



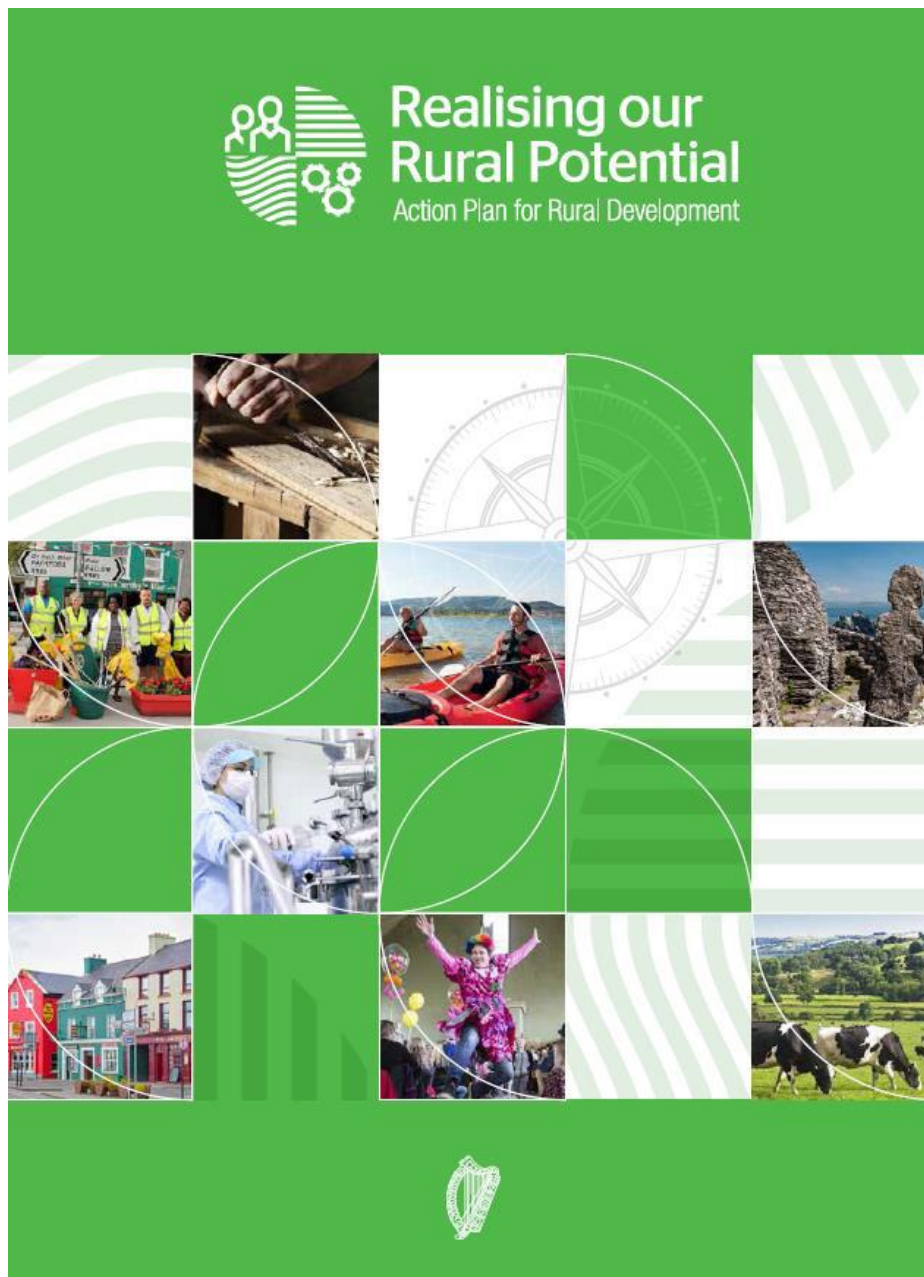
Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Action Plan for Rural Development

Fourth Progress Report

Prepared by the Department of Rural and Community Development

Realising our Rural Potential Action Plan for Rural Development



**Fourth Progress Report
June 2019**

Minister's Foreword

The Action Plan for Rural Development has been a key vehicle for implementation of the Government's support for rural development since January 2017, and the implementation rate of measures contained in the Plan continues to be very positive.

In the short period since the Plan was launched, much progress has been made in the delivery of individual actions in the Plan, as outlined in this Progress Report. Additional measures have also been taken to support rural Ireland under the Government's Project Ireland 2040 Strategy.

Investment is taking place right across Government to support rural communities and rural businesses. This investment is driving job creation, improving access to services, and enhancing the quality of life in rural Ireland.

Employment in rural areas continues to grow, with an increase of over 146,000 people employed outside of Dublin between 2015 and 2018, surpassing the Government's target of 135,000 by 2020. More than 60% of the 18,846 new jobs created by Enterprise Ireland's client companies last year were outside of the Dublin region, while over 132,000 jobs in IDA client companies are now based outside of Dublin, representing 58% client companies employment.

Through the €1 billion Rural Regeneration and Development Fund, my Department is investing in projects to rejuvenate communities across rural Ireland. Under the Fund, 84 projects have been approved so far, with total funding amounting to €86 million. These are ambitious, collaborative projects which will have a transformational effect on towns, villages and rural areas across Ireland.

As we near the end of the lifecycle of the Action Plan at the end of 2019, we must now turn our focus to developing the next phase of rural policy, to build on progress made to date, and further strengthen our rural communities and rural economies in a coherent and ambitious manner.

My Department has been engaging in a series of consultation events with stakeholders to help develop the next phase of rural policy for Ireland which will succeed the Action Plan for Rural Development from 2020.

The development of the next phase of rural policy comes at a time of significant national and international change, including emerging issues such as Brexit, increasing focus on sustainability and climate adaptation, and the emergence of new technologies, which are leading to new ways of working. The world we live in is changing more rapidly than ever before, bringing new challenges, but also exciting opportunities.

We need to build resilience in our rural communities and economies to overcome emerging challenges, take full advantage of available opportunities, and to realise rural Ireland's full potential.



Michael Ring T.D.
Minister for Rural and Community Development



Table of Contents

Minister's Foreword	1
Executive Summary	3
Key Developments and Case Studies.....	5
Pillar 1 – Supporting Sustainable Communities	5
Pillar 2 - Supporting Enterprise and Employment	10
Pillar 3 - Maximising our Rural Tourism and Recreation Potential.....	14
Pillar 4 - Fostering Culture and Creativity in Rural Communities	18
Pillar 5 - Improving Rural Infrastructure and Connectivity.....	22
Progress Status of Actions	26
Glossary of Abbreviations.....	86

Executive Summary

Background

Realising our Rural Potential, the Government's Action Plan for Rural Development, was launched in January 2017. The Action Plan contains 277 actions for the delivery across Government, State agencies and other bodies over the three years to end 2019 to support the economic and social progress of rural Ireland.

The actions are broken down across 5 thematic Pillars as follows:

Pillar 1: Supporting Sustainable Communities

Pillar 2: Supporting Enterprise and Employment

Pillar 3: Maximising our Rural Tourism and Recreation Potential

Pillar 4: Fostering Culture and Creativity in rural communities

Pillar 5: Improving Rural Infrastructure and Connectivity

Each action has been assigned to a lead body which is responsible for implementation of the action. Progress on the implementation of the actions is overseen by a Monitoring Committee which includes senior representatives of relevant Government Departments and key rural stakeholder interests.

Progress Reports on the implementation of the Action Plan are published twice-yearly. Following on from an interim Progress Report in May 2017, the first Progress Report was published in August 2017, with the Second Progress Report following in May 2018 and the Third Progress Report published in November 2018. These reports are available to download on Gov.ie <https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/b13c5f-progress-reports-action-plan-for-rural-development/>

Summary of Progress

This Fourth Progress Report outlines the progress which has taken place in relation to all of the actions in the Plan, focusing on activity between July and December 2018.

Of the 277 actions reported on, 268 have been completed or are substantially advanced, and 4 actions were closed. 5 actions due for delivery are delayed. These are summarised in the following table.

Delayed Actions

The 5 actions which were not completed on schedule in the latter half of 2018 were:

Action No.	Measure to be delivered	Lead Body
44	Develop a new and effective rural proofing model which will ensure that rural development issues are considered in the decision-making processes of all Government Departments, State bodies and agencies.	DRCD
80	Introduce a Marine Development and Investment Strategy for the Gaeltacht in line with Harnessing our Ocean Wealth.	Údarás na Gaeltachta
97	Conduct a review of the REDZ initiative to measure its impact on rural communities, and to support the development of future calls for projects under the scheme.	DRCD
176	Agree and implement a scheme to indemnify private land owners with regard to recreational users of their lands.	DRCD
251	Conduct a full review of public transport policy, including the rural transport dimension, to ensure that it meets the needs of rural communities.	DTTAS

This Progress Report sets out some of the key developments over the period July – December 2018 under each of the Pillars of the Action Plan. It also includes a number of case studies which illustrate the impact of the actions being delivered under the Plan. A brief progress report on each action is provided in the second part of the report.

Key Developments and Case Studies

Pillar 1 – Supporting Sustainable Communities

The objective of this Pillar is to make rural Ireland a better place in which to live and work; to achieve this, we must support our rural communities. We need to enhance local services, support social cohesion and empower the people that live in our communities to ensure that their voices are heard.

Some recent key developments under this Pillar include:

1. Under the 2018 Town and Village Renewal Scheme, 224 projects countrywide were approved for funding in October 2018, to the value of €21.3 million. (Action 1, DRCD)
2. A pilot scheme to encourage increased residential occupancy in town and village centres, involving six rural towns was launched in October 2018. This scheme is now in progress and lessons learned through the pilot will inform future investment in rural towns and villages. (Action 2, DRCD)
3. Roughly one in four new homes built in 2018 was a Social Housing home. The number of new social housing homes built in 2018 was eight times greater than the number built in 2015. Construction figures from December 2018 show almost 5,000 new social housing homes currently being built across 291 sites and this is being added to on a weekly basis. 27,103 new households had their housing needs met under Rebuilding Ireland in 2018. (Action 5, DHPLG)
4. Building on the CLÁR 2017 programme which supported 233 projects, the 2018 CLÁR Programme funded 389 small infrastructure projects during 2018. A further call for proposals under CLÁR was launched in February 2019. (Action 10, DRCD)
5. In 2018, €2 million was allocated and 284 projects funded by the Built Heritage Investment Scheme. Over €4.7 million of private funding was leveraged, and over 17,000 days of employment were created. The 2019 scheme was launched in November 2018 with an allocation of €2.5 million. (Action 13, DCHG)
6. Payments of €1.7m were made to 21 Volunteer Centres, 8 Volunteering Information Services and 4 national volunteering supporting organisations, in Q3 2018. Further actions taken to advance volunteering include a grant of €200,000 to support IT upgrades for Boardmatch and Volunteer Ireland platforms in Q4 2018. The Dormant Accounts Fund Action Plan 2018 includes provision of €1.2m in 2019 for the upgrading of the eight Volunteering Information Services to full Volunteer Centres in order to provide a consistent level of volunteering infrastructure nationwide. A Call for Input paper was launched in Q4 2018 as the first step in developing a national volunteering strategy. (Action 19, DRCD)

7. In relation to increasing the number of GPs in rural areas, 256 GP practice units were in receipt of supports under the Rural Practice Support Framework at end 2018. This relates to 352 individual GPs benefitting under the new scheme. This is a significant increase in the number of GPs benefitting from rural supports, which stood at 167 prior to the introduction of the new scheme in May 2016. (Action 24, HSE)
8. Between July and December 2018, the final two Primary Care Centres (PCCs) became operational in Tullamore and Dungarvan, completing the delivery of all 18 PCCs. Ongoing funding in the future will further enhance the development of PCCs. (Action 28, HSE)
9. The Government has approved the Scheme Outline for a new single targeted youth funding scheme. The target group for the scheme includes young people impacted by a range of factors including rural isolation. Preparation for implementation of the new scheme is currently underway. (Action 35, DCYA)
10. The development of the Affordable Childcare Scheme is ongoing. Following on from the adoption of the Childcare Support Act in Summer 2018, comprehensive secondary legislation is being drawn up. Detailed policy guidelines and a governance framework for the Scheme are being developed, and the Scheme is expected to launch in October 2019. (Action 36, DCYA)
11. In July 2018 Government approval was given for the High Level Design of the new Renewable Electricity Support Scheme. One of the key pillars of the scheme is the development of an Enabling Framework for Community Participation in renewable electricity generation. (Action 42, DCCAE)
12. A total of 1,644 projects were approved for LEADER funding to the end of 2018, with a value of over €55 million. A further 355 projects were at various stages of the approval process seeking funding of approximately €22m. Of the total, over €38m in funding was approved for projects in 2018. (Action 47, DRCD)
13. In 2018, the 7 FLAGs awarded grants worth €4 million to 285 new rural projects around Ireland's coast. Grants paid out amounted to in excess of €2 million. These grants will support a wide range of local initiatives to foster marine tourism and leisure, community regeneration and employment. (Action 48, DAFM)
14. 3,350 participants and 139 supervisors are supported through the Rural Social Scheme, supporting almost 2,000 community projects. An additional 500 places were announced in 2017, plus 250 places in 2018 as part of the Programme for Government commitment to Rural Ireland. Overall there has been an increase of just over 30% in the places available under the RSS since 2017 – from 2,600 to 3,350. (Action 50, DEASP)
15. The contract awarded to Leitrim Development Company for the Social Farming Network was extended by DAFM in 2018 with funding of €350,000 for a further 12 month period. A further 3 social farming model projects are active and received funding in 2018. (Action 51, DAFM)

16. From July to December 2018, 7,364 homes have carried out energy efficiency improvements with grant assistance from the Better Energy Homes Scheme. Approximately 60% of these homes are located outside of Dublin. (Action 52, DCCAE)

17. Over €6.9 million was invested in the Seniors Alert Scheme in 2018. The Scheme had a total of 44,763 participants at the end of 2018. This represents an increase of 90% (21,231 new participants) since 31 December 2017. (Action 61, DRCD)

18. As of February 2019, the Irish Men's Sheds Association has 447 registered members. Sheds are now present in all 32 counties, and Ireland continues to enjoy the highest per capita concentration of Men's Sheds in the world. (Action 66, Irish Men's Sheds Association)

Case Study: Supporting Sustainable Communities

The Irish Men's Sheds Association

The Irish Men's Sheds Association (www.menssheds.ie) was founded as recently as 2011. In less than a decade, Men's Sheds have become, in their understated way, something of an institution in Irish society.

In towns, villages and cities the length and breadth of the island, from Donegal to Kerry, Men's Sheds are a familiar presence in their communities. As well as their undoubted and life-changing effect on their members, men's sheds have become quietly indispensable to their neighbourhoods.

In addition to offering an outlet and a lifeline to men at risk of social isolation, Men's Sheds members are frequently to be seen participating in local parades, stewarding local events, donating Buddy Benches to local schools, taking to the stage for choir performances, as well as a myriad of other significant engagements in their local areas.

Men's Sheds have become a beacon of hope and inspiration for all those who believe that community cohesion remains a vital component of a functioning society, particularly in rural areas.

On the individual level, Men's Sheds are known to have a profoundly positive impact on a member's wellbeing, with over 90% of members agreeing that belonging to a shed had improved their sense of wellbeing.

The Irish Men's Sheds Association seeks to capitalise on this fact through its Sheds for Life initiatives, an ambitious slate of health and wellbeing programmes, partnerships and events, undertaken in conjunction with the HSE and dozens of national health organisations.

Sheds for Life activities include local diabetes management and physical activity programmes, the provision of health-checks and advice clinics at shed events, as well as frequent talks by health experts on topics as diverse as depression and cancer awareness.

In 2018, the Department of Rural & Community Development provided a ring-fenced €500,000 Men's Shed Fund for sheds throughout Ireland.



Members of Terenure Men's Shed

Case Study: Supporting Sustainable Communities

SICAP and Social Farming

The Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) is the Government's primary social inclusion programme. It provides funding to tackle poverty and social exclusion at a local level through local engagement and partnerships between disadvantaged individuals, community organisations and public sector agencies. One of the benefits of the programme is that it can be tailored to local need, as demonstrated in the case study below.

North East and West Kerry Development (NEWKD) is a local development company and the programme implementer for SICAP across an area comprising all of North Kerry, the Corca Dhuibhne Peninsula and rural East Kerry. Within this region are a number of areas with higher rates of disability than the national average. The aim is to empower those with disabilities, who are one of the target groups of SICAP, and support them to fully integrate into the community.

NEWKD commenced work with Kerry Social Farming, under SICAP, in 2016. Kerry Social Farming is a locally-led, community-based, shared service that provides farming and social inclusion opportunities in rural areas to people with intellectual disabilities and acquired brain injury all within their local communities. It forges links between farmers and participants, and benefits not only the farmers and participants but also their respective families.

Smaller rural farmers can experience isolation and social farming provides them with opportunities to meet people and have social interaction. Participating farms are upgraded where necessary, to ensure the safety of participants and benefitting farmers into the future. The farms remain as working farms while offering participants opportunities to learn farm skills, life skills, to connect with the rural community and build relationships. The participants have differing capacities and require a range of diverse supports, which is provided by qualified job coaches.

SICAP provides support through two resources, funding and staff. The funding, for farm modifications, complements funding from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. NEWKD also allocates a portion of a SICAP funded staff time to the development of social farming in the area.

Initially it proved challenging to link in with local farmers, but by August 2018, there were six social farms operating in the NEWKD area, with participants drawn from St. John of Gods amongst other organisations. The participants are supported by qualified job coaches for the first 4-6 weeks and this support is gradually withdrawn as the individuals gain confidence and independence.

Host farmers, participants and guardians have all been extremely positive about the Social Farming model. There is a strong desire to continue with the programme and to help expand it where possible to involve more participants and host farmers.



Social farming in Kerry

Pillar 2 - Supporting Enterprise and Employment

The focus of this Pillar is on supporting enterprises to start up and grow, and supporting job seekers in rural areas to access jobs. Increasing employment opportunities for people across all regions of the country is a key objective for the Government. Supporting the growth of enterprises at regional level – whether start-ups, scaling companies or FDI companies – will bring increased job opportunities for people who live in rural areas, and will increase economic activity in rural areas.

Some recent key developments under this Pillar include:

1. During 2018, Minister Humphreys refreshed and refocused the Regional Action Plans for Jobs. Nine new “Regional Enterprise Plans” were launched by the end of Q1 2019. (Action 68, DBEI)
2. In May 2018 the second call under Enterprise Ireland’s Regional Enterprise Development Fund was announced. In Call Two, 77 projects applied, and 21 projects were approved funding of €29 million. The 42 successful projects from Calls One and Two are at various stages of implementation. (Action 69, Enterprise Ireland)
3. Since the beginning of IDA Ireland’s ‘Winning’ Strategy, 407 investments have been won for the regions and almost 27,000 net jobs have been added on the ground in locations outside Dublin. There are now over 132,000 people employed across 681 firms in IDA client companies outside the capital, the highest number of people employed by IDA clients outside of Dublin in the history of the organisation. Every region posted net employment gains in 2018 with 56% of all net new IDA client company jobs created last year outside of Dublin. (Action 70, IDA)
4. Údarás na Gaeltachta client companies created 589 new jobs in 2018, resulting in the highest level of employment in client companies in 10 years. The target of the creation of 500 new jobs for 2019 is ongoing. (Action 72, Údarás na Gaeltachta)
5. During 2018 the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) supported 2,411 jobs through financial assistance measures. The LEOs also supported 3,415 Start Your Own Business Programme participants, provided training courses to 28,767 participants, provided mentoring to 7,280 participants, and supported 20,247 Student Enterprises Awards participants.
6. The €300 million Brexit Loan Scheme provides working capital support to enable eligible Irish businesses to implement necessary changes to address the challenges posed by Brexit. The Scheme opened for applications on 28 March 2018 and the total number of loans progressed to sanction at bank level to date is 69, with a value of €15.7m. (Action 89, SBCI)
7. In 2018, 1,100 vouchers were distributed under the Trading Online Voucher Scheme with approximately 60% going to businesses based in rural Ireland. (Action 92, DCCAE)

8. A National Social Enterprise Policy is currently being finalised, informed by research and consultations with a variety of stakeholders during 2018 and Q1 2019. A draft National Social Enterprise Policy was published for public consultation in April 2019. The final Policy will be informed by the submissions received. (Action 99, DRCD)
9. InterTradeIreland continues to support SMEs to face the challenges associated with Brexit. In 2018 over 4,000 companies engaged with ITI's Brexit Advisory Service which includes the provision of factual advice, information materials and supports for capability building and the provision of other specialist expertise for companies. Another key part of ITI's Brexit work is the provision of Brexit 'Start to Plan' vouchers worth €2,250, which enable companies to obtain specialist advice in areas such as customs, tax, tariff and non-tariff barriers, legal and labour mobility issues. In 2018 there were 549 vouchers approved. (Action 101, ITI)
10. The Bioeconomy Implementation Group (BIG) was established in 2018 on foot of the National Policy Statement on the Bioeconomy, and is in the process of publishing a draft report. The Bioeconomy has the potential to contribute to decarbonisation, sustainable growth and job creation in agriculture, fisheries, forestry and technological sectors, with an emphasis on job creation in rural areas. (Action 118, DCCAE & DAFM)
11. Regional Skills Fora managers engaged with over 1,000 enterprises in 2018, compared with 700 in 2017. The latest figures show 75% of engagement is with micro enterprises and SMEs. Although engagement is across a range of economic sectors, Manufacturing, Construction and ICT continue to be the three main areas of engagement. (Action 121, DES)
12. In the second half of 2018, SFI funded 8 awards in Smart Agriculture/Precision Agriculture and related areas, with a combined value of €1.4 million. One award will study how to transform Irish agricultural waste into high value, low carbon products by analysing and enhancing current and emerging agri-waste supply chains. (Action 126, SFI)
13. The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2018–2022 was launched in April 2018 and is providing opportunities for people to engage in a range of employment supports including the development of personal skills, lifelong learning, labour market training and one-to-one employment supports. (Action 136, DRCD)
14. In July 2018, the Dormant Account Action Plan 2018 was launched with funding of almost €40 million announced for 45 measures across 10 Departments and State Agencies. The measures provide supports for economically, educationally and socially disadvantaged people and people with disabilities in communities across the country. Implementation of measures in 2018 resulted in almost €28 million from the Dormant Accounts Fund being utilised for projects and programmes which address disadvantage, right across the country. These measures took place across a range of areas including sport, health, caring and social innovation and social enterprise. (Action 138, DRCD)

Case Study: Supporting Enterprise and Employment

E & I Engineering Ltd

E&I Engineering Ltd., an indigenous business based in Burnfoot Co. Donegal, has grown to become one of the biggest manufacturers in the north-west of Ireland supplying power distribution products to Europe, the Middle East and Asia. The company was founded in 1986 by CEO Philip O'Doherty, who was financed by a small loan, with a staff of just three people. Through his leadership and determination, the company has expanded to now employ over 1,700 people across the globe, including 700 employees in Donegal where its headquarters have been located since 2004.

