



Comhairle Contae Mhuineacháin
Monaghan County Council

2026 SPRING/SUMMER NEWSLETTER



*Live. Work. Visit
Monaghan*



Elliott's Farm Rewilding Project

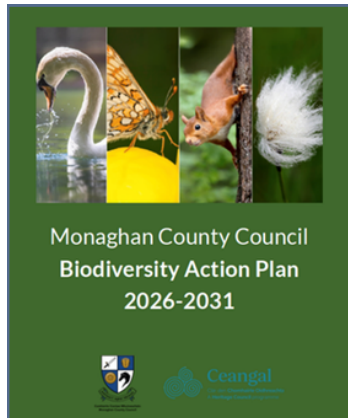
The launch of the Elliott's Farm Rewilding Project took place on March 4th, with the ceremonial planting of a heritage apple tree on the site by the Cathaoirleach and Chief Executive, with Directors of Service, Elected members, residents and partners in attendance, such as Monaghan Tidy Towns, local CE workers and St. Mary's Boys School. This project is being led by the Biodiversity Officer and Horticulturist and is a 5-year plan to restore a natural grassland habitat at this site.



The boys from 5th Class in St Mary's Boys School helped to plant 150m of native hedgerow on the site boundary. This native hedge will provide food and shelter for a variety of wildlife over the coming years.

Biodiversity

Adoption of County Monaghan Biodiversity Action 2026-2031



The Biodiversity Officer presented the draft Biodiversity Action Plan to the Elected Members on April 13th. The presentation covered a full overview of the policy and legislative context for the Plan, a summary of biodiversity in the county, a brief outline of the steps involved in drafting the Plan and an example of the fifty targeted actions contained within it. The Biodiversity Action Plan sets out a roadmap for how Monaghan County Council will protect, restore and enhance Monaghan's Biodiversity over the lifetime of the Plan.

All about bees at Doohamlet National School

A collaboration between Doohamlet Group Water Scheme, Ballybay Men's Shed and the Biodiversity Officer resulted in children in 5th and 6th Class at All Saints NS in Doohamlet receive bespoke' bee hotels to take home for their own gardens. The children listened to a presentation on Irish Bees from the Biodiversity Officer before receiving a packet of native wildflowers seeds and a bee hotel each. The engagement from the children was excellent with great feedback received from teachers.



Monaghan's Youth Biodiversity Conference



Monaghan's 2nd Youth Biodiversity Conference took place on Friday 24th April with 40 children and their teachers from 5 national schools across the county taking part. This event was a fantastic success two years ago, and with a change of venue to Tanagh Outdoor Centre, it was even better than before. Children canoed down the Dromore River learning about its biodiversity and water quality, coupled with classroom and pond dipping sessions to learn more about nature in Monaghan.

Monaghan Peace Campus Named Ulster's Building of the Year 2026

Monaghan County Council is delighted to report that the **Monaghan Peace Campus** has achieved significant recognition at the 2026 Royal Society of Ulster Architects (RSUA) Awards, securing the prestigious **Liam McCormick Prize for Ulster's Building of the Year**. Designed by Hall Black Douglas Architects for Monaghan County Council, the project has been widely celebrated as a benchmark in contemporary civic architecture.



In addition to the top honour, the development also received the **Architects' Choice Award**, reflecting the endorsement of approximately 300 practising architects across the region. This recognition highlights both critical acclaim and strong professional support within the architectural community.

Further success was achieved with the project also receiving the **Regional Public Building Award** and the **Accessible & Inclusive Design Award**, underlining its excellence in both civic function and inclusive design principles.

Significance of the Awards

Liam McCormick Prize – Building of the Year

The Liam McCormick Prize represents the highest architectural distinction in Ulster. Winning this award positions the Monaghan Peace Campus alongside notable buildings such as Queen's University Belfast's Business School Student Hub, the Lyric Theatre, and the Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre.

URBACT



Co-funded by
the European Union
Interreg



URBACT PARKS Study Visit 26-27 February - *Shared governance for resilient urban green spaces*



Welcome meeting in the Civic Offices Carrickmacross

Following Monaghan County Council's recent success in securing a place in one of 25 newly funded URBACT Transfer Networks, the Climate Action Unit hosted the URBACT Lead Expert and Lead Partner representative for a two-day study visit on 26–27 February. Monaghan's participation in the PARKS Transfer Network, led by Perugia, Italy, was confirmed in the URBACT programme announcement on 10 October 2025, placing Monaghan among only four Irish authorities selected for this cycle.

The PARKS Network brings together partners from Italy, Bulgaria, Hungary, Portugal, Spain and Ukraine, with the shared aim of enhancing ecosystem resilience, climate adaptation and biodiversity through more coordinated and community-centred management of urban green assets. Participation in this network provides Monaghan with access to technical expertise, peer-learning opportunities and practical guidance on adapting Perugia's recognised Urban Green Asset Strategy to a local context.

A central component of the Climate Action Plan is the development of a comprehensive Green Infrastructure Plan for the county and its main urban areas. The study visit marked the formal start of this work. Over the two days, the visiting delegation met with Council teams, community representatives and local project leads to explore how Perugia's Good Practice can inform the Carrickmacross–Castleblayney Municipal District, which has been selected as the primary pilot area for the transfer process.

