding secured under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme (TVRS) shall also provide for the development of a construction-ready plan for the re-development of *The Bridewell* building in Carrickmacross Town

Investing in Public Spaces

Public Realm, Heritage and Amenity enhancements in the Village Heart and St. Mary's Space areas of Inniskeen Village:

In 2023, the Executive engaged consultants to progress the scheme through to construction tender stage. The scheme is currently at Design Stage. It is hoped that works shall commence in Q2 2025.



Inniskeen Public Realm Spatial Plan

Convent Lands Landscape Masterplan:

Working in collaboration with Council's Town Regeneration Team, the MD developed a concept landscape masterplan for the Convent Lands area to the south of Carrickmacross Town Centre.

The terms of reference of the proposed Masterplan are centred on the provision of improved foot and cycle linkages to the town centre, the accommodation of the potential expansion of the St. Louis Secondary School and the consolidation of recent investments in sports facilities.



Study area, Convent Lands Landscape Masterplan

This development and implementation of the Masterplan is an action set out in the Carrickmacross Town Centre First Plan, developed by the local Town Team, and published in 2024.

Developing Outdoor Recreational Amenities

In 2024, the MD completed the development and upgrade of angling and boating facilities at both Lough Nagarnaman and Rahans Lake.



New jetty and slipway at Rahans Lake



Upgrade of jetty and carparking at Lough Nagarnaman

Funding secured under the Outdoor Recreational Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) in 2024 shall enable the continued development of outdoor amenities in the MD. Projects currently underway include:

- The development of a Recreational Masterplan for Creevy Lough.
- The development of a 7.9km standalone walking loop off the main Monaghan Way walking trail at Mullyash.
- The creation of an outdoor sensory space adjacent to the existing playpark in Lough Muckno Park

Funding secured under the TVRS has also provided for the development of a Greenspace Masterplan for the Gallows Hill Area in Carrickmacross Town. The Plan shall provide a framework of measures to deliver a new, usable, high quality and accessible public green space and amenity area to the northern end of town.

Community Actions

The MD continued to work closely with communities to better target investment and improve the built environment.

In March 2024, consultants were appointed to progress the development of a high-level Regeneration Plan for the backlands off the north-western side of main street, Castleblayney. The proposed Plan encompasses an area of approximately 4.5 hectares, bounded by Main Street, West Street, Muckno Street and McGrath Road, and is aimed at providing a framework to encourage the activation of backland properties, while providing guidance on viable uses, densities, layout, and design.



Backlands to the north-western side of Main Street, Castleblayney

March 2024 also saw the launch of the Carrickmacross Town Centre First Plan. Developed

by the newly formed Town Team, with the support of Monaghan County Council, the Plan represents the community's vision for the future sustainable development of the Town.

In Castleblayney, the Town Team is active in providing focus for the business and community sectors. The Team meets with the MD Executive monthly and leads initiatives such as the Back to Castleblayney weekend, the Town Voucher Scheme and the Christmas lights switch on.

Tidy Towns - The MD supports these groups by way of annual contributions and logistical assistance throughout the year. In 2024, Carrickmacross Tidy Towns were awarded National Winner under the Town First Plan Category.

Tourism Initiatives

The MD continued to work closely with the Tourism Officer in 2024, to direct investment into the various tourism products of our District. Funding received under the ORIS has provided for the enhancement of amenities and walking trails on Black Island at Lough Muckno. The scheme is currently at the construction stage and is scheduled for completion in Q2 2025.

Corporate Procurement

Overview

In early 2023 the OGP launched an update of the eTenders portal, this required a restructuring of how MCC would use and operate the portal. The launch of the new eTenders portal aligned with the Senior Management decision to put in place a centralised Procurement Unit to manage procurement activities and ensure a consistent approach to procurement throughout the council.

The Council's procurement activity for 2024 remained consistent with 2023 figures. In 2024, the Procurement Unit published a total of sixty-nine competitions (Call for Tenders (CfT)) using eTenders, fifty-four tenders through the www.supplygov.ie portal and three using the OGP arrangements.

Five of the competitions advertised on eTenders were for values above the EU procurement thresholds (i.e. €5,538,000 for works or €221,000 for goods or services). Greater use was made of the SupplyGov portal in 2004 with the number of competitions increasing from eighteen to fifty-four in line with government policy to use Central Procurement Arrangements.

Procurement Procedures

The Council's Procurement Procedures Rev 7.0. were updated on the SharePoint portal in June 2024, taking account of the updated EU thresholds for procurement and structural change of procurement personnel within the sections.

The procedures ensure that procurement is conducted in line with the requirements of Public Sector reform, the Office of Government Procurement, EU Directives and National Guidelines.

A step-by-step guide to the Procurement procedures and associated forms are available on the Council's SharePoint, for use by all staff.

In June of 2024 'Circular 09-2024 - Reporting on the Use of Centralised Procurement Arrangements' was issued by the Department of

Public Expenditure. This circular set out the requirements to report on the use of Central Procurement Arrangements, (CPA), for Goods and Services with a value above €143,000. Where a CPA is available and not utilised by the Local Authority there is a requirement to explain and give reasons for not using the CPA.

Procurement Team

The Procurement Officer role was filled in early 2023 and a centralised Procurement unit was established consisting of three staff members.

