



ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Registered office:	Mullingar E.T.I. Ctr Mullingar Business Park Mullingar Co. Westmeath N91 X012
Auditors:	BDM Financial & Accounting Limited Chartered Accountants and Statutory Audit Firm Church Avenue Mullingar Co. Westmeath
Bankers:	Allied Irish Bank Oliver Plunkett Street Mullingar Co. Westmeath
Solicitors:	Buckley & Co Solicitors 14 St. Lomans Terrace Mullingar Co. Westmeath
Company no:	215187
CHY no:	12061
RCN:	20034535

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all our staff and Board of Directors who contributed to producing this Annual Report



www.westcd.ie



Westmeath Community Development CLG



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MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRPERSON

Welcome to Westmeath Community Development's Annual Report 2019.

Our work as a Local Development Company (LDC) continues to put social inclusion, equality and respect for diversity centre stage in all our programmes and activities.

2019 was no different, with our dedicated team working hard to bring together individuals, groups, agencies, and voluntary and statutory bodies to support individuals and communities in the county.

We continued to play an active role in the Irish Local Development Network (ILDN), a collaborative network of 49 LDCs focusing on building vibrant and inclusive communities throughout Ireland.

In 2019, we continued our work at enhancing our corporate governance structures and compliance obligations. The year began with a governance

review which was so ably facilitated by Derek O'Reilly from the Carmichael Centre. Undertaking the review provided an opportunity for the Board and leadership team to reflect on the work ahead in complying with the Charities Governance Code. As a Board, we are very aware that this will be a core and iterative part of our work for the years ahead.

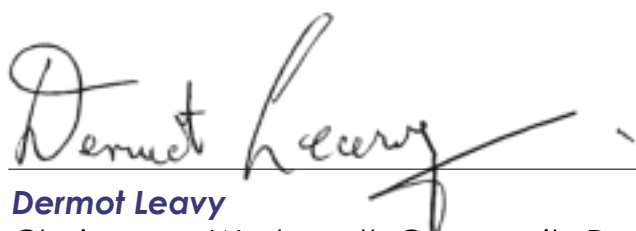
We continue to invest in people and capacity, restructuring the Senior Management Team to include a Human Resource & Corporate Manager.

We said good bye to Board members Mary Lennon and Hugh Farrell who stepped down in 2019 and we thank Mary and Hugh for their contributions to the organisation. We welcomed Joan Scally, Julia Dalton and John Mangan to our Board and we look forward to working with them in the coming years.

Thank you to my fellow Directors for their continued contribution and commitment to WCD. I also must acknowledge the role played by the various members of our Board Substructures and the valuable contribution they make in shaping our work on the ground.

We also acknowledge and pay tribute to our dedicated, CEO, management team and staff on their achievements.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge and thank our funders and supporters who share our vision in helping create vibrant, inclusive and resilient communities throughout Westmeath.



Dermot Leavy

Chairperson Westmeath Community Development

MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

2019 continued to be a busy and productive year for WCD, as we welcomed new funding programmes and continued with delivering high impact services for communities throughout Westmeath.

In February, we welcomed Minister of State for Equality, Immigration and Integration, at the Department of Justice and Equality, David Stanton TD, to our Athlone offices. Minister Stanton joined us to recognise and celebrate the great work happening throughout the county to welcome refugees into our communities and more importantly to support vital services that enables greater integration and inclusion.

We reached a milestone in May 2019, celebrating 10 years of our Belvedere Horticulture School. Our Horticulture programme is aimed those experiencing barriers to the labour market and accessing mainstream training or education. The programme continues to

achieve some of the highest progression rates compared to similar courses in the country.

Also this month, WCD held a Renewable Energy Conference in Mullingar, the first of its kind in the county. The conference brought together the farming community, community groups and business owners to discuss how the contribution from renewable energy can be maximised and implemented effectively to address energy security needs as well as our commitment in reducing Ireland's carbon emissions. Environmentalist, Architect and TV personality Duncan Stewart was the key note speaker at the event. Duncan gave a passionate speech about Climate Change and how we can meet our future energy needs in Ireland.

In October, we were delighted to be selected as one of the recipients of the Mná na hÉireann, Women of Ireland Fund, created by Social Innovation Fund Ireland in partnership with Bank of America and the Department of Rural and

Community Development. Our programme will work with over 120 women over the next 3 years to remove barriers that prevents them from taking part in training and upskilling opportunities.

I would like to thank our Board of Directors and the members of our Board Substructures for their ongoing support and commitment to driving this organisation forward and for retaining the vision to serve those most in need in the county.

Finally, to the team in WCD, I thank you for your continued efforts to deliver quality programmes and services that improve the quality of life for the people and communities of Westmeath.



Frank Murtagh

Chief Executive Officer, Westmeath Community Development

COMPANY OVERVIEW

We are Westmeath Community Development (WCD), the local development company for the county. We administer a range of programmes and support services to individuals and community groups. Our objective is to improve the quality of life through the provision of lifelong learning and labour market supports.

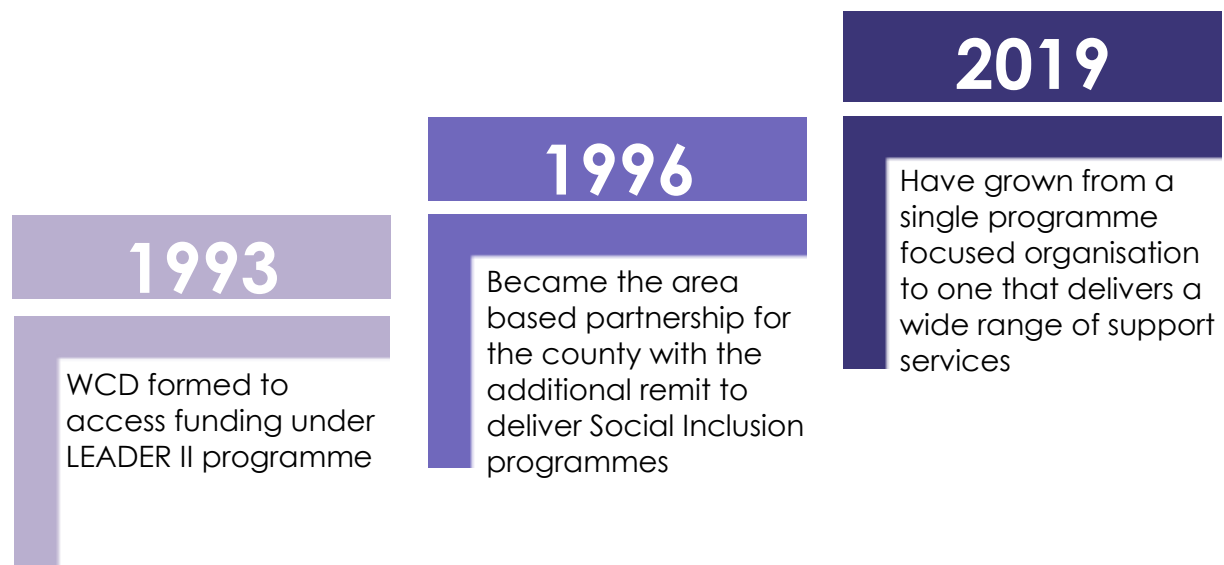
We support communities and target groups to engage with relevant stakeholders in identifying and addressing social exclusion and equality issues, developing the capacity of local community groups, and creating more sustainable communities. We are the delivery agent for the LEADER programme and SICAP in Westmeath as well as delivering employment activation schemes such as TUS, Rural Social Scheme, Community Employment, and Jobs Club. Our headquarters are located in the Enterprise & Innovation centre, Mullingar, with offices in Athlone and our horticultural training centre in Belvedere House & Gardens.