COMMUNITY CLIMATE ACTION PROGRAMME

Phase 1 - 6th Drawdown Complete

The sixth drawdown for Phase 1 of the Community Climate Action Programme was completed during March. Five participating groups—Monaghan Tidy Towns, Castleblayney Faughs, Cremartin GFC, ABC Council and Omagh Rugby Club—have drawn down a total of €109,038 in quarter 1. The funding supported a wide range of community climate projects across the county. Energy-efficiency upgrades were delivered at Omagh Rugby Club and Cremartin GFC, where both organisations replaced existing lighting with energy-efficient LED systems reducing electricity demand. ABC Council completed major enhancements to their community garden and installed water-refill stations across the district, strengthening local circular-economy and water-conservation efforts.



Monaghan Tidy Towns - Pocket Forest Tree Planting

Monaghan Tidy Towns advanced biodiversity goals through extensive tree planting and preparatory works for pocket forests in several housing estates, while Castleblayney Faughs improved the ecological value of their grounds by planting native hedging to support nature restoration.

Ministerial Visit to Carrickmacross Library



Carrickmacross Library was pleased to host a visit from Minister Thomas Byrne on Friday, 6 February 2026, for a community meeting with those working at a local level. Minister Byrne was conducting community outreach across the country to raise awareness of Ireland's upcoming EU Presidency and to hear the views of citizens on how to frame Ireland's EU Presidency policy priorities for the six-month period.

The Minister was welcomed to the library where he addressed around 50 attendees, ahead of a meeting in the Council Chamber with Elected Representatives, Directors of Service and the Chief Executive. Discussions covered ongoing preparations for the EU Presidency and the important role that Ireland will play in driving forward the EU agenda, with the aim of engaging young people and local communities on matters related to the EU and its impact on their lives.

The visit provided an opportunity to highlight Carrickmacross Library's role as a vibrant community space and to showcase the work being carried out with local groups and partners.



Monaghan County Libraries host LAI CILIP Conference 2026 at Peace Campus

Monaghan County Libraries were proud to host the Library Association of Ireland (LAI) and Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professional Joint (CILIP) Conference 2026, welcoming library professionals from across Ireland to the Peace Campus, Monaghan, on 29 and 30 April.

The two-day event brought together delegates from public, academic and special libraries to explore the evolving role of libraries in community life, democratic engagement, education and inclusion.

The conference featured keynote addresses from international and Irish speakers, including Sam Helmick, President of the American Library Association, and Neil MacInnes, Strategic Lead for Libraries, Galleries and Culture with Manchester City Council. Delegates also took part in plenary sessions, panel discussions, lightning talks, poster presentations and site visits showcasing local cultural and library services. A total of 19 exhibitors attended the conference, providing delegates with opportunities to engage with the latest library products, services and innovations.



Monaghan Community Integration Forum (CIF)

Monaghan Community Integration Forum continues to play a vital role as a collaborative network and working group. Its purpose is to identify emerging trends, address needs or gaps in service provision and develop solutions at a local level or escalate issues where necessary. The Forum is driven and chaired by Patricia Monahan, Director of Services for Community and Rural Development, and consists of representatives from service providers across the county.

Throughout 2025, the Forum convened five times, reinforcing its commitment to fostering integration and supporting social inclusion policies and initiatives.

Monaghan Age Friendly Programme

Monaghan Age Friendly Programme together with partners from the Age Friendly Alliance are currently in the process of developing an Age Friendly Strategy 2026-2030. The first part of this process is the public consultation phase which was completed through participation in a detailed survey. The consultation closed on 30th January 2026. The census data has also been reviewed to extract information on the profile of people aged 55 and over living in County Monaghan.

Healthy Ireland

January was a busy month for the Healthy Ireland programme locally as 2026 marks the final year of Round 4 of the programme. The Healthy County Coordinator liaised with HI funded project partners to review 2025 project progress and collate all documentation and reports required to complete annual financial and progress report returns relating to all projects to Pobal. As well as completing the necessary returns, the annual activities work plan for 2026 was devised, agreed, and returned to Pobal.

For projects due to commence in early 2026, service level agreements were drawn up with project partners to enable them to commence activities. Several projects which were delivered successfully in 2025 will be revisited in 2026 along with some new and innovative initiatives under both outcome areas of "Improving Physical Activity Levels" and "Decreasing Negative Mental Health".

Monaghan Comhairle na nÓg

In early January, Monaghan County Council's Youth Officer responsible for overseeing Comhairle na nÓg completed the annual funding request application to Pobal for funding to deliver Comhairle na nÓg in Monaghan in 2026. The Youth Officer also reviewed and completed all necessary reporting requirements relating to the 2025 programme.

Local Community Safety Partnership (LCSP)

Monaghan Local Community Safety Partnership staff are currently working on the first Community Safety Plan for the county. Over 750 questionnaires were completed as part of the consultation period, with submissions being received from local public bodies.

It is planned that the first Monaghan Community Safety Plan will be published in September, following approval from the National Office for Community Safety.

Partnership staff are currently working with the Women's Assembly on an "EmPOWER Her Auto Night", which was held in June in the Civil Defence Building. It was a free event which was being designed to provide women with the knowledge and confidence to better understand their vehicles and to stay safe on our roads. Participants received guidance on daily car safety checks, essential road safety advice, basic vehicle maintenance and how to interpret dashboard warning lights. The RSA were also in attendance to give a Safe Driving presentation.

