

Press release

Minister Joe O'Brien launches the Youghal Blue & Green Community Network

From [Department of Rural and Community Development \(/en/organisation/departments/departments-of-rural-and-community-development/\)](/en/organisation/departments/departments-of-rural-and-community-development/)

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- an innovative community-driven climate action project
- a visit to Trabolgan Holiday Village, celebrating community integration

Minister of State for Community Development, Integration and Charities, Joe O'Brien, has today (Friday 23 June) launched the Blue & Green Community Network at Cumann na Daoine's Community Development Centre in Youghal.

This innovative community based climate action project is co-funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and Tomar Trust. It aims to make Youghal the healthiest, cleanest and the most environmentally sustainable town in Ireland.

Speaking at the launch Minister O'Brien said:

"I am delighted to launch the Blue & Green Community Network Project, which is paving the way for a sustainable future, revolutionising the way we live, work and interact with our environment. In less than 2 years you have come a long way, this is a true reflection of the wealth of work happening day in and day out, promoting sustainability and protecting the town's natural and cultural heritage, working towards building a sustainable future for Youghal.

“This project is the culmination of extensive planning, collaboration and community engagement. It’s great to see local organisations, government agencies, passionate community members and volunteers coming together to ensure the success of this visionary project. You are creating a lasting legacy of resilience, innovation, and environmental stewardships for your future generations.”

Later in the afternoon, the Minister visited Trabolgan Holiday Village to join in a celebration and showcasing of successful integration initiatives, including SECAD Partnership supports and programmes, volunteer and community group supports and local agency supports. The residents in the village are actively involved in the local community through sport, education, volunteering, employment, social and wellbeing events.

The Minister said:

“Today, we celebrate the integration of new arrivals into local communities and the collaboration and responsiveness of local agencies, local communities, new and existing community groups coming together to ensure that a warm welcome was extended here in East Cork.

“I am aware the numbers availing of your vital services have increased significantly over the last few years and I know this has required a huge response from you, your staff, your communities and your volunteers, all who have gone above and beyond in providing supports to those who need it most.

“I am overwhelmed by the great range of collaborative activities delivered, giving support through wellbeing activities, language supports, friendly conversation and mental health supports to combat loneliness and isolation and to ensure that all members of our diverse community feel welcomed and valued and to ensure no one is left behind.”

Notes

Blue & Green Community Network Project

Aim and objectives

To work together in order to strengthen and support each other's work in relation to responding climate change; enhancing biodiversity; ensuring clean beaches, healthy marine and coastal life while being sensitive and careful of our wildlife, woodlands and green environments.

To do this through collaborating with each other and with agencies concerned with Youghal.

To attract larger scale resources to deliver on our vision for Youghal.

To promote the reduction of carbon emissions, renewable energy and support the development of clean energy efficient communities.

To build greater awareness across the whole community of Youghal and bring all citizens with us.

To explore what is happening to the earth and its people, and find constructive ways of responding.

To share information, work together and agree on priorities for the Network.

Cumann na Daoine

Cumann na Daoine CLG is a community based organisation for the last 25 years. It is managed by a Voluntary Board of directors & management members – local people who give their time to manage and guide the work and staff of the Community Development Resource Centre. Cumann na Daoine is a company limited by guarantee (CLG) and has charitable status.

Cumann na Daoine works with individuals and groups to help identify their needs and empower people to work together on a common agenda.

It provides information and training to support people to improve their quality of life.

It provides low-cost rooms to agencies and community groups to run courses and events.

Tomar Trust

The Tomar Trust is a philanthropic trust that aims to contribute to strengthening Irish society over 10 years 2016-2026. Established in 1994 the Tomar Trust has been supporting community and voluntary activity in rural Ireland, particularly North Cork, West Waterford, Clare and Donegal and disadvantaged communities in Cork City. The Trust aims to deepen its commitment to rural Ireland, to the building of strong communities and resilient young people, and aims to address some of the big issues facing Ireland today and investing in the solutions to solve them.

SECAD Partnership

SECAD Partnership provides a range of innovative and effective rural development and social inclusion supports to motivate and empower local communities to create a more vibrant, sustainable and inclusive society.

Supporting the development and evolution of the community sector is a central element of SECAD Partnership's work.

Together with communities and partner organisations, SECAD is coordinating work in the community sector by working together to design, deliver and build the creative capacity of community support programmes.

SECAD brings innovative approaches into the most disadvantaged areas to enable communities to address issues of physical and mental health, integration and many other challenges in a creative and inclusive way.

SECAD works with new communities directly and through local service providers such as Family Resource Centres to provide information and training to new communities.

Barriers exist for members of new communities, particularly those for whom English is not their first language, in integrating into Irish society and accessing the supports available to them and their families to achieve their potential as members of their communities and in the workforce.

Past integration projects have included celebrating cultural diversity through food at local food festivals. A shared love of food enables SECAD to bring together new communities and alongside this promote access to services, employment, training and meaningful participation in their communities.

Events to promote increased awareness around healthy eating and nutrition, improving healthy cooking skills and budgeting and linking this in with physical activity.

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