E&I Engineering Ltd. is a highly innovative Irish company with global ambition. The company, with the support of Enterprise Ireland, has continued to build scale and expand reach internationally, while creating domestic employment, particularly high-quality manufacturing jobs. The company is a global leader in the critical power distribution sector, manufacturing electrical switchgear, bus duct systems and energy management software. Among its customers are Wembley Stadium and Heathrow Airport.

Recognising skills as a catalyst for development, O'Doherty has worked to ensure that his company has the correct skills and personnel in-house. Through in-house apprenticeship schemes and linking with local education facilities such as Letterkenny IT, Sligo IT and Queen's Belfast, E&I Engineering Ltd. now employs many of its manufacturing team from the region. O'Doherty takes great pride in attracting highly qualified staff to Donegal and is relentless and consistent in getting his message out to those who may wish to return to their native county that one of Ireland's most successful companies is located in the idyllic Inishowen peninsula. O'Doherty's key focus is upskilling and creating a learning culture in his facility and is keen on promoting engineering as a career to local youth. The company engages regularly with girls' schools to try and increase the numbers of women employed in the engineering sector. The company also works with a number of local suppliers and promotes all aspects Donegal and Irish where possible.

Research & Development (R&D) is core to the company's values and the company, with the assistance of Enterprise Ireland's Lean Business offer, implements Lean operation concepts throughout the business. One such R&D project led to an announcement in September 2018 of 90 new jobs to be created at the Donegal plant. At the jobs announcement event, which was launched by An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar, Philip O'Doherty spoke of the advantages of running a business in a rural area "Rural Ireland can produce companies that can expand globally and create jobs in these areas, you don't have to be in a large city to have a large facility like this. In fact, I would contend that it is easier sometimes to assemble a large skilled workforce in areas like the north west of Ireland. We have achieved the scale that we have because of this location, the location has not given us any disadvantage"

Looking ahead, the company continues to set sights on further expansion and on new opportunities.

O'Doherty's ambition is to grow the company further through a mix of continued research and development of new products and through potential international acquisitions or through technology.



E & I Engineering facility at Burnfoot, Co. Donegal

Case Study: Supporting Enterprise and Employment

Troy Studios

Troy Studios is situated on the outskirts of Limerick. The development of the studios saw the transformation of the old Dell factory in Limerick into what is now a major asset for Ireland's Creative industries. This project aims to:

- Bring investment to the regions in line with the Action Plan for Jobs;
- Bring creativity to the centre as set out in the Creative Ireland Programme;
- Bring top quality jobs and training to a whole new generation in Limerick to ensure that Limerick becomes a major centre of film and TV drama for years to come.

The studios is located in the Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC) which stretches along the entire western seaboard of Ireland, from Donegal in the north to Kerry in the south. The AEC is home to hundreds of successful businesses. The further development of the Atlantic Economic Corridor is a long-term collaborative initiative encompassing Ireland's business community, national and local government, higher education sector, and public bodies with the objective of nurturing entrepreneurialism and innovation, encouraging infrastructural investment, attracting foreign direct investment and supporting indigenous companies with global ambitions.

The much anticipated Syfy series *Nightflyers* was produced in Troy Studios over a nine month duration. The series, based on George R.R. Martin's 1987 Novella was produced by NBC Universal and Universal Cable Productions, alongside Wild Atlantic Pictures with Irish producers Macdara Kelleher and Eoin Egan, and aired on the Syfy Channel in the US in December 2018, and was also be made available on Netflix. The production of the television series at Troy Studios resulted in 320 direct jobs and a €53 million boost to the local economy.

The Irish Film Board (IFB) granted production funding to *Nightflyers*, while its training arm, Screen Training Ireland, also collaborated with Troy Studios and *Nightflyers* to develop work-based learning initiatives for new entrants, alongside shadowing and mentoring opportunities for more experienced industry practitioners. Since the Troy Studios Open Day in late 2016, Screen Training Ireland has delivered training in areas such as Construction, Set Build, Introduction to the Production Office, Drafting and a P.A. Boot camp.

Troy Studios is committed to building a highly skilled local crew base in the medium term; forged strong links with higher education institutes in the region including University Limerick and Limerick School of Art and Design with over 3,700 students engaged in creative studies. It intends to develop a new Training Studio of 2,150 Sq ft as part of expansion plans.



Troy Studios, Limerick

Pillar 3 - Maximising our Rural Tourism and Recreation Potential

Tourism is a key driver of economic development in rural Ireland and this Pillar of the Action Plan aims to maximise the potential of the sector for the benefit of rural communities. In 2015, 85% of visitors to Ireland visited at least one region outside Dublin. With the revenue this generates in the regions, tourism has a significant role to play in supporting sustainable jobs and growth in rural areas and will be supported through targeted marketing initiatives and co-ordinated approaches at national and local level.

Some recent key developments under this Pillar include:

1. As part of the response to Brexit, a focus has been placed on addressing regional growth and season extension in rural tourism to help counteract any decline experienced from the Great Britain market. Fáilte Ireland's revised Tourism Facts for 2017 indicate that tourism volumes to rural areas increased to 8.28 million in 2017. Preliminary data for 2018 will be available in Q2 2019. (Action 152, DTTAS)
2. In September 2018 a new Gaeltacht Brand 'Gaeltacht na hÉireann' was launched as a marketing tool for all business in the Gaeltacht. As part of the Tourism Investment and Development Strategy for the Gaeltacht, five tourism officers have been recruited to support the development of tourism attractions and tourism networks across the Gaeltacht. Six additional people are due to be hired in 2019. (Action 154, Údarás na Gaeltachta)
3. A competitive public procurement procedure under the 2018 Rural Innovation and Development Fund for Agri-Food Tourism Initiatives was announced in June 2018 and contracts were subsequently awarded to Carlow County Council and O'Connell Marketing on behalf of Taste Wexford. A further call for proposals issued in September with €200,000 funding available for projects with a maximum of €25,000 being awarded to any one project. Eleven projects received funding following this call. (Action 163, DAFM)
4. A successful application was made to the first round of the Rural Regeneration Development Fund for a Global Learning and Digital Hub in Tullycross, Connemara, as a destination for US college Study Abroad programmes. Led by the Western Development Commission, the project has 5 Irish and 3 United States partners. (Action 165, Connemara West and other relevant stakeholders)
5. Under the 2018 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme, funding was awarded to 232 projects, to the value of €20.7 million. (Action 170, DRCD)
6. Inland Fisheries Ireland is finalising a Marketing Strategy for Tourism in Ireland which will launch in Q1 2019. The strategy has been developed in collaboration with the fisheries and tourism agencies on the island of Ireland and industry representatives. (Action 181, Inland Fisheries Ireland)

7. Under "Investing in our Culture, Language and Heritage, 2018 – 2027" capital investment of €50m has been earmarked for National Parks and Nature Reserves. Investment to date includes the expansion of Wild-Nephin Ballycroy National Park, trail maintenance including upgrades to the popular Diamond Hill in Connemara National Park, the resurfacing of the Blue Road at Shrahduggan in Ballycroy National Park, and on-going clearance of scrub and invasive species in a number of National Parks and Nature Reserves. (Action 186, DCHG)
8. €8.2 million was approved during 2018 for 8 sites located outside the Dublin region under the Ireland's Ancient East campaign. In addition a major investment of €4.3 million was announced for four key heritage sites along the Wild Atlantic Way to enhance visitor experiences. (Action 191, OPW)
9. In 2018, seventy-two projects were supported by the Structures at Risk Fund to the amount of €1.28 million, providing over 1,860 days employment. The Structures at Risk Fund was updated as the Historic Structures Fund in 2019 and was open for applications through the Local Authorities up to the end of January. The allocation for 2019 is €1.8 million. Applications were to be assessed in Q1 2019, with successful applicants being notified in due course. (Action 193, DCHG)
10. National Heritage Week 2018 was held in August as part of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018. It focused on sharing the stories of our built, natural and cultural heritage. Coordinated by the Heritage Council, 1,211 event organisers from the public, private and voluntary sectors organised 2,190 heritage events across the country. More than 435,000 people took part in events ranging from community archaeology to medieval festivals to nature camps for children in Ireland. (Action 195, Heritage Council)

Case Study: Maximising our Rural Tourism and Recreation Potential

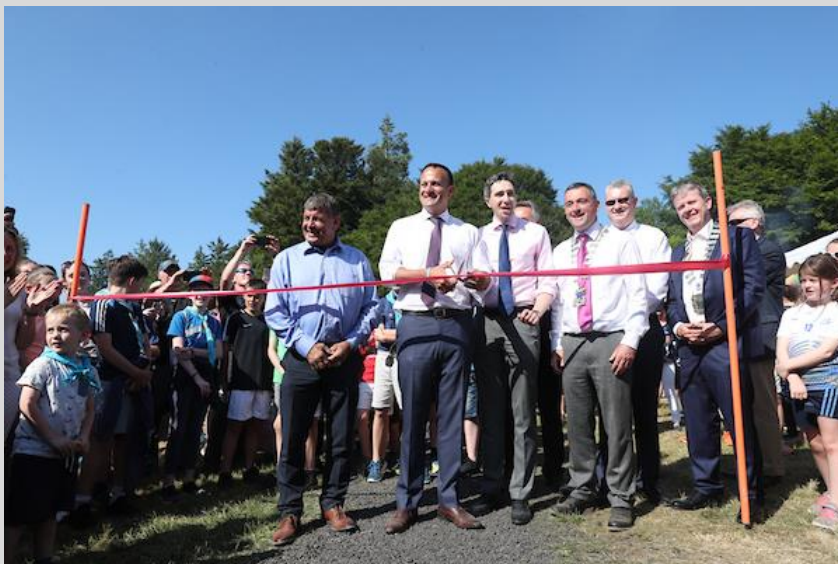
Development of the Walkway around the Upper Vartry Reservoir, Roundwood

The project to enhance and further develop the recreational benefits of existing woodland around the Upper Vartry Reservoir, Roundwood was undertaken by the Roundwood and District Community Council (RDCC) and co-funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the Department of Rural and Community Development, Irish Public Bodies (IPB) together with Wicklow County Council. It was formally opened by An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar T.D., and Minister of State for Agriculture Food and the Marine, Andrew Doyle T.D., on 9 June 2018.

Funding from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine was provided under the NeighbourWood Scheme. This Scheme is designed to help community groups, in cooperation with Local Authorities, to develop opportunities for recreation while creating and developing woodlands for the benefit of current and future generations. The scheme is also designed to provide outdoor classrooms for teachers to show children the important contribution forests make to society in terms of social, economic and environmental benefits.

The scheme consists of three components: NeighbourWood Establishment which provides funding towards the creation of new NeighbourWoods on open greenfield sites, NeighbourWood Enhancement which provides funding towards the silvicultural enhancement and improvement of existing woodlands which are proposed for development as neighbourwoods, and NeighbourWood Facilities which provides funding towards the installation and/or upgrade of appropriate recreational facilities within woodland areas submitted under NeighbourWood Establishment or NeighbourWood Enhancement.

The Roundwood NeighbourWood Project itself has brought the existing woodland to a better standard for recreational use through surfacing trails, putting in place informative signage and carrying out maintenance programmes once dead trees and undergrowth have been cleared. The project will also raise awareness of the woods as an important natural heritage and landscape amenity area for residents and visitors. The woodland structure has been improved through light selective thinning to facilitate development of regeneration (both natural and planted) enhancing its ecological function.



Taoiseach Leo Varadkar formally opens the Roundwood NeighbourWood

This successful work has opened the woodland to a variety of user groups, such as local people exercising both themselves and their dogs on a daily basis; families as access is now safer and there is a myriad of paths for children to explore; other walking groups, particularly active retirement groups, visitors, as the scenery in the area is fabulous with great views of the Sugarloaf and Scarr; local clubs such as the athletic club who use the tracks for training; the local soccer club whose pitch adjoins the woodland; birdwatchers, and of course those interested in the history of the Vartry Reservoir.

Case Study: Maximising our Rural Tourism and Recreation Potential

Call of the Wild campaign

Tourism projects provide significant opportunities for supporting jobs in rural areas. Call of the Wild was a joint regional tourism initiative between Tourism Ireland, Fáilte Ireland and the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport which asked people living along the Wild Atlantic Way to share images and videos of the hidden gems in their counties whether it be a secluded beach, unknown coastal walkway or the perfect café, so the tourism agencies could in turn share it with the world.

The aim of the campaign, which ran for three months from October to December 2018, was to showcase the beauty of the Wild Atlantic Way – the longest defined coastal touring route in the world - and to encourage potential visitors in the US, Britain, Germany and France and other markets to come and experience the Wild Atlantic Way for themselves in 2019.

The response from people along the Wild Atlantic Way was significant, with more than 4,000 uploads of stunning scenery, regional delicacies and local delights captured on camera and then shared via social media using the hashtag #MyWildAtlanticWay. From these, the top submissions from each county featured in a suite of videos that were launched in overseas markets by Tourism Ireland.

A sporting personality from each county helped launch the campaign, serving as Call of the Wild Ambassadors. These included: Alan Cawley from Sligo, Aidan O'Mahony from Kerry, Michael Murphy from Donegal, Lee Keegan from Mayo, Podge Collins from Clare, Orla Finn from Cork, David Collins from Galway and Róisín Upton from Limerick. Well-known Irish personalities based in Britain also joined the campaign to share their personal stories and memories of the Wild Atlantic Way. These included Angela Scanlon, Laura Whitmore, Vogue Williams, Connor Phillips, Paul O'Connell, Chris Walley, Clodagh McKenna and Pixie McKenna.

Collaboration with local communities was key to the success of the campaign, which delivered superb results, with some 14 million views recorded in Ireland's top tourism markets. This campaign has further enhanced Ireland's tourism image overseas and placed a greater emphasis on promoting regional growth.



Pillar 4 - Fostering Culture and Creativity in Rural Communities

Many rural communities all over Ireland have a thriving arts scene and it is important that facilities and assets in rural areas are enhanced to strengthen the social fabric of rural life. This Pillar aims to increase access to the arts and to develop culture and creativity in rural communities. The Irish language is also a vital part of our culture and heritage and is a key resource in Gaeltacht communities.

Some recent key developments under this Pillar include:

1. Investment in small festivals has increased from a budget of €930,419 in 2016 to €1.4 million in 2019. The average festival grant has subsequently increased from €8,731 to €10,852 over a period of three years. The increased investment has enabled arts activity to take place in local communities in every county in Ireland and increased opportunity for public engagement in the arts. (Action 208, Arts Council)
2. As part of the Creative Ireland Programme, in 2018 the nationwide culture network supported the rollout of over 1,200 new initiatives/projects with funding of more than €4 million. (Action 210, DCHG)
3. As part of the Creative Ireland programme 31 five-year culture and creativity strategies were published and launched in September 2018. Each Local Authority received €97,000 to roll out annual plans under their county's Plan. (Actions 211 + 212, DCHG and Local Authorities)
4. Cruinniú na nÓg took place across the country on 23 June 2018, with over 500 free events for children and young people taking place. This had a significant impact on rural communities with many children and young people taking the opportunity to engage in new activities in their own communities. In 2019, Cruinniú na nÓg will take place on 15 June with additional funding being provided to those Local Authorities outside of Dublin. (Action 214, DCHG)
5. The Arts and Culture Capital Scheme 2016 - 2018 is focused on the refurbishment and enhancement of the existing stock of arts and culture facilities throughout the country. To date, funding of €10.21 million has been allocated to 134 projects. This is the most significant investment in cultural infrastructure in a decade with funding provided to a range of facilities, including arts centres, theatres, galleries and museums, as well as artists' studios and creative spaces throughout the State. (Action 216, DCHG)
6. Culture Night 2018 saw almost €190,000 being provided in funding to regional locations for programmed events. RTÉ's Culture Night concert was streamed live for the first time to an audience of almost 100,000. In addition 35,000 tuned in on Radio 1. (Action 218, DCHG)

7. Funding continues to be provided to a wide range of capital projects throughout the Gaeltacht to assist with the development and upgrading of community facilities. 59 capital projects were funded in 2018 at a cost of €1.3 million. Current funding was provided to 2 Gaeltacht organisations to fund 94 language assistants in 139 participating schools throughout the Gaeltacht. 2,030 packages under the Clár Tacaíochta Teaghlaigh programme were distributed to families who wish to raise their children through Irish. 200 Irish language summer camps were organised at a cost of €330,000. (Action 224, DCHG)

Case Study: Fostering Culture and Creativity in Rural Communities

The Blackwater Valley Makers

The Blackwater Valley Makers is a new collective of artists, craftspeople and designers from the Blackwater Valley area around the town of Fermoy in North County Cork who have come together with the support of Cork County Council's Directorate for Municipal Operations and Rural Development to raise the public awareness of the quality of craft and design production in this area of rural County Cork.

The genesis of this project has come about through developmental work done in 2017 by Cork County Council's Municipal Directorate, bringing together business, culture and tourism interests through the establishment of the Fermoy Forum.

This process brought together a group of highly talented craft makers and designers with studios in the local hinterland but who were working in isolation. Over a 12 month period the group, working with Cork County Council's Arts Office has achieved several key goals including the establishment of a collective of thirteen outstanding craftspeople and designers, the launch of a new website, a new craft trail and most recently the opening of a new outlet in the centre of Fermoy, through the Council's Pop-up Shop Scheme.

The impact of this initiative in the town of Fermoy has been significant. Townspeople and businesses have welcomed the development as a valuable addition to the trading resources of the town. The makers have seen a huge increase in their sales, and footfall into the shop unit has exceeded their expectations.

Ceramicist Siobhain Steele, Chairperson of Blackwater Valley Makers said, "The support of Cork County Council has been critical to our success to date. They have given us the confidence to achieve our objectives and we are now seeing this in public reaction. Typical responses include "we had no idea such talent existed on our door step". "Fermoy has been crying out for a place like this"."

Glass artist, Suzanne O'Sullivan said, "The Pop Up created a fantastic buzz within the town square. A huge number of individuals and families of all ages came to browse and purchase and were genuinely impressed and proud of our showcase. People were delighted to have the opportunity to meet and chat with the makers. Great conversations were had and dialogue was opened for future art projects and ideas".

Plans are now advancing for the establishment of a permanent retail space, the development of incubation units for emerging creatives, increasing opportunity for creativity through the development of classes and workshops delivered by local makers and planning for the development of Creative Experience packages for the tourist market in co-operation with local tourism interests.



Fermoy Tidy Towns Group Awards 2018: Overall Best Initiative 2018. L-R Carol O'Sullivan, Suzanne O'Sullivan, Siobhain Steele, and Charley Mc Carthy of Blackwater Valley Makers

Case Study: Fostering Culture and Creativity in Rural Communities

Historic Shopfronts of Leitrim

Creative Ireland's core proposition is that participation in cultural activity drives personal and collective creativity, with significant implications for individual and societal wellbeing and achievement. By identifying specific areas of focus, the Local Authorities, Creative Ireland Co-Ordinators and Culture Teams highlight the potential for long-term impact to the well-being of communities with reference to our children, our cultural infrastructure, our creative industries and our global reputation.

Under the Creative Ireland Programme's Creative Communities many projects work collaboratively to create dynamic and innovative partnerships. One example of a successful partnership is a project called Historic Shopfronts of Leitrim. This is supported by the Creative Ireland Programme, Leitrim County Council Arts Division and the Irish Countrywomen's Association.



Leitrim shopfront

As many changes of use and occupancy occur to historic buildings in both rural and urban locations, this project sets out to highlight the significant contribution of traditional shopfronts to our built environment and to acknowledge the social value of the local shop in people's lives and communities.

The project aims to celebrate the traditional shopfronts of Leitrim through photographic documentation and exploration of the stories, people and events associated with these important social spaces. This project planned to encourage and develop more creative activity and collaboration within our rural communities. It brought the community together with tangible results.

Rolled out in 2018, the project documented noteworthy shopfronts or traditional commercial premises through photography, complemented by a social narrative. In 2019, it plans to publish this material in book form and exhibition, as a starting point to explore issues of heritage, design, planning and globalisation within the community.

Leitrim County Council, Creative Ireland Co-Ordinator and Culture Team supported this project through funding made available by the Creative Ireland Programme in 2018.

Pillar 5 - Improving Rural Infrastructure and Connectivity

The objective of this Pillar is to improve the connectivity of rural communities through improved broadband connection, improved transport links, and by reducing the risk of flooding in vulnerable areas.