This unit is there to guide, support and promote procurement activities across the Local Authority, to ensure that goods, services and works comply with all relevant legislation and guidelines while managing risk and achieving value for money.

The Procurement Unit upload all tenders/quotes over a value of €25k on behalf of the Council, which in turn creates a full audit trail and a consistent and clear approach to MCC's procurement.

Public Spending Code

The Council issued a Quality Assurance Report to NOAC in August 2024, to confirm compliance with the Public Spending Code (PSC).

The report included an inventory of all projects/programmes costing greater than €0.5m, distinguishing between capital and current expenditure and categorised by expenditure being considered, expenditure being incurred, and expenditure recently ended.

The PSC also requires the Local Authority to publish procurements with a value of more than €10m and to submit a self-assessment checklist.

Model Publication Scheme

The Council is obligated to report quarterly on public contracts (tenders) awarded for the Model Publication Scheme, which is part of the Freedom of Information regime.

This publication relates to all public works/supplies/services contracts with a value over €25k. To date, all Sections have assisted in the compilation of contracts awarded for 2024 and this information has now been published on the Council's website and can be found on the following link:

<https://monaghan.ie/corporateservices/model-publication-scheme-contracts-awarded/>

Office of Government Procurement

The Council has signed a 'Memorandum of Understanding' with the Office of Government Procurement (OGP), which sets out the principles governing the procurement relationship between the two parties.

The arrangement recognises that the Council and the OGP are engaged in a partnership focussed on delivering efficient and suitable procurement services and value for money, ultimately assisting the local authority in meeting service delivery needs.

The Council continues to avail of OGP frameworks for all procurement processes, where possible.

Green Procurement

Green Public Procurement, GPP, requires changes to procedures and behaviour throughout an organisation.

While there is an element of 'learning by doing' planning helps to limit the risks attached to GP. The Procurement Unit continue to track the use of Green Procurement elements throughout all procurement competitions and ensure that best practice is adhered to.

Strategic Policy Committees

The role of Strategic Policy Committees is to formulate policy proposals, evaluate and report on policy implementation for consideration; provide policy centred committees which can harness the experience of external bodies in the formulation of policy.

The Committees are not designed to deal with routine operational matters in relation to the delivery of services.

The SPCs which consists of elected members of Monaghan County Council and others who are nominated by / or representative of the sectors relevant to the work of the particular SPC.

Monaghan County Council has 4 Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs):

SPC 1 - Housing, Social and Cultural

SPC 2 - Community & Transport

SPC 3 - Planning & Economic Development

SPC 4 - Climate Action & Environmental Services

Report of Strategic Policy Committee Activities during 2024

Housing, Social and Cultural SPC

*(2 meetings held in 2024) (Feb & Apr)
(No further meetings held due to Local Elections in June 2024)*

The SPC received presentation on the following topics:

- Arts Development Strategy 2024-2030
- Traveller Accommodation Programme 2025-2029
- Scheme of Priorities for Services Sites
- Housing for Disability Strategy
- Housing Care Leavers
- Private Rental Standards / Inspections
- Differential Rent Scheme
- Creative Ireland Programme
- Peace Campus Progress
- Project Children

Community and Transport SPC

(2 meetings held in 2024)

The members received presentations on

- Monaghan County Council Urban Public Roads Traffic Calming Policy
- Speed limit review presentation
- Monaghan County Council Noise Action Plan
- Green Routes/ Quiet Roads
- Treatment of Zebra Crossings
- Monaghan Local Authority Integration Team

The members also received detailed updates of various Roads and Community projects.

Planning & Economic Development SPC

(1 meetings held in 2024)

1 meeting took place in January 2024, there was no quorum for the Meeting in April and Local & General Elections took place in June and November 2024.

At this meeting a new Terms of Reference for the Draft Tourism and Recreation Forum was circulated for consideration.

The Carrickmacross Town Centre First Plan was drafted and would be presented at the upcoming Municipal District Meeting for review. A Derelict Sites Policy was adopted, and an update was provided on the Croi Conaithne Grant Scheme and the number of applications received and approved.

Climate Action & Environmental Services SPC

(2 meetings held in 2024)

The Climate Action & Environmental SPC were restricted to 2 meetings held in 2024 due to the local and national elections that took place on the 7th June and the 29th November 2024 respectively.

The elections meant the new SPC's for 2024 – 2029 didn't get up and running till early 2025.

In 2024, members received presentations on a wide range of topics. Members were given a comprehensive presentation on "Ireland's New Deposit Return Scheme", by Gill McCann, Head of Regulatory Affairs, Re-turn.