Providing support services to individuals and community groups within our county that improves the quality of lives through the provision of lifelong learning and labor market supports

Our core activities

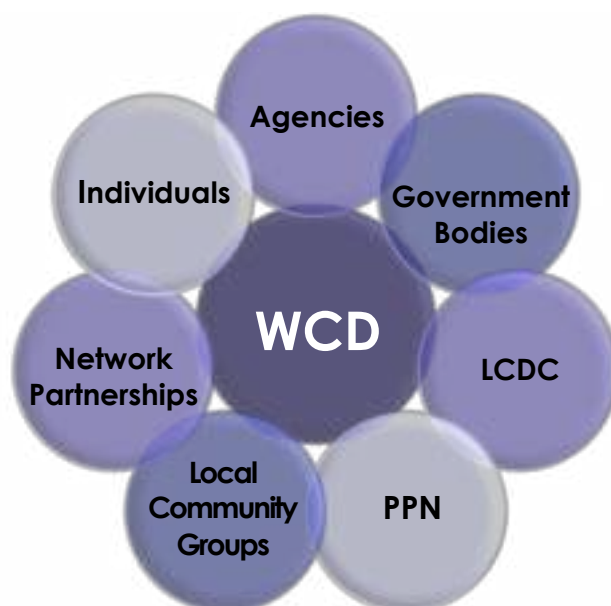


OUR HISTORY



HOW WE WORK

Achieving our vision is not possible without the support of all our partners and collaborators. We use innovative partnership approaches to progress a social inclusion agenda and design programmes that address the needs of our service users. We are members of the Irish Local Development Network.



**PROGRAMME ACTIVITY
REVIEW 2019**

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP)

SICAP is the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme, funded by Westmeath Local Community Development Committee, through the Department of Community and Rural Development.

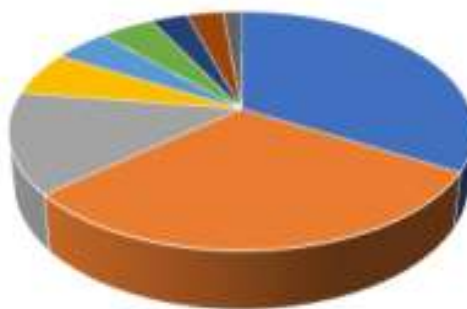
The objective of the programme is to reduce poverty, while promoting social inclusion and equality in Ireland through supporting communities and individuals. A community development approach to engagement and collaboration underpins SICAP Goal 1.

Goal 1: Supporting Communities

This goal specifically supports communities and target groups to engage with relevant stakeholders in identifying and addressing social exclusion and equality issues, developing the capacity of Local Community Groups [LCG] thus creating more sustainable communities.

In 2019 WCD worked with 66 groups as part of the programme, surpassing the target of 63

Breakdown of groups supported in 2019



- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| ■ Disadvantaged Rural Areas | ■ People Living in Disadvantaged Areas |
| ■ Disadvantaged Women | ■ Disadvantaged Children & Families |
| ■ People with Disabilities | ■ Travellers |
| ■ New Communities | ■ Low Income Families |
| ■ Disadvantaged Young People | |



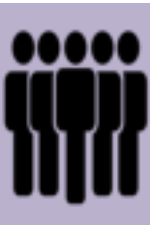
Promoting community engagement and stronger communities

In 2019, nine disadvantaged small areas continued to receive support including; Ballinacargy, Delvin, Castlepollard, Kilbeggan, Kinnegad, Moate, Raharney, Rochfordbridge, and Tyrellspass. An additional four areas were supported to carry out community needs analysis and profiles, resulting in the development and implementation of Community Support Plans for each area. 10 groups availed of a SICAP grant of €1,500.



Building the capacity of Local Community Groups

Empowering local communities remained a priority in 2019, with **27 training workshops** delivered on various topics. **245 attendees** participated in our workshops. In addition, there was significant one-to-one and group supports to LCGs.



Supporting participation in decision-making structures

We supported a very active RAPID process with Area Implementation Teams & Community Forums sustained in Athlone and Mullingar, with 13 local community groups from disadvantaged urban areas including members of the Travelling community.



Promoting collaborative engagement

We assisted representatives from LCGs to participate in collaborative networks such as; Community Development & Youth Working Group, Disability Working Group, Traveller Advisory Group, Age Friendly Strategy and a new sub-group under RAPID, dealing with drug related issues.

Thank you very much, the training was very good and explained very clearly.
All information will be very useful.
(Committee Skills workshop)

Support to Social Enterprises which contribute to SICAP outcomes

In 2019 one of our Social Enterprises commenced trading with core funding from the Community Services Programme (CSP), making it the first new CSP recipient in Westmeath in over 10 years.



In May, WCD, Westmeath LCDC and Westmeath Social Enterprises made a joint submission on the National Social Enterprise Policy for Ireland.

SICAP supported 4 Social Enterprises in 2019, with one of these receiving SICAP funding.

St. Stephens Green Trust

Ongoing support of LCGs in direct provision centre in Athlone including provision of homework club 4 days per week, with 13 children attending. In addition, over 32 children benefitted from off-site sports and social activities funded through a grant of €6,000 from St. Stephens Green Trust (SSGT).