Some recent key developments under this Pillar include:

1. As of Q3 2018, 74% of the 2.3 million premises in Ireland had access to high speed broadband. This includes 209,216 premises passed as part of the eir rollout of high speed broadband to 300,000 rural premises. In the second half of 2018 the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment received and evaluated the final tender in the procurement process for the National Broadband Plan to engage a company to build and maintain a future proofed high speed broadband network to 542,000 premises in Ireland, mainly in rural areas. The Government confirmed the preferred bidder in May 2019. (Action 232, DCCAE)
2. The Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce Implementation Review 2018, setting out progress on measures to accelerate the rollout of broadband infrastructure, and planned actions for 2019, was published in February 2019. (Action 233, DCCAE & DRCD)
3. As part of the prioritisation strategy for the National Broadband Plan (NBP), each Local Authority was asked to identify up to 12 sites for Broadband Connection Points (BCP). In total, 296 locations countrywide have been selected to become BCP sites. These sites include community centres, schools and sports clubs. All BCPs will be publicly accessible and will offer local residents in rural areas the opportunity to connect to high-speed broadband ahead of the delivery of nationwide coverage. (Action 234, DRCD)
4. In February 2019 ComReg published on its website a national mobile phone coverage map. The map will enable consumers to choose the network provider which best meets their needs, and will be of particular assistance to consumers in rural areas. (Action 245, ComReg)
5. The second Annual Stakeholder Forum of the Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce took place in October 2018. This event brought together representatives from Local Authorities, Government Departments, telecommunications operators and community groups to engage in open dialogue around issues impacting on broadband and mobile phone coverage, and to identify solutions to those challenges in order to enhance and improve services. The Forum also informed actions to be progressed by the Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce in 2019. (Action 247, DRCD)
6. A total of 65 new evening/night time Local Link services were approved for funding in 2018 and commenced operations in July 2018, running on a pilot basis up to the end of December 2018. A review in December 2018 showed the majority of services were performing well, with 4 non performing services ending in December 2018. New routes commenced in January 2019 and

demand responsive routes will continue to be developed nationally throughout 2019 in response to local need. (Action 252, NTA)

7. €20 million in funding was allocated under the Local Improvement Scheme in 2018. Over 1,200 private roads in rural areas have benefitted from investment of over €38 million under the Local Improvement Scheme during 2017 and 2018. (Action 259, DRCD)
8. Under the Regional Airports Programme in 2018 a total of €3.65 million was paid in capital funding in respect of safety and security related projects at the regional airports of Donegal, Kerry and Ireland West Airport Knock, and funding of operational support for the regional airports totalled €3.77 million. €21.7 million has been allocated to the programme for 2019. (Action 260, DTTAS)
9. A €1 billion investment in an additional 118 flood relief schemes over the coming decade was launched in May 2018. The OPW and the Local Authorities are pro-actively engaging on the arrangements and structures to be put in place to advance the implementation of the first tranche of projects. In most cases, Project Steering Groups have been established to oversee the implementation of the projects and Local Authorities are leading on the delivery of the projects. (Action 265, OPW)
10. The Uíbh Ráthaigh Taskforce has completed its Action Plan for the area, with plans to publish and commenced implementation of same in Spring 2019. The Taskforce was successful in securing funding under the second round of the Rural Regeneration Development Fund announced in February 2019. This funding will support the implementation of measures contained in the Action Plan, through the appointment of a Project Manager to coordinate progress. (Action 277, Údarás na Gaeltachta)

Case Study: Improving Rural Infrastructure and Connectivity

Local Authority Broadband Officers

The Department of Rural & Community Development provides funding to each Local Authority to assist with the employment of a Broadband Officer. This funding has increased from €35,000 to €42,000 for 2019.

The role of the Broadband Officer is of vital importance as they provide a local point of contact for industry and the public regarding telecoms issues. The appointment of Broadband Officers has been highlighted by telecommunications operators and other stakeholders as an extremely important development.

Broadband Officers have successfully submitted applications to the Department of Rural and Community Development for funds in excess of €500,000 awarded under the Digital Innovation Programme. This programme was established to support Local Authority led projects that test digital solutions to local issues, or address digital deficiencies. Applications ranged from infrastructure projects, to life saving uses of digital technology, cultural promotion and tourism initiatives, to scientific research and smart street furniture.

Broadband Officers are also responsible for overseeing the rollout of the WiFi4EU initiative, potentially releasing €60,000 in European funds per Local Authority for free public WiFi access. The Department of Rural and Community Development will co-fund this initiative.

Broadband Officers are leading on the development of Digital Strategies for each Local Authority which will enable communities to make full use of digital technology in their daily lives.



They are also involved in a number of other initiatives in their functional areas, including the Smart Communities Initiative which was recently launched in Tubbercurry, and the Development of the Digiwest network of Rural Digital Working Hubs which recently received funding under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund, and which will see Hubs established in Swinford Co. Mayo, Stranorlar, Co. Donegal, Tulsk, Co. Roscommon and Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo, in partnership with the Western Development Commission.



Broadband Officers at the Telecommunications Action Group meeting February 2019

Case Study: Improving Rural Infrastructure and Connectivity

Digital Skills for Citizens Scheme

The internet and digital technologies are transforming the way people live and work today, yet figures from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) show that 1 in 7 people living in Ireland have never used the internet. They cite lack of skills and the belief that they don't need it as the key barrier to using it.

Addressing the foundations of the digital divide means reaching out to these citizens and helping them participate in a digital society. The Department of Communication Climate Action and Environment's Digital Skills for Citizens Scheme is providing basic digital skills classes through community, voluntary and not-for-profit organisations to help citizens take their first step online.

Communities are at the heart of everything and classes are taking place in libraries, schools, community centres, etc., across all counties. Training is targeted at people over 45, farming communities, small business owners, unemployed people, persons with disabilities and disadvantaged groups. Classes are tailored to meet the needs of the participants. Minister Seán Canney visited a Digital Skills training class in Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo, where he observed members of the farming community learning about the Agri-Food package and the many benefits of embracing technology.

Since the commencement of the Scheme in 2017, over 37,000 citizens have received training including 14,600 citizens over the age of 65 and over 5,200 members of the Farming Community. In addition to providing citizens with the skills to use online Government services, participants have reported that they feel less isolated and confident to use technology to stay in touch with family and friends.

Further details on the Scheme and the National Training Schedule is available at www.dccae.gov.ie/digitalskills



Digital Skills session in Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo with Minister of State Sean Canney

Progress Status of Actions

The table below provides a brief update on the status of individual Actions.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
Pillar 1 – Supporting Sustainable Communities					
1	Support over 600 towns and villages through an enhanced Town and Village Renewal Scheme, with funding of up to €12 million per annum, to support their revitalisation, boost their potential to support increased economic activity and improve the living and working environment of rural dwellers.	DRCD	2017-2019	In progress	Under the 2018 Town and Village Renewal Scheme, €21.3 million in funding was approved for 224 projects countrywide in 2018. Details of the projects approved under the scheme can be found at the following link on the Department’s website https://drcd.gov.ie/about/rural/town-village-renewal-scheme/ . Almost 500 projects have been funded under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme since the Action Plan for Rural Development commenced and a further call for proposals was launched in April 2019.
2	Develop and pilot an initiative to encourage increased residential occupancy in town and village centres.	DRCD	Q3 2017	In progress	The pilot scheme involving 6 rural towns was launched in October 2018. This scheme is now in progress, lessons learned through the pilot will inform future investment in rural towns and villages.
3	Complementing the Town & Village Renewal Scheme, roll out the National Town Centre Health Check Programme in selected rural towns across Ireland to maximise the contribution of important facilities and assets within rural towns, in particular heritage resources.	DCHG / Heritage Council	Q2 2017	In progress	<p>A workshop was organised by the Heritage Council in Monaghan for Border Towns (e.g. Cavan, Dundalk, Letterkenny, Monaghan and Sligo) in June 2018 in partnership with Monaghan County Council and various Departments including DCHG, DHPLG and DRCD. A Border Towns Town Centre Health Check Feedback report was submitted to the partner Departments in September 2018.</p> <p>The first Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC) CTCHC workshop was delivered in November 2018 in Ballina in partnership with Mayo County Council and relevant Departments. It is planned that a Position Statement on Border Towns will be prepared for March/April 2019 with the support of the relevant Departments. It is also planned that building reuse and energy conservation projects will be established in early 2019, when the 2-year data for historic town centres is available.</p>

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
4	Finalise and implement the recommendations of the Framework for Town Centre Revival to assist with the regeneration of rural towns.	DBEI	2017-2019	Completed	Action Completed. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
5	As part of Rebuilding Ireland, the Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness, support all local authorities to respond to the needs of their communities and deliver 47,000 new social homes which should also stimulate construction and other economic activities on a local and regional basis.	DHPLG	2017-2021	In progress	<p>Following budget 2018 and 2019 negotiations, additional funding secured under Rebuilding Ireland has facilitated an increase in the delivery ambition for Build, Acquisition and Leased homes from 47,000 to over 50,000. By end 2018, 3 years into the 6-year programme some 21,231 homes had been provided, which is ahead of target at this point. Roughly one in four new homes built in 2018 was a Social Housing Home – the number of new social housing homes built in 2018 was eight times greater than the number built in 2015.</p> <p>8,422 new homes were brought into the active social housing stock through build, acquisitions, voids and leasing programmes in 2018. 38% of these were delivered by the Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness in partnership with Local Authorities. Construction figures from December 2018 show almost 5,000 new social housing homes currently being built across 291 sites and this is being added to on a weekly basis. 27,103 new households had their housing need met under Rebuilding Ireland in 2018.</p>
6	Review planning legislation to allow the change of use of vacant commercial properties in cities, towns and villages, including vacant or under-utilised areas over ground floor premises, into residential units without having to go through the planning process.	DHPLG	2017	Completed	Action completed. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
7	Increase delivery of small housing schemes in towns and villages as an alternative to one-off housing.	DHPLG	2017	In progress	DHPLG is examining mechanisms to support local authority development plan-led initiatives to enable small housing schemes in rural towns and villages further to National Policy Objective (NPO) 16 of the National Planning Framework. Tipperary County Council has brought forward a practical guidance manual for the delivery of clustered housing, which the Department is giving further consideration to as an input to action under NPO 16.
8	Based on an examination by the Working Group on Urban Renewal, review the Derelict Sites Legislation with a view to assisting in the revitalisation of towns and villages.	DHPLG	Q4 2017	Completed	Action completed. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
9	Consider the relative requirements and identify appropriate targets for an additional Rural Resettlement Initiative as a measure to facilitate wider re-utilisation of existing housing stock.	DHPLG	2017	In progress	It is already possible for households to move and relocate between local authority areas, including relocating from an urban to a rural location, under the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Scheme. DHPLG is also currently examining additional ways to facilitate households, who are qualified for social housing, and who may wish to relocate to rural areas.
10	Launch a new phase of the CLÁR Programme in 2017, with funding of €5m, to support small infrastructural projects in rural areas experiencing depopulations.	DRCD	2017	Completed	<p>Building on the CLÁR 2017 programme which supported 233 projects, the 2018 CLÁR Programme funded 389 small infrastructure projects during 2018 across all 4 measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measure 1: Support for Schools/Community Safety Measure 194 • Measure 2: Play Areas (including MUGAs) 98 • Measure 3: First Response Support Measure 70 • Measure 4: Mobility and Cancer Care Transport Measure 27 <p>A further call for proposals under CLÁR was launched in February 2019.</p>
11	Expand the Tidy Towns Competition with a view to increasing the level of support available to applicants and the addition of a number of new categories and/or elements to the competition.	DRCD	2017-2019	Completed	Action completed. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
12	Provide support for An Taisce National Spring Clean to heighten awareness of litter and waste issues and recycle and reuse where possible.	DCCAIE	Ongoing	In progress	The National Spring Clean takes place each April. For further details see Nationalspringclean.org
13	Support a built heritage investment scheme of an estimated €6 million between 2017 and 2019, which supports employment of skilled and experienced craft workers, tradespeople and conservation professionals to invest in and assist in the conservation and re-use of heritage	DCHG	2017-2019	In progress	The Built Heritage Investment Scheme is administered through the 31 LAs. In 2018, the allocation was €2 million. 284 projects were funded, over €4.7 million of private funding leveraged, and over 17,000 days of employment were created. The 2019 scheme was launched in November 2018 and €2.5 million allocated nationwide.
14	Implement the GLAS Traditional Farm buildings grant scheme to help in the conservation of traditional farm outbuildings as a support to rural communities.	Heritage Council	2017-2019	In progress	The Traditional Farm Buildings Scheme which the Heritage Council runs in partnership with DAFM, supported 50 projects in 2018. This included conservation works to 89 buildings, 88 of which serve as wildlife habitats. The 2019 Scheme closed for applications on 19 February.
15	Make use of the new RAPID programme to provide small scale seed financing for capital and small scale infrastructure projects of a regenerative nature in disadvantaged areas, including provincial towns.	DRCD	2017	Completed	Action completed. This scheme was replaced by the Community Enhancement Programme (CEP). For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
16	Implement the Health & Safety Authority's Farm Safety Action Plan 2016–2018, with a focus on high risk activities such as tractor and machinery use, livestock handling, and forestry and timber work on farms, as well as the development of new ways of improving farmer skill levels, particularly around risk identification and management. Measures will include the promotion of farm safety through targeted awareness campaigns, farm inspections and training courses.	HSA	2017-2018	In progress	The current Farm Safety Action Plan expired in 2018 and the Farm Safety Partnership Advisory Committee will carry out an assessment on the implementation of the plan with a view to developing a further action plan expected to run from 2019 to 2021. Separately, during 2018 Minister Pat Breen convened the Farm Safety Task Force and has asked the HSA to move forward in conjunction with the Dept. of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and other stakeholders to implement the final outcomes of the Task Force concerning improved training and safety awareness measures and targeted actions in relation to safer work practices. It should be noted that 2018 has produced the lowest level of fatality statistics for the farming sector, a total of 15 fatalities in the farming sector in 2018; this is a reduction of 40% from 2017.
17	Prioritise farm safety through knowledge transfer and inclusion of farm safety measures through knowledge transfer schemes.	DAFM	Ongoing	In progress	Year 3 of Knowledge Transfer is now in progress, with farm safety a key element of the programme.
18	Provide support for an estimated 1,700 small-scale environmental projects under the Local Agenda 21 Environmental Partnership Fund to promote sustainable development at local level.	DCCA	2017-2019	In progress	Some 880 local projects were supported in 2018 under this scheme. The 2019 Scheme will launch in Q2 2019.
19	Provide funding for Volunteer Centres and Volunteer Information Services, as well as national organisations such as Volunteer Ireland, which aims to strengthen those organisations and foster a culture of volunteering in Ireland, including to the benefit of rural communities and community-based organisations.	DRCD	Ongoing	In progress	<p>Payments of €1.7m were made to 21 Volunteer Centres, 8 Volunteering Information Services and 4 national volunteering supporting organisations, in Q3 2018. Further actions taken to advance volunteering include the grant of €200,000 to support IT upgrades for Boardmatch and Volunteer Ireland platforms in Q4 2018. These upgrades will enhance user experience and facilitate those seeking to find a volunteering role.</p> <p>The Dormant Accounts Fund Action Plan 2018 included provision of €1.2m in 2019 for the upgrading of the eight Volunteering Information Services to full Volunteer Centres in order to provide a consistent level of volunteering infrastructure nationwide. Discussions to give effect to this commitment commenced with stakeholders. A Call for Input paper was launched in Q4 2018 as the first step in developing a national volunteering strategy.</p>
20	Oversee and monitor the implementation of actions to support the Post Office Network, arising out of the report of the Post Office Renewal Board and the Post Office Hub Working Group.	DCCA	Ongoing	In progress	An Post is a commercial organisation and decisions on the operations of the company are taken by the Board of An Post. While some consolidation of the Post Office network has been undertaken, An Post has focused on developing new products and services.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
				<p>An Post has confirmed the decision by its Board to provide a mortgage package as part of its financial services strategy. The mortgage offer will be among a set of new products that will include credit cards, personal loans and fintech (Financial Technology) services offered via partnerships under a new brand, An Post Money. An Post issued a Request for Proposals for joint venture partners around mortgages at the end of 2018.</p> <p>The Digital Assist pilot initiative was launched on 28th September 2018. Government funding of €80,000 was allocated to roll out the pilot scheme which has seen 10 post offices kitted out to assist citizens with online Government interactions. An Post has ensured that a visible smart tablet, keyboard and printer encased in a free standing unit is available to the public providing access to Government and An Post websites. The pilot will provide data and insight in relation to the provision of offline Government services to citizens.</p>
21	Continue to support the use of rural post offices for the delivery of payment services such as social welfare payments.	DEASP	Ongoing	<p>In progress</p> <p>The Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection has given effect to this commitment through its current cash services contract with An Post. The contract specifies that outlets providing welfare payments must be available within fifteen (15) kilometers of 95% of customers in a rural area.</p>
22	Develop a strategy for the growth and development of the credit union sector, which is an important resource in rural Ireland, and ensure that credit unions benefit from regulatory support, in order to respond to the needs of a changing economy.	DoF	Ongoing	<p>In progress</p> <p>An Implementation Group was established to oversee and monitor the recommendations set out in the Commission on Credit Unions Report (2012) and the Credit Union Advisory Committee (CUAC) report (2016). The term of the Implementation Group ended in December 2018. The CUAC Implementation Group Final Report was published in January 2019. In addition, revised regulations for credit unions commenced on 1st March 2018 which make changes to the investment and liquidity requirements and allow for greater diversification of investment income.</p> <p>Other areas where support has been provided include the establishment of the Credit Union Restructuring Board (ReBo) and the availability of €250 million for voluntary restructuring of credit unions facilitated by ReBo which oversaw 82 restructuring projects involving 156 credit unions during its lifetime. ReBo concluded its restructuring work on 31 March 2017 and is currently being wound down through primary legislation. Restructuring continues, facilitated by the Central Bank, albeit at a reduced rate.</p>

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
23	Investigate the potential of the German Sparkassen model and the Kiwibank model for the development of local public banks that operate in defined regions.	DRCD	2017	Completed	Action completed. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
24	Increase the number of GPs in rural areas by 2019 through the implementation of the agreement reached with the IMO on rural GP practices, which covers changes in the qualifying criteria for rural support, an increase in the rural practice allowance and an amendment of the special items of service covered.	HSE	Ongoing	In progress	256 GP practice units were in receipt of supports under the Rural Practice Support Framework at end 2018, which relates to 352 individual GPs benefiting under the new scheme. This is a significant increase in the number of GPs benefitting from rural supports, which stood at 167 prior to the introduction of the new scheme in May 2016.
25	In line with the Connecting for Life Programme, provide support for local strategies across rural Ireland to address suicide and improve mental wellbeing.	HSE	2017-2019	In progress	Connecting for Life, Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide (2015-2020) was launched in 2015. The strategy is being led by DoH and includes actions assigned to the HSE and various Government departments. Responsibility for monitoring and reporting systems to support the delivery of the Strategy has been assigned to the National Office for Suicide Prevention. The Cross-Sectoral Steering Group, established to implement the Strategy, has held 11 meetings so far and is scheduled to meet quarterly in 2019. There are 17 Connecting for Life Local Plans, all of which have been now launched.
26	Consider the treatment of family farms and small businesses in relation to the 'Fair Deal' Nursing Homes Support Scheme.	DoH	2017	In progress	A draft General Scheme of a Bill is currently with legal advisers for advice and legal quality control review. Subject to legal advice, it is expected to bring the Heads of Bill to Government soon. The changes to the Scheme will come into effect in 2019 subject to the legislative process.
27	Continue the rollout of a multi-year programme of investment worth €435m for circa 90 projects in public nursing home facilities and district and community hospitals in rural areas which could provide up to 5,000 construction-related jobs during their delivery.	HSE	Ongoing up to 2021	In progress	At the end of November 2018, a total of 24 projects were either at construction completed stage or are operational. A further 6 projects are at construction stage and due for completion in 2019.
28	Deliver 18 new primary care centres in rural Ireland and support the establishment of primary care teams to allow people to avail of a comprehensive range of health and social care services in their local areas, including access to ultrasound services.	HSE	2018	In progress	In the period July to December 2018, the final two Primary Care Centres (PCCs) became operational (Tullamore and Dungarvan) and so completed the delivery of all 18 Primary Care Centres. Ongoing funding in the future will further enhance the development of Primary Care Centres. The HSE is continuing to make progress on measures to support the development and enhancement of radiology services in the primary care sector throughout the country. It is intended that increased access will be provided through a number of different models including outsourcing,

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
				resourcing hospitals directly and developing hospital/primary care partnerships.
29	Plan and resource the Primary Care workforce, including GPs, community nursing and allied health professionals, to address the health and social care needs of the population in rural communities, in conjunction with a wider range of network services.	HSE	Ongoing	<p>In progress</p> <p>Investment in Primary Care staff continued in 2018 and a range of new approaches were developed in service delivery across the country. In particular, a range of funding initiatives in Primary Care therapy grades supported an increase of 171.34 whole time equivalents from the end of 2014 to 1,651.99 to end November 2018:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physiotherapists—increase of 29.64 WTEs (end 2014: 527.59 to end Nov 2018: 557.23) • Occupational Therapists—increase of 51.51 WTEs (end 2014: 490.3 to end Nov 2018 : 541.81) • Speech & Language Therapists—increase of 90.19 WTEs (end 2014: 462.76 to end Nov 2018: 552.95). <p>In addition, 114 Assistant Psychologist posts and 20 staff grade psychology to support Counselling in Primary Care services for children and adolescents were approved. The vast majority of these posts were filled at end 2018.</p> <p>The number of GP training places has increased from 170 places filled in 2017 to 193 places filled in 2018. Over 400 applications for the 2018 GP Training Programme were received. This represents a significant increase of almost 50% on the number of applications for the 2017 programme.</p>
30	Building on the current number of 14 Community Intervention Teams (CITs), support the full nationwide access to CIT services to facilitate the treatment of patients in their own local community, whether in the patient’s home, primary care centres or public or private nursing homes.	HSE	Ongoing	<p>In progress</p> <p>Dedicated funding under Budget 2018 supported Community Intervention Team development and expansion around the country during 2018. Two new CITs were developed in rural locations while seven existing teams in 10 rural locations benefitted from an expansion of services.</p>
31	Enhance supports for older people in rural areas through the network of Day Care Centres, continued provision of grant aid to the voluntary sector and through the implementation of the National Positive Ageing Strategy to support older people in staying healthy and involved in their local communities.	HSE	2017-2019	<p>In progress</p> <p>The HSE carried out a mapping of existing day care centres nationally in 2018, and the report is being finalised. The HSE provide funding to many organisations that work with older people and further the objectives of the National Positive Ageing Strategy. This funding is ongoing by its nature, as the strategy and the goals therein are intended as direction for future engagement for the continued promotion of older people’s health and wellbeing. Engagement with older persons’ interest groups is ongoing through arenas such as an annual stakeholder forum.</p>