Monaghan Age Friendly Programme

Bealtaine Festival 2026

Monaghan Age Friendly Programme are delighted to collaborate with colleagues in the County Monaghan Libraries Network for Bealtaine Festival 2026 "Lust for Life". This festival celebrates creativity in older age with a diverse programme of arts, culture and community events hosted in libraries across the county and in community venues.



Pic: Members of Age Friendly Alliance with Age Friendly Team

National BikeWeek – 9-17th May 2026

Activities completed include;

Activity	Description	No. of participants
Sprocket Rocket	Sprocket Rocket is a fun skills programme for children aged 5 to 12, who are taught four FUNdamental elements of cycling skills. This session took place at Corracrin National School as part of bike week events.	227
Battle of Clontibret e-Bike Tour	eBikes guided loop tour to the Battle of Clontibret site and return. The tour will be preceded by a car and followed by van for safety and for support for any potential breakdowns which might occur on the tour.	7
Cycling Skills & safety talk	Safety talk & tips on how to cycle safely delivered by Community Garda in Loughmourne National School	30
Inclusive Cycling	A learn to cycle programme, spanning 5 weeks for children with a disability aged 5 to 12 years at Carrickmacross venue.	12
Learn to Cycle	A learn to cycle programme, spanning 5 weeks, open in general to children aged 5 to 12 years.	13



Pic: Bike Week E-Bike Tour Battle of Clontibret



Pic: Bike Week Cycling Skills and Safety Talk



Pic: Bike Week Sprocket Rocket Activity

New Environment Boat for Lake Sampling

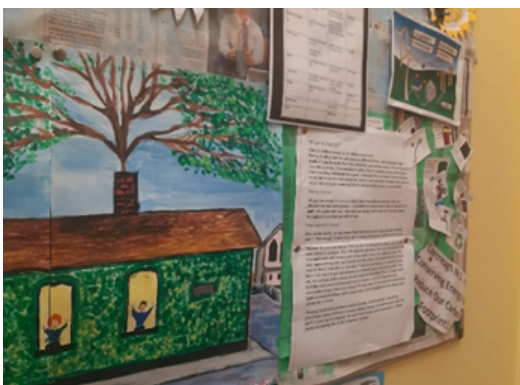


Environmental Services recently purchased a new Whaly 500 boat which will improve our health and safety obligations and ensure our continued capability for the open-water sampling of County Monaghan's lakes. Open Water sampling is required by the EPA as part of the implementation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) Lakes Monitoring Programme. As part of the programme the team carry out open water sampling on Lough Muckno, Emy Lough, White Lough, Lough Egish, Lough Avaghon, Dromore Lough and Drumlona Lough. The results from this monitoring are required to assess the WFD status of the lakes and are critical for guiding ongoing water quality management and protection efforts.

Environmental Awareness Activities

Green Schools Programme

All schools in Monaghan, currently reviewing their Green Flag status under the An Taisce Green Schools Programme, have been contacted. 7 participating schools reviewing their flags were visited and assessed, with reports submitted through the online An Taisce platform in advance of the closing date of 20th March 2026.



Green Schools Programme 2026

Small Steps, Big Achievements !

Well done to all the children across the county working diligently on their An Taisce Green Flag applications.

Monaghan County Council would like to thank **all the children and their teachers** for their outstanding participation and engagement with our Environmental Awareness Officer throughout the 2026 Green Schools Programme.

www.monaghan.ie

Bathing Waters Sampling Program 2026

Environmental Services have commenced sampling under the 2026 Bathing Waters Sampling program. Although there are no designated Bathing Waters in the county and Monaghan County Council has no obligation to conduct the sampling of any bathing waters, sampling of several non-designated bathing waters will be taking place over the summer months during the bathing season. Sampling will take place at the following locations:



Emy Lough Bathing Area

- Lough Muckno
- Lough Muckno Water Sports Area
- Lough Muckno Black Island Point
- Greaghglone Lake
- Creevy Lake
- Emy Lough
- Hollywood Lake
- Halton's River (Dromore Lake System)
- Gortawinnmey Lake
- Beach area at Lough Major

The amenity and recreation sites listed above shall be assessed for compliance with the water quality standards specified in the 2008 Bathing Water Regulations, using the two microbiological parameters, Intestinal enterococci, and Escherichia coli (e-coli). Samples will be taken and analysed by our contracted laboratory. It takes three to four days for the results of sampling to be completed and returned by the lab. The planned monitoring is aimed at providing an overall assessment of water quality and there is no absolute guarantee that on the day that an individual chooses to bathe at one of these locations that there may not be an issue with water quality. Water quality can vary significantly during the day, and from day to day, due e.g. to the influences of rain or sunshine and the number of bathers using the water at any time. Bathing water quality is however at its most vulnerable after heavy rainfall, or in stormy conditions, which may give rise to higher bacterial counts than normal. In the event of the detection of a

Poor-Quality Result the council will:

- Erect a notice at the site advising not to swim.
- Arrange for a further sample to be taken.

From this year all monitoring results at the designated locations will be available to view on that national bathing waters website www.beaches.ie

Training & Development Centre:

In a further boost to regional emergency preparedness, “Approval in Principle” has been secured from the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management (NDFEM) for the construction of a new Training & Development Centre.