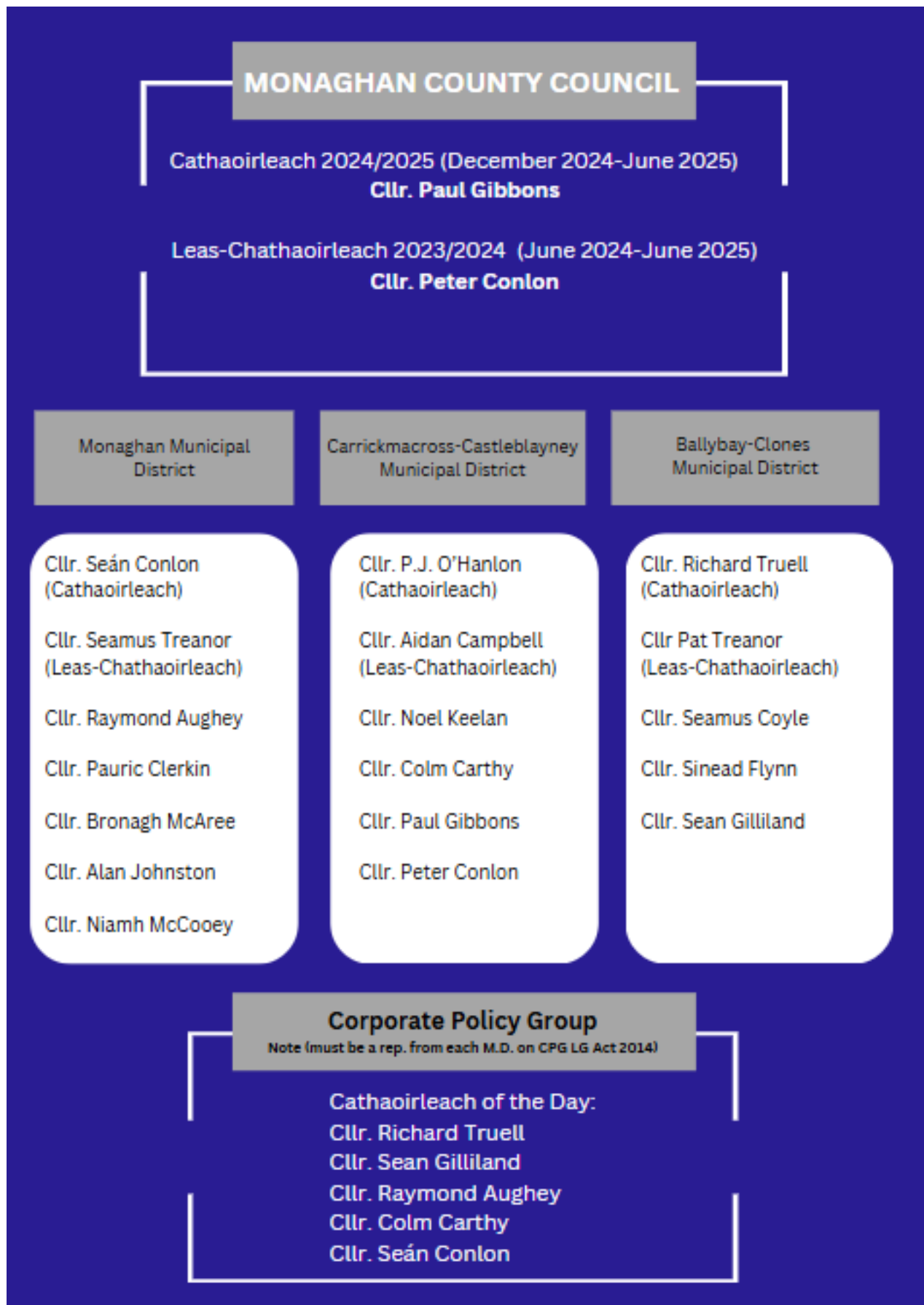
In addition, the Climate Action team updated the members on the adoption & publication of the Local Authority's Climate Action Plan (LACAP) and the overview of the implementation phase of the LACAP.

Other presentations to members included:

- RMCEI
- Lough Muckno – Road to Recovery
- Community Climate Action Programme

Members were also advised on the continuing principal activities in which the Council has been engaged in 2024.

Councillor Representation on External and Council Committees



Strategic Policy Committees

SPC for Housing, Social and Cultural

Cllr. Colm Carthy, Chair
Cllr. Aidan Campbell
Cllr. PJ O'Hanlon
Cllr. Sinead Flynn
Cllr. Paul Gibbons
Cllr. Alan Johnston

SPC for Economic Development and Enterprise Support

Cllr. Sean Gilliland, Chair
Cllr. Pat Treanor
Cllr. Colm Carthy
Cllr. Niamh McCooey
Cllr. P.J. O'Hanlon
Cllr. Peter Conlon

SPC for Transport and Community

Cllr. Raymond Aughey, Chair
Cllr. Seán Conlon
Cllr. Bronagh McAree
Cllr. Noel Keelan
Cllr. Pauric Clerkin
Cllr. Alan Johnston

SPC for Climate Action and Environment

Cllr. Richard Truell, Chair
Cllr. Raymond Aughey
Cllr. Noel Keelan
Cllr. Sinead Flynn
Cllr. Bronagh McAree
Cllr. Pauric Clerkin

SPC for Tourism, Rural and Community Development; An Ghaeilge & Cultural

Cllr. Seán Conlon, Chair
Cllr. Pat Treanor
Cllr. Niamh McCooey
Cllr. Paul Gibbons
Cllr. Raymond Aughey
Cllr. Aidan Campbell

**Local Community
Development
Committee**

Cllr. Seamus Coyle

Cllr. Paul Gibbons

Cllr. Pauric Clerkin

Audit Committee

Cllr. Raymond Aughey

Cllr. Paul Gibbons

**Standing Orders &
Procedures
Committee**

Cathaoirleach of the day

Cllr. Peter Conlon

Cllr. Alan Johnston

Cllr. Seán Conlon

Cllr. Sinead Flynn

Cllr. Raymond Aughey

Cllr. Niamh McCooley

**Appointment of
members to witness the
affixing of the Official
Seal**

All Members of Monaghan County
Council appointed to witness the
affixing of the Official Seal.