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
32	Maintain the network of senior helplines in operation throughout the country, which offer a listening service for older people provided by trained older volunteers, and help address issues such as loneliness and isolation in rural areas.	HSE	Ongoing	In progress	Provision of this measure is ongoing. The network is kept operational on an ongoing basis.
33	Support the role of schools in communities across the country by revising protocols to ensure that no small school closes against the wishes of parents and facilitate amalgamations where desirable.	DES	2017 onwards	Completed	Action Completed. The revised protocol is available on the website of DES.
34	Engage with relevant education stakeholders and school property owners to develop guidelines for schools to facilitate, where feasible, the use of school buildings out-of-hours.	DES	2017	Completed	Action completed. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
35	Develop a new funding scheme for youth services in line with the recommendations of the Value for Money and Policy Review of Youth Programmes, which will help support the provision of such services across the country.	DCYA	2017	In progress	The Government has approved the Scheme Outline for a new single targeted youth funding scheme. The target group for the scheme includes young people whose outcomes are impacted by a range of factors including rural isolation. Preparation for implementation of the new scheme is currently underway.
36	Expand provision of affordable childcare through the implementation of the Affordable Childcare Scheme, which will assist in delivering greater accessibility to childcare services across the country.	DCYA	Q4 2017	In progress	DCYA officials continue to progress the development of the Affordable Childcare Scheme. Following on from the adoption of the Childcare Support Act in the summer of 2018, comprehensive secondary legislation is being drawn up. Detailed policy guidelines and a governance framework for the Scheme are being developed and will be finalised in the coming months. The development of the ICT system which will underpin the scheme is progressing and as such the Scheme is now expected to launch in October 2019. Once implemented the Scheme will make childcare more accessible and affordable for families all over Ireland. A comprehensive communications campaign in the coming months will advise parents and guardians how they can avail of the scheme and the levels of subsidy to which they could be entitled. Information about the Affordable Childcare Scheme can be found at www.affordablechildcare.ie
37	Develop the Public Participation Networks (PPNs) to ensure all local groups can input to local decision making processes by: -Providing funding for a Resource Worker for each PPN;	DRCD	2017-2019	In progress	DRCD continued to support the operation of PPNs during 2018. Funding for a Resource Worker for each PPN continued to be provided in 2018. The Department also committed to the provision of funding for a Support Worker for each PPN in 2019. Salesforce database was rolled out to all

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Providing a database for each PPN's registered local community organisations; -Rolling out local training and capacity building; -Developing and improving a practical PPN User Guide; and -Establishing a National PPN Advisory Group, fully representative of all PPN stakeholders. 			PPNS, supported by dedicated training. A fully representative National Advisory Group held 4 meetings during 2018. A practical PPN User Guide was developed and is currently being reviewed.	
38	Consult extensively with the PPN Network and sectoral interests in developing Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies.	Regional Assemblies	Ongoing	In progress	All three Regional Assemblies (NWRRA, SRA & EMRA) invited submissions via social, print and radio media, with submissions received from the PPN during the consultation process.
39	Implement the Framework Policy on Local & Community Development to ensure greater participation of rural communities in the planning, development, delivery and evaluation of policies, strategies and interventions.	DRCD	Q2 2017 to end 2019	In progress	A Cross Sectoral Group (CSG) was established in 2017 to assist in the development of an Implementation Plan for the Framework Policy for Local and Community Development in Ireland (2015). A set of draft actions has now been agreed by the CSG. It is anticipated that the implementation plan will be approved in Q2 2019.
40	Engage with local communities on water quality projects through the Local Authority Waters and Communities Office.	DHPLG	Ongoing	Completed	Action completed. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
41	Through the National Dialogue for Climate Change, ensure that rural communities have a key role in contributing to our transition to an environmentally sustainable, climate resilient, low carbon economy.	DCCAE	Ongoing	In progress	<p>The work of the Dialogue continued during 2018. The first Regional Gathering was held in Athlone on the 23 June 2018 and the second was held in Tralee on 10 November 2018. The aim of these gatherings is to build awareness, engagement and motivation to act in relation to the challenges presented by climate change. Workshops aim to engage people in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspiring a shared purpose: Through better understanding of the big issues and identifying some key principles on what a better future could look like. • Exchanging ideas: Harnessing what exists and connecting the dots to unlock opportunities for action that individuals, public, private and community sectors can collaborate upon.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shaping the process: For future regional and local events under the National Dialogue on Climate Action, exploring how to engage and mobilise people in the process. <p>Further Regional Gatherings will be held in 2019. More information is available at www.dccae.gov.ie/climatedialogue</p>	
42	As part of the Energy White Paper, roll out a range of actions to increase the engagement with and participation of citizens and communities in rural areas, to allow for greater involvement in the planning of energy infrastructure in their local areas.	DCCAE	Ongoing	In progress	<p>On July 20th 2018 Government approval was given for the High Level Design of the new Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (RESS). One of the key pillars of the new scheme is the development of an Enabling Framework for Community Participation in renewable electricity generation.</p> <p>In July 2018 a pilot support scheme for domestic rooftop solar PV, targeted at self-consumption was launched, after consultation with the micro renewable sector. This new grant will enable domestic households to generate their own electricity and reduce their electricity bills. The establishment of the scheme and an installer's Code of Practice will allow for the development of a sustainable micro renewable sector in Ireland.</p>
43	As part of the National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-making 2015-2020, support Government Departments and State agencies to involve children and young people appropriately in policies relating to the planning and development of rural communities.	DCYA	Ongoing	In progress	<p>A five year development plan for Comhairle na nÓg is due to be commissioned in 2019 and will set out the strategic objectives over a five year period. The development of the plan will include consultation with stakeholders, an environment scan and a lessons learned review. Hub na nÓg has engaged in a number of successful training programmes with Sports Ireland, HIQA and Creative Ireland over the course of 2018.</p>
44	Develop a new and effective rural proofing model which will ensure that rural development issues are considered in the decision-making processes of all Government Departments, State bodies and agencies.	DRCD	Q4 2017	Delayed	<p>Following further review of this action, rural proofing will now be considered as part of the development of the next phase of rural policy during 2019. A focused Working Group will be established to discuss how rural communities are impacted by Government policies and programmes and to determine the most appropriate model to ensure an equitable outcome for rural areas.</p>
45	Ensure that, in developing the new National Planning Framework, the long-term needs of rural Ireland are taken into account.	DHPLG	2017	Completed	<p>Action completed. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.</p>
46	Work with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and other relevant stakeholders to identify research needs in relation to rural and regional development to inform policy formulation and implementation.	DRCD	2017-2019	In progress	<p>DRCD continues to engage on an ongoing basis with rural development research experts in order to understand priority research needs and inform policy development. DRCD co-hosted a series of rural development seminars in 2018/2019, in conjunction with the Royal Irish Academy. The Rural Conversations series, which focused on the themes of economic</p>

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
				development, social cohesion, and sustainable rural communities, elicited rural stakeholder views on issues emerging in relation to rural development.
47	Deliver the LEADER measure of the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, with funding of €250m to support economic development and job creation, social inclusion and the environment in rural areas.	DRCD	2017-2020	In progress A total of 1,644 projects were approved for LEADER funding to the end of 2018, representing a value of over €55 million. A further 355 projects were at various stages of the approval process seeking funding of approximately €22 million. Of the total, €38 million in funding was approved for a myriad of projects across all programme themes, demonstrating the increased level of engagement with rural communities by the LAGs. 15 projects have been approved under the LEADER Food initiative worth a value of €682,300.
48	Invest €12m in 7 Fisheries Local Action Groups in coastal communities to support a wide range of initiatives targeting job creation, social inclusion, tourism, community regeneration and market development around our coastline.	DAFM	2017-2020	In progress In 2018, the 7 FLAGs awarded grants worth €4 million to 285 new rural projects around Ireland's coast. Grants paid out amounted to in excess of €2 million. These investments will add to the €1.8 million paid out in 2017 by the 7 FLAGs. These grants will support a wide range of local initiatives to foster marine tourism and leisure, community regeneration and employment.
49	Invest €37.5m to implement the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme, SICAP, as the main social inclusion programme of Government to support 2,800 local community groups, including low income workers and young people not in education, employment or training, and support lifelong and community education opportunities for disadvantaged communities and individuals.	DRCD	Ongoing to end 2017	Completed Action Completed. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
50	Provide 500 additional places on the Rural Social Scheme which employs the skills of farmers and fishermen to provide services which benefit rural communities.	DEASP	2017	In progress The Department supports 3,350 participants and 139 supervisors through the Rural Social Scheme who are engaged in supporting almost 2,000 community projects. An additional 500 places were announced in 2017, plus 250 places in 2018 as part of the Programme for Government commitment to Rural Ireland. Overall there has been an increase of just over 30% in the places available under the RSS since 2017 – from 2,600 to 3,350.
51	Continue the implementation of supports for Social Farming which offers, on a voluntary basis, farming and horticultural participation to people who avail of a range of therapeutic day support services.	DAFM	Ongoing	Completed The contract awarded to Leitrim Development Company in respect of the Social Farming Network has been extended by DAFM in 2018 with associated funding of €350,000 for a further 12-month period. There is the possibility for a further one contract extension of up to 12-months. There

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
				are a further 3 social farming model projects that are active and that received funding in 2018. These contracts were extended in 2018 and a further two one-year extensions are possible.	
52	Through the Better Energy Homes Scheme, provide over €300m in grants to householders to improve the energy efficiency of their homes, while supporting over 2,000 jobs and helping make approximately 46,500 rural homes more environmentally sustainable.	DCCAE	2017-2019	In progress	From July to December 2018, 7,364 homes carried out energy efficiency improvements with grant assistance from the scheme. Approximately 60% of these homes are located outside Co Dublin.
53	Through the Better Energy Warmer Homes scheme, deliver approximately 15,500 energy efficiency upgrades to people living in energy poverty in rural areas, while also boosting regional employment and helping make rural homes more environmentally sustainable.	DCCAE	2017-2019	In progress	From July to December 2018, 1,872 homes received free energy efficiency upgrades through this scheme, with over 80% of these homes located outside Co. Dublin.
54	Through the Sustainable Energy Communities Network, deliver approximately 700 rural community and premises upgrades.	DCCAE	2017-2019	In progress	There are now over 160 communities in the SEC Network with over 100 of these in rural areas. In 2018 additional funding was allocated to allow community groups to carry out some of the projects identified through working with SEAI on their Energy Master plans.
55	Continue to implement the Better Energy Communities scheme which provides competitive funding to community energy projects all over Ireland.	DCCAE	Ongoing	In progress	In 2018, €20 million was spent in grant funding to 37 community energy projects across Ireland under the scheme. These projects represent nearly 1,200 homes and over 450 commercial and public buildings.
56	Recruit 800 Gardai per year, achieving an overall Garda workforce of 21,000 personnel by 2021 comprising 15,000 Garda members, 2,000 Reserve members and 4,000 civilians.	DJE	2017-2021	In progress	This measure is in progress. 800 Garda trainees entered the Garda college in 2018.
57	The Garda Inspectorate, on behalf of the Policing Authority, will examine the dispersement and use of resources available to the Garda Síochána in the delivery of policing services to local communities and make recommendations to provide a more effective, visible and responsive policing service.	Policing Authority	2017-2018	In progress	<p>The Garda Síochána Inspectorate report entitled “Policing with Local Communities” was submitted by the Policing Authority to the Minister for Justice and Equality on 17 December 2018. The report was published on 21 December 2018.</p> <p>The report addresses a wide range of issues around how policing is delivered to local communities. The report suggests a number of principles and actions for An Garda Síochána to consider in order to enable demand for policing services to be better understood, to enhance service delivery and to assist in the effective allocation of resources. It also makes a number of recommendations as to how Garda visibility could be improved and in relation to other matters, including rural crime and a national</p>

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
				approach to custody facilities. The report also deals with a broad range of issues relevant to the ongoing programme of Garda reform.
58	Launch a pilot scheme to reopen six Garda stations both urban and rural, to determine possible positive impacts that such openings will have on criminal activity, with special emphasis on burglaries, theft and public order. The results of this pilot will feed into the wider review of resources being overseen by the Policing Authority.	An Garda Síochána	2017	In progress The works required at one station, Donard, have been completed and the building has been handed over by the OPW to An Garda Síochána. Implementation of the programme and reopening of the remaining 5 stations is being pursued as a priority and it is expected that works should be completed in each case in 2019.
59	Continue to support and prioritise community crime prevention schemes including Neighbourhood Watch and the Text Alert Scheme.	DJE	Ongoing	In progress The Department of Justice and Equality continues to provide funding for Community Alert and also for a rebate scheme for costs incurred for local Text Alert Groups. Since it was launched in September 2013, Community Text Alert has grown quickly with a total of 164,000 subscribers and in the order of 3 million text message sent annually. Every Garda Division, rural and urban, now offers the text alert service and An Garda Síochána has published guidelines to assist in the establishment and operation of local groups. At the Ploughing Championships in September 2018, the Minister for Justice and Equality announced details of the 2018 Text Alert Rebate Scheme which is available to over 1,000 local groups registered under the Garda Text Alert Scheme. DJE is making in the region of €150,000 available to local communities who wish to apply for a rebate towards the costs associated with running their local Text Alert Scheme.
60	Introduce a new Community CCTV Grant Aid Scheme which will benefit both urban and rural communities.	DJE	2017	In progress The grant aid scheme launched by the DJE in 2017 continues to offer groups the possibility of support for establishment of community-based CCTV systems. 20 grant applications have been approved to date, involving approved funding of approximately €500,000.
61	Significantly invest in the Seniors Alert Scheme, which facilitates valuable community based support for vulnerable older people living alone, particularly those in isolated rural communities, by providing grant assistance towards the purchase and installation of personal monitored alarms to enable them to live securely in their own homes.	DRCD	Ongoing	Completed The Department of Rural and Community Development invested €6.9 million in the Seniors Alert Scheme in 2018 for this demand-led scheme. The scheme had a total of 44,763 participants as of 31 December 2018. This represents an increase of 90% (21,231 new participants) since 31 December 2017.
62	As part of the Government's Capital Investment Plan 2016-2021, invest €46m in a modern, effective and fit-for-	An Garda Síochána	2017-2021	In progress Investment is continuing in a planned manner over the lifetime of the Plan. This is in addition to the investment of almost €30 million in the period

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
	purpose Garda fleet over the lifetime of the Plan, to provide the Gardaí with additional high-powered vehicles to ensure that Gardaí are mobile, visible and responsive on the roads and in the community to prevent and tackle crime.			2013 to 2015. Of that allocation, as confirmed in Budget 2019, €10 million will be available to An Garda Síochána for purchases for the fleet in 2019.
63	As part of An Garda Síochána Modernisation and Renewal Programme, a new computer-aided dispatch will be developed to ensure responsive and co-ordinated deployment of Gardaí in the community.	An Garda Síochána	2017-2021	<p>In progress</p> <p>An Garda Síochána is establishing regional control centres to respond to calls for service from the public. Each control centre will be supported by computer-aided dispatch technology and when complete will provide national coverage. The current status of the establishment of the control rooms is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combined control room for the Dublin Metropolitan Region and Eastern Region is complete • Combined control room for the Western Region and Northern Region is planned to be operational by Quarter 1 2019 • Control rooms for the Southern Region and South Eastern Region are planned to be fully operational by Quarter 3 2019
64	Rollout the new Community Facilities Fund, announced in Budget 2017, which will invest over €2m in rural and urban areas, to enhance communities, address disadvantage and improve social cohesion at local level.	DRCD	2017	<p>Completed</p> <p>Action completed. This scheme was replaced by the Community Enhancement Programme (CEP). For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.</p>
65	Invest €30m in sports and community facilities around the country through the Sports Capital Programme.	DTTAS	2017	<p>Completed</p> <p>Action completed. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.</p>
66	Support the sustainability of 450 Men's Sheds across rural Ireland which provide a safe space where men can gather and participate in their communities, develop social networks and potentially gain new skills and access information.	Irish Men's Shed Association	2017-2019	<p>In progress</p> <p>As of February 2019, the Irish Men's Sheds Association has 447 registered members on its books, well on course to exceed its target. It is likely that the number of registered men's sheds in Ireland will exceed the 500 barrier in Q3 2019. Sheds are now present in all 32 counties, and Ireland continues to enjoy the highest per capita concentration of men's sheds in the world.</p>
67	Promote the health, wellbeing and skills of up to 15,000 men through the 'Sheds for Life' programme.	Irish Men's Shed Association	2017-2019	<p>In progress</p> <p>The Sheds for Life initiative continues to gather momentum. Sheds for Life is currently embarking on an ambitious research and evaluation process, in conjunction with the Irish Research Council, Waterford IT, IT Carlow and the National Centre for Men's Health, which will broaden and deepen its impact in the years ahead.</p>

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
Pillar 2 - Supporting Enterprise and Employment					
68	Implement eight Regional Action Plans for Jobs to facilitate each region to achieve its economic potential and raise its employment levels and monitor the impact of these Plans on rural Ireland.	DBEI	2017-2018	In progress	During 2018, Minister Humphreys refreshed and refocused the Regional Action Plan for Jobs. Nine new “Regional Enterprise Plans” were launched by the end of Q1 2019. Between 2015 and 2018 over 146,000 new jobs were created in the regions, surpassing the Government’s target of 135,000 new jobs to be created by 2020.
69	Provide investment of up to €50m over the period to 2020 to support collaborative approaches to boost enterprise and job creation across the regions. This competitive funding is aimed at accelerating economic recovery in every part of the country by delivering on the potential of local and regional strengths.	Enterprise Ireland	2017-2020	In progress	In May 2017 EI launched the Regional Enterprise Development Fund (REDF) with funding up to €60 million, to support step change Enterprise Development projects in each region with funding of between €250k and €5 million per project. The first call was in April 2017 with 21 projects receiving funding and the second call was in May 2018. In Call Two, 77 projects applied, 66 were eligible for evaluation and a further 21 projects were approved funding of €29 million approximately in November 2018. The 42 successful projects are at various stages of implementation and execution of their plans, the approved funding will be drawn down over the next 3 to 4 years as the promoters deliver against agreed project metrics and KPI’s.
70	Increase FDI in each of the 8 NUTS III regional areas by 30-40% in the period to 2019.	IDA	Ongoing to Q4 2019	In progress	Since the beginning of IDA Ireland’s ‘Winning’ Strategy, 407 Investments have been won for the regions and almost 27,000 net jobs have been added on the ground in locations outside Dublin. An average of 102 investments were won annually by locations beyond Dublin, compared to an annual average of 69 under the previous strategy. There are now over 132,000 people employed across 681 firms in IDA client companies outside the capital, this is the highest number of people employed by IDA clients outside of Dublin in the history of the organisation. Every region posted net employment gains in 2018 with 56% of all net new IDA client company jobs created last year outside of Dublin.
71	As part of the IDA’s €150m property investment programme, complete the construction of three new advance buildings in Tralee, Castlebar and Sligo and accelerate the development of six new advance buildings in Limerick, Dundalk, Galway, Athlone, Carlow and Waterford.	IDA	2017-2019	In progress	The IDA is directly investing in regional Ireland through their €150 million Regional Property Programme. The funding announced as part of Budget 2019 means that the Agency has been allocated €120 million of the €150 million funding to date. Buildings have been completed in Sligo, Waterford, Athlone, Tralee and Castlebar. In 2019, the IDA is continuing with the building programme with two facilities currently under construction in

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
				Limerick and Waterford. There are also buildings planned for Dundalk, Galway, Athlone and Carlow.
72	Support the creation of 500 new jobs per annum and continue to maintain existing jobs in Údarás na Gaeltachta client companies in the Gaeltacht, including through supports for post-research and pre-commercialisation units in the life sciences, food and business support services and creative enterprise sectors, as well as for community development initiatives.	Údarás na Gaeltachta	2017-2019	In progress Údarás na Gaeltachta client companies created 589 new jobs in 2018, resulting in the highest level of employment in client companies in 10 years. The target of the creation of 500 new jobs is ongoing for 2019.
73	Through the LEOs, strengthen local enterprise development and job creation with the following supports, which include indicative projections, on an annual basis, for outside Dublin: 1,400 jobs through Measure 1 approvals, 2,800 Start Your Own Business (SYOB) participants, 23,000 participants on LEO training courses, 2,100 mentoring participants, 18,500 Student Enterprise Awards participants, – 350 MicroFinance Ireland (MFI) loan applications.	LEOs	2017-2019	In progress Results for 2018 for the LEOs are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,411 jobs through Measure 1 approvals. This is significantly ahead of target. It should be noted that these are projected jobs as a result of the Priming and Business Expansion Grant supports given to LEO clients. • Start Your Own Business Programme participants – 3,415 • Training courses/programme participants – 28,767. • Total number of mentoring participants – 7,280. • Student Enterprises Awards participants – 20,247 • Micro Finance Ireland Applications – 260, this is behind target which according to the LEOs reflects weak market demand for this product.
74	Continue to build on the LEO Communications Strategy to communicate the range of supports and services available at local level.	LEOs	Ongoing	In progress In 2018, LEOs organised over 300 events during ‘Local Enterprise Week’ across every local authority area. These events included one-to-one business clinics, start your own business boot camps, finance workshops, trading on-line seminars, data protection briefings and Brexit-themed workshops. A new co-ordinated communications strategy was launched in November to promote LEO supports and services, building on the LEO brand and utilising all relevant communication channels. Enterprise Ireland will continue to work with the Local Government Management Agency and LEO committees to drive communication activities and strategy.
75	Determine the feasibility of enabling Local Authorities to introduce rates alleviation schemes to support rural development policy objectives.	DHPLG	Ongoing	In progress A provision to enable LAs to introduce rates alleviation schemes to support local or national policy objectives is included in the Local Government (Rates) Bill 2018. The Bill was published in August 2018 and is currently making its way through the legislative process.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
76	Conduct a revaluation of commercial properties in nine rural counties to ensure fairness and equity in the levying of commercial rates on business with a view to rolling out to further counties in 2017.	DHPLG	2017	In progress	The National Revaluation Programme (known as REVAL 2019) was commenced in October 2017. Phase 1 resulted in the revaluation of all rateable properties in Dublin, Waterford and Limerick LA areas. Phase 2 resulted in the revaluation of all rateable properties in Carlow, Kildare, Kilkenny, Leitrim, Longford, Offaly, Roscommon, Sligo and Westmeath with a second revaluation of South Dublin County Council also completed. The new valuations will be published in 2019 and become effective for rates purposes from 2020 onwards.
77	As part of the National Planning Framework, develop planning guidance for a positive approach to enterprise development in rural areas, where appropriate.	DHPLG	2017	In progress	Planning guidance development is progressing towards completion in the first half of 2019, with dissemination thereafter to Local Authorities and other stakeholders via circular letter.
78	Progress the proposal for an Atlantic Economic Corridor to attract Irish and multinational investment, and grow jobs and economic opportunities in the western regions in the context of the new National Planning Framework.	DRCD	2017-2018	In progress	Three subgroups, with agreed workplans, have now been established to support the work of the Atlantic Economic Taskforce, focusing on the issues of infrastructure, enterprise space and communications and marketing strategies. In addition, Atlantic Economic Corridor Officers have been operational in each Local Authority and have now established themselves as a coherent network that will play a critical role in delivering on the goals of the Taskforce and the Subgroups.
79	Implement Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth which aims to double the value of the blue economy and deliver 29,000 additional jobs across the various maritime sectors.	DAFM	Ongoing	In progress	Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth (HOOW) is being implemented across Government through a range of sectoral strategies. Key in 2018 was DHPLG's preparation of Ireland's National Marine Planning Framework and progress in the development of Ireland's Marine Spatial Plan. The Marine Coordination Group continues to monitor the progress in Ireland's Integrated Marine Plan (HOOW). A detailed update on progress was provided at the annual Ocean Wealth Summit in June 2018 and a report on progress and economic update published - https://www.ouroceanwealth.ie/sites/default/files/Publications/oe_infographic_oct_2018.pdf . Ireland's ocean economy reported a turnover of over €5.5bn in 2017 with the direct economic value estimated at €2bn. The latest figures show 21% increase on 2015 values. The 2017 estimates also suggest that Ireland's 'blue/ocean economy' continues to grow at a faster pace than the general economy. The sector provided employment for approximately over 32,000 people (FTEs). Established Marine Industries provided 92% of the total turnover and 93% of total employment in Ireland's ocean and coastal economy. The regional distribution of Ireland's