This was the sixth year WCD received grants from SSGT under their Direct Provision Grant Programme.

Supporting Local Community Groups

57 Local Community Groups were supported by SICAP with funding applications and a further 6 were support to access **€66,534** from other sources in 2019.



Disability Supports

The Westmeath Disability Working Group met **6** times in 2019, developing a workplan which included organising the Disability Awareness Workshop, Mental Health Awareness Workshops and the annual services and information event. This was the largest event ever with **45** service providers participating with information stands and with **200** members of the public attending.

For the first time the Alzheimer's Society of Ireland attended with their mobile information bus. This was a direct result of supporting the establishment of Athlone/Mullingar branches of the Alzheimer's Society, which is an important piece of work from a social inclusion perspective.

Two excellent speakers who
created a very easy and enjoyable
atmosphere
(Funding Workshop)

WESTMEATH TRAVELLER PROJECT

The Westmeath Traveller Project works with and for Travellers in Westmeath. It aims to improve the quality of life of Travellers in the county. The programme is funded by the HSE with support from SICAP. WCD prides itself on being able to employ 6 members of the Travelling community to deliver this programme in the county.

Outcomes in 2019



Delivered information and training on Mental Health (**165** families), Child Safety awareness (**145** families); Cholesterol information (**116** families); Smoking cessation (**27** families); Cancer awareness (**104** families)

4 Cultural Awareness workshops delivered



Locally, the Traveller Project is represented on a number of structures including Traveller Women's and Men's Health Network; Public Participation Network; Domestic violence group; Traveller Advisory Group; Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee; Midwifery forum; RAPID Athlone and Mullingar.

12 Travellers were supported to sit on the Midland Traveller Health Network (Men & Women's network). The network met 6 times and included 6 Traveller men and 6 Traveller women from Westmeath. Guest speakers were invited to talk about different issues including, diabetes, mental health, mediation services, and domestic violence.

86 families supported with accommodation issues.

A total of **15** families were supported with education needs throughout 2019 including: home tuition, behavioural issues, Leaving Cert applied.

Traveller Pride Event 2019

The event provided an opportunity for Travellers to celebrate their heritage & culture. For the first time young people from Athlone joined together with Travellers from Mullingar for the celebration. Over 200 adults and children attended.

Redevelopment of Blackberry Lane

Work continued on this project during the year with a contractor chosen. Meetings with Blackberry Lane Development Group continued this year, with 4-5 Traveller representatives attending.

IMAGES FROM 2019



*Supporting Community Participation
Mullingar RAPID tour*



Ballinacarrigy Pop-up Event



*Supporting Community Participation
Athlone RAPID tour*

EMPLOYMENT & ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

The primary objective of WCD's employment services is to support people into work. No matter what our clients work history, educational experience or background, we support individuals to become job-ready, through working with them on a one to one basis and in a group setting. This is achieved by providing employability supports, labour market training, designing and delivering bespoke employer courses, and linking our clients with local employers.

In 2019 WCD supported over **1,350 jobseekers** under the following programmes:

- The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP), which is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development with co-funding from the European Social Fund (ESF) as part of the ESF Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning 2014-2020.
- Dormant Account Fund (DAF), Measure 4 – Pre-activation supports for female refugees and their female relatives.
- The Programme for Employability Inclusion and Learning (PEIL). Cofounded by the Irish Government and the European Social Fund for Women Returning to the Workforce.
- Social Innovation Fund Ireland



10 Employability courses & Job Club job seeking skills delivered



380 people secured employment & further 99 progressed to self-employment



33% of the clients that progressed into employment were young people aged 15-24 years



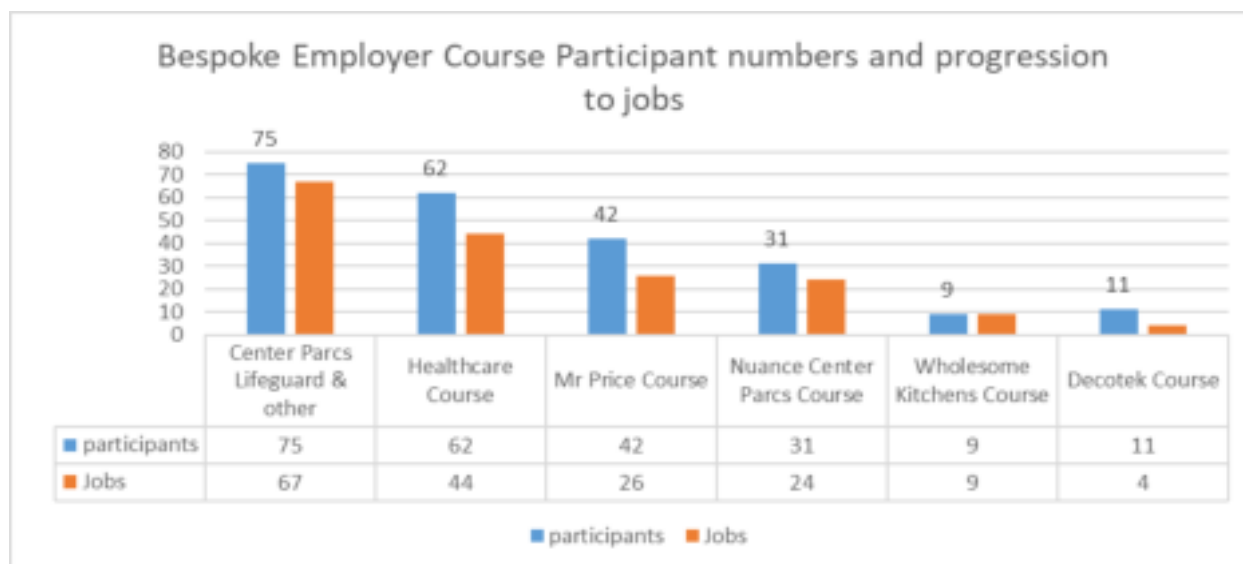
Lifelong Learning opportunities

A total of 91 courses were delivered in 2019 with over 600 clients completing a lifelong learning opportunity. Of these, 59 clients took part in courses that were accredited, 348 participated in industry certified course while 200 participated in non-accredited courses. Of the 200 people participated in non-accredited courses, the majority were clients who took part in WCD employability skills training. Of the 348 industry certified course participants, the majority were clients who took part in one of the 6 bespoke employer courses WCD designed and delivered in partnership with local employers.