Local Steering Group for the
Use of Irish in Monaghan
County Council (Coiste
Gaeilge)

Cllr. Pat Treanor
Cllr. Richard Truell
Cllr. Seamus Coyle
Cllr. Aidan Campbell
Cllr. Niamh McCooley

Local Improvements
Scheme Committee

Cllr. Aidan Campbell
Cllr. P.J. O'Hanlon
Cllr. Bronagh McAree
Cllr. Noel Keelan
Cllr. Sean Gilliland

Local Monitoring
Committee (Rural
Water Programme)

Cllr. Paul Gibbons
Cllr. Aidan Campbell
Cllr. P.J. O'Hanlon
Cllr. Noel Keelan

Speed Limits
Committee

Cllr. Raymond Aughey
Cllr. Colm Carthy
Cllr. Peter Conlon
Cllr. Alan Johnston
Cllr. Sinead Flynn
Cllr. P.J. O'Hanlon

County Monaghan
Heritage Forum

Cllr. Peter Conlon
Cllr. Bronagh McAree
Cllr. Seán Conlon
Cllr. Seamus Coyle

Road Safety
Committee

Cllr. Seán Conlon

Museum Advisory
Committee

Cllr. Paul Gibbons
Cllr. Raymond Aughey
Cllr. Alan Johnston
Cllr. Pauric Clerkin

Monaghan Local Sports
Partnership Board

Cllr. Colm Carthy

Local Traveller
Accommodation
Consultative Committee

Cllr. Pauric Clerkin
Cllr. Niamh McCooley
Cllr. Seamus Coyle
Cllr. Seamus Treanor

Monaghan Leisure
Complex Management
Committee

Cllr. Pauric Clerkin
Cllr. Sean Conlon
Cllr. Raymond Aughey

Civic Offices
Steering Group

Cllr. Bronagh McAree
Cllr. Seamus Treanor
Cllr. Raymond Aughey
Cllr. Seamus Coyle
Cllr. Alan Johnston
Cllr. Sean Gilliland
Cllr. Niamh McCooley

Muckno Development
Committee

Cllr. Peter Conlon
Cllr. Aidan Campbell
Cllr. Paul Gibbons
Cllr. Noel Keelan
Cllr. Colm Carthy
Cllr. P.J. O'Hanlon
Cllr. Pat Treanor
Cllr. Pauric Clerkin

**A5/N2 Cross
Border Committee**

Cllr. Peter Conlon
Cllr. Seamus Treanor
Cllr. Noel Keelan
Cllr. PJ O'Hanlon

**Peace Partnership
Board**

Cllr. Richard Truell
Cllr. Seamus Treanor
Cllr. Niamh McCooley
Cllr. Raymond Aughey
Cllr. Paul Gibbons

Twinning Committee

Cllr. Pauric Clerkin
Cllr. Aidan Campbell
Cllr. Sinead Flynn
Cllr. PJ O'Hanlon

**East Border Region
Members Forum**

Cllr. P.J. O'Hanlon
Cllr. Peter Conlon
Cllr. Raymond Aughey
Cllr. Aidan Campbell
Cllr. Paul Gibbons
Cllr. Noel Keelan

**Directors to the
East Border
Region Ltd**

Cllr. Noel Keelan
Cllr. P. J. O'Hanlon
Cllr. Aidan Campbell

**Board of the
Garage Theatre**

Cllr. Pauric Clerkin
Cllr. Bronagh McAree

**Northern and Western
Regional Assembly
(NWRA)**

Cllr. Seán Conlon
Cllr. Richard Truell

**Management Board of
ICBAN Ltd., (Irish Central
Border Areas Network)**

Cllr. Alan Johnston
Cllr. Pat Treanor
Cllr. Seamus Coyle

**Clones Erne East
Partnership**

Cllr. Richard Truell
Cllr. Pat Treanor
Cllr. Sinead Flynn
Cllr. Seamus Coyle
Cllr. Sean Gilliland
Cllr. Pauric Clerkin

**Association of Irish
Local Government
(AILG)**

Cllr. Pat Treanor
Cllr. Noel Keelan
Cllr. Sean Gilliland

**Regional Health Forum
– Dublin and North
East**

Cllr. Seamus Coyle
Cllr. Bronagh McAree
Cllr. Alan Johnston

**An Coiste
Logainmneacha**

Cllr. Pat Treanor
Cllr. Peter Conlon
Cllr. Seamus Coyle
Cllr. Bronagh McAree

**Local Authority
Members Association
(LAMA)**

Cllr. Sean Conlon

**Cavan/Monaghan
Education and Training
Board**

Cllr. Sinead Flynn
Cllr. Aidan Campbell
Cllr. Colm Carthy
Cllr. Alan Johnston
Cllr. Seamus Coyle

