



Happy New Year from the WPPN. Welcome to our first newsletter of 2025.

High on the list of priorities for early 2025 will be the relaunching of the PPN website. Our website will enable us to communicate more efficiently with our members and the general public. It will be the go-to place for up-to-date information on events, training programs, funding supports and other assistance provided by Westmeath Council and other public bodies.

Our website will also be a place to share our newsletters and reports from your WPPN representatives and Secretariat. This is all with the aim of encouraging the transfer of public information and 'public participation'.



Cllr Keenan and Mark Ahern at the Independent People with Disabilities 'Empowering Abilities Conference' in Athlone, 4/12/24

Dates for Funding Workshops and Walk in Clinics 2025.

Please note the new dates for our very popular funding workshops and walk-in clinics.

These are public events and all are welcome to attend.

Funding Workshops

5th February – Athlone.

6th February – Mullingar.

Walk-in-Clinics

11th February – Mullingar

12th February – Athlone

To help us prepare for the event and to order catering, we'd ask attendees to register in advance at -
<https://forms.office.com/e/qZSGjfR3Xs>

*Mark Ahern and Martin Fagan
Westmeath PPN*

We are currently in the process of developing a dedicated website for WPPN. In the meantime you can find information on our work in the Community Development Section of Westmeath County Council's website at <https://www.westmeathcoco.ie/en/ourservices/communitydevelopment/>
Contact Mark or Martin directly at ppn@westmeathcoco.ie

WPPN Funding Workshops & Walk-in Clinics.

February 2025

- Do you or your group have a project or a need - but are unsure what public supports are out there?
- Come to WPPN and Community Development Sections 's annual information-sharing days to learn about the funding and assistance provided through Westmeath County Council and other public bodies in Westmeath.
- The Funding Workshops will have presentations and information stands from a wide range of funders.
- Staff will be at hand at the Walk-in Clinics to personally answer your questions and assist you with form-filling.
- These are free public events and all are encouraged to attend.

Funding Workshops

5th Feb. 6pm – Shamrock Lodge, Athlone.

6th Feb. 6pm – Bloomfield Hotel, Mullingar.

Walk-in-Clinics

11th Feb. 4pm – Bloomfield Hotel, Mullingar.

12th Feb. 10am – Shamrock Lodge, Athlone

Let us know that you'll be attending by filling out this short online registration form

<https://forms.office.com/e/qZSGjfR3Xs>

Note change of dates from those advertised earlier!



An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithé agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
Community Development

SNAPSHOT OF THE YEAR 2023



19,063 MEMBER GROUPS



15,242

**COMMUNITY AND
VOLUNTARY GROUPS**



3,081

**SOCIAL INCLUSION
GROUPS**



730

**ENVIRONMENTAL
GROUPS**

2023 proved to be another year of challenges. On the heel of a global pandemic, increasing levels of conflict across the world and rates of inflation that hit the lowest income households the hardest, we increasingly experienced a break down in both our weather patterns and social cohesion in our communities. As always, the Community and Voluntary sector proved to be a vital part of the national response to these issues at a local level highlighting time after time, just how necessary and vital the Community and Voluntary sector is. Local knowledge was key.



926

PPN REPRESENTATIVES

sat on **343** Boards and Committees bringing the voice of the community to the decision-making table.

The PPNs provided a wide variety of training and supports for Representatives, allowing them to fully engage and participate.

There was continuous engagement with Member Groups, ensuring that vital information was widely disseminated.

2023 saw the PPNs increasing their Social Media profile. This is an increasingly vital communications tool, allowing different communities to be reached in different ways.



Wicklow hosted the 5th National Public Participation Network Conference in October, welcoming over 200 delegates representing community and voluntary, social inclusion and environmental groups throughout the country as well as local authority officials, elected representatives and others who support the work of PPNs. The theme of this year's conference was 'Participation in Action'. The Conference programme included presentations and workshops that showcased a wide and diverse selection of structures, processes, community work and policy development from across the PPN spectrum.¹



The PPNs continued to adapt in response to the changes experienced by their communities and develop innovative solutions using a bottom-up approach to problem solving.