WCD delivered in partnership with DEASP a youth taster course that offered 20 young jobseekers in Westmeath an opportunity to gain labour market certification and links to local employers for either part/full time jobs or placement on the YESS programme. Over 60% of the young people that took part either secured a job or entered further education at QQI level 5 or 6.

Employer Supports and Bespoke Courses

All our bespoke employer courses are delivered in partnership with the employer. WCD ensure that our clients are entering employment where their rights are respected, the terms and conditions are fair and workplace conditions are of an excellent standard. The chart below illustrates the progression to employment by industry in 2019. The following bespoke employer courses were delivered with 230 clients participating and 174 securing work with the employers the training was provided for:



Center Parcs

Close to 25% of our clients secured employment with Center Parcs (CP) in 2019, as a direct result of the extensive work and supports we put in place for the company. WCD worked closely with the HR team on a weekly basis, referring clients for jobs in accommodation, food & beverage and outdoor activities departments. WCD accompanied CP on their road-shows, including promotional work activity and contacting all our active clients about opportunities available with CP.

WCD designed a bespoke course for Nuance, the retail provider in CP. This required working over a 6-month period with the management of Nuance, agreeing the course content and delivering their induction training as part of our course. Over 30 clients took part in the Nuance course and 24 secured full and part time quality jobs as a result.

Self Employment

220 clients engaged with WCD seeking help with their goal of entering self-employment and 45% of these clients progressed to self-employment as a result of the various supports and services provided. Two QQI accredited Entrepreneurial courses were delivered in 2019 with 36 clients participating, of which 80% progressed to self-employment directly after completing the course. The one to one business mentoring and preparation services we offered clients provided them with advice and guidance in the creation of their business plans and BTWEA application support. WCD delivered two social media marketing courses for our self-employed clients with over 30 taking part.

Social Innovation Fund Ireland

In 2019, WCD were successful in securing funding from The Mná na hÉireann, Women of Ireland Fund, created by Social Innovation Fund Ireland in partnership with Bank of America and the Department of Rural and Community Development. The Mná na hÉireann, Women of Ireland Fund is the first fund in Ireland to support charities and social enterprises that seek to enhance the economic mobility of women.

The programme will work with over 120 females from Westmeath over the next 3 years. The aim is to remove barriers that prevents many women from taking part in training and upskilling such as childcare costs, lack of transport, uncertainty and lack of prior training and/or work experience. Each course will offer women an opportunity to gain relevant labour market training and qualifications in roles that are in high demand in the following industries: retail, hospitality & care.



Social Innovation Fund presentation



National Enterprise Awards

Client feedback

I met new people and learned new interview techniques, uploading my CV to all the websites, Customer Service skills. The tutor was good fun.

(Job Club client)

It was a big help to know what interviewers are looking for and exact information to put on the CV and cover letter. Mock interview was very very helpful especially feedback afterwards.

(Job Club client)

EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT & SUPPORT PROGRAMMES

WCD hosts a number of employment activation and employment support programmes. Each programme provides a direct benefit to both urban and rural communities throughout Westmeath by providing employment placements to community and voluntary organisations.

Community Employment

Community Employment (CE) programme is designed to help people who are long-term unemployed to get back to work by offering part-time and temporary placements in jobs based within local communities.

WCD's CE Scheme is funded by the Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection. An integral component of the CE programme is to support participants to engage in training and upskilling so that they are more 'jobs ready' after the programme is complete. WCD also supports local entrepreneurs to develop their business model and business planning skills through a variety of Start-Up and business activation programmes including the Trainee Entrepreneur Programme.

WCD's CE scheme is based between Mullingar and Athlone with 51 places (18 of which are dedicated to the Business Development Programme).

WCD places value on training for CE participants and we encourage participants to seek out and engage in quality training that is of specific interest to them and which may lead to employment opportunities. Training undertaken in 2019 included:



I'm very grateful to have a place on the WCD CE programme for a variety of reasons; the training and options to do courses both funded or free are amazing and I've been able to pursue and learn so much that pertains to jobs I see myself working in this time next year. That combined with a placement within a community project that I get to practice the skills I am learning, makes it an ideal situation for my self-improvement and building my skillset. With the guidance of my CE management team, I have been able to pinpoint a sector I want to work in and focus on that. The CE scheme has proven an excellent tool for me to progress and learn.

Darren Russell, CE participant

Rural Social Scheme

The Rural Social Scheme (RSS) provides income support for farmers who are in receipt of long-term social welfare payments. They in turn carry out services that benefit rural communities. Participants on the scheme are placed with local community groups such as GAA clubs, Tidy Towns groups, community centres and childcare groups. RSS is funded by the Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection. WCD administers the scheme for Westmeath and managed 42 RSS placements in 2019.

The type of work carried out by RSS participants



Maintaining and enhancing walking routes and bog roads



Social care and care of older people, Community Childcare



Village and countryside enhancement projects as part of Tidy Towns



Projects relating to not-for-profit cultural and heritage centres



Energy conservation work for older people and those at risk of poverty



Environmental maintenance work - maintenance and care-taking of community and sporting facilities

Mount Temple Holy Trinity Graveyard

WCD provides an RSS placement to the Mount Temple Holy Trinity Graveyard committee to restore a derelict graveyard into one that could be accessed by the local community and the wider public. A detailed plan was drawn up so that the graveyard could be restored over a few years. The works had to be carried out in a sensitive manner as the graveyard is a heritage site and is adjacent to a working farmyard. All works were carried out in consultation with the heritage officer of Westmeath County Council. The change in the access to the graveyard is remarkable.

I can't speak highly enough of the RSS scheme, in the way it has offered ongoing support to the Mount Temple Holy Trinity Graveyard Group. The opportunity offered to us to access excellent workers through RSS, gives us peace of mind as a voluntary group in the knowledge that our graveyard would be maintained to the highest standards. I would like to sincerely thank Westmeath Community Development for all the assistance and support.

Frankie Kenna, Chairperson of Mount Temple Holy Trinity Graveyard Group

Tús Programme

The Tús initiative is a community work placement scheme providing short-term working opportunities for unemployed people. WCD administers the scheme for Westmeath. Tús is funded by the Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection.

WCD currently manages 120 places on Tús with 6 supervisors. The places on the scheme are allocated to community and voluntary organisations involved in the delivery of local services in urban and rural areas. The allocation is based on the numbers of eligible unemployed people in each local area. There are 80 participants based in the greater Mullingar area and 40 in Athlone. Over 75% are placed in urban settings.