**North Eastern
Regional Drugs and
Alcohol Task Force**

Cllr. Seamus Coyle

**Irish Public Bodies
Mutual Insurances**

Cllr. Richard Truell

**Connecting to Life
Suicide Prevention
Working Group**

**Cllr. Pauric Clerkin
Cllr. Bronagh McAree**

**Cavan/Monaghan
Drugs & Alcohol
Forum**

**Cllr. Niamh McCooey
Cllr. Richard Truell
Cllr. PJ O'Hanlon**

**Monaghan Tourism
& Recreation
Forum**

**Cllr. Peter Conlon
Cllr. Sean Conlon
Cllr. Raymond Aughey**

**Comhairle na nOg
Steering Committee**

Cllr. Pauric Clerkin

**Monaghan Walking &
Cycling Forum**

**Cllr. Paul Gibbons
Cllr. Pauric Clerkin
Cllr. Seamus Coyle**

**Monaghan Digital
Steering Committee**

**Cllr. Colm Carthy
Cllr. Richard Truell**

Conferences/Training Attended by Members in 2024

Promoting Authority	Subject / Theme	Venue	Dates	Number of Members Attended
LAMA	Building for Success	Abbey Hotel Donegal	19th - 20th January 2024	6
Ailg	"Elected Members Briefing: Annual Declarations, Donations, Code of Conduct, and Local Representation Allowance Update"	Limerick	26th & 27th January 2024	2
Association of Irish Regions'	Regions in Focus 2024	Fitzgerald's Woodlands Limerick	7th & 8th February 2024	3
AILG	<i>The 21st Century Councillor in Irish Local Government & Local Elections 2024</i>	Arklow Bay Hotel, Co. Wicklow.	14th & 15th February 2024	7
AILG	Local Election 2024 Preparation A Briefing from the Electoral Commission	Kilkenny	21st March 2024	3
AILG Module 2	Local Election 2024 Preparation – A Briefing from the Electoral Commission	Athlone Hodson	23rd March 2024	2
AILG	AILG Elected Member General Induction Training	Mullingar Park Hotel	11th & 12th July 2024	4
AILG	AILG Autumn Training Seminar 2024	Hillgrove Hotel Co Monaghan	11th & 12th September 2024	7
AILG	September Training Module: "An Overview of the Planning System" – Delivered by the OPR	Bridge House Hotel, Tullamore	28th September 2024	1
Lama	Autumn Seminar	Newgrange Hotel in Navan	17 th & 18 th of October 24	4
Womens Regional Causcus		Sligo Park Hotel	15th October 2024	3
IBP	IBP Insurance Members	Mullingar Park Hotel	4th October 2024	1
AILG	re SEAI Home energy upgrade grants	Claregalway Galway	16th November 2024	1
Celtic Conferences	Health Service Entitlements	Clonakilty, Co. Cork.	13th -15th December 2024	1

Appendix I Members Expenses

Payments to Monaghan County Council Elected Members in 2024 from 1 January - 31 December 2024							
Name of Councillor	Representational Payment / Salary (Subject to PAYE etc.)	Local Representational Allowance (T&S, Vouched & Unvouched)	Cathaoirleach / Leas Cathaoirleach / Cathaoirleach of MD Allowance (Subject to PAYE etc.)	SPC Chair Allowance (subject to PAYE etc)	Travel & Subsistence (Training, Conferences, Crossborder and Other Meetings)	Foreign Travel (Twinning etc., Cost of Flights and Expenses)	TOTAL PAID
Cllr. Aidan Campbell	€29,877.56	€7,959.37				€1,157.32	€38,994.25
Cllr. Aoife McCooley	€14,664.86	€1,749.58	€2,616.67		€1,500.00		€20,531.11
Cllr. Brian McKenna	€14,661.41	€1,698.33			€1,667.25		€18,026.99
Cllr. Cathy Bennett	€27,440.72	€4,819.45	€11,427.84		€927.27		€44,615.28
Cllr. Colm Carthy	€29,877.56	€9,119.41		€3,266.67	€1,599.94		€43,863.58
Cllr. David Maxwell	€27,440.72	€5,736.09	€13,349.14		€2,290.33	€5,430.76	€54,247.04
Cllr. Hugh McElvaney	€14,664.86	€2,239.74					€16,904.60
Cllr. Noel Keelan	€29,877.56	€8,864.41		€2,616.87	€1,098.39		€42,457.23
Cllr. Pat Treanor	€29,877.56	€7,265.85	€1,744.42	€2,616.67	€799.09	€421.92	€42,725.51
Cllr. Paudge Connolly	€14,664.86	€2,818.28			€4,459.78		€21,942.92
Cllr. P.J. O'Hanlon	€29,877.56	€6,564.41	€3,266.67		€170.00		€39,878.64
Cllr. Raymond Aughey	€29,877.56	€4,512.70		€5,883.34			€40,273.60
Cllr. Richard Truell	€29,877.56	€6,759.37	€3,266.67	€3,266.67	€3,266.85		€46,437.12
Cllr. Seamus Coyle	€29,877.56	€6,761.32			€330.00		€36,968.88
Cllr. Seamus Treanor	€29,877.56	€4,133.75					€34,011.31
Cllr. Sean Conlon	€29,877.56	€6,064.66	€3,266.67	€3,266.67	€2,950.26		€45,425.82
Cllr. Sean Gilliland	€29,877.56	€8,684.41	€2,616.67	€5,883.34			€47,061.98
Cllr. Peter Conlon	€29,877.56	€8,408.76	€2,177.76		€163.00		€40,627.08
Cllr Pauric Clerkin	€16,479.76	€3,706.69					€20,186.45
Cllr Sinead Flynn	€16,479.76	€4,192.73			€460.07		€21,132.56
Cllr Bronagh Mc Aree	€16,479.76	€3,917.85			€1,316.28		€21,713.89
Cllr Paul Gibbons	€16,479.76	€4,428.32			€393.17		€21,301.25
Totals	€537,987.19	€120,405.48	€43,732.51	€26,800.23	€23,391.68	€7,010.00	€759,327.09