The proposed facility will be located adjacent to Monaghan Civil Defence Headquarters on the existing CFB training ground – a site that is already serviced, secure, and strategically positioned.

The centre is intended to:

- House the Regional High-Volume Pump (HVP)
- Serve as a training facility for local and national personnel
- Operate as a Regional Emergency Management Office (REMO)

This development aligns with NDFEM’s strategic objectives, addresses current infrastructure gaps, and significantly enhances regional preparedness, coordination, and training delivery capacity.

High-Capacity Pump:

Further strengthening operational capability, a new High-Capacity Pumping (HCP) unit is currently in production and is scheduled for delivery in September 2026. This specialist resource will enhance large-scale water movement capability and bolster regional resilience in response to major incidents, including flooding and large-scale emergencies.

Together, these developments represent a substantial investment in the future of fire and emergency services in the region, reinforcing Ballybay and Monaghan’s commitment to public safety, operational excellence, and community protection.

Emergency Management:

The Regional Working Group held On-Site Co-ordinator training at the end of January. Two members from Monaghan County Council attended the course. This training is designed for personnel responsible for leading, controlling, and coordinating emergency responses. This training focuses on command, control, communication, and stress management during crises.

Community Support Centres:

The National Resilience Programme involving the process of installing changeover switches in designated community support centres has commenced.

The first phase in Co. Monaghan involves identified centres engaging suitably qualified electrical contractors to undertake the installation and commissioning process. Once installed, the changeover switch will facilitate the connection of auxiliary power supplies (generators) during power outages.

Opening of Ballybay Fire Station:

The Official opening took place on the 24th April. The new development of Ballybay Fire Station reflects a long tradition of community service and commitment to public safety, originating from the establishment of a voluntary brigade in 1911. Progressive investment led to a purpose-built station in 1976 and integration into Monaghan County Fire Service, with further modernisation from the early 2000s enhancing operational capability.

Ongoing development, including increased staffing and specialist resources, has positioned Ballybay as a modern and resilient fire and rescue station. The new facility is designed to meet evolving risks, including climate-related severe weather events, and supports both local response and regional operations.

Ballybay Fire Brigade continues to play a central role in protecting the community, representing a transition from voluntary origins to a modern, well-equipped emergency service.



Heritage

Christopher O'Sullivan TD- Minister of State for Nature, Heritage and Biodiversity met with Heritage Officers at their Heritage Council training in Kilkenny and voiced his strong support for the Heritage Officer and Biodiversity Officer programmes and their continued growth.



Heritage Funding

The Heritage Officer has been successful in securing a total of €140,000 in funding from the Heritage Council to support heritage projects and initiatives in 2026. This includes €80,000 awarded under the Historic Towns Initiative towards essential repair works to the Rossmore Memorial Fountain, which will be match-funded by Monaghan Municipal District. These works form a key action of both the Monaghan Town Centre First Plan and the Heritage-Led Regeneration Plan for Monaghan Town.

An additional €40,000 has been awarded to the Heritage Section for the delivery of Heritage Plan actions. This funding will support a local Heritage Grant Scheme for small community-led projects, as well as Heritage Week events taking place across the county. It will also contribute to the Monaghan Minor Fieldnames Project, the recording of a further five Heritage at the Heart podcasts, and the delivery of a Musical Heritage project.

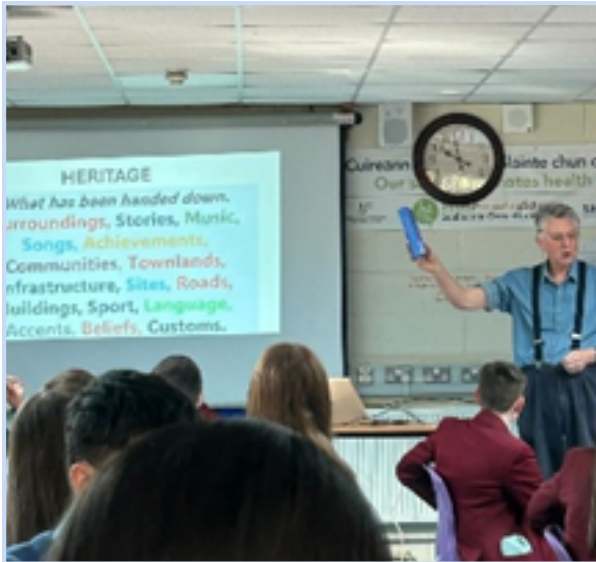


A further €20,000 has been awarded for a joint project between the Heritage Section and Monaghan County Museum to develop a Community Archaeology Project at Rossmore Castle. This project will involve archaeological geophysical surveys and test trenching, alongside community engagement initiatives, and will encourage local participation in the exploration and appreciation of Monaghan's archaeological heritage.

Heritage

Focus on Heritage Conference

The Heritage Officer was delighted to be involved in the Changemaker-funded, cross-border two-day Focus on Heritage Conference, hosted this month at Beech Hill College, Monaghan, and St Patrick's High School, Keady. The event featured a variety of facilitators who guided students through engaging activities, encouraging them to explore and connect with their heritage.



Monaghan County Heritage Strategy 2026-2031

The final Heritage Strategy was presented to the May Council meeting, receiving strong support from members, and was formally approved.

Affordable Purchase Scheme – Sean Ghairdíní, Carrickmacross

Monaghan County Council received approval on 20th February, 2026 for 10 new affordable housing units at Sean Ghairdíní, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan.