Activities carried out by participants in the Tús scheme



Community services



Caring services in childcare and care of older people



Environmental services including conservation and maintenance of national walkways



Heritage and Cultural services

Willow Park Residents Association

Willow Park is a large housing estate within close proximity to Athlone Institute of Technology. It consists of open grass areas and numerous streets all of which need regular tidying and maintenance. Tus participants play a vital role in keeping Willow Park looking its best. Willow Park Residents Association have been sponsor groups for the Tus scheme since 2011. The projects location near a large population base means that WCD has been able to place participants consistently over the last 9 years. The residents association is very active and provide WCDs' supervisor and participants with clear direction on what they want to achieve with the Tus scheme. Every year work plans are agreed and very clear daily and weekly goals are set for the participants.

The Tus scheme has been extremely beneficial and productive to our community with on average 2 workers employed here over the last 9 years. They do everything from litter collecting, grass cutting to building walls, setting gates and fences and almost anything else that requires attention. It has helped us move up the tidy towns ranking each year.

Padraig Higgins, Chairperson of Willow Park Residents Association

Jobs Initiative

Jobs Initiative scheme is funded by the Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection. The programme provides full time employment for people over 35 years of age who have been unemployed for 5 years or more. Since November 2004 there has been no further recruitment onto the scheme. At present we have four participants remaining on our scheme. Participants are currently placed with Dr Stevens Centre, Athlone; Marist College, Athlone; Athlone Community Radio; IPWD.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Leader 2014-2020 Programme

LEADER is a community led approach to local development, funded through Ireland's Rural Development Programme 2014-2020. It supports initiatives that seek to address locally identified needs and challenges. LEADER covers the entire geographic area of Westmeath including the two main towns of Mullingar and Athlone, which had been excluded under previous LEADER Programmes. Funding of **€7,384,205** has been allocated to Westmeath for the duration of the programme. The Programme includes a number of themes and sub themes that reflect the overarching needs of rural Ireland.

Project Approvals and payments in 2019

LEADER enquiries, Project Approvals and payments in 2019

90 written expressions of interest were received from across the community and voluntary sector, sporting bodies as well as from individuals and businesses in 2019. 78% of such enquiries were from new promoters who would not have previously accessed LEADER Funding.



37 projects were approved for grant aid in 2019 to the value of **€3,123,777**. A total of **€400,974** was made in payments to project promoters who had made claims on their projects in 2019.

Projects Approved in 2019

Project Promoter	Project	LEADER Grant Aid
St. Malachy's Gaelic Football Club	Feasibility Study to consider the development of Communities Amenities and facilities at the GAA grounds in Castletown Geoghegan	26,568.00
Castletown Geoghegan Community Development Group	Feasibility Study to consider linking Castletown Geoghegan village to the Old Rail Greenway	8,955.00
Mullingar Tidy Towns	3-year Tidy Towns Plan	1,786.50
Mullingar Tidy Towns	Heritage Trail and App development	8,994.36
Tudenhams Ltd. Mollie Moo's Pet Farm	Improvements to Mollie Moo's Pet Farm to include extension to reception/dining area and enclosures for karting area and mooville	51,350.00
Westmeath Community Development	Renewable Energy Awareness and Information Programme	30,054.35
St. Paul's GFC	Development of an All-weather, multi-purpose Astro Pitch at St Paul's GFC grounds Clonmellon	164,674.92
Ballinafid, Multyfarnham & Bunbrosna Active Retirement	Development of website	1,697.39
Midland Amenity and Heritage Park	Thatching of 3 heritage out buildings in the Dun na Si heritage park in Moate	14,950.00

Project Promoter	Project	LEADER Grant Aid
Ballymore Country Music Festival	Hire of equipment and marketing for the Music Festival	16,968.74
Multyfarnham GAA	Walking track development with LED lights and lights for pitch	218,276.86
Rosemount GAA	Additional facilities at the grounds – ball stops and netting	4,688.88
Mullingar Town Band	Renovations to the Band Hall in Mullingar	401,624.32
Athlone Agri-Show	Purchase of equipment for show	7,346.83
Westmeath Community Development	Tidy Towns plans initiative for communities	28,341.14
Lakeland Shooting Centre Ltd. Mullingar	Purchase of 14 new Sporting Clay Target machines and upgrading of carpark and create two disabled parking spaces	26,324.00
Ballynacargy Boxing Club	Enhancement works to building including removal and replacement of existing roof and ceiling, interior paintwork, installation of sign to exterior building, doors	93,551.95
Clonmellon Community Council	Refurbishment works to Clonmellon Community Centre	22,380.75
Castlepollard Hurling Club	The development of a two-storey extension, to include changing rooms, referee room, outdoor toilets, meeting room and training space	323,781.69
Athlone 72 Bridge Club	Purchase an electronic scoring system and new bidding boxes for the bridge game	6,647.25
ETHOS - Tyrrellspass	Feasibility Study to examine the development of a looped walk in Tyrrellspass to include Cloncrow Bog	4,892.94
Rathowen Community Development	Installation of electronic stage at the community centre	14,250.00
Mullingar Arch Club	Spring to Life project- purchase laptops, a printer, sewing machines and equipment, tables and chairs to offer members an opportunity for personal development and life skills	5,585.00
The Downs GAA	Provision of recreation facilities to include extension to walkway, pitch drainage works, lighting and associated ancillary works	233,809.12
Mullingar Chamber of Commerce	Marketing and promotion of Winterfest 2019 and also the purchasing of 3 market stalls for inside the ice-skating rink	29,700.00
Renew Kilbeggan	Technical Assistance Study for the development of a Recreational Amenity route; to include a walking trail in Kilbeggan	13,782.15
Mullingar Sub Aqua	Search and Recovery Equipment	11,146.00
Drumraney Community Centre	Upgrading of facilities at community centre	3,734.81

Athlone Festival and Events Group	Athlone Festival and Events infrastructure project to include the purchase of huts for use at markets and lighting	149,564.25
Cullion Hurling Club	Replacement of second-hand all-weather surface and associated works	39,159.54
Westmeath Community Development	Energy Audits for 13 community buildings	12,879.90
Mount Temple Hall Committee Ltd	Renovations to the Hall in Mount Temple	217,178.99
Castlepollard Men's Shed	Renovation to old school house in Castlepollard	110,784.87
Castledaly GAA	Upgrading of walking track and clubhouse facilities at Castledaly GAA	200,711.98
Agri-Promotions Ltd, Delvin	Purchase of 2 new machines for farm wardrobe business	12,789.66
Raharney United	To construct a new 61 x 43 metre all-weather surface pitch including fencing and floodlights and all associated ancillary site services	201,772.40
Athlone Boat Club	Construction of a new Boat/Club house at Grace, Road, Athlone	400,000.00
TOTAL		3,123,777.00

3 projects to the value of **€79,634.46** were also approved through the Co-operation Element of the Programme in 2019. This is an additional budget stream for LEADER projects which are undertaken in co-operation with other LEADER areas both in Ireland and in the EU.