Appendix II Financial Statement 2024

Financial Statement 2024

Summary of Expenditure, Income and Balances

The Capital Account expenditure of €58,317,848 reflects the investment by the Council in improving the infrastructure in the County.

Capital Account

Activity by Programme Group	2024 Expenditure	2024 Income	2024 Net cost
Housing & Building	35,058,962	33,468,534	(1,590,428)
Roads Transportation & Safety	7,968,733	6,830,681	(1,138,052)
Water Services	205,117	22,521	(182,596)
Development Management	8,679,016	7,317,761	(1,361,255)
Environmental Services	2,100,236	1,982,419	(117,817)
Recreation & Amenity	1,998,428	7,413,057	5,414,629
Miscellaneous Services	2,307,356	1,551,610	(755,746)
Total Expenditure / Income	58,317,848	58,586,583	268,735
	2023	2024	
Balance (Debit) / Credit January 1	6,118,312	(5,915,014)	
Expenditure	55,099,431	58,317,848	
Income	39,775,107	58,586,583	
Transfers to Revenue	(1,244,402)	(881,566)	
Net Transfers from Revenue Account	4,535,401	4,996,585	
Balance (Debit) / Credit December 31	(5,915,014)	(1,531,260)	

Revenue Account

Activity by Division	2024 Expenditure	2024 Income	2024 Net cost
Housing & Building	14,280,911	16,463,497	2,182,586
Roads Transportation & Safety	29,787,332	22,392,055	(7,395,277)
Water Services	8,205,332	7,689,534	(515,798)
Development Management	20,314,022	13,554,961	(6,759,061)
Environmental Services	9,071,590	2,398,254	(6,673,336)
Recreation & Amenity	6,447,852	652,597	(5,795,255)
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	587,615	425,841	(161,774)
Miscellaneous Services	6,065,910	6,764,477	698,567
Total Expenditure / Income	94,760,563	70,341,217	(24,419,346)

Net Cost of Programmes to be funded from County Rates and Local Government Fund **(24,419,346)**

	€
Rates	15,252,819
Local Property Tax	13,225,238
Surplus / (Deficit) for Year	4,058,711
Transfer to Reserves	(4,298,646)
Overall Surplus/ (Deficit)	(239,934)
Balance (Debit) / Credit @ 1st January	531,313
Balance (Debit) / Credit @ 31st December	291,378

Revenue Account

Income and Expenditure Account		2024		2023	
Income					
State Grants and Subsidies	53,376,161	54.0%	46,767,176	52.6%	
Contributions from other Las	574,329	0.6%	296,708	0.3%	
Goods and Services	16,390,727	16.6%	15,441,827	17.4%	
Local Property Tax	13,225,238	13.4%	11,692,672	13.2%	
Rates	15,252,819	15.4%	14,651,949	16.5%	
Total Income	98,819,274	100.0%	88,850,332	100.0%	
Expenditure					
Payroll Expenses	34,885,834	36.8%	30,923,924	36.3%	
Operational Expenses	46,487,579	49.1%	43,345,111	50.9%	
Administration Expenses	4,355,447	4.6%	3,287,982	3.9%	
Establishment Expenses	1,817,244	1.9%	1,729,119	2.0%	
Financial Expenses	6,075,880	6.4%	4,754,667	5.6%	
Miscellaneous	1,138,580	1.2%	1,035,357	1.2%	
Total Expenditure	94,760,563	100.0%	85,076,159	100.0%	
Surplus for Year before Transfers		4,058,711		3,774,173	
Transfers to Reserves		(4,298,646)		(3,647,846)	
Overall (Deficit)/Surplus for Year		(239,934)		126,327	
General Reserve at 1st January		531,313		404,986	
General Reserve at 31st December		291,378		531,313	

STATEMENT OF INTERNAL FINANCIAL CONTROL (SIFC)

Introduction

I, Robert Burns, Chief Executive (CE) of Monaghan County Council am responsible for the annual financial statement (AFS), prepared by the Director of Finance, in accordance with the accounting code of practice issued by the Minister under section 107 of the Local Government Act, 2001.

I certify that the financial statements of Monaghan County Council for the year ended 31 December 2024, are in agreement with the books of account and have been prepared in accordance with the accounting requirements of the Minister of Housing Local Government and Heritage.

