

LEADER NEWS



Rialtas
na hÉireann
Government
of Ireland

Funded by the Department of Rural and
Community Development

Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2020



The European Agricultural Fund
for Rural Development: Europe
investing in rural areas.



Kildare County Council
Comhairle Contae Chill Dara



THE LEADER PROGRAMME: BUILDING SOCIAL CAPITAL

The LEADER Programme in Kildare recognizes the importance of social capital and networks for the development of communities, whether they are local based or issue-based. The term "social capital" is used to describe the coming together by individuals to address mutual needs and to pursue common interests. To build social capital means to improve networking structures and develop social skills and behaviours. By doing this, the community has a greater capacity to address challenges collaboratively. LEADER is crucial to this process - providing individuals with the necessary financial, technical and moral support needed to firstly increase their skills and then to develop a formal network. This model of training in pragmatic skills - enabling individuals to come together to face challenges - can be seen most recently in the Craft Network Training run in conjunction with the Local Enterprise Office.

The training commenced in September 2019 under the broad theme of *Enterprise Development: Support Kildare's Creative Network and Craft Design Hubs*. The participants on the course have worked together to agree an identity for the new Network and engaged a graphic designer to design a logo. Their beautifully designed "ORIGINAL KILDARE" website went live at the start of June and a Graduation Ceremony was held on June 24th to conclude the Programme and formally launch the Network.



Original Kildare

SUPPORTING KILDARE'S CREATIVITY AND CRAFTS

The Craft Network Training was designed in a way so as not to just teach skills, but to increase the capacity of the group and enable them to become self sufficient. The result is the creation of Original Kildare as a multidisciplinary craft collective, bringing together some of the finest professional designers and craftspeople in County Kildare.

The Network's aim is to foster the creativity and exceptional talent of Kildare's craftspeople and promote their work to a wider audience. It is committed to positioning Kildare as a leading destination in Ireland for quality, original handmade craft.

The Network contains a rich variety of work ranging from captivating bog oak sculpture, to delicate jewellery and exquisite glass fused art.

The LEADER Programme was delighted to support this strategic development for the County, through a partnership approach with the Local Enterprise Office and to lay the foundation for ongoing future progress. Similar strategic and collaborative work is planned for a Food Network and for the development of a Strategic Plan for the development of the Barrow Blueway.



ACDAL

At the May meeting of the Local Action Group, funding was allocated to the Allenwood Community Development Association (ACDAL) to refurbish facilities to enable them respond to the changing needs of the community. Since December 1998, ACDAL's mission has been to organise, promote and assist the cultural development of the community at Allenwood with a view to promoting their economic and cultural welfare and particularly to empower specific, disadvantaged groups to effectively participate in programmes of personal and social development.

This refurbishment will allow the development of hot-desking and remote working possibilities for the local community, which, in the light of changing work practices due to the COVID pandemic, are very timely. Thus, building on a rich heritage, the Association can position itself for moving into the future.

As lockdown restrictions began to ease, Brian Kelly, LEADER Project Officer, was happy to be able to deliver the Contract to Cara Clancy, Manager of the Enterprise Park, while still observing a correct social distance!

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