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
				ocean economy shows a high intensity of employment in the N-W, S-W and W of the country. Further research of the regional and rural distribution of marine industries and accompanying characteristics is being carried out by NUIG in association with the Marine Institute. Analysis is also being carried out under Ireland's Marine Spatial Plan and associated Marine Planning Framework.
80	Introduce a Marine Development and Investment Strategy for the Gaeltacht in line with Harnessing our Ocean Wealth.	Údarás na Gaeltachta	2017	Delayed Údarás na Gaeltachta is continuing to work with other relevant state agencies to progress such a strategy. In the meantime, Údarás has recognised in its own strategy for 2018-2020 that Marine is a very significant part in delivering organisational goals. "Theme 2: Foster innovation and increase enterprise - Develop a strong, innovative, enterprise-led culture to create enterprise opportunities that will empower the Gaeltacht work force. There will be a particular focus on using a wide range of the Gaeltacht's natural resources to promote sustainable development." Pairc na Mara – a dedicated business park for marine businesses in Cill Chiarán is the cornerstone of this strategy (See Action 127 for further details).
81	Invest €21m over five years to provide new and upgraded property solutions to attract FDI and indigenous Irish industries to locate in the Mid-West region.	Shannon Group	Ongoing	In progress Projects completed in the year to December 2018 include a 33,000 ft ² Grade A advance technology manufacturing unit, a 56,000 ft ² Grade A office block. Both are to be leased by Jaguar Land Rover. These two facilities will have the capacity to cater for in the region of 500 people. Other projects completed include an extended 110,000 ft ² advanced technology manufacturing unit for GE Sensing and the commencement of the refurbishment of a 35,000 ft ² office block for existing tenants. In Q2 2019, work will commence on the construction of three new ATMU/Industrial units in SFZ generating 150,000 ft ² of space for new FDI companies.
82	Provide a new incubation space in Shannon to encourage start-up businesses and rural entrepreneurs.	Shannon Group	Q4 2017	Completed Action completed. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of The Action Plan for Rural Development.
83	Develop advanced property solutions for innovative companies seeking to move from the incubator phase to market-led and competitive commercialisation in the Gaeltacht area.	Údarás na Gaeltachta	2017 and ongoing	In progress Údarás na Gaeltachta continues to refurbish/modernise/upgrade its property portfolio to meet its client companies specific needs and enable the companies to innovate and scale their businesses.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
84	Create appropriate incentives and attract further businesses to join the existing aviation industry cluster in the International Aviation Services Centre in Shannon.	Shannon Group	Ongoing	In progress	Shannon Group's International Aviation Services Centre (IASC), in conjunction with Shannon Commercial Properties, continues to work successfully to attract further aviation and aerospace companies to establish operations in Shannon. Over 65 aviation and aerospace companies are now established in and around Shannon and the number continues to grow. IASC has provided extensive input to the consultancy study commissioned by DTTAS and DBEI to examine the potential for growing the Irish aircraft MRO (Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul) industry and the necessary policy initiatives and incentives to enable such growth.
85	Develop four Innovation Hubs in Donegal, Mayo, Galway and Kerry to support entrepreneurship and start-up companies in the Gaeltacht Regions.	Údarás na Gaeltachta	2017	Completed	The 4 innovation hubs in Gaoth Dobhair, Béal an Muirthead, An Ceathrú Rua and An Daingean are fully operational. Further hubs are currently in the planning/development stage.
86	Review the recommendations of the CEDRA Report and the Charter for Rural Ireland and identify how best to progress any recommendations that have not yet been implemented.	DRCD	Q1-Q3 2017	Completed	Action completed. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of The Action Plan for Rural Development.
87	Enhance awareness amongst SMEs and entrepreneurs of State business supports to raise their financial capacity in either starting a business, or in growing and expanding an established business.	DBEI & SME State Bodies Group	2017 and ongoing	In progress	DBEI has responsibility for the Supportingsmes.ie online tool. This is a cross-Government initiative to assist Irish start-ups and small businesses to navigate the range of Government supports. By answering 8 simple questions, the tool will then assist in directing businesses to the most relevant resource out of a total 170 Government supports listed. This tool is currently being upgraded and will re-launch during 2019.
88	Conduct a review of the credit application process with a focus on the administrative burden for SMEs and the time costs to them.	DOF	2017	Completed	Action completed. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
89	Deliver, through the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland, effective financial supports to SMEs that address failures in the Irish credit market by sourcing additional funding from international organisations and securing new on-lenders.	SBCI	2017	Completed	To the end of December 2017 €925 million of SBCI supported lending was provided, supporting 22,928 SMEs and 113,841 jobs. The SMEs who received SBCI finance were from all sectors of the Irish economy with a wide geographical spread, with approximately 85% of loans going outside Dublin and 24% of loans going to the Agriculture sector. The €300 million Brexit Loan Scheme was designed, in cooperation with DBEI and the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland (SBCI), to provide working capital support to enable eligible Irish businesses to

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
				<p>implement necessary changes to address the challenges posed by Brexit. The Scheme opened for applications on 28 March 2018 and it will remain open until 31 March 2020. The total number of loans progressed to sanction at bank level to date is 69, with a value of €15.7 million. The Future Growth Loan Scheme is being developed by DAFM and DBEI in partnership with the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland (SBCI) and the European Investment Fund (EIF). It will be delivered through participating finance providers and make up to €300 million of long-term investment loans available to eligible Irish businesses, including farmers and the agri-food & seafood sectors. Arrangements are currently being finalised to have the Scheme in place and ready to launch as soon as possible. The Scheme will run for three years from its launch date.</p>
90	Examine procurement policies with a view to enhancing measures to support SMEs to access public procurement markets, including through training and information events and the development of guidance and information notes.	DPER	2017 and ongoing	<p>In progress</p> <p>The SME Advisory Group has regular proactive engagement with SME Representative Bodies. The OGP works with the SME industry representative bodies as well as DBEI, ITI and EI to promote the engagement of SMEs in public procurement. A cross-body communications strategy subgroup of the SME Advisory Group has been formed. Its aims include to encourage potential suppliers to build their awareness, understanding and ultimately skills in public tendering; understand the role respective bodies play in the communications strategy; work in partnership with industry representative bodies to considerably improve understanding and awareness of public procurement in the target supplier community; and focus on efficient and effective use of scarce resources in investing time and money in proposed interventions. The strategy has led to the introduction of industry targeted and regional informative breakfast briefing events, which have taken place in a number of locations around the country with further events currently being planned to take place in 2019. The Public Procurement Guidelines for Goods and Services were published in 2017 and were revised in January 2019, these guidelines will help deliver a more consistent approach to procurement throughout the State making it easier for SMEs to deal with procurers. The OGP will be considering appropriate refinements to enhance the significant measures already in place to support SME access. These will take account of the lessons learned to date in the procurement reform programme as well as feedback received through the SME Advisory Group and regional briefings.</p>