The AFS are subject to external audit, by an auditor of the Local Government Audit Service, whose purpose is to form an independent opinion of the accounts and state whether the annual financial statement presents *fairly the financial position* of the local authority and of its income and expenditure for the period in question, and whether the transactions of the local authority under which they purport to have been carried out.

The AFS reports on the day-to-day activities of Monaghan County Council in the form of the Statement of Comprehensive Income & Expenditure, summarised by Division. The Statement of Financial Position outlines Monaghan County Councils overall financial position as of the 31st of December 2024.

The *Statement of Comprehensive Income* represents expenditure and income on the day-to-day running of Monaghan County Council.

The key sources of income for Monaghan County Council are as follows:

	2024 €	2023 €
Goods & Services	16,390,737	15,441,827
Grants & Subsidies	53,376,161	46,767,176
Other Contributions	574,329	296,708
Rates	15,252,819	14,651,949
Local Property Tax	13,225,238	11,692,672

Activity on the Income and Expenditure account for 2024 is as follows:

Over expenditure occurred on all Divisions with the exception of Division C. This over expenditure will require the approval of the members by resolution in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act, 2001. A report on the over expenditure and Transfers to Reserves will be presented at the May 2025 Council Meeting.

	2024 €	2023 €
Income	98,819,274	88,850,331
Expenditure	94,760,563	85,076,159
Transfers to Capital	(4,298,646)	(3,647,846)
Surplus/(Deficit) for	(239,934)	126,327
Opening Revenue Reserve	531,313	404,993
Closing Revenue Reserve	291,378	531,320

The opening revenue surplus for Monaghan County Council at 1st January 2024 was €531,313. The Council recorded a deficit of €239,934 for the year ended 31st December 2024 resulting in a decreased cumulative surplus of €291,378.

The *Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet)* represents the total financial activity of the council for the year together with comparative year figures as appropriate.

The statement includes assets and liabilities as follows:

- Assets both recently constructed/purchased and historical assets
- Work in progress and preliminary schemes- mainly roads and housing
- Long Term Debtors – housing loans
- Current Assets- including Stock, Debtors, Cash at bank
- Current and long term liabilities- mortgage and non-mortgage loan borrowings
- Various Reserves/Balances

The Net Assets of Monaghan County Council at the end of 2024 total €1,567,921,871 and are as follows:

	2024 €	2023 €
Fixed Assets	1,559,808,626	1,512,446,439
Works in Progress	14,021,259	34,123,973
Long Term debtors	29,237,526	27,817,403
Current Assets	17,106,856	14,922,447
Current Liabilities	(11,270,958)	(13,472,716)
Net Current Assets/ (Liabilities)	5,835,898	1,449,731
Creditors (Amounts greater than 1 year)	(40,981,437)	(39,502,593)
Net Assets/(Liabilities)	1,567,921,871	1,536,334,953

A *Statement of Funds Flow* was introduced as part of AFS 2011. While the guidance of International Accounting Standard 7 Statement of Cash Flows has been followed, the business of local authorities is substantially different to most private sector organisations and therefore some minor changes to the format have been agreed to ensure the data displayed is meaningful and useful within the local government sector.

System of Internal Financial Controls

As CE of Monaghan County Council, I acknowledge my responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial control is maintained and operated by Monaghan County Council. This responsibility is exercised in the context of the resources available to Monaghan County Council. Also, any system of internal financial control can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or would be detected in a timely manner. Maintaining the system of internal financial controls is a continuous process and the system and its effectiveness are kept under ongoing review.

Financial control environment

As CE of Monaghan County Council, I confirm that a financial control environment containing the following elements is in place:

- Financial responsibilities have been assigned at management level with corresponding accountability.
- Reporting arrangements have been established at all levels where responsibility for financial management has been assigned.
- Formal procedures have been established for reporting significant control failures and ensuring appropriate corrective action.

- There is an Audit Committee which as part of its work programme regularly review the internal financial control system.
- Procedures for all key business processes have been documented.
- There are systems in place to safeguard the assets.

Administrative Controls and Management Reporting

As CE of Monaghan County Council, I confirm that a framework of administrative procedures and regular management reporting is in place including segregation of duties and a system of delegation and accountability and, in particular, that:

- procedures for key business processes have been documented
- there are systems aimed at ensuring the security of the ICT systems
- there are systems in place to safeguard the assets of the local authority and
- there are appropriate capital investment control guidelines and formal project management disciplines in operation.

Procurement compliance

Monaghan County Council ensures that there is an appropriate and ongoing focus on good practice in tendering and purchasing and that procedures are in place to ensure compliance with all relevant procurement guidelines.

Internal audit and Audit Committee

As Chief Executive, I can confirm that Monaghan County Council has an internal audit function with appropriately trained personnel, which operates in accordance with a written charter. Its work is informed by analysis of the financial risks to which Monaghan County Council is exposed, and its annual internal audit plans are based on this analysis. I am satisfied that there are procedures in place to ensure that the reports of the internal audit function are followed up.

I can confirm that Monaghan County Council has an effective audit committee which carries out an annual effectiveness review of their activities. I can also confirm that an Audit Committee is in place in accordance with the requirements of Section 122 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended).