Consultations continue to be a vital part of the work of the PPN and took place across a wide variety of topics, with environmental issues becoming more and more prominent.

The PPNs continue to make a real difference to the communities they serve.

Westmeath Heritage Office



<https://westmeathculture.ie/heritage>

Community Monuments Fund 2025

Deadline 31st Jan 2025

Core aims of fund is the conservation, maintenance, protection and promotion of archaeological monuments.



Waterways Ireland's 'Heritage & Biodiversity Community Grant 2025' is open for applications. This scheme supports projects that complement the delivery of the Waterways Ireland Heritage and Biodiversity Plan. Closing Date: 14th February 2025. More info at <https://www.waterwaysireland.org>



National Parks & Wildlife Service

National Parks and Wildlife Service's 'Peatlands and Natura Community Engagement Scheme' is open for applications. This scheme aims to support community led projects. The deadline for applications is 24th Jan 2025. For full details see: <https://www.npws.ie/peatlands-and-turf-cutting/peatlands-and-natura-community-engagement-scheme-2025>

Munster Technological University

MSc. in Applied Community Led Development for Well-being

**Learn,
Lead,
Transform**

MSc
**COMMUNITY LED
DEVELOPMENT**
for **WELLBEING**



Building Stronger Communities
through EDUCATION.



We are excited to announce the launch of our innovative, new, sought after program, in APPLIED COMMUNITY LED DEVELOPMENT FOR WELL-BEING, designed to transform your career and connect you with like-minded professionals. This is your opportunity to gain a truly transformative learning experience and to enhance your career through connecting with a dynamic community of leaders in community development and well-being.

Contact us to secure your place.

MScdevelopmentforwellbeing@MTU.ie

Choose our 24 month/4 semesters blended Masters programme or fast track your goals with the 3 semester blended diploma programme -both designed to empower you with practical real world solutions.

Undertake work-based challenges as part of your learning journey, enhancing your professional growth while fostering collaboration across organisational settings.

This applied approach equips you with the skills and strategies to drive meaningful change and make a lasting impact on community well-being. Join us and start building the future today.

MSc
 **COMMUNITY LED
DEVELOPMENT** **SEPT
2025**
for **WELLBEING**
Building Stronger Communities
through EDUCATION.

More information at

<https://www.mtu.ie/courses/tlshcwbm/>



DUBLIN ROAD ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEME, INCLUDING SECTIONS OF ARDMORE ROAD AND DELVIN ROAD, MULLINGAR

Public Information and Feedback Session on initial design

Westmeath County Council, in conjunction with the National Transport Authority (NTA), invites residents of the local area, members of the public and interested parties to attend a public information and feedback session on the initial design for Dublin Road Active Travel Scheme, including sections of Ardmore Road and Delvin Road. The event will be held on the following date/location:

**Monday 13 January 2025 (3pm – 8pm)
Áras an Chontae, Mullingar**

The initial design will be on display and staff/designers will be available to answer queries on the day.

The initial design will remain available to view and feedback comments will be accepted until Close of Business on **17 January 2025**.





Údarás Náisiúnta Míchumais
National Disability Authority

The NDA is an independent statutory body that provides information and advice to Government on policy and practice relevant to the lives of persons with disabilities

Keep up to date on NDA events, publications and webinars by visiting their website, subscribing to their quarterly newsletter or visiting their Youtube channel.