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
91	Agree and finalise a protocol between DJEI and DAHRRGA in relation to the Local Enterprise Offices and LEADER to ensure a collaborative approach to supporting enterprise at a local level.	DBEI	Q1 2017	Completed	Action Completed. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
92	As part of the Trading Online Voucher Scheme under the National Digital Strategy, approve a minimum of 1,000 vouchers per annum to micro businesses across the country of which approximately 60% will be from rural Ireland.	DCCAIE	2017-2019	In progress	The Trading Online Voucher Scheme is on target to meet objectives. In 2018, 1,100 vouchers were approved and distribution was in line with the target of approximately 60% of businesses in rural Ireland.
93	As part of the EU Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning 2014-2020, roll out the women's entrepreneurship initiative to promote female entrepreneurship and develop their entrepreneurial capabilities.	DJE	2017	Completed	Action completed. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
94	Continue the implementation of supports for the Rural Female Entrepreneurs Initiative (Acorns programme).	DAFM	Ongoing	Completed	In 2018, Fitzsimons Consulting was awarded, as part of a competitive tender process, a contract to further develop and implement the ACORNS programme. ACORNS is a six month part time development programme for aspiring rural female entrepreneurs aimed to equip early stage entrepreneurs with the appropriate knowledge, confidence and networks to successfully start and develop sustainable businesses in rural areas. Over the past four years Acorns has provided peer support and learning for 50 plus women with start-up businesses in rural areas each year. A one year extension is allowable on this contract.
95	Create an industry-wide, long-term plan, for Ireland as a global hub for the production of Film, TV Drama, and Animation.	DCHG	2017	Completed	Action completed. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
96	Develop and launch a new www.ruralireland.ie website which will act as a central portal to provide information on relevant supports, and showcase best practice examples of rural development.	DRCD	2017	Completed	Action Completed. For further details, see the Second Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
97	Conduct a review of the REDZ initiative to measure its impact on rural communities, and to support the development of future calls for projects under the scheme.	DRCD	2017	Delayed	A Request for Tenders to conduct a review of the 2015 and 2016 REDZ programmes has been prepared and will be issued shortly. There are some good examples of successful REDZ projects throughout the country and the concept of towns and villages working across administrative boundaries was incorporated into the Town and Village Renewal Scheme in 2017 and subsequent years.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
98	Through the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP), support the establishment and development of social enterprises in rural areas.	DRCD	Q4 2017	Completed Action completed. The 2015 – 2017 SICAP ran to 31 December 2017 and included supports for social enterprises in some Local Authority areas. SICAP 2018 - 2022 was launched in April 2018 and provides supports including provision of training, volunteering and employment opportunities, business planning and development services, and development of new services to improve the sustainability of the enterprise.
99	Develop and publish a National Policy on Social Enterprise which will encompass the full range of activity in this sector.	DRCD	Q3 2017	In progress A Steering Group, which includes practitioners from the social enterprise sector, was established in the middle of 2017 to oversee the research. The Social Enterprise Policy is currently being finalised, informed by research and consultations with a variety of stakeholders during 2018 and Q1 2019. A draft National Social Enterprise Policy was published for public consultation in April 2019. The final Policy will be informed by the submissions received.
100	Commission a specific piece of research in relation to the impact of Brexit on rural areas, particularly rural areas in the Border region.	DRCD	Q1 2017	Closed In light of the body of work already carried out (and continuing) in relation to the impact of Brexit, it was decided not to proceed with this specific measure in the Action Plan, as it risked duplicating other work being conducted.
101	Fund the development of a programme of initiatives to increase the awareness and capacity of SMEs to deal with the practical consequences of Brexit for cross border trade.	Inter Trade Ireland	2017	In progress ITI continues to support SMEs to face the challenges associated with Brexit. ITI's Brexit Advisory Service includes the provision of factual advice, information materials and supports for capability building and the provision of other specialist expertise for companies. In 2018 over 4,000 companies engaged with Brexit Advisory Service through ITI Conferences, workshops, presentations and non ITI speaking events. Another key part of InterTradeIreland's Brexit work is the provision of Brexit 'Start to Plan' vouchers, which enable companies to obtain specialist advice in areas such as customs, tax, tariff and non-tariff barriers, legal and labour mobility issues. These are worth €2,250 to each of the companies. In 2018 there were 549 vouchers approved. In 2018 ITI completed its economic appraisal for the next stage of its voucher scheme which is intended to run from 2019-2021.
102	Complete the planned programme of courthouse refurbishment works in seven locations with an investment of €135m over two years and estimated employment of 700 over the construction period.	DJE	2017	Completed Action Completed. Construction in respect of all 7 courthouses has been completed with Mullingar Courthouse officially reopening in November 2018.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
103 Continue to deliver the National Waste Prevention Programme on behalf of the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, including country-wide programmes such as Green Enterprise, Green Business, Green Hospitality, Green Healthcare, Smarter Farming and 'Stop Food Waste'.	EPA	Ongoing	In progress	The EPA continues to lead the National Waste Prevention Programme. It was restructured in 2018 to align with the emerging circular economy model. Additional focus is being placed on addressing construction waste, plastics and food waste.
104 Continue to provide SEAI supports for small businesses across the country, including provision of advice through www.seai.ie , to help them to be more energy efficient and therefore more competitive and environmentally sustainable.	SEAI	Ongoing	In progress	In 2018, 69 Dairy Farmers availed of grant payments amounting to €300,000 under the Dairy Farm Support Scheme, which provides support for the installation of more efficient vacuum and milk pump technology. The SME Smart Lighting programme will continue into 2019. In 2018, €1.1 million in grant funding was availed of by 196 small and medium-sized enterprises. Successful applicants can receive support of up to 30% to upgrade to more efficient lighting and permanently reduce their future energy use and spend on lighting.
105 Through Food Wise 2025, support the creation of additional jobs along the supply chain from producer level to high-end value-added product development (target to 2025 is 23,000 jobs).	DAFM	Ongoing	In progress	Implementation and monitoring of Food Wise 2025 measures is ongoing via the High Level Implementation Committee, which is chaired by the Minister for Agriculture Food and the Marine. The Committee met seven times during 2018. Further information is available at https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/foodwise2025/
106 As part of Food Wise 2025, increase the value of food exports, which will support rural and coastal economies (target to 2025 is 85% increase in exports to €19bn).	DAFM	Ongoing	In progress	See update under Action 105.
107 Develop, enhance and promote the effectiveness of the Origin Green Programme as a key marketing tool for the Irish agri- food sector.	Bord Bia	2017-2020	In progress	Origin Green is the world's first national sustainability movement. This voluntary programme has evolved at an exceptional pace since its launch in 2012, to the point where virtually every level of the Irish food industry is now either preparing for, or actively engaged in, the journey towards sustainability. Origin Green clearly sets out Ireland's ambition to become a world leader in the delivery of sustainable, high-quality food and drink products. Since the inception of Origin Green in 2012, the programme has evolved over time to meet the ever-increasing market demands with regards to sustainability. Origin Green's 345 plus verified members now account for over 90% of Ireland's total food and drink exports. Origin Green provides the platform to build the reputation of Irish food and drink products in the regions and help grow the value of exports.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
108	Support a further cohort of new food entrepreneurs under Food Works and develop the Food Works Plus supports for those entrepreneurs continuing to pursue their ventures.	Bord Bia	2017	Completed	Action Completed. For further details, see the Second Progress Report of The Action Plan for Rural Development.
109	Support food start-ups through initiatives with retailers including the Food Academy Advance with Musgraves SuperValu and the Taste Buds Programme with Tesco.	Bord Bia	2017	Completed	Action Completed. For further details, see the Second Progress Report of The Action Plan for Rural Development.
110	Support the agri-food sector through the financial services industry to ensure that financial products are developed for all sectors of farming across the industry.	DAFM	2017	Completed	The €300 million Brexit Loan Scheme was designed, in cooperation with DBEI and the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland (SBCI), to provide working capital support to enable eligible Irish businesses to implement necessary changes to address the challenges posed by Brexit. The Scheme opened for applications on 28 March, 2018 and it will remain open until 31 March 2020. To date 69 loans to the value of €15.7 million have been progressed to sanction at bank level, of which 9 to the value of €3.9 million relate to food businesses. The Future Growth Loan Scheme is being developed by DAFM and DBEI in partnership with the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland (SBCI) and the European Investment Fund (EIF). It will be delivered through participating finance providers and make up to €300 million of long-term investment loans available to eligible Irish businesses, including farmers and the agri-food & seafood sectors. Arrangements are currently being finalised to have the Scheme in place and ready to launch as soon as possible. The Scheme will run for three years from its launch date.
111	Implement the Seafood Development Programme (2014-2020) through a range of supports for fishermen to adapt to the new Common Fisheries Policy, seafood processing, aquaculture, inshore fisheries and the Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGS).	DAFM	Ongoing	In progress	The European Maritime and Fisheries Fund Programme has committed in excess of 60% of its €238 million budget, with expenditure to end 2018 at €105 million (44% of budget). The Programme is being implemented through a suite of 19 schemes providing a broad range of supports, including capital investment, innovation, marketing, business planning, advisory services, training and supports to marine biodiversity and environmental sustainability.
112	Implement supports for the fishing, aquaculture and seafood processing sectors under: the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund Operational Programme to achieve sales of seafood worth €1 billion by 2020; the National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture Development; and Harnessing our Ocean Wealth.	DAFM	Ongoing	In progress	This measure is in progress, see Action 111 for update.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
113 Finalise the Draft Bioenergy Plan, which will capture the potential of the bioenergy sector and help generate employment opportunities.	DCCAIE	Q1 2017	Closed	Following an examination of the crossover in scope of the National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) and the Bioenergy Plan, it was intended that relevant policies and measures in the Bioenergy Plan would be integrated into the NECP and this action closed. The draft NECP was published in Q4 2018.
114 Create a Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (RESS) designed to encourage investment in renewable electricity generation in a cost effective manner and help support economic growth and job creation in rural Ireland.	DCCAIE	Q3 2019	In progress	The High Level Design of the new RESS was approved by Government in July 2018. The RESS is now subject to an EU State Aid approval process and it is expected that the first auction will take place in 2019. RESS will provide a framework for renewable electricity technologies to deliver renewable generation in a cost effective manner. Work is ongoing across three main areas: Detailed RESS auction design, EU State Aid notification and development of the enabling framework for community participation.
115 Create a Support Scheme for Renewable Heat (SSRH) which will help stimulate demand for biomass and support economic growth and jobs in rural Ireland.	DCCAIE	Q4 2018	In progress	Phase 1 of the scheme, an installation grant for heat pumps, opened for applications on 12 September 2018. Phase 2 of the scheme, an operational support for biomass boilers and anaerobic digestion heating systems, is expected to open for applications in 2019, subject to State aid clearance from the European Commission.
116 Establish a baseline assessment of the current level of Bioeconomy activity and opportunities across the various sectors in Ireland.	Dept. of An Taoiseach	Q1 2017	Completed	Action Completed. For further details, see the Second Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
117 Hold a consultative seminar on the Bioeconomy with key stakeholders, including the development agencies and the private sector.	Dept. of An Taoiseach	Q1 2017	Completed	A seminar on Bioeconomy was held in Feb 2017, and a National Policy Statement on the Bioeconomy published in March 2018.
118 Publish a high-level Policy Statement on the Bioeconomy in Ireland. Action 118 has evolved to the action below: Establish a Bioeconomy Implementation Group (BIG) on foot of the National Policy Statement on the Bioeconomy, published in March 2018.	DCCAIE & DAFM	Q2 2017	In progress	The Bioeconomy has the potential to contribute to decarbonisation, sustainable growth and job creation in agriculture, fisheries, forestry and technological sectors, with an emphasis on job creation in rural areas. The National Policy Statement on the Bioeconomy was published in March 2018. The Bioeconomy Implementation Group (BIG) was established in 2018 on foot of the National Policy Statement on the Bioeconomy. The BIG is tasked with addressing a number of key actions for the future success of the Bioeconomy in Ireland. The BIG met several times in 2018 and is in the process of publishing a draft report.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
119	As part of the International Financial Services (IFS) Strategy 2020, showcase the competitive and operational advantages of regional locations for new and existing international financial services activities.	IDA	Ongoing	In progress	IDA Ireland continues to prioritise regional locations during engagements with both new and existing clients in the International Financial Services portfolio. The value proposition includes the benefits to organisations of “second site” operations in Ireland in addition to the growing number of FinTech activities being carried out in regional locations.
120	Through the Regional Action Plans for Jobs process, identify, in consultation with EI, IDA and other stakeholders, areas for further IFS-related actions at regional level.	DBEI	Ongoing	In progress	The North-East, South-East & South-West Regional Enterprise Plans to 2020 have identified actions in relation to International Financial Services.
121	Through the Regional Skills Fora, facilitate close co-operation between education and training providers and enterprise in addressing identified skills needs in the regions and a local link with the implementation of other strategies including the Regional Action Plans for Jobs and Pathways to Work.	DES	Ongoing	In progress	Since the establishment of the Regional Skills Fora there is a greater focus on strengthening and establishing positive relationships between employers and the education and training system in the different regions. The Fora are engaging with a broad range of sectors, particularly high skilled manufacturing and ICT. The most up to date figures show 75% of engagement is with micro enterprises and SMEs. The RSF managers have engaged with over 1,000 enterprises in 2018, compared with some 700 in 2017. A key emerging strategy for industry both nationally and in the regions is the upskilling of the existing workforce at all levels. Although engagement is across a range of economic sectors, Manufacturing, Construction and ICT continue to be the three main areas of engagement.
122	Increase the number of young people accessing employment in their communities through: strengthening the apprenticeship and traineeship systems, enhancing the range of courses and increasing student, places, achieving Government targets of over 100 apprenticeship schemes, and a cumulative target of 50,000 apprenticeship and traineeship registrations to 2020	DES	2017-2020	In progress	There were 55,000 participants cumulatively in Quarters 1- 4 2018 upskilling through Skillnet. DES will continue to implement measures in the <i>Action Plan to Expand Apprenticeship and traineeship in Ireland 2016-2020</i> during 2019 with a particular focus on employer engagement. There will be ongoing support offered to relevant consortia via the Apprenticeship Council Secretariat, and a particular focus on employers and apprenticeship targets in 2019.
123	Increase options for post-secondary school leavers in rural Ireland through agreeing Annual Service Plans between SOLAS and Education Training Boards (ETBs), and monitoring progress against agreed quality and performance targets.	SOLAS	Ongoing	Completed	3-year Strategic Performance Agreements for 2018 – 2020 have been agreed between SOLAS and the 16 ETBs. Post-second level school leavers can avail of a host of FET options including apprenticeships, traineeships, PLC courses. Information is available through www.fetchcourses.ie or local ETBs.
124	Enact the Technological Universities Bill to underpin the development of a new model of higher education in Ireland, so that these regional institutions will have	DES	2017	Completed	Action completed. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
	greater industry links, support enterprise, underpin diversity and promote access and participation on a regional basis with a view to significantly boosting our capacity to create and retain jobs in regions.			
125	Increase the participation of young people in rural Ireland in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths through the SFI Smart Futures Programme, public engagement activities and through the support of regional science festivals in rural Ireland.	SFI	Ongoing from Q2 2018	In progress SFI engagement with rural communities through Science Week has increased year on year, with Science Week 2018 being the biggest event to date. In total, over 1,400 events took place across 24 counties. Festivals took place in the Midlands, Cork, South East – Waterford and Wexford, Cavan/Monaghan, Galway, Limerick, Sligo, Tipperary, Carlow and the Festival of Farming and Food organised by Teagasc, which is a multi-centre festival. Events take place in schools, libraries, third level institutions and corporate entities. SFI was also actively involved in the 2018 National Ploughing Championship, with a full programme across two days, including a Smart Futures stand for students and parents to chat about future careers in STEM, interactive physics experiments demonstrations and shows. Fifteen of the SFI Research Centres were also present, delivering workshops and exhibitions. The SFI Discover Centre Network brochure distributed in 2018, to all primary schools nationwide, highlights STEM engagement opportunities for schools in over 50 centres across Ireland. 640 Primary Schools nationwide received an SFI Discover Science and Maths Award in 2018.
126	Fund research proposals in Smart Agriculture/ Precision Agriculture to improve farm management and increase quality of life for farmers in rural Ireland.	SFI	Ongoing	In progress In the second half of 2018, SFI funded 8 awards in Smart Agriculture/ Precision Agriculture related areas. The combined value of these 8 awards was €1.4 million. For example, one award will study the application of novel, rapid analytical tools to identify the most efficient and profitable dairy cows. The objective is to routinely identify the most efficient animals in the national herd from which to breed the subsequent generations and thereby meet future national (and international) demand for dairy products. Another award will study how to transform Irish agricultural waste into high value, low carbon products by analysing and enhancing current and emerging agri-waste supply chains. It is envisaged that this project will contribute to the economics of waste management and enhance the Irish Bioeconomy.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
127 Strengthen links between Údarás and Institutes of Technology and Universities to build capacity in the Gaeltacht region and promote research and innovation.	Údarás na Gaeltachta	Ongoing	In progress	Údarás na Gaeltachta is working with NUI Galway and GMIT to develop a market-focused Marine Innovation and Development Centre that will provide 1,800 square metres of enterprise and incubation space for marine enterprise. Through collaboration with regional stakeholders and the HEIs, the project will provide specialist training and business development supports and targets the creation of 200 jobs. This project received Regional Enterprise Development Fund support of €200k in December 2018. Údarás na Gaeltachta continues working with all third level institutions partners in the economic development of the Gaeltacht and assisting with skills needs for client companies.
128 Develop stronger links with the diaspora to access investment, establish networks and source skills and experience for the Gaeltacht area.	Údarás na Gaeltachta	Ongoing	In progress	A formal relationship between Údarás na Gaeltachta and Scottish Chambers of Commerce was created in 2018, resulting in a commitment to open offices in Gaoth Dobhair, Donegal, to facilitate increased trading opportunities for Scottish businesses in Ireland, and for Irish businesses in Scotland by providing a 'soft landing' for companies in the gteic network (Innovation and digital hubs). Events and relations have also been developed with partners in Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Philadelphia and Glasgow.
129 Work with public and private sector stakeholders to identify and address skills training needs in traditional building skills and architectural conservation through the development and implementation of a Traditional Building Skills and Conservation Education Action Plan to assist the regeneration of our historic cities, towns and villages.	DCHG	2017-2018	In progress	A number of key steps have been drafted in a consultation report which, when finalised, will provide a national framework for architectural conservation curriculum development and the design and delivery of training provision for traditional skills.
130 Improve knowledge transfer and exchange to farmers by developing a network across all State agencies and relevant advisory bodies to deliver clear advice on how farmers can adopt sustainable practices that deliver both environmental and economic benefits.	Teagasc	2017-2020	In progress	The Teagasc Annual Programme sets out a range of knowledge transfer and exchange activities that involve networking and collaboration on sustainable farming practices. In a new initiative Agricultural Sustainability Support and Advice Programme, Teagasc is working closely with Government departments, agencies, industry and individual consultants to improve water quality. The Teagasc ConnectEd programme provides services and training to agri industry stakeholders around sustainable farming.
131 Develop and deliver training and education programmes for farmers to:	Teagasc	Ongoing	In progress	(a) Following on from Education Vision 2050, a CPD working group is being formed to plan the delivery of a comprehensive programme across all farmer groups.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
	<p>(a) ensure that the appropriate skillsets and knowledge are applied at each stage of development of the primary producer's business; and</p> <p>(b) Up-skill farmers as employers, in areas such as improving farm practices, employing staff and responsibilities as an employer</p>			<p>(b) Following on from the publication of the "People in Dairy Action Plan" in June 2018, new course material has been developed and is being delivered to targeted groups around farm labour management.</p>	
132	Continue to develop and implement the 'Options Plus' programme for improving off-farm income generation of farmers and to link farm families with a variety of learning opportunities provided by other agencies including the ETBs, LEOs, LDCs, third level institutions and the Department of Social Protection.	Teagasc	Ongoing	In progress	Regional Options workshops were undertaken in 2018 across the country. A study tour on diversification enterprises in Germany was also completed by some Options Coordinators. An Agri-Tourism national conference was held in October 2018.
133	Continue the rollout and promotion of www.opt-in.ie (a website aimed at helping rural dwellers find the means and skills necessary to increase their income generating options), currently piloted in Limerick and Tipperary.	DAFM	Ongoing	In progress	As the course offering has increased substantially, it has been necessary to build additional functionality into the system. The current focus of Opt-In development is on improving the training course offering and improving back-end functionality, while promoting wider use by Teagasc staff prior to actively promoting public participation. For example, functionality has been added to facilitate notifications of interest to registered users by Email, Facebook or Twitter.
134	Provide in the region of €1m per annum for the Advanced Irish Language Skills Initiative, aimed at training Irish speakers for employment in the EU institutions and at developing the freelance Irish language translation sector at home.	DCHG	2017-2019	In progress	Ongoing. Twelve third level courses are receiving funding and a Centre of Excellence is in operation.
135	Continue to support jobseekers through the network of local Intreo offices and DSP case workers.	DEASP	Ongoing	In progress	DEASP continues to provide support to jobseekers through its network of local Intreo centres and case workers.
136	Through the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP), increase work-readiness and support individuals in accessing employment and self-employment.	DRCD	Q4 2017	Completed	The 2015 – 2017 SICAP ran to 31 December 2017, the end of programme report was published in September 2018 and is available to download at https://drcd.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/SICAP-End-of-programme-report-2015-2017.pdf . SICAP 2018 - 2022 was launched in April 2018 and is providing opportunities for people to engage in a range of employment supports including the development of personal skills, lifelong learning, labour market training and one to one employment supports.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
137 Review impact of SICAP in rural areas and consider this review in the development of a re-designed SICAP for 2018.	DRCD	2017-2019	Completed	The redesigned SICAP 2018 - 2022 was launched in April 2018. The programme has reduced the number of goals from 3 to 2. Goal 1 - Community Engagement and Goal 2 - Individual Engagement. This reflects the need to engage and support the most disadvantaged individuals. The overall reduction in targets for the programme will ensure the Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) can provide intensive and targeted supports to more isolated communities.
138 Through the Dormant Account Funds, support disadvantaged groups in rural and urban communities through measures that assist their access to employment.	DRCD	2017	In progress	In July 2018, the Dormant Account Action Plan 2018 was launched with funding of almost €40 million announced for 45 measures across 10 Departments and State Agencies. The measures provide supports for economically, educationally and socially disadvantaged people and people with disabilities in communities across the country. Implementation of measures in 2018 resulted in almost €28 million from the Dormant Accounts Fund being utilised for projects and programmes which address disadvantage, right across the country. These measures took place across a range of areas including sport, health, caring and social innovation and social enterprise. In July 2018, a Review of the Dormant Accounts Fund Disbursement Schemes 2013-2016 was completed which sets out 15 recommendations to be implemented to improve administration of the fund. The recommendations in this review are now being implemented by DRCD.
139 Implement changes to the Farm Assist Scheme, as announced in Budget 2017, which will increase the value of the weekly Farm Assist payments for low income farmers, in particular for those with children, which will ensure that farm families are supported in actively farming their land.	DEASP	2018	Completed	Action Completed. Farm Assist payments have been increased by €5 per week in Budget 2019. This follows on from a similar €5 per week increase in Budget 2018.
140 Develop and conduct an awareness campaign in rural communities to highlight the Farm Assist and Fish Assist schemes.	DEASP	2018	Completed	DEASP ran an information campaign to raise awareness about the Farm Assist and Fish Assist schemes in April and July 2018.
141 Review the impact of the changes made to the Farm Assist Scheme, as announced in Budget 2017, in early 2018 to ensure that it is addressing the challenges facing farmers on low income.	DEASP	Ongoing	In progress	This measure is in progress. DEASP continues to look at the number of recipients on the Farm Assist Scheme on a monthly basis to see if the changes announced in Budget 2017 are having an impact on the numbers in recipient of a payment.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
142 Maintain the provision of schemes such as the Rural Social Scheme, Community Employment, Back To Education Allowance and Tús in rural communities and the Gaeltacht, having regard to the declining numbers on the Live Register and the need to ensure that these schemes are targeted to the needs of jobseekers and others.	DEASP	Ongoing	In progress	These schemes are reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure they are targeted appropriately. An Inter-Departmental group was set up in Q1 2019 to consider which Department is best placed to host the Social Inclusion places on Community Employment and the Rural Social Scheme and Job Initiative Schemes.
143 As part of the EU Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning 2014-2020, roll out training under the “women returning to the workforce” strand, targeting women who are currently detached from the labour market and who are interested in entering/re-entering employment.	DJE	2017	Completed	Ten rural projects are receiving funding under the ESF PEIL 2.9 Gender Equality Women Returning to the Workforce Strand. Contracts awarded in 2017 will run until Q2 2020. The projects are located throughout rural areas of Ireland. The ten projects will receive a total allocation of approximately €3 million over three years. The participants in these projects attend group training and one-to-one coaching to improve job readiness skills and are supported both into and in employment.
144 Continue to support farm incomes through the roll-out of CAP payments of over €1.2 billion annually.	DAFM	Ongoing	In progress	Basic Payment Scheme payments for 2018 commenced on schedule on 16 October 2018. As of 25 January 2019 payments of €1.167 billion have issued to 122,512 BPS applicants.
145 Support on-farm investment through the Rural Development Programme (RDP) (2014-2020) and national funding to improve competitiveness and sustainability.	DAFM	Ongoing	In progress	A range of Pillar 2/Rural Development payments under the CAP have issued since Autumn 2018 – e.g. The Areas of Natural Constraint Scheme, GLAS, the Beef Data and Genomics Programme, the Sheep Welfare Scheme, and the Knowledge Transfer Programme. TAMS II scheme approvals and payments are also issuing on an ongoing basis.
146 As agreed in Budget 2017, increase the earned income tax credit to self-employed farmers.	DoF	Ongoing	Completed	The Earned Income Credit (EIC) was increased by €400 to €950 in Budget 2017 and to €1,150 per annum in Budget 2019. The EIC tax credit is available to self-employed individuals, including farmers, who do not have access to the PAYE employee tax credit.
147 Support the Government Initiative to (a) use the taxation system strategically to encourage greater land mobility, increased productivity and greater profitability at farm level (b) Investigate taxation measures aimed at supporting farmers through periods of volatility (c) Land leasing, partnership and mobility measures will be developed further to ensure the next generation of farmers are supported and the sector is developed strategically for future growth.	DAFM	Ongoing	In progress	DAFM continues to liaise with Department of Finance and Revenue to provide support on these issues.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
148 As agreed in Budget 2017, roll out new income averaging 'step out' for farmers. (The Income Averaging regime allows a farmer's taxable profit to be averaged out over a 5-year period. This is being amended to allow an "opt out" in a single year of unexpectedly poor income, which may be availed of for the 2016 tax year).	DAFM	2017	Completed	In Budget 2019 it was announced that Income Averaging will be available to more farmers with the lifting of the restriction whereby farmers with additional self-employed income (for either themselves or their spouse) could not participate.
149 As agreed in Budget 2017, roll out new tax credits for fishers to assist the viability of the fishing sector (Fishers who have fished for wild fish or wild shellfish for at least 80 days in a tax year can claim an income tax credit of €1,270 per annum).	DAFM	2017	Completed	This tax credit is in place and available to fishers to offset against their total income i.e. income from fishing and other sources. This credit remains at €1,270 per annum.
150 As agreed in Budget 2017, extend Farm restructuring Capital Gains Tax (CGT) relief to end 2019.	DoF	Ongoing to end 2019	Completed	Legislated for under Finance Act 2016 Amendment of section 604B of Principal Act (relief for farm restructuring).
151 As agreed in Budget 2017, provide an exemption from Capital Gains Tax (CGT) for payments made by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (on or after 1 October 2016) under the Protected Raised Bog Restoration Incentive Scheme.	DoF	Ongoing	Completed	Legislated for under Finance Act 2016 Amendment of section 613 of Principal Act (miscellaneous exemptions for certain kinds of property).
Pillar 3 - Maximising our Rural Tourism and Recreation Potential				
152 Through the Tourism Action Plan 2016-2018, increase tourism volume in rural areas to 8.3 million visits by 2019 (an increase of 12%).	DTTAS	Ongoing	In progress	As part of the response to Brexit, a focus has been placed on addressing regional growth and season extension in rural Tourism to help counteract any decline experienced from the Great Britain market. Fáilte Ireland's revised Tourism Facts for 2017 indicate that tourism volumes to rural areas increased to 8.288 million in 2017. Final data for 2018 is not yet available. Based on known performance in 2018 it is almost certain that the 8.3m target was reached.
153 Carry out a feasibility study in relation to the development of the 'Ireland's Lakelands' brand as a separate proposition to sit alongside the Wild Atlantic Way and Ireland's Ancient East.	Fáilte Ireland	Q1 2017	Completed	Action completed. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
154 Develop a Tourism Investment and Development Strategy for the Gaeltacht.	Údarás na Gaeltachta	Q1 2017	Completed	Action Completed. Five tourism officers were recruited throughout the Gaeltacht on tourism training schemes to support the development of tourism attractions and tourism networks across the Gaeltacht. Six additional people are to be hired in 2019. The Gaeltacht Brand 'Gaeltacht

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
				na hÉireann’ was launched as a marketing tool for all business in the Gaeltacht and most relevant to the tourism sector. Cósta Gaelach Chonamara & Árinn was set up and launched its website www.connemara.ie to bring the tourism industry together and to promote the Connemara Gaeltacht as a holiday destination.	
155	Provide practical support to the local authorities in the development of comprehensive tourism strategies and support collaborative approaches at Local Authority and community levels.	DTTAS	Ongoing	In progress	The Tourism Action Plan 2019-2021, published in December 2018, will continue to drive the implementation of the Government’s Tourism policies, one of which is to collaborate with and support Local Authorities all around the country, with an emphasis on regional growth. As part of this plan the County and City Management Association will develop and roll out a Local Authority Tourism Officer Capability Programme to build tourism knowledge and key core capabilities/competencies. The programme will utilise the biennial Local Authority Tourism Conference as a platform for sharing best practise and inspiring other community groups.
156	Ensure that supports for festivals and events are updated to reflect changing market needs – including identifying key indigenous events with the greatest potential for attracting international visitors and off-setting seasonality to be supported by a multi annual framework; and reviewing arrangements for regional and community festivals to ensure maximum value for money in terms of incremental visitors.	Fáilte Ireland	Q4 2017	Completed	Action Completed. For further details, see the Second Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
157	Support direct access to the regions outside of Dublin by extending the Regional Co-operative Market Access Scheme, which promotes air and sea access to regions outside of Dublin, until 2018.	Tourism Ireland	2017	Completed	The Regional Co-operative Market Access Scheme promotes air and sea access direct to the Wild Atlantic Way and Ireland’s Ancient East and is administered by Tourism Ireland with matching funding from airlines, sea carriers, airports, ports and regional tourism stakeholders including Local Authorities. In light of the likely impact of Brexit on the regions, the Regional Co-operative Market Access Scheme has been further extended for 2019. €1 million exchequer funding has been made available for this scheme annually since 2016, with an additional €250,000 allocated in 2019.
158	Include Eircodes in Satnav and digital spatial mapping platforms to help simplify navigation in rural areas and enhance the tourist experience.	DCCA	Q2 2017	Completed	Action Completed. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
159	Develop cultural digitisation initiatives to enhance “Ireland’s Roots” tourism offering.	DCHG	Ongoing	In progress	In October 2017, DCHG announced over €2 million for the new cultural Digitisation Scheme which will help our Cultural Institutions, together with a number of other cultural heritage bodies, to build on this work and

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
				<p>digitise their rich and varied collections for the benefit of the public over the coming years. The funding is provided to enable the cultural organisation to preserve, conserve and safeguard collections, provide online searchable access to their collections, facilitate the reuse of digital content, and potentially secure revenue streams for collections. A range of digitisation projects in our national cultural institutions and organisations with collections of national significance have received funding support under the digitisation scheme. Examples of digitisation projects currently being funded include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Band Aid Archives – a tribute to Bob Geldof's role in Band Aid and our Ireland's part in this global initiative of charitable donation. • "Towards a Republic" which is a project to digitise the personal papers of the signatories of the Treaty. • Digitisation of Church of Ireland Parish Registers, which will greatly complement the existing access to the Catholic Church records. 	
160	Work with representatives from Government agencies and voluntary action groups for the development of targeted tourist mapping to assist in the promotion of rural tourism locations.	OSI	2017	In progress	OSI continues to work with Tourism Ireland to produce an All-Ireland map to assist with their promotion of Ireland overseas and is working in conjunction with Sport Ireland and the National Parks and Wildlife Service in the development and capture of their walking routes. OSI has also produced a Wild Atlantic Way map of Ireland partly using information supplied by Fáilte Ireland.
161	Accelerate diversification of overseas tourism to Ireland to reduce the impact of possible decline in visits from Great Britain.	Tourism Ireland	Ongoing	Completed	Action completed. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
162	Continue to develop Irish language based tourism in the Gaeltacht through the provision of Gaeltacht scholarships for Irish language learners in international 3rd level institutions.	DCHG	2017-2019	In progress	This measure is ongoing. Funding for this programme has been made available for the 2018/19 academic year.
163	Support Agri-Food tourism initiatives by local authorities, including local markets and food and beverage trails.	DAFM	Ongoing	In progress	A competitive public procurement procedure under the 2018 Rural Innovation and Development Fund for Agri-Food Tourism Initiatives was announced in June 2018 and contracts were subsequently awarded to Carlow County Council and O'Connell Marketing on behalf of Taste Wexford. A further call for proposals issued in September with €200,000 funding available for projects with a maximum of €25,000 being awarded to any one project. Eleven projects received funding following this call.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
164	Develop cross-Border tourism initiatives to support the tourism potential of the Border region, building on projects such as the Ulster Canal Greenway from Smithboro (Co. Monaghan) to Middletown (Co. Armagh), the Carlingford Lough Greenway, and historic literary trails.	Local Authorities in collaboration with cross border counterparts and other relevant parties	Ongoing	In progress	Smithboro to Middletown Greenway: There was a meeting on 16 January, 2019 which should finalise the appointment of the design team, due to be followed by contract signing. Project completion estimated to be end 2021. Carlingford Lough Greenway: Louth County Council are continuing to work closely with Newry Mourne and Down District Council on delivery of the proposed Cross-Border Greenway. Following the official opening of the Newry to Victoria Lock phase in July 2018, efforts are now fully focused on the Victoria Lock to Omeara section as well as the extension from Carlingford Village to the Marina.
165	Examine the potential to promote rural Ireland as the destination of choice for US colleges wishing to avail of a rural based learning or study abroad experience.	Connemara West and other relevant stakeholders	Ongoing	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A successful application was made to the first round of the RRDF for a Global Learning and Digital Hub in Tullycross, Connemara, as a destination for US college Study Abroad programmes. Led by the WDC, the project has 5 Irish and 3 United States partners. A Scoping study on the independent/faculty-led US study abroad sector in Ireland is being co funded by Galway County Council, WDC and Connemara West. Preliminary discussions were held with 3 new United States colleges about starting Study Abroad Programmes in the West of Ireland. Planning continued for <i>Interchanges 2019 – The Fifth Transatlantic Conference on Education, Research and Community Engagement</i>, to be held in Renvyle, Connemara in June 2019. The primary aim of this conference is to provide a forum where intending or existing US Ireland study abroad programme directors and other faculty and students can network with each other and Irish collaborative partners, on location in rural Ireland. <p>A Memorandum of Understanding about co-operation around Study Abroad programmes in rural Ireland was signed between Connemara West and Aquinas College, Michigan in the US in September 2018. The opportunities for building a study abroad programme in rural Ireland were promoted at the American Conference of Irish Studies – Western Region in Wyoming in October 2018. Two US colleges expressed interest and have begun discussions about establishing a programme in 2021.</p>