This development includes:

- 4 two-bedroom homes
- 6 three-bedroom homes

This marks the second Affordable Purchase Scheme to be delivered in County Monaghan and the first such scheme in Carrickmacross, representing a significant step forward in providing accessible homeownership opportunities for the local community.

Ministerial Visit - April 2026

On Friday, 24 April, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, James Browne TD, visited County Monaghan for a series of positive and engaging engagements with Monaghan County Council.

During the visit, the Minister toured social and affordable housing developments in Monaghan Town and Carrickmacross, viewing newly completed homes alongside projects currently under construction - Sean Ghairdíní, Carrickmacross, Slí na Coille and Slí Lorcáin, Monaghan town.



Slí na Coile, Mullaghmatt

Housing

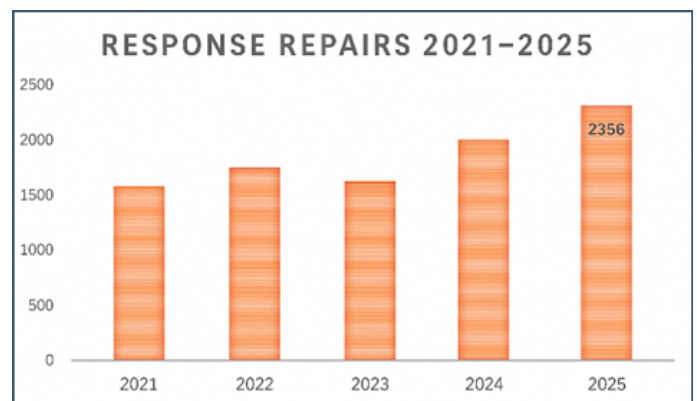
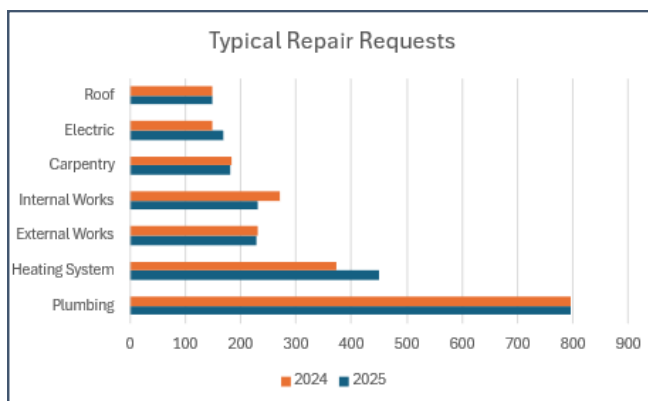
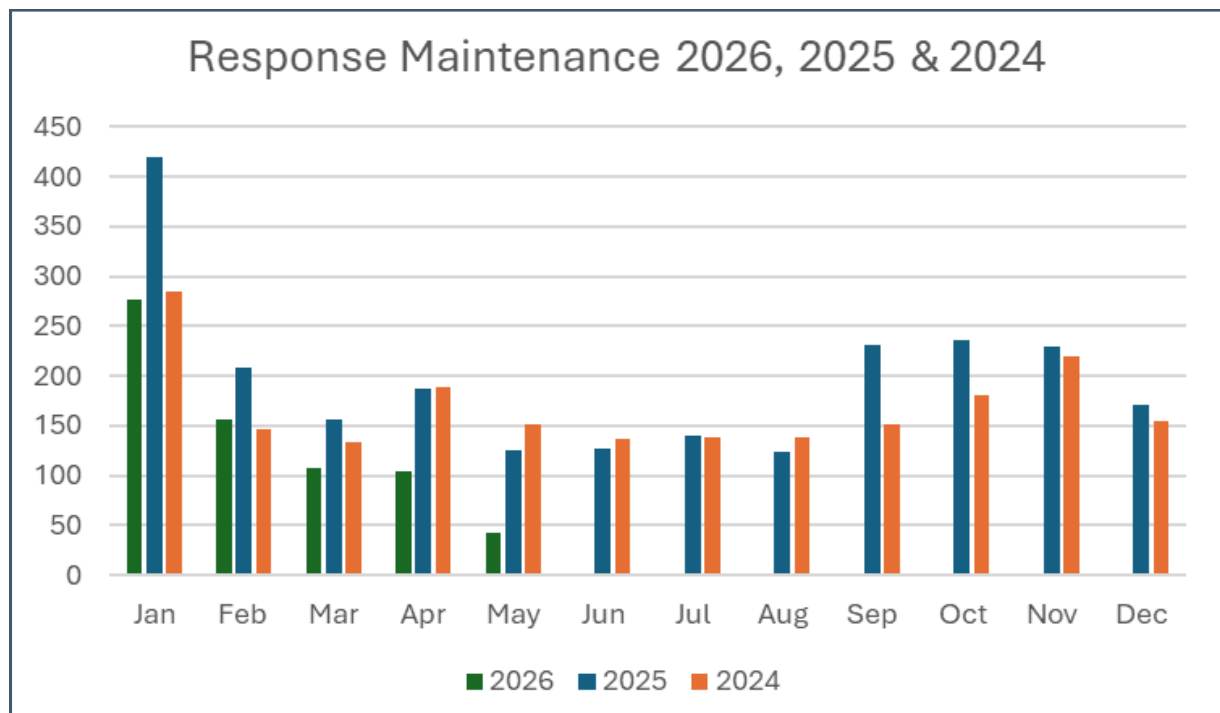
Response Maintenance

A budget of €825,000 had been provided for Response Maintenance in 2026. The funding is used to attend to the day-to-day maintenance of the housing stock.