Under this element of the programme, WCD partnered with neighbouring county, Roscommon on jointly funding a marketing initiative for Destination Athlone; and with Offaly and Finnish partners Keskipiiste and Rieska LEADER on projects including a drama initiative and a craft training and development programme.

Co-operation Projects approved in 2019

Westmeath Community Development	Transnational Drama Project involving drama groups from Mullingar, Clara and Finland	14,970.51
Westmeath Community Development	Innocrafts - Craft Co-operation Project with Offaly and Finland	39,906.45
Destination Marketing Activity Company Ltd	Co-operation Project - marketing and promotion of Athlone town and environs	24,757.50
TOTAL		€79,634.46

WCD in cooperation with Offaly Local Development Company developed a bespoke innovative training programme for the creative sectors in both counties. Also, in partnership with Rieska and Keskipiiste LEADER companies in Finland, it's designed to explore and create opportunities for Irish and Finnish craft makers with a focus on traditional crafts and how the sharing of skills and heritage can impact on creative inspiration and sustainable economies in the sector. This innovative project was launched at Winterfest 2019 at the WCD Craft marquee, with makers from Finland exhibiting their products alongside craft makers from Westmeath.

SERVICE PROJECTS

Westmeath Volunteer Centre

WCD promotes the value of volunteering by offering a range of quality volunteering opportunities in the county, delivered through the Westmeath Volunteer Centre (WVC). WVC is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and is affiliated to Volunteer Ireland. We provide a quality volunteer placement service to the non-profit and Community & Voluntary sector in the county. In total 21,712 volunteer hours were recorded in Westmeath in 2019 for 76 organisations by 227 volunteer.



Volunteer Centre Services & Impact

- ◇ Referral service for volunteers to non-profit groups that need volunteers
 - ◇ Support volunteers to access quality roles that suits their skills and abilities
 - ◇ Provide a follow up service to volunteers to assist their progression through the process
 - ◇ Supporting organisations to develop best practice guidelines when working with volunteers
 - ◇ Assisting organisations to create roles that helps build their capacity and attract volunteers
 - ◇ Provide training to organisations that will best help them to attract, manage and retain volunteers
 - ◇ Facilitate productive links between organisations and groups
 - ◇ Provide a Garda Vetting Service and Garda Vetting training
- ◇ Volunteers registered **274**
 - ◇ Volunteers Placed **216**
 - ◇ Volunteer hours **21,712**
 - ◇ Organisations engaged **76**
 - ◇ Volunteer placements **227**



What our Organisations Say!

The North Westmeath Hospice Fundraising office in Mullingar used the Westmeath Volunteer Centre services in June 2019 for our Annual National Sunflower Days Event. The response from staff and all of the 14+ volunteers from the Westmeath Volunteer Centre was one of the main reasons we were able to raise over €11,000. The whole process, from talking with staff to liaising with the volunteers was faultless and the services were very dependable. Thank you to all the team for connecting us all.

What our Volunteers Say!

I emailed the WVC to offer my services, I was met with a swift reply and asked to call into the centre to explain what I was hoping to do and achieve. I met with a staff member who was extremely open, friendly and engaging. She presented me with a list of areas that she thought I would be most effective in. The staff member was swift and diligent in getting me placed within the community, volunteering with people who needed help the most, a placement which I am thoroughly enjoying. I am extremely grateful to this service for the information and assistance that was given to me that has allowed me to follow my passion of helping those who require it the most. I would highly recommend this service to anyone who would like to contribute their time, and help make a difference within a great association who are continually uplifting and making a positive impact within our community.

Childcare Programme

WCD Childcare Services operates from 7 Childcare and After-school centres, 6 in Athlone and 1 in Mullingar. Our After-school Service is funded through the National Childcare Investment Programme, under the new National Childcare Scheme, from the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. Supports such as school meals is funded by the Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection and Westmeath County Childcare Committee.

Our After-School services operate from the start of the school year until July, and includes full day camps at Halloween, Easter and during the month of July when the schools are closed. After-school services are available 4 hours a day from Monday-Friday during the school year, and includes a homemade hot snack, homework supports, art and cultural activities, sports, and games.



189 children were registered in our **7** services during 2018-2019 academic term.

167 of children registered received subvention towards childcare cost under the Community Childcare Scheme and **22** remaining paid pro-
rota.

SEA Programme

Children attending our services who are in 5th & 6th Class attend the SEA Programme (Sports and Education After School). This programme operates once a week over 5/6 weeks in Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT). The programme aims to give children exposure to third level institutions and to break down barriers for many children from disadvantaged backgrounds accessing third level. Students from the Social Care Department in AIT deliver an introduction programme to the college where children get to experience the various faculties and college life.

What service users had to say!

My son attends Brawny Afterschools for the last 3 years. He loves attending. He gets help from staff with his Irish which is great because, its not our favourite subject at home. He has outdoor activities with his friends there, gets his homework done and has a close bond with all the staff. He loves Art, which the staff encourage and support him with. I am very grateful for this service and for all the staff there.

Parent

Horticulture Programme

The Horticulture FETAC Level 5 programme is delivered by WCD and funded by Longford Westmeath Educational Training Board (LWETB) as a Local Training Initiative.

The course provides a 1-year course in Belvedere House and Gardens and caters for students aged between 16 and 35 years of age. Entry to the programme includes those experiencing barriers to accessing the labour market, mainstream training or education programmes.



The course offers a unique educational and practical environment in beautiful surroundings of Belvedere House covering modules such as garden design, work practice, plant protection, plant & soil science, plant identification & use, plant propagation, fruit and vegetable production.

Graduation of Level 5 class of 2018/2019

On May 22nd last, Horticulture programme held its graduation ceremony at Belvedere Horticulture School with 12 students graduating from the class of 2018-2019. The programme, which is now in its 10th year, continues to achieve some of the highest progression rates compared to similar courses in the country.



Graduates of the 2018/2019 programme found employment in garden centres, landscaping companies, the OPW and county councils, castle estates and parklands, Center Parcs, golf courses, as well as nursery and stock plant specialists.