The statutory functions of audit committees as set out in section 59 and 60 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 are as follows:

- I. to review financial and budgetary reporting practices and procedures within the local authority that has established it;
- II. to foster the development of best practice in the performance by the local authority of its internal audit function;
- III. to review any audited financial statement, auditor's report or auditor's special report in relation to the local authority and assess any actions taken within that authority by its chief executive in response to such a statement or report and to report to that authority on its findings;
- IV. to assess and promote efficiency and value for money with respect to the local authority's performance of its functions; and
- V. to review systems that are operated by the local authority for the management of risks.

I recognise that the audit committee plays a crucial role in the governance framework of local authorities, particularly in the context of increased public sector accountability. They have an independent role in advising the Council on financial reporting processes, internal control, risk management and audit matters as part of the systematic review of the control environment and governance procedures of the local authority.

I acknowledge the Audit Committee's role in the risk management process and in the continuing review of the control environment and governance procedures in Monaghan County Council.

Risk and control framework

Monaghan County Council has implemented a risk management system which identifies and reports key risks and the management actions being taken to address and, to the extent possible, mitigate those risks.

A corporate risk register is in place which identifies the key risks and evaluates and grades them according to their significance. The register is reviewed and updated by the Management Team on a regular basis. There is also a risk register in place for each service division and these are also reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

The outcome of these assessments is used to plan and allocate resources to ensure risks are managed to an acceptable level. The risk register details the controls and actions needed to mitigate risks and responsibilities for the operation of controls are assigned to specific staff.

As Chief Executive, I confirm that key risks and related controls have been identified, and processes have been put in place to monitor the operation of those key controls and report any identified deficiencies.

The Statement of Internal Financial Control will be included in the draft Annual Report submitted to Council members by 30 April 2025 and thereafter included in the published Annual Report prepared and adopted by the Council by 30 June 2025.

Signed by:

Dated:



Chief Executive

18th March 2025

Appendix III Governance Statement

Governance Statement

Purpose

The purpose of this governance statement is to provide relevant information on the governance structures and governance arrangements within the local authority including on council, committees, senior management and related areas. It demonstrates our commitment to effective governance, recognises key legislative and good governance requirements and affirms the Council's compliance with the Local Government Code of Governance obligations.

Good Governance

Fundamentally, good governance in the local government sector and wider public sector is about delivering priorities, achieving objectives, behaving with integrity and acting in the public interest, in ways that are consistent with legal, regulatory and government policy obligations. Governance refers to the framework of rules, relationships, systems and processes by which the local authority is directed, controlled and held to account and whereby authority within an organisation is exercised and maintained. It encompasses authority, accountability, stewardship and leadership, direction and control.

Good Governance Principles

CORE PRINCIPLE 1 - Good governance means focusing on the purpose of the authority, on outcomes that deliver sustainable economic, community and wider societal benefits and on implementing a vision for the local authority.

CORE PRINCIPLE 2 - Good governance means promoting and demonstrating public service values through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.

CORE PRINCIPLE 3 - Good governance means members and officials working together to achieve a common purpose within a framework of clearly defined functions and roles.

CORE PRINCIPLE 4 - Good governance means developing the organisational capacity and the leadership capability and competencies of members and officials to operate effectively and fulfil the purpose of the organization.

CORE PRINCIPLE 5 - Good governance means taking well-informed and transparent decisions and managing risks and performance.

CORE PRINCIPLE 6 - Good governance means engaging openly and comprehensively with local people, citizens and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability.

CORE PRINCIPLE 7 - Good governance means actively contributing to the furtherance and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by delivering on the priorities and actions within the Climate Action Plan and the provisions of the Climate Act.

Our Commitment to Good Governance

As the Cathaoirleach and Chief Executive of the council, and on behalf of the elected members, management and staff we confirm that;

1. We have adopted the governance principles as the fundamental bedrock and philosophy on how we operate as a governing body and as an executive.
2. The Local Government Code of Governance has been adopted and the extent to which the Council is in compliance with the Code has been reviewed and assessed.
3. The Statement of Internal Financial Control is submitted by the Chief Executive to the Elected Members and to the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee reviews the SIFC and provides an assurance on an annual basis to the Elected Members. Mechanisms are available to the Audit Committee to notify the Elected Members of any issues that arise outside of the normal annual reporting.
4. Compliance with legal and regulatory obligations are acknowledged and adhered to.
5. There is clarity of roles and responsibilities based on the reserved and executive functions and based on committee terms of reference.
6. Codes of Conduct and ethics declarations for members and employees are in place.
7. Procedures are in place for the making of protected disclosures in accordance with section 21(1) of the Protected Disclosures Act 2014 and confirmation that the annual report required under section 22(1) of the Act has been published.
8. The Council and Committees review their own performance on a periodic basis.
9. We have instituted appropriate governance oversight arrangements in respect of subsidiary, associated and related companies.
10. As part of our commitment to effective oversight and accountability, we have developed and continue to enhance our overall assurance framework utilising external and internal assurance sources to ensure good performance as part of our governance culture.



Cathaoirleach/ Mayor

Date: 01 April 2025



Chief Executive

Date: 01 April 2025



Comhairle Contae Mhuineacháin
Monaghan County Council

Comhairle Contae Mhuineacháin Tuarascáil Bhliantúil 2024

Monaghan County Council Annual Report 2024