This includes work such as fixing leaks, boiler repairs, heating systems, drainage works, boundary works and repairing kitchen units.

687 repairs were logged up to date in May 2026 and represents a lower number of repairs compared to the same period in 2025.

It is envisaged that due to the higher standard of works prior to reletting, energy efficiency works and planned maintenance undertaken since 2015, the quality of our housing stock has been raised to a higher standard than previously was the case.



Staff Recognition & Long Service Awards

The Staff Recognition and Long Service Awards ceremony was held on Thursday, 7th of May at Nuremore Estate by McGettigan's. The event marked an important opportunity to celebrate and acknowledge staff commitment and contribution across the organisation.

In 2026, 74 staff members reached the significant milestone of 25 years' long service. These achievements were formally recognised through the awards programme, with 52 recipients attending the ceremony on the night, representing a broad range of services and departments.

The evening commenced with a reception and dinner, followed by the formal awards ceremony. Guests were welcomed by Carmel O'Hare, Director of Services, with addresses also delivered by the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. P.J. O'Hanlon, and the Chief Executive, Robert Burns.

Each recipient was presented with a bespoke long-service trophy, designed and produced by Mullan Lighting, a County Monaghan based company. The use of a locally designed and manufactured award added additional significance to the presentation and reflected the organisation's support for local enterprise.

Overall, the event was very well received and successfully highlighted the organisation's appreciation and recognition of long serving staff and their valued contribution.



2026 Monaghan Student Enterprise Programme Award Winners



Junior Category

Winner: Oisin's Jams and Jellies —
Oisin Marron, Patrician High School,
Carrickmacross (Teacher: Linda Healy)

Runner Up: Brookies and Bakes —
Tess Carron, Alexandra Graham, Erin Smith,
Aoife Lynch, Caoimhe Cunningham, Largy
College, Clones (Teacher: Ciaran Curran)

Intermediate Category

Winner: Crinkle Critters —
Lily Mae Duffy, Largy College, Clones
(Teacher: Ciaran Curran)

Runner Up: Fresh Aura —
Lauren Rice, Hollie McDonald Quigley,
Kamila Ciurleviciute, Largy College,
Clones (Teacher: Ciaran Curran)



Senior Category

Winner: WireLessCam — Blake McVicar, St. Macartan's College, Monaghan (Teacher: Paddy Hughes)



Runner Up: MultiFeeder —
James Boylan & Lorcan Derry, Inver College,
Carrickmacross (Teacher: Lisa Shekleton)

Third Place: Crainn Nollaig —
Pauric Prunty, Odhran McMeel, Callum Ross,
Beech Hill College, Monaghan (Teacher:
Michelle Moore)

Regional Food & Drink Producers Showcase 2026

The Regional Food & Drink Producer Showcase is a landmark trade event bringing together the very best of food and drink production from across Meath, Louth, Kildare, Wicklow, Cavan and Monaghan. Held on the 30th April in Emerald Park, four outstanding Monaghan businesses showcased the very best of local food and drink:



- 🥚 Connolly's Organic Eggs
- 🥛 Bia Cultures
- 🍺 Brehon Brewhouse
- 🌾 Old Carrick Mill Distillery

For producers, this event represented more than just a showcase, it was a platform to engage directly with key decision-makers across retail, hospitality and distribution. In an increasingly competitive market, the ability to build relationships, tell their story and demonstrate product quality in person is more important than ever.

This event was designed to open doors, spark meaningful conversations and create real opportunities for growth. Everyone in attendance spoke very positively about the engagement and interaction throughout the day.

Regional AI Summit

Monaghan Peace Campus hosted a major regional AI Summit on 28 May, attracting hundreds of SMEs and individuals from across the region to explore the latest advancements in AI technology.

Minister Niamh Smyth used the event to launch a significant national initiative - a series of roadshows demonstrating how AI can benefit businesses.



In Ireland, it is estimated that only one in three people use AI regularly, and just 6% of SMEs are actively adopting it.

The programme featured expert talks, workshops, demonstrations, and peer learning sessions designed to support companies at every stage of their AI journey. An evening session was also held, open to the public.

The event was delivered in partnership with Google, Enterprise Ireland, the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs), and the Enterprise Europe Network.

Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031

The Planning Department continues to work with the Housing Activation Team in seeking to meet the objectives contained within the Section 28 Guidelines NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements to reflect the updated housing growth requirements contained within the Revised National Planning Framework – First Revision (2025) in respect of housing.

The Forward Planning Team has met with the Chief Executive and the Elected Members (at Municipal District level) to discuss the revised Housing Growth Targets. Further meetings with the Elected Members took place in the first two weeks of February. In addition, the Chief Executive's Report to the Elected Members regarding the implementation of the NPF was presented at the February CPG meeting.

Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT)

The Final Map for 2026 and the Annual Draft Map for 2027 have been published on the Monaghan County Council website www.monaghan.ie/planning/rzlt), and are also available for inspection at the Planning office and at the Municipal District offices.