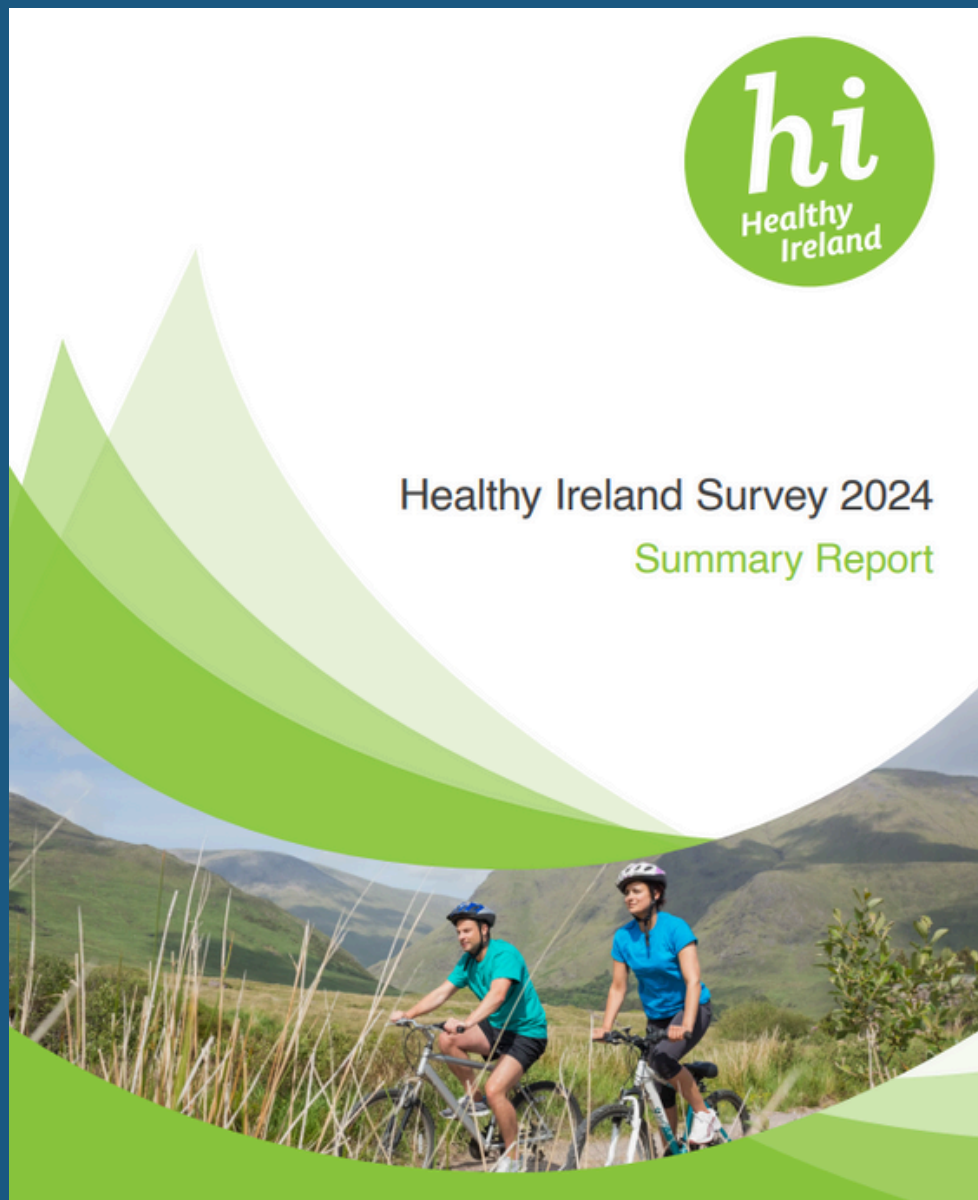
<https://nda.ie/>

The NDA also publishes guidance on making the built environment and public spaces accessible to all through their Centre for Excellence in Universal Design

<https://universaldesign.ie/>

Healthy Ireland

Healthy Ireland has released it's annual survey. It gives an up-to-date picture of the health of the nation, reporting on many health-related lifestyle behaviours.



To view visit

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/d1ab3-healthy-ireland-survey-2024/>

Africa Day. 25th May 2025

An annual celebration of culture and people.

Westmeath County Council is offering funding support to groups who would like to celebrate Africa Day.

Please contact WCC Community Development Section communitygrants@westmeath.coco.ie for an application form. Closing date for receipt of applications is 21st February 2025.



Waterways Ireland

Heritage & Biodiversity Community Grant 2025

This scheme supports projects that complement the delivery of the Waterways Ireland Heritage and Biodiversity Plan.

Closing Date: 14th February 2025



More info at <https://www.waterwaysireland.org>