Mullingar Tidy Towns Project

WCD showcased its first landscape collaboration project with Westmeath County Council and the Mullingar Tidy Towns Committee this summer. In June, partners on the project came together to design and plant a roundabout on Lynn Road, Mullingar.

WCD initiated the project and provided the support of its Horticultural team and students from Belvedere Horticulture school. The project has improved the aesthetics of the roundabout, while also supporting Mullingar Tidy Towns in their work competing in the National Tidy Towns' competition.

Additionally, the project has provided practical and valuable work experience for horticulture students working towards their level 4 accreditation.

Westmeath Resettlement Programme

The Irish Government committed to receiving approximately 4,000 people through the Irish Refugee Protection Programme. Westmeath was selected as a Refugee Resettlement host community in early 2017, with WCD appointed as the implementing agency for the Westmeath Syrian Programme Refugee Resettlement Project. The Refugee Resettlement Project is co-financed by the European Commission under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund 2014-2020 and is supported by the Department of Justice and Equality.

The overall objective of the programme is to ensure that refugees can settle into the community, access services appropriately and build lasting relationships with the local community. Part of WCD's remit is to support families with any medical and educational needs; access various services and integration into the local community.



128 people settled in Westmeath as part of the Resettlement programme

The last 24 families settled in Westmeath in April of 2019, mainly in Mullingar but also a number of families in Kilbeggan. In total, 128 people settled in Westmeath as part of the programme. The programme continues until April 2020 when all families will have received 12 months of support.

What families have to say

I am so delighted that myself and my family came to Ireland. We have gotten so much help and we have had great experience with our new community and the Irish system. I believe that because of this help I will be able to provide my family with a great life compared with what they used to have.

I am so happy with the support that my family has received with helping my children to get a good education in school and with the homework club. I feel like my children have a brighter future.

I really appreciate everything that has been provided to my family, especially the support given to my children to access healthcare and education. We feel that we are active in our new community because of this help.

Community Mothers Programme

Community Mothers are volunteers who use their experiences as mothers as well as their local knowledge to support and encourage new parents. The programme is funded by TUSLA – the Child and Family Agency. All visits take place in the parents home and the service is free.

Home Visiting Service

The Community Mothers Service is provided predominately in Longford, Mullingar and Athlone areas, but also includes the surrounding towns of Edgeworthstown, Newtownforbes, Kenagh, Drumlish in Longford as well as Kinnegad, Moate, Kilbeggan & Delvin areas in Westmeath.

During 2019, 49 new families were referred to our service. In total 82 families were in receipt of a home visit during 2019. Our service carried out over 1163 individual home visits. 2019 saw an increase in referrals from Longford but a decrease in referrals from Mullingar, with overall numbers slightly lower than in 2018.



By the end of 2019 the number of Community Mothers providing a service to families between the two counties was 28 (Mullingar 16, Athlone 5 and Longford 7). During the year we welcomed 9 new Community Mothers who will cover the following areas Longford Town (3) Moate (1) Delvin/Clonmellon (3) Mullingar (1) Kilbeggan (1). This is the first time we have been able to accept referrals from Clonmellon, Moate and Kilbeggan areas.

Baby massage

We continue to offer classes in Athlone, Mullingar and Longford. 247 parents and 250 babies attended classes during the year.

What our clients have to say!

It's great to chat to another mum. I have no family in Ireland and find it hard to get out but it's great that she can call to me. Being a stay at home mum is lonely, like the idea of regular visits, to break the routine and she's great at playing with the kids - they love her.

It's very good for the children, helps you find information, helps me when I go to citizen information, I am better parent, I give 10/10 thank you.



TripleP Parenting Classes

A 4 week class for parents with children aged between 2-10 years continues in WCD offices in conjunction with Longford Westmeath Parenting Partnership. During 2019, two 7-week courses were delivered with Anne McGuinness from TUSLA TripleP team in Mullingar.

Meitheal

Meitheal is a national framework developed by TUSLA. Our service facilitated 6 meitheal meetings with one family in Longford with very positive outcomes. Community Mothers, a physiotherapist, occupational therapist, speech and language therapist and TUSLA all worked together using Meitheal Framework to help a young mum with a three year daughter with a rare bone disease.

New Developments

We are now offering a weaning information service to parents in the Westmeath area. This service works with the community dietician service from the HSE. At our first event, 21 parents attended and we received very positive feedback.

We are proud to have supported Trim Community Mothers launch its service in 2019, which is based on the Longford Westmeath model. WCD's Community Mothers Co-ordinator played a leading role in helping set up and guide this new service for Trim.

And finally, a big thank you to all our community mothers who work to support families in Longford/Westmeath, without their support and commitment this service would not exist.

Westmeath Care and Repair Service

Westmeath Care and Repair Service is operated through Westmeath Community Development under the umbrella of Age Action. The programme aims to support older people to remain living in their homes as long as possible. Unlike our other programmes, Care and Repair is not a funded programme and is supported through SICAP as part of our role in the Westmeath Age Friendly Strategy, with a small amount of funding received annually from Mullingar Credit Union. The service has three elements; providing volunteer support to carry out small repair works; providing volunteers for home visits; and Befriending calls service.



Repair Service

As part of the Repair Service, jobs can vary from fitting a light bulb to fitting smoke alarms; shelving; painting; installing security locks; light gardening chores; mowing lawns; and general home maintenance work. This programme carries out small jobs for the over 60's within the Westmeath catchment area. In 2019, 324 Care and Repair and trusted trades jobs were completed for older people in Westmeath.

Home Visits

Our Home Visit is a Volunteer Service for isolated older people in our community. Older people receive a weekly home visit from our volunteers. In 2019, 11 people availed of home visits. One of our older persons availing of visits is 104 this year and really looks forward to her weekly visits. This is an area we hope to increase significantly in 2020.

Befriending Service

The Befriending service is where an older person receives a daily or weekly call. The Befriending Programme is run by a Befriending operator, with over 100 older people availing of scheduled calls. The service has become a critical and very valuable service to older people who have very little social contact with others. It can be a lifeline to connect with other supports such as the Gardai, Primary Health Care Centres, Meals on Wheels and other agencies supporting older people.



The Food & Health programme promotes healthy eating and living, aimed at individuals where cost and affordability is a consideration. All our courses are designed to be user friendly and deliver the message of healthy eating in a practical fun way. The main goal is to help improve people's access to good quality information that can be applied to everyday lifestyle choices. This is a joint initiative between WCD and HSE Midlands area in the Westmeath Longford area.

In total during 2019, 47 courses were completed with 488 participants directly engaging. The programme has a number of different courses available:

Health Food Made Easy (HFME)

6-week course, where individuals gain hands-on experience of preparing and cooking healthy dishes that are affordable. Learning about the food pyramid, balanced diets and shopping tips is central to this course.



Able to Cook for Health (A2C4H)

6 session course aimed at individuals with an intellectual disability. Each session has a practical cookery element with all participants encouraged to get involved in both preparation and cooking of simple healthy dishes.

Cool Dude Food Programme (CDFP)

5 session course targeting younger people between 8 and 14 years to introduce them to healthy eating through fun and practical activities. This course is popular as a school activity.

Community Heart Health (CHH)

This is designed for groups that have already completed healthy food made easy course and focuses on nutrition, stress management and physical activity.

Live Longer & Prosper

In 2019, WCD in conjunction with Westmeath County Council and Age Friendly Council delivered Live Longer & Prosper programme for older people groups in Westmeath. The initiative was supported and funded under the Healthy Ireland programme, promoting healthy eating and lifestyle choices amongst the older generation.

The programme consists of four key elements: nutrition and healthy eating, information provision, health and physical exercise and social aspect.

The programme was run over five weeks in four locations Delvin, Rochfortbridge, Athlone and Mullingar. The programme included demonstrations by Food & Health tutors on healthy eating, cooking for one, reading food labels and budgeting. Exercise class was delivered by Westmeath Sports Partnership, information session with guest speakers from various organisations such as Garda, CIC, HSE, Help link South, Care and Repair Befriending programme, lunch and entertainment.

The final week all groups came together in Bloomfield House Hotel to celebrate the programme, workshops and to receive completion certificates. In all the programme reached approximately 220 participants in 2019.

**GOVERNANCE & FINANCIAL
REVIEW 2019**

GOVERNANCE & COMPLIANCE

Good governance is the cornerstone of a successful and sustainable organisation. At WCD, we strive to meet the best governance standards driven by the principles of transparency, openness and accountability. We are committed to adopting the [Principles of the Charities Governance Code](#) and are currently working towards compliance in 2020.

Board of Directors / Trustees of Westmeath Community Development in 2019

Name	Position
Dermot Leavy	Director/Chairperson
Liam Cahill	Director/Treasurer (IBEC)
Pat Boyce	Director (ICTU)
Marion Garry	Director (PPN)
Seamus Browne	Director (PPN)
Paddy Corcoran	Director (PPN)
Geraldine Lacey	Director (PPN)
Helen Donnelly	Director (PPN)
Augustina Adagun	Director (PPN)
Emily Wallace	Director (Environmental Pillar)
Hugh Farrell	Director (PPN) [Retired in 2019]
Mary Lennon	Director (PPN) [Retired in 2019]
Joan Scally	Director (ICTU) [Appointed in 2019]
Julia Dalton	Director [Appointed in 2019]
John Mangan	Director (PPN) [Appointed in 2019]
Michelle Smith	Company Secretary

Our Board of Directors met 10 times in 2019 with a 69% attendance rate. AGM was hosted on 24th April 2019. The Board appoints a number of sub-committees to oversee the organisations compliance and operational obligations. Membership of the sub-committees is drawn from the board. Sub-committees include:

Human Resource subcommittee (met 7 times)

Finance/Audit subcommittee (met 3 times)

Community Development subcommittee (met 4 times)

Enterprise and Employment subcommittee (met 3 times)

Disability Working Group (met 5 times)

WCD is a company limited by guarantee with Charitable status. We are fully compliant with annual reporting requirements to the Charities Regulator. Our Charity Regulator profile can be found on www.charitiesregulator.ie.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Schedule of Income and Expenditure for the financial year ended 31st December 2019

<u>Schedule of Income</u>	€
Department of Rural and Community Development	
Volunteer Centre & ORIS	172,743
Pobal – National Childcare Investment Programme	450,275
Longford Westmeath Education Training Board – Horticulture	121,521
Westmeath County Council	
SICAP	780,516
LEADER 2014-2020	362,347
Resettlement Programme	99,889
Various (Healthy Ireland, Horticulture, Disability projects)	21,611
Tusla – Community Mothers Programme	78,912
HSE – Traveller, Food & Health projects	225,290
Department of Justice – PEIL	83,958
Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection	
RSS & TUS Programmes	152,877
Job Club	117,211
Community Employment & Jobs Initiative	811,203
School Meals & SICAP related	35,269
St Stephens Green Trust	6,000
Other Income- Admin course fees and parent's fees	<u>119,246</u>
Total Income	3,638,878
<u>Expenditure</u>	€
Staff Costs	2,677,622
Project Specific costs	535,549
Admin and overhead costs	<u>457,593</u>
Total Expenditure	<u>3,671,244</u>
Deficit for the financial year	<u>(32,246)</u>

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2019

Fixed Assets	€	€
Tangible assets		152,513
Current Assets		
Debtors	355,513	
Cash and cash equivalents	<u>724,578</u>	
	1,080,091	
Creditors:		
Amounts falling due within one year	<u>(620,139)</u>	
Net Current Assets		<u>459,952</u>
Total Assets less Current Liabilities		<u>612,465</u>
Reserves		
Income and expenditure account		<u>612,465</u>
Total Funds		<u>612,465</u>

FUNDERS

LEADER



Childcare programme



Tus Programme



Community Employment



Supported by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, which is funded by the Irish Government

Volunteer Centre



Westmeath Traveller Project



Horticulture programme



Rural Social Scheme



FUNDERS

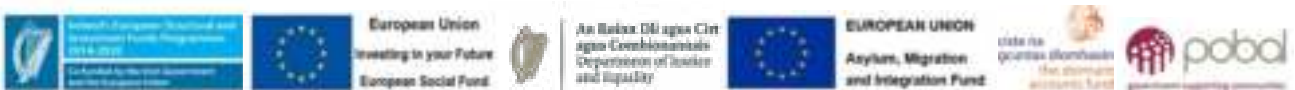
Social Innovation Fund



Live Longer & Prosper programme



Resettlement programme/ DAF/ PEIL



Community Mothers



Westmeath Care & Repair Service



Food & Health Programme



Community Development, Employment & Enterprise



The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2018-2022 is funded by the Irish Government through the Department of Rural and Community Development and co-funded by the European Social Fund under the Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020