Annual Draft Map for 2027

The Annual Draft Map for 2027 has been prepared for the purposes of identifying land that satisfies the relevant criteria and is to be subject to the Residential Zoned Land Tax.

Any interested individuals or parties may make submissions in respect of land on the Annual Draft Map regarding:

- (i) either the inclusion in or exclusion from the final map of specific sites, or
- (ii) the date on which a site first satisfied the relevant criteria.

Final Map for 2026

The Final Map for 2026, published on 31 January 2026, identifies land that may be liable for the tax in 2026. Owners of such land may make a request to Monaghan County Council to change the zoning of this land until 01 April 2026. If certain conditions are met, a landowner may be exempt from the 2026 liability on foot of such a request.

Built Heritage

Projects approved for the BHIS grant funding in 2026 are progressing in line with their proposed schedules.

The first BHIS progress report to the Department was submitted on 22 May 2026.

Historic Structures Fund (HSF)

St. Macartan's Cathedral is progressing in line with its scheduled works, with the first progress report due to be submitted to the Department on 26 June 2026.

Staff attended a Department of Housing, Heritage and Local Government hosted workshop on the BHIS and the Historic Structures Fund (HSF) at the Customs House, Dublin on 22 May.

Elected Members, staff, and the consultant team travelled to Vandeleur Gardens, Kilrush, Co. Clare on 06 May on a study visit. They met with key personnel from Clare County Council, Kilrush Amenity Trust, and Clare Tourism to learn about the project development, and the operation and management of recreation and tourism facilities. It was a very engaging day and will support devising considerations for the implementation of projects from the Lough Muckno and Environs Masterplan.

The consultant team presented the Lough Muckno and Environs Plan 'Emerging Options' report to the Municipal District members on 27 May. The public consultation took place on the 18th of June, in the Gate Lodge and the survey remains open to the public until the 10th of July.



ACTIVE TRAVEL

MN/21/014 Ballyalbany Bridge Active Travel Scheme

Contractor Jons Civils commenced works January 2026 on Ballyalbany Bridge active travel scheme. The project consists of 16m Bridge along with approach footways and associated civils works. The contractor is currently installing pile foundations and existing bridge repairs.



A major construction milestone for the Ballyalbany Active Travel Scheme took place on **Friday 17 April**, with the lifting and installation of the main pedestrian bridge beam.

The beam lift represents a significant step forward in the delivery of the new pedestrian bridge, which will greatly improve safety and connectivity for people walking and cycling in the Ballyalbany area. Bridge is currently open to the public.



Transportation

St Louis Girls National School & Infant School, Monaghan – Safe Routes to School

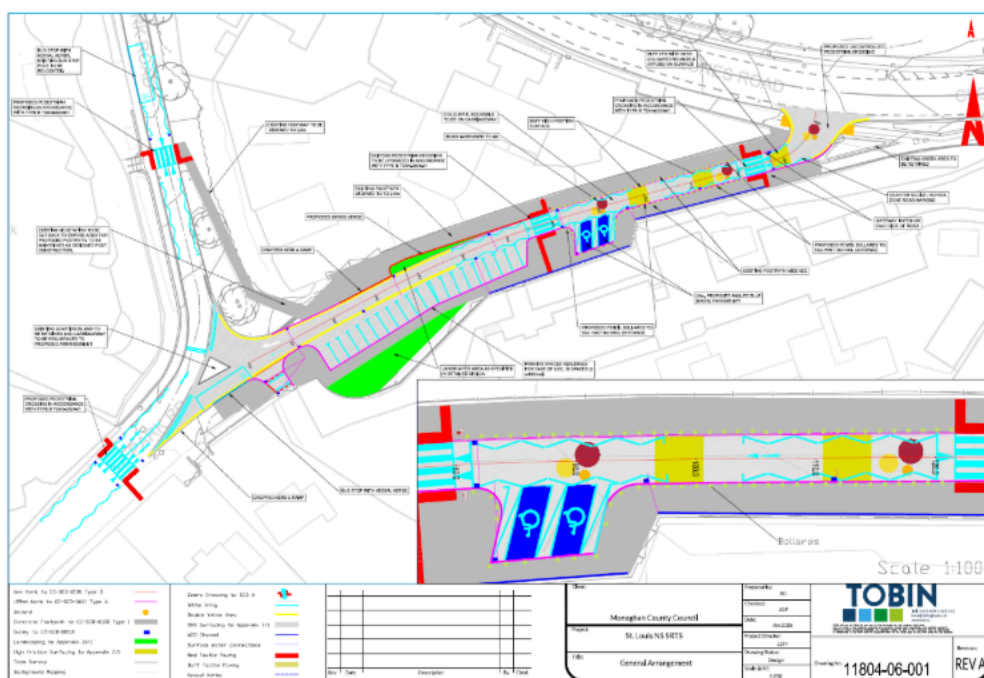
St Louis Infant School and St Louis Girls National School form part of the round one of An Taisce “Safe Routes to School Scheme”. As Part of this scheme An Taisce have developed a delivery plan for these two schools which are located on L5513 Park Road in Monaghan Town.