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
166	Provide assistance for the promotion of island development and island tourism, to maximise the benefit of the Wild Atlantic Way to our offshore islands.	DCHG	Ongoing	In progress	DCHG continues to work with the island communities, Local Authorities and other relevant stakeholders, to enhance services provided to visitors to the islands as well those living on the islands.
167	Develop a strategy to underpin the development, funding and promotion of Greenways to support activity tourism in rural areas.	DTTAS	Q2 2017	Completed	Action completed. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
168	Develop and promote Blueways (multi-purpose activity trails on or beside water) on the Royal, Grand and Barrow Canals and on the Shannon Navigation to expand the recreational and tourism offering, with a capital investment of €6m over the period 2017-2019.	DCHG	Ongoing	In progress	Development of existing Blueways continues. Further development of the North Shannon Blueway took place in 2018 with infrastructure improvements and enhanced signage. Activity on the Blueway exceeded 2017 levels and the Acres Lake Boardwalk continued to be a major attraction. In partnership with Fáilte Ireland, through the Strategic Partnership agreement, Waterways Ireland have tendered for a Masterplan for the Shannon as part of 'Ireland's Hidden Heartlands'. The study is currently ongoing and is hoped will provide a strong proposal for an increase in the tourism and recreational potential of the Shannon region. A study is also taking place on the feasibility of a 'Pilgrim Way' along the Shannon and Erne navigations to Donegal. The feasibility study is being undertaken using LEADER funding and is the largest co-operation funded project by LEADER ever undertaken in Ireland. It is hoped that the results of this study will be finalised in May 2019.
169	Enhance infrastructure on and along the inland navigation system to support increased recreational and economic activity in rural Ireland.	Waterways Ireland	2017-2019	In progress	Waterways Ireland continue to work with Local Authorities to progress the development of infrastructure along the inland navigation system, including moorings along the Ulster Canal, a boat jetty at Ballina Quay, towpaths along the Royal Canal and recreation infrastructure on the Shannon – Erne Waterway.
170	Through the Rural Recreation Scheme, provide funding for new recreation infrastructure and the maintenance of existing structures resulting in the creation and retention of jobs in rural areas.	DRCD	2017-2019	In progress	The 2018 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme commenced in June 2018 and will continue through to October 2019. Funding was provided to 232 projects in 2018, to the value of €20.77 million.
171	Expand the National Walks Scheme with a view to doubling the number of walks in the scheme by 2019.	DRCD	2017-2020	In progress	The Programme for a Partnership Government included a commitment to increase the number of walks covered by the Walks Scheme. In line with this commitment, funding for the scheme was doubled in Budget 2019 - from €2 million to €4 million - to allow the expansion to proceed. The Department has advertised for expressions of interest for walks that might be considered for inclusion in the expanded scheme. Expressions of

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
				Interest will be considered under a number of criteria, including the strategic importance of the trail, landowner agreement to participate, and state of readiness.
172	Ensure co-ordination of major outdoor recreation projects with all main State land owners to maximise potential for sustainable tourism in rural areas through the Inter-Agency Group on Outdoor Recreation.	DCHG	Ongoing	In progress The Outdoor Recreation Group continues to meet on an on-going basis. The Group is chaired by DCHG and is comprised of representatives from DCHG, DRCD, Fáilte Ireland and five public landowning organisations (<i>NPWS, Waterways Ireland, Coillte, Bord na Mona & Inland Fisheries Ireland</i>). Meetings are held in locations around the country and relevant Local Authorities are also invited to attend.
173	Through the Inter-Agency Group on Outdoor Recreation, develop a Public Outdoor Recreation Amenities Plan (PORA) to transform the provision of outdoor recreation facilities and services on public-owned land and waterways over the next five years which will add a potential €142 million of economic activity per year across rural Ireland.	DCHG	2017	Completed Action Completed. For further details, see the Second Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
174	As part of the PORA, progress four flagship, co-operative projects to enhance outdoor recreational activities to drive tourism in rural Ireland, viz: Midlands Cycling Destination; Barrow Blueway Flagship Project; Connemara Cluster; and Spatial Geodatabase.	Coillte	2017 onwards	In progress There are 4 separate entities collaborating on this action. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coillte: The Slieve Bloom MTB trail centre received full funding for completion in the RRDF announcement in Feb 2019. This is one of the elements of the project and will progress through 2019/ 2020. Also, a new section of the Grand Canal towpath (10kms) was recently completed by Offaly County Council. The MCD project is being delivered incrementally, with elements being completed as funding becomes available. • DCHG: The Outdoor Recreation Group (ORG) have successfully delivered on a ‘proof-of-concept’ to provide a collaborative forum for participating organisations to share existing Spatial Data of their National trails, Greenways and Blueways networks. The ORG will collaborate with Sports Ireland who are undertaking a Feasibility Study looking at a National Digital Database for Outdoor Recreation Amenities in Ireland. • Waterways Ireland: Waterways Ireland appealed a decision from Kildare, Laois and Carlow planning authorities on the development of the Barrow Blueway. Waterways Ireland received the decision on the appeal from An Bord Pleanála on 10 April 2019. The Board upheld the decisions of Kildare, Laois and Carlow planning

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
				<p>authorities granting permission for the proposed development from Lowtown to Athy (canal section) but refused permission from Athy to St Mullins (river section). The primary reason for refusal are the potential impacts of the proposed development on the Special Area of Conservation. Waterways Ireland is currently reviewing available options to advance the blueway.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPWS: As part of the Connemara Cluster Pathfinder Project, the NPWS (DCHG) are exploring the feasibility of connecting the proposed Connemara Greenway at Clifden to Connemara National Park and onto the Western Way walking route. In particular the DCHG are looking at developing a walking and cycling link from Connemara National Park at Letterfrack, to the town of Clifden. DCHG are examining some possible options with Galway CoCo, Coillte, Connemara Chamber of Commerce and some local landowners. Discussions are ongoing. DCHG would hope to bring forward a viable proposal in the next 12 months.
175	Progress the development of niche outdoor activities in our National Parks and Nature Reserves drawing on their unique attributes which will contribute to sustainable tourism in rural areas.	DCHG	2017-2019	<p>In progress</p> <p>As part of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) Strategic Partnership with Fáilte Ireland, which has the aim of enhancing the tourism offering at Ireland’s National Parks, DCHG launched <i>Experiencing the Wild Heart of Ireland, a Tourism Interpretative Masterplan</i> for all six National Parks and Coole Park in 2018. This is a framework for investment within the Parks and Nature Reserves and identifies potential projects to improve visitor experiences and modernise the presentation of these sites (taking into account conservational objectives). €4 million in funding has been allocated to the first two projects in this regard. €2.1 million is being invested in Wild Nephin-Ballycroy National Park to develop a continuous 56km walking cycling trail from Newport to Ballycastle on the Wild Atlantic Way through the National Park. The outcome of this project will be an off road continuous cycling and walking trail in challenging terrain which will link the popular Great Western Greenway with the Wild Atlantic Way. A further €1.9 million investment is being made in Connemara National Park to develop an additional 10.5 km of new trails, the development of a sensory trail, improvements to the Diamond Hill and Ellis Wood trails, a children’s natural play area, visitor carpark at Mweelin and a new Lime Kiln Trail to enhance access to more areas of the National Park. The project, when completed, will allow visitors to explore higher level walking and</p>

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
				hiking providing greater access to five of the park's mountains including Binn Bhán, the highest mountain in Co Galway.
176	Agree and implement a scheme to indemnify private land owners with regard to recreational users of their lands.	DRCD	2017	Delayed The Department has been working to develop a National Indemnity Scheme to indemnify private land owners with regard to the use of their lands for recreational purposes. This is a complex issue and the legal rights of landowners must be respected, while trying to facilitate access to their lands for recreational users on a permissive basis. The Department has been advised that an indemnity scheme will require legislative provision. The Department has met with the Attorney General's Office on the proposed scope, roll-out, and the legal processes required to give effect to such a scheme and will continue to work to achieve the objective in the Action Plan.
177	Reorganise the operation of structures such as Comhairle na Tuaithe to ensure the most appropriate/effective mechanisms are in place to progress rural recreation policy/implementation issues.	DRCD	Ongoing	In progress Following a review of the role of Comhairle na Tuaithe, DRCD is currently considering feedback received. A final decision regarding the future operation of Comhairle na Tuaithe will be announced in the near future.
178	Implement the new tourism capacity maintenance programme under the National Strategy for Angling Development to ensure that the capacity of the inland fisheries resource is maintained and continues to deliver social and economic benefits to rural communities.	Inland Fisheries Ireland	Ongoing to 2020	In progress 987 structures needing attention were actioned during 2018 and a further 85 new structures were added to the portfolio. A rolling audit continues on Inland Fisheries Ireland's stock of almost 5,000 structures.
179	Continue to deliver the annual Inland Fisheries Ireland Sponsorship Scheme to assist rural communities to engage with angling, angling tourism and environmental issues.	Inland Fisheries Ireland	2017-2019	In progress The 2018 Sponsorship scheme operated and closed out during the year, with the 2019 scheme opening for applications in December 2018.
180	Implement the Minor Capital Angling Access Scheme under the National Strategy for Angling Development to help in sustaining the capacity of the inland fisheries resource.	Inland Fisheries Ireland	Ongoing to end 2017	Completed Action Completed. For further details, see the Second Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
181	Develop and promote Ireland's angling tourism offering abroad to assist in generating tourism in rural Ireland.	Inland Fisheries Ireland	Ongoing	In progress Inland Fisheries Ireland has worked on developing a Marketing Strategy for Tourism in Ireland. This is being developed in collaboration with the fisheries and tourism agencies on the island of Ireland and industry representatives. In the meantime IFI ran comprehensive shows, promotional items and journalist visits programmes during 2018.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
182	Rollout the Capital Works Scheme under the National Strategy for Angling Development (NSAD) to help deliver an accessible and sustainable, world class inland fisheries resource.	Inland Fisheries Ireland	2017-2018	In progress	This action is ongoing. There are three schemes in delivery, 2016 Capital Grant Scheme (CGS), 2017 NSAD and 2018 Salmon Conservation Fund & Midland Fisheries Fund. €2.9 million has been awarded over the three schemes and delivery of all three schemes is at over 60%.
183	Continue to deliver the annual Inland Fisheries Ireland Something Fishy National Schools Programme to inform and educate students on fish, water, angling and the environment in their local areas.	Inland Fisheries Ireland	2017-2019	In progress	The 'Something Fishy' 2017/18 schools competition was won by Letterkenny Educate Together School. The 2018/19 Scheme is underway since September 2018 with school visits ongoing. This is in collaboration with The Blackrock Education Centre and other Education Centres throughout Ireland.
184	Issue of blog content on walking routes in Ireland to promote the use of the outdoors for recreation purposes.	OSI	Ongoing	In progress	OSI continues to use blogs and social media to promote walking and outdoor activities in Ireland. These have included Walking Tours of Dublin, 360° Views of Glendalough, Best Walks in Cork and Pilgrim Trails.
185	Support the inclusion of the voices of children and young people in the development of tourism and recreation opportunities, through the Children and Young People's Participation Hub.	DCYA	Ongoing	Completed	Action completed. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
186	Develop Ireland's six National Parks and Nature Reserves through a capital programme of up to €10 million over 4 years, in partnership with other State agencies, to support marketing initiatives such as the Wild Atlantic Way and Ireland's Ancient East, by developing the trails network and improving visitor experience to drive sustainable tourism in rural areas.	DCHG	Ongoing from Q2 2017	In progress	Under "Investing in our Culture, Language and Heritage, 2018 – 2027" capital investment of some €50 million has been earmarked for the National Parks and Nature Reserves. Highlights of the capital investment to date include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Expansion of Wild-Nephin Ballycroy National Park with the addition of the transfer to the National Parks and Wildlife Service of Coillte's Wild Nephin holdings, which increased the total size of the National Park to over 15,000 hectares. • Trail maintenance including upgrades to the popular Diamond Hill in Connemara National Park, the resurfacing of the Blue Road at Shrahduggan in Ballycroy National Park and on-going clearance of scrub and invasive species in a number of National Parks and Nature Reserves. • Upgrading of the road network in Killarney National Park and the restoration of the historic windows and essential maintenance and restoration works to the roof of Muckcross House. • Restoration of the Victorian Servants' Dining Hall and Laundry Room in the basement of Muckcross House.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
187	Explore the potential for the development of new tourism and recreation activities within the context of the National Peatlands Strategy, including the consideration of a National Peatlands Park and centre of excellence.	DCHG	2017-2019	In progress	A Peatlands Strategy Implementation Group oversees implementation of measures contained in the National Peatlands Strategy and reports on an annual basis on the implementation of the actions and principles contained within the Strategy.
188	Develop and publish an updated National Heritage Plan to protect, manage and promote our built and natural heritage.	DCHG	2017	In progress	A 4 month Public Consultation on a new National Heritage Plan <i>Heritage Ireland 2030</i> commenced in November 2018. Local, regional and stakeholder events were held in early 2019 ahead of National Discussion Day.
189	Co-ordinate a programme for the management of Ireland's uplands areas, expanding on the pilot already carried out in Wicklow.	DCHG	Ongoing	In progress	The Heritage Council is supporting the Irish Uplands Forum (IUF) which is a voluntary body established in 1995, to assist upland communities to face the many economic, social and environmental challenges arising in the upland districts of Ireland. Its members include farmers, recreational users, ecologists, tourism and other countryside service providers. In 2018 the Heritage Council awarded €46,000 to 13 Upland Study Visit projects. Members of the Nephin Beg Uplands group in Co. Mayo undertook a 2 day study visit to the Wicklow Uplands in October 2018. The aims of the visit were to provide an opportunity to share experiences and knowledge and explore topics of interest and revitalise interest in pursuing locally led agri-environment projects. Mulranny Group Study Visit to Tannaghmore Gardens & Slieve Gullion took place in October 2018. The visit brought together 27 key players and 11 different agencies. The study visit covered, rare breed conservation, opportunities for native livestock conservation into landscape management and eco-tourism, trail management, opportunities in uplands fire risk management.
190	Progress the designation of additional sites to UNESCO for inclusion in Ireland's World Heritage list which will assist in the development of sustainable tourism and also preservation of our natural and built heritage.	DCHG	Ongoing	In progress	The World Heritage Tentative List is under review. The List was opened for new applications on 25 January 2019, while stakeholders responsible for sites currently listed have been requested to submit an audit of their sites to DCHG. DCHG continues to advise Kerry County Council on the potential application of Valentia Transatlantic Cable Station to the List.
191	Continue the rollout of the programme of investment in State heritage sites with a view to developing the tourism potential of our heritage sites and assisting in the creation of local employment opportunities in tourism-related industries.	OPW	Ongoing	In progress	€11.5 million in funding was approved for 10 Ireland's Ancient East (IAE) projects including €8.2 million for 8 sites outside the Dublin region. Work continues to progress in relation to investment in these sites including UNESCO World Heritage Site at Brú na Bóinne. A Masterplan for the Boyne Valley has been completed. Work is on-going with Interpretative Designers at Brú na Bóinne, Knowth and Newgrange. Interpretation contract has been awarded for Ormond Castle.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
				<p>Construction is underway at King John's Castle in Carlingford.</p> <p>A major investment of €4.3 million has been announced in four key heritage sites along the Wild Atlantic Way which will enhance the visitor experiences at each location. The four sites to benefit from this investment are: The Blasket Island Visitor Centre, Céide Fields, Inis Mór and Carrowmore Megalithic Cemetery. Interpretation contract has been awarded for Céide Fields and Carrowmore. Tenders have been received for Inis Mór. Planning permission has been granted for the Viewing Platform at the Blasket Island Visitor Centre and is due to progress to tender stage.</p>	
192	As part of the implementation of Fáilte Ireland's Tourism Investment Plan 2016-2021, work to enhance the presentation of key State Heritage Sites to help encourage greater employment in the tourism sector including the rural areas covered by the Wild Atlantic Way and Ireland's Ancient East.	DCHG	2017-2021	In progress	With partners in OPW, DCHG has submitted Phase II projects to Fáilte Ireland for selection for additional investment in order to improve presentation and tourist experience.
193	Through the Structures at Risk Fund, with an estimated €2.4m of matched funding available between 2017-2019, encourage investment of private capital in labour-intensive projects to conserve historic structures in public/ private ownership.	DCHG	2017-2019	In progress	The Structures at Risk Fund was administered through the 31 Local Authorities. In 2018, seventy-two projects were supported by the Structures at Risk Fund to the amount of €1.28 million, providing over 1,860 days employment. The Structures at Risk Fund was updated as the Historic Structures Fund in 2019 and was open for applications through the Local Authorities up to the end of January. The allocation is €1.8 million. Applications were to be assessed in Q1 2019, with successful applicants being notified in due course.
194	Support the development of conservation and heritage tourism in rural areas through the Community Heritage Grants Scheme, with an estimated investment of €2.5m between 2017 and 2019.	Heritage Council	2017-2019	In progress	Between 2017 and 2019, nearly €1.5 million was offered to 336 community heritage projects nationally. In 2018, 152 projects valued at just under €0.7 million were carried out by community groups.
195	Raise the profile of, and access to, our built, natural and cultural heritage nationwide, through the roll out of Heritage Week, thus helping to preserve our unique heritage assets.	Heritage Council	2017-2019	In progress	National Heritage Week 2018 was held from 18-26 August as part of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018. It focused on sharing the stories of our built, natural and cultural heritage. Coordinated by the Heritage Council, 1,211 event organisers from the public, private and voluntary sectors organised 2,190 heritage events across the country. More than

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
				435,000 people took part in events ranging from community archaeology to medieval festivals to nature camps for children in Ireland.
196	Through the Historic Towns Initiative, invest in our historic towns to encourage tourism, foster traditional building skills and regenerate historic towns.	Heritage Council	Ongoing	In progress The Historic Towns Initiative (HTI) is a joint undertaking by the Heritage Council and DCHG. In 2018 funding of €1 million was provided for regeneration projects in six towns, Ballinrobe, Carrick on Suir, Kells, (Co Meath), Kilmallock, Portlaoise and Youghal. Street façade conservation works were carried out in Kells and Carrick on Suir, public realm works in Youghal and Portlaoise and conservation works in Ballinrobe and Kilmallock. A fund of €1 million capital monies is available again in 2019. The closing date for applications to the Heritage Council was 8th February 2019.
197	Encourage the conservation and reuse of historic properties and lettings to tourists in rural communities.	Irish Landmark Trust	Ongoing	In progress Conservation work was carried out on two houses in Elizabeth Fort in Cork City, in partnership with the City Council. During the last quarter of 2018, other properties where owners consulted Irish Landmark Trust included Duncannon Fort in Wexford and the re-generation of a gardeners building in Mountbellew in Co. Galway. Additional work and promotional activity was carried out at Saunderscourt Gate Lodges in Co.Wexford. Private funding was achieved to match the grants offered. An open day event was held there, where local people and general groups from the wider Wexford area were invited to come and see the site so that they might better appreciate the architectural gem that is on their doorstep.
198	Implement the Action Plan for Irish Historic Houses to assist in the promotion and development of Historic Irish Houses as centres for employment, tourism and innovation.	DCHG	2017-2019	In progress The Irish Historic Houses Association is granted an allocation of €45,000 per annum (2016-2018) to assist in achieving its objectives set out in 2016 Action Plan for Sustainable Future of Irish Historic House in Private Ownership. Section 482 of the Taxes (Consolidation) Act aims to help with the preservation of our built heritage by giving tax relief to the owners or occupiers of significant buildings or gardens to repair, maintain and restore such properties. A condition of the scheme is that the property is required to be open to the public for a minimum numbers of days each year, or in use as a registered guest house. A review of the operation of Section 482 is being undertaken by DCHG, DoF, with support from the Revenue Commissioners and will be concluded in 2019.
199	Support the Irish Walled Towns Network to ensure that these heritage assets are appropriately managed and conserved as a tourism asset to their areas.	Heritage Council	Ongoing	In progress In July, ‘Renewing your town or village’ online resources web page was created for communities. Between July and October, sixteen festival and heritage interpretation projects were successfully completed in 14 towns.

Action		Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
					In August 'Heritage festivals and events marketing checklist', an advisory document was launched. During August-November, town wall conservation works were completed in four towns and three feasibility/conservation reports were completed (€17,400 granted). In October, at an IWTN Training event 100 attended a two day conference focusing on heritage led regeneration. In November, 600 people attended 24 separate events during a week-long conference on the social and economic uses of archaeology.
200	Enhance animation and interpretation at key heritage sites and augment existing networks and trails with additional sites and materials to create new visitor experiences.	DCHG	2017-2020	In progress	This measure is being progressed through a Fáilte Ireland/OPW/DCHG partnership. Work on Brú na Boinne interpretation site is ongoing.
201	Seek to forge links internationally to key monastic and historic sites to draw more international visitors as part of pan European heritage, cultural and ecclesiastical networks.	DCHG	2017-2020	In progress	DCHG is organising an international archaeology conference for Q3 2019 on relevant themes.
202	In the context of the National Landscape Strategy, develop dedicated actions that assist in the promotion and development of Ireland's national landscape characteristics with regard to management, employment, tourism and innovation pilots.	DCHG	2017-2019	In progress	DCHG's primary focus in 2018 was to prepare the documentation for a National Landscape Character Assessment (NLCA) which is on-going. A National Landscape Strategy Steering Group has been assembled in order to inform the process. The Steering Group includes relevant Government Departments and associated Agencies and relevant professional institutes. A specification document for the NLCA has been prepared and circulated to the Steering Group for consideration. A contract document will be prepared and sources of funding explored in due course.
Pillar 4 - Fostering Culture and Creativity in Rural Communities					
203	Roll out a new small grants scheme which will provide essential upgrades to existing regional arts and culture centres to support the revival of the cultural sector in rural Ireland.	DCHG	Ongoing	Completed	The list of successful projects under the Arts and Culture Capital Scheme 2016-2018 (Streams 1 & 2 and 3 (small capital)) is available on the Department's website at the following link https://www.chg.gov.ie/arts/creative-arts/grants-and-funding/previous-schemes/
204	Increase funding supports to regional museums across the country ensuring access to our cultural heritage for rural dwellers.	DCHG	2017-2019	In progress	€138,950 was given to 15 projects under the Regional Museum Exhibition Scheme in 2018 in addition to core operational funding to rural bodies like the Foynes Flying Boat & Maritime Museum.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
205	Facilitate access by rural communities to our National Collections through increased loans of art works between our National Cultural Institutions and regional museums.	DCHG	2017-2019	In progress	€9,122 was granted to 3 projects under the 2018 Mobility of Collections scheme for the dissemination of the National Collection to regional organisations.
206	Through the Arts Council's Touring and Dissemination of Work Scheme, increase investment in 2017 to €1.4m and annually thereafter to support quality professional productions to tour venues across Ireland, increasing access to the arts for rural communities.	Arts Council	2017-2019	In progress	In 2018, 24 awards for touring were made out of 47 applications received. 36 tours have already been approved for 2019. The decisions for the July to December 2019 period are yet to be made, the estimate at this stage is that this will be in the region of a further 20 tours.
207	Introduce a new programme as part of the Framework for Collaboration with Local Government in 2018, specifically advancing children and young people's provision, cultural diversity and arts and disability.	Arts Council	2018	Completed	The programmatic approach has been to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) strategically support and advance children's and young people's provision within Local Authority framework agreements b) advance learning and capacity in building inclusion in the arts (cultural diversity, arts and disability) with the conference Places Matter, building inclusion in the arts March 2019 including an international CPD opportunity (Nina Simon) with Local Authorities and other arts leaders.
208	Increase our investment in small festivals from 2017 to support greater participation in the arts throughout the country.	Arts Council	2017 onwards	In progress	The Investment in small festivals increased from a total budget of €930,419 in 2016 to €1.4 million in 2019. The average festival grant has subsequently increased from €8,731 to €10,852 over a period of three years. The increased investment has enabled arts activity to take place in local communities in every county in Ireland and increased opportunity for public engagement in the arts.
209	Provide grant assistance of €0.48m to refurbish and develop a theatre in Gaoth Dobhair, Co. Donegal, in order to provide a suitable space to develop Irish language theatre in the North West.	DCHG	2017-2018	Completed	Action Completed. For further details, see the Second Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
210	As part of the Creative Ireland Programme, develop a nationwide network of culture teams and creativity hubs which will co-ordinate cultural activities in each local authority area. This will have a particular benefit for rural communities who will be encouraged to participate and engage with culture in their communities.	DCHG	2017 onwards	Completed	Culture Teams are continuing to go from strength to strength. In 2018, over 1,200 new initiatives/projects were rolled out with funding of over €4 million provided between DCHG and DHPLG.
211	Develop a Culture and Creativity Plan in every county as part of the Creative Ireland programme.	LAs	End 2017	Completed	31 five year culture and creativity strategies were published and launched in September 2018.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
212 Allocate a dedicated budget to each local authority with the primary objective of citizen engagement with their Culture and Creativity Plans.	DCHG	2018	Completed	Action completed. Each Local Authority received €97,000 to roll out annual plans. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
213 Develop a new Creative Place Programme in partnership with Local Government which draws on the work of artists and arts organisations to animate local communities, particularly in rural areas.	Arts Council	Q4 2017	Completed	In 2017, research was conducted to develop and consider the potential roll out of this scheme, looking at international and national best practice. In 2018 discussions were entered into with 6 local authorities and the Regional Assemblies on possible locations, identifying 6 towns through arts investment/social deprivation indexes. Budget constraints will allow for one pilot project to be launched in Q4 2019.
214 As part of the Creative Ireland Programme develop and implement Cruinniú na Cásca, an annual programme of arts activities and cultural reflection over Easter weekend which will take place all over Ireland and will have a positive effect on culture and arts activities in rural Ireland.	DCHG	2017 onwards	In progress	Over 500 free events for children and young people took place across the country on 23 rd June 2018. This had a significant impact on rural communities with many children and young taking the opportunity to engage in new activities in their own communities. In 2019, Cruinniú na nÓg will take place on 15 th June with additional funding being provided to those Local Authorities outside of Dublin.
215 As part of the Creative Ireland Programme, establish and support an annual County of Culture award, allowing individual counties to showcase their cultural creativity over a 12-month period.	DCHG	2018 onwards	Closed	DCHG have decided not to proceed with this action based on initial discussions with their Creative Ireland Co-ordinators. Many felt that every County has a unique culture and heritage which should be celebrated. Increased funding to all Counties has allowed further creative engagement to take place.
216 Review the requirements of rural Ireland in the context of the development of the five year capital investment programme for the culture and heritage sector.	DCHG	End 2017	In progress	The recent Arts and Culture Capital Scheme 2016 - 2018 is focused on the refurbishment and enhancement of the existing stock of arts and culture facilities throughout the country. To date, funding of €10.21 million has been allocated to 134 projects under three complementary grant streams. This is the most significant investment in cultural infrastructure in a decade with funding provided to a range of facilities, including arts centres, theatres, galleries and museums, as well as artist studios and creative spaces throughout the state.
217 Develop a national plan to enable every child in Ireland to access tuition in music, drama, art and coding.	DES	End 2017	Completed	Action completed. For further details, see the Second Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
218 Increase funding to Local Authorities across the country to roll out an enhanced culture night experience which will be of particular benefit to rural communities.	DCHG	2017	Completed	Culture Night 2018 saw almost €190,000 being provided in funding to regional locations for programmed events. RTÉ's Culture Night concert was streamed live for the first time to an audience of almost 100,000. In addition 35,000 tuned in on Radio 1.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
219 Implement the Arts in Education Charter, a joint initiative between D/AHRRGA and D/ES to ensure that arts and cultural engagement in schools at all levels will be attained across the country.	Arts Council	Ongoing	In progress	<p>Implementation of the Arts in Education Charter is underway on an ongoing basis. The Creative Youth programme, the plan for Pillar 1 of Creative Ireland, commits to resourcing and implementing the Charter. Creative Youth was published jointly by the DCHG, DES and DCYA. A range of initiatives such as the development and maintenance of the Arts in Education Portal (www.artsineducation.ie) and the holding of a National Arts in Education Portal Day are ongoing. The Portal Committee are considering a date for the Portal Day to be held in 2019. A range of initiatives in the Charter have been developed. This includes Music Generation, who as part of Creative Youth are to expand nationwide. 'Arts Rich Schools' (ARÍS) is now being implemented as Creative Schools/Scoileanna Ildánacha, by the Arts Council as part of Creative Youth. 150 schools are currently engaged in this initiative across the country.</p> <p>Three new pilot Local Creative Youth Partnerships (being led by Kerry, Laois/Offaly and Limerick/Clare ETBs) have been announced following a competitive process, to provide structure for the development and co-ordination of out-of-school creative activities for children and young people. These partnerships will also aim to enhance creative and cultural activities in disadvantaged areas. 73 schools in 23 clusters across the country are taking part in the new Creative Clusters Scheme.</p>
220 Introduce formal agreements with individual Local Authorities from 2017 to assist in clarifying shared and individual responsibilities in the context of regional and local planning and the national perspective of the Arts Council.	Arts Council	2017 onwards	In progress	This measure is ongoing. 14 local authorities have now entered into formal Framework Agreements with the Arts Council: Fingal, Kildare, Leitrim, Kerry, Offaly, Laois, Westmeath, South Dublin, Wexford, Waterford, Cork City, Tipperary, Limerick, Galway City. All agreements will be complete in 2020.
221 Develop an integrated Arts Strategy for the Gaeltacht and Irish Language Arts in conjunction with Foras na Gaeilge, Údarás na Gaeltachta and the Arts Council.	DCHG	2017	In progress	A Strategy Working Group has been established consisting of members from DCHG, ÚnaG, Foras na Gaeilge, TG4, the Arts Council and Creative Ireland. The Terms of Reference for the Group have been finalised.
222 As part of the Town & Village Renewal scheme, provide competitive funding for public art works which contribute to public spaces and reflect the culture and characteristics of the town or region.	DRCD	2017-2020	Closed	It was originally envisaged that a number of public Art Works would be supported as part of the 2017 Town and Village Renewal Scheme. However, given the resources available, all funding was allocated to projects directly supporting the regeneration of rural towns and villages. Some of the projects in question included elements of public art works.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
223 Advance the implementation of the Language Planning Process through the provision of funding, advice and technical support in order to foster the Irish language as a key resource in Gaeltacht areas.	DCHG	Ongoing	In progress	13 of the 26 Gaeltacht Language Plans as identified in the Gaeltacht Act 2012 have been approved.
224 Continue to support and invest in the language and community infrastructure of the Gaeltacht by way of a wide range of schemes, measures and initiatives (capital and current) currently administered by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. These Schemes include: Capital Programme to develop community facilities, Irish Language Assistance Scheme, An Clár Tacaíochta Teaghlaigh, Scéim Seirbhísí Réamhscoile agus Iarscoile, Summer camps in the Gaeltacht, Assistance for Gaeltacht Organisations.	DCHG	Ongoing	In progress	Funding continues to be provided to a wide range of capital projects throughout the Gaeltacht to assist with the development and upgrading of various community facilities. 59 capital projects were funded in 2018 at a cost of €1.3 million. Current funding was provided to 2 Gaeltacht organisations to fund 94 language assistants in 139 participating schools throughout the Gaeltacht. 2,030 packages under the Clár Tacaíochta Teaghlaigh programme were distributed to families who wish to raise their children through Irish. 200 summer camps were organised at a cost of €330,000. Funding was provided towards the provision of the sports programme in 65 participating schools assisting 4,400 pupils throughout the Connacht and Múster Gaeltacht. Funding continues to be provided to a range of organisations including towards the provision of educational opportunities through the medium of Irish; Oideas Gael and Coláiste Uisce who provide Irish-language courses for students from Ireland and abroad; and Oidhreacht Chorca Dhuibhne who provide language support measures that benefit the community and families in the Gaeltacht area of Corca Dhuibhne, Co. Kerry.
225 Roll out the Techspace as Gaeilge Initiative, currently operating in the Connacht region, to all other regions.	DCHG	2017-2019	In progress	Techspace is now in operation in Connacht, Munster and Ulster. Roll out to Leinster, including Dublin area, is proposed by the end of 2019.
226 Roll out An Dioplóma sa Chultúr Dúchais to assist community capacity building through tourism development and professional development for Heritage Officers in the Gaeltacht.	Údarás na Gaeltachta	Ongoing	In progress	Two cycles of the programme have been delivered and cycle 3 is ongoing. 28 students completed cycles 1 & 2. 21 Students are taking part in the current cycle which is due to finish in 2020.
227 Continue to provide funding for Ealaíon na Gaeltachta Teo to foster creativity and the arts in the Gaeltacht.	Údarás na Gaeltachta	2017-2019	In progress	Funding by Údarás na Gaeltachta for Ealaíon na Gaeltachta Teo was increased for 2019 in order to develop further creativity and arts in the Gaeltacht, with the additional funding aimed at developing programmes in the traditional arts for young people.
228 Continue to support the development of cultural tourism in the Gaeltacht by administering the Irish Language Learners scheme.	DCHG	Ongoing	In progress	This measure is ongoing. Students attended various Gaeltacht Irish Colleges during August 2018. In 2018, a total of €4.178m was spent on this scheme under which funding was provided to 712 Gaeltacht households who provided accommodation to 26,228 students attending 55 Irish colleges.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
229	Implement Foras na Gaeilge schemes such as the Festival scheme and Drama scheme to foster culture and creativity.	Foras na Gaeilge	Ongoing	In progress	The Festivals Scheme has a maximum grant available of €5,000 or £3,500. Applications under the Scheme for festivals in 2018 were sanctioned by the Board in May 2018. 46 Festivals were funded and a budget of €116,379 was approved. In 2019, 42 Festivals were funded under this scheme and a budget of €95,864 was approved by the Board on 18 January 2019. The Drama Companies Scheme offers a maximum grant available of €50,000 or £30,000. Applications for Drama Companies' Scheme in 2018 were approved by the Bord in May 2018. 18 Companies were funded and a budget of €208,896 was approved. In 2019 Foras na Gaeilge received 19 applications under this scheme and were to be discussed by the Board of Foras na Gaeilge on 8 March 2019.
230	Implement Foras na Gaeilge Schemes which create capacity building for young people in the Irish language community such as summer camps and special youth events.	Foras na Gaeilge	Ongoing	In progress	The Summer Camp Scheme is currently open and applications for funding will be accepted until 22 March 2019. Funding decisions will be announced on completion of assessments and board approval. The Youth Event Scheme for 2019/2020 is currently open and applications for funding will be accepted until 5 April 2019. Funding decisions will be announced on completion of assessment and board approval.
231	Continue to support three NUIG Outreach Centres in Gaeltacht areas (Gaoth Dobhair, Carna and An Cheathrú Rua) in order to maintain Irish-medium educational opportunities at local level.	DCHG	Ongoing	In progress	Funding continues to be provided to Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge, NUIG, towards the provision of third-level education opportunities through the medium of Irish in each of the University's three Gaeltacht-based campuses. These education opportunities will continue to be developed and adapted to better support the implementation of the language planning process and the Policy on Gaeltacht Education.
Pillar 5 - Improving Rural Infrastructure and Connectivity					
232	Implement the National Broadband Plan to provide high speed broadband to every premises in Ireland.	DCCAIE	Ongoing	In progress	As of Q4 2018, 74% of the 2.3 million premises in Ireland have access to high speed broadband. This includes 225,176 premises passed as of Q3 2018 as part of the eir rollout of high speed broadband to 300,000 rural premises. In the second half of 2018 DCCAIE received and evaluated the final tender in the procurement process to engage a company to build and maintain a future proofed high speed broadband network to 542,000 premises in Ireland, mainly in rural areas. The Government confirmed the preferred bidder in May 2019.
233	Establish an Implementation Group to drive and monitor the recommendations in the report of the Taskforce on	DCCAIE &	Q1 2017	Completed	The Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce Implementation Review 2018, setting out the progress made in 2018 and planned actions for 2019 was

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
	Mobile Phone and Broadband Access to accelerate the rollout of broadband infrastructure and mobile phone access in rural Ireland.	DRCD		published in February 2019 and is available on the websites of DRCD and DCCAE.
234	Work with local authorities to plan for and facilitate early access to high-speed broadband to rural communities in Ireland by identifying and addressing barriers and through the rollout of Strategic Community Access Hubs across Ireland.	DRCD	Ongoing	In progress As part of the prioritisation strategy for the National Broadband Plan (NBP), each Local Authority was asked to identify up to 12 sites for Strategic Community Access Hubs (SCAH), these were later renamed Broadband Connection Points (BCP). In total, 296 locations countrywide have been selected to become BCP sites. These sites include community centres, schools and sports clubs. All BCPs will be publicly accessible and will offer local residents in rural areas the opportunity to connect to high-speed broadband ahead of the delivery of nationwide coverage. BCPs will offer a minimum 30Mb/6Mb connection over a fixed wireless network initially and may then be upgraded to fibre when the NBP rollout reaches the surrounding area.
235	Assign an officer with responsibility for broadband in each Local Authority area who will act as a single point of contact for telecommunications operators who are building out broadband infrastructure.	LAS & DRCD	Q1 2017	Completed All 31 Local Authorities have appointed Broadband Officers. These appointments were supported by DRCD through a subvention of €35,000 per annum in 2018. The Broadband Officers have proven to be an invaluable resource, providing a much needed single point of contact for telecommunication operators and Department officials. The Broadband Officers have also made significant contributions to preparations for the National Broadband Plan through their engagement in various fora and sub-groups and by sharing their knowledge, expertise and insights. In 2018, DRCD organised 9 Regional Action Group (RAG) meetings. These meetings allow DRCD, DCCAE and other stakeholders to meet with Broadband Officers and other LA personnel. The RAGs also provide a networking opportunity for Broadband Officers leading to the sharing of experiences, innovation, planning and co-ordination.
236	Develop Local Digital Strategies in each Local Authority area to ensure that businesses and communities are in a position to realise the full benefit of the National Broadband Plan once it is rolled out.	DRCD	2017	In progress DRCD engaged the services of Indecon Economic Consultants to research and produce local Digital Readiness Assessments. Each Assessment measured digital maturity against a seven pillar framework and compared each Local Authority's progress to their peers. Peer groups are defined by urban/rural population percentages. These Assessments provide Local Authorities with the quantitative data needed to identify where their digital strengths and weaknesses are when preparing their Digital Strategies. Following publication of the Digital Readiness Assessments, workshops for information sharing and strategy development were facilitated by DRCD in

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
				<p>Q2 2018 and the guidance document <i>Guidelines for Strategy Development</i> was issued to Local Authorities in Q3 2018.</p> <p>A number of Local Authorities are at varying stages of their digital journey with several Local Authorities Digital Strategies already published. It is the Department's intention to facilitate additional information sessions for Local Authorities throughout 2019, in order to further assist them in drafting and developing their Digital Strategies.</p>
237	Implement a new Digital Skills Training Programme under the National Digital Strategy, to support 25,000-30,000 citizens who have never used the internet, thereby assisting in upskilling rural communities ahead of the rollout of broadband across the country.	DCCA	2017-2019	<p>In progress</p> <p>8,000 people received training between July and December 2018 under the Digital Skills Training Programme. To-date over 37,000 citizens have received training across all Counties including 4,700 unemployed people, over 5,200 members of the Farming Community and some 14,600 people over the age of 65. 28% of participants have stated that the skills learned will improve their job prospects. 48% of trainees have reported that they feel less isolated. 62% will use their skills to stay in touch with family/friends. 59% of all trainees now feel competent to use online Government services.</p>
238	Remove development contribution charges for the placement of telecommunications infrastructure across all Local Authorities as a matter of priority.	Local Authorities	Q1 2017	<p>Completed</p> <p>DHPLG has prepared an update to the 2013 Development Contribution Guidelines to extend the current exemptions for broadband infrastructure to incorporate mobile phone infrastructure by way of a Circular letter issued to planning authorities under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000. Planning authorities must have regard to guidelines issued under Section 28 in the performance of their functions generally under the Planning Acts. The Circular letter issued on 3 July 2018 and DHPLG continues to engage with planning authorities in relation to its implementation.</p>
239	Complete the duct installation on 95km of roadway on the M7/M8 corridor to enable operators to deploy end-to-end telecommunications infrastructure between Dublin and Cork.	TII	Q2 2017	<p>Completed</p> <p>Action Completed. For further details, see the Second Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.</p>
240	Explore whether take up of the Metropolitan Area Networks (MANs) can be improved, including through a review of the pricing and other arrangements relating to connections.	DCCA	Q2 2017	<p>In progress</p> <p>The review of the pricing and other arrangements relating to access to the Metropolitan Area Networks is in progress. The review has taken longer than expected because of the complexity of the MANs and their unique position as wholesale open access fibre networks in 94 regional towns and cities. Following finalisation of the review, the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment will be engaging in</p>

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
				discussions with enet, which manages and operates the MANs on behalf of the State, about recommendations arising from the review. It is hoped that the outcome of this process will facilitate improved access to the MANs by retail service providers. The review of pricing and other arrangements relating to connections to the MANs is expected to be published in the near future.
241	Monitor the Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads (Purple Book) on an ongoing basis and, building on existing arrangements, establish an appropriate Stakeholder Forum to provide for a clear and transparent engagement process for formal dialogue between the relevant stakeholders in relation to road openings. (The function of this action has evolved from reviewing to monitoring)	DTTAS	Ongoing	In progress The latest version of the Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads (Purple Book) was published in April 2017. This document provides guidance and specifications for excavation and road opening works on public roads, material on the legal background and requirements as well as procedures for the use of the MapRoad Licensing System (national centralised road opening licensing system). Training to support implementation is being rolled out. The Purple Book will be reviewed on an on-going basis. The Stakeholder (User) Forum was established in November 2017. This Forum will seek to address operational issues relating to the Purple Book, the MapRoad Road Licensing System and the Green Book (Guidance on the Potential Location of Overground Telecommunications Infrastructure on Public Roads) together with any subsequent associated guidelines.
242	Optimise State assets to facilitate the roll out of strategically-paced telecommunications infrastructure, leading to improved broadband and mobile phone coverage.	DRCD & DCCA	Ongoing	In progress The Working Group on State Assets, a sub-group of the Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce and chaired by officials from DCCA, was established in 2018. The Working Group's remit is to consider the development of a national policy to facilitate access to State owned assets for the purposes of installation, maintenance, upgrading and replacement of necessary telecommunications infrastructure. The Working Group includes officials from several Government Departments and agencies and has engaged with State and non-State stakeholders. Regular meetings were held in Q3 and Q4 of 2018 to inform the development of a policy document for presentation to Government. This document is nearing completion and it is envisaged that it will be presented to Government in the near future.
243	Develop revised 'Exempted Development Regulations' to allow industry to accelerate the rollout of 4G services by exempting 4G antennae from requiring planning permission.	DHPLG	2017	Completed Action Completed. For further details, see the Second Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
244	Develop a licensing scheme allowing for the use of mobile phone repeaters to improve the quality of indoor mobile coverage, particularly in rural areas.	COMREG	2017	Completed	Action completed. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
245	Generate and publish online a composite national mobile phone coverage map (similar to the map produced by the UK regulator (Ofcom)), which will help consumers - particularly in rural areas - choose the network provider that best meets their needs depending on where they live and work.	COMREG	2018	In progress	ComReg appointed an IT consultancy company following a tender process to deliver the mobile coverage map. Updated data was provided by Mobile Network Operators in late October and early November 2018. A test version of the Map was released to mobile operators with 4G data in December 2018. ComReg published the coverage map with all 2G, 3G and 4G data in February 2019, available at https://coveragemap.comreg.ie/map
246	Assess the extent of mobile phone reception blackspots being experienced across the country, which affects rural areas in particular, and identify actions to rectify this. This could include consideration of how spectrum in the 700MHz band is allocated.	DCCAE	Q2 2017	Completed	A focus group was established in 2018 to provide guidance with respect to categories of location where high quality reliable mobile coverage should be made available as a priority. Having completed its work, the report of the focus group was published on DCCAE's website on 31 August 2018. It is anticipated that the output of the focus group should influence the actions of the mobile network operators in their work to reduce mobile phone blackspots. It will