The development plan produced by An Taisce proposed the following front of school improvements-

- School Street/ School Zone
- Pedestrian Crossing
- School Street/ School Zone Gateway elements
- Bus Bay
- Park And stride
- SuDS Treatment
- Signposting
- Colour Themed Street Furniture
- New Fencing/ Railings
- Walking links

A section 38 consultation commenced 11th February with notices being published in Anglo Celt newspaper as well as an online consultation being published on Monaghan County Council Consultation portal. The Section 38 consultation ran from 11th February to 11th March with a week's extension 18th March 2026.

The Details of the scheme were presented to the elected members of Monaghan Municipal District at the May meeting, and it was agreed to proceed with the works.



Croí Cónaithe Towns Fund Grant Update

On the 1st of April 2026, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage released additional grants in addition to the existing Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant. These grants are funded under the Croí Cónaithe Towns Fund.

1. Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant

Existing funding for refurbishment of single homes.

- Up to €50,000 for refurbishing a vacant residential property.
- Up to €70,000 for derelict properties (vacant and structurally unsound).

2. Conversion of former Commercial-Public Use Building Grant

New funding introduces major improvements, particularly for those converting former commercial or public buildings. This grant sees enhanced funding for multi-unit conversions while the commercial element of the property does not remain.

Owners converting former commercial/public buildings into two or more residential units can now access significantly increased grant supports, with total funding of up to:

- €70,000 for vacant buildings (two units).
- €90,000 for vacant buildings (three or more units).
- €90,000 for derelict buildings (two units).
- €110,000 for derelict buildings (three or more units).

3. Vacant Above the Shop Grant – Retention of commercial element

The Vacant Above the Shop Grant, funded under the Croí Cónaithe Towns Fund, is a new national initiative designed to help bring long-term vacant spaces in commercial buildings back into residential use. The scheme specifically targets vacant space/floors above shops or commercial premises, supporting their refurbishment or conversion into new homes while the ground floor commercial element remains.

Funding levels are based on the number of homes being delivered:

- Up to €95,000 for the first residential unit created or refurbished
- An additional €20,000 for a second unit
- A further €20,000 where three or more units are developed
- Maximum grant: €135,000 per building

Town Regeneration

Croí Cónaithe Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant

Location: Carrickmacross/Castleblaney MD

Before Photo:



After Photo:



ITOA Showcase event

Monaghan secured a significant tourism opportunity in January 2026 when Castle Leslie Estate hosted the AGM of the Inbound Tourism Operators Association (ITOA) from 23–25 January, bringing Ireland's leading inbound tour operators and destination management companies to the county. Building on this, Monaghan Tourism and Monaghan County Council delivered a dedicated ITOA Showcase Event at The Peace Campus for approximately 80 delegates, the key decision-makers responsible for bringing international visitors to Ireland.

The showcase featured 20 tourism providers and included a tour of Monaghan County Museum followed by structured networking, allowing direct engagement between local businesses and international travel planners. The event highlighted Monaghan's strengths in heritage, culture, food, outdoor activity and authentic visitor experiences, concluding with a lively jiving workshop that left a strong and memorable impression. Hosting both the AGM and showcase provided Monaghan with a valuable platform to raise its profile, strengthen industry relationships, and support future inclusion of the county in overseas tour programmes.

Each year at their AGM, the ITOA presents an award (€3,000) to a community run, tourism project in the county that has a commitment to sustainable tourism. Clones Development Society (Ulster Canal Stores) was this year's recipient and Hugh Tunney accepted the award on their behalf.



Dromore River Blueway

A meeting of the Dromore River Blueway committee was held on 18th May to update the members on progress to date. The Design team presented the work programme to the committee and outlined timescales for works which will include enhancements to access and egress slipways, signage, information boards and car parking along the 12km route. There are a number of conditions attached to the planning permission so the scheduling of works is an important consideration. Expected completion is April 2027.

Castleshane Forest

Funding of €151,000 has been secured under Measure 2 of the ORIS 2024/25 programme for enhancement works to Castleshane Forest. The Tourism Officer and MD Co-Ordinator met with Coillte and the Design team on site on 11th May to discuss draft proposals and a topographical survey will be undertaken before end May so that the consultants can progress to detailed design. Subject to Coillte's harvesting programme, it is envisaged that the works would commence in Sep/Oct.

Sliabh Beagh – Shared Island Project

The first meeting of the project team for the Sliabh Beagh Eco-Tourism project was held on 11th May with representatives from the partner councils, Failte Ireland, Tourism NI, Tourism Ireland and DETE (Dept of Enterprise, Tourism & Employment). Issues discussed included programme governance structure, key milestones and indicative timelines, risks and dependencies, claims process etc.

A grant investment agreement letter for Stage 1 (Project Development) has now been received and it is anticipated that the procurement of a multi-disciplinary design team will commence shortly.

Old Cross Square Motorhome Site development

€300,000 Town & Village Renewal Scheme funding has been awarded for this project to develop a 9 space motorhome stopover site with facilities in Old Cross Square. Two tenders were received by the procurement deadline and will be evaluated by end May, with a view to appointment of the preferred supplier by mid June with a likely completion date in late Q3/early Q4 2026.

Mullaghamatt Cycle Trails Project (ORIS)

Pre-Development Project funding of €50,000 was secured under the Project Development Measure of the ORIS 2024/25 programme to work up proposals for bike trails in Mullaghamatt Forest. Work is ongoing on initial concept design and screening reports are currently being undertaken by an ecologist to inform and support the planning application. It is anticipated that the project will be submitted for planning in Q3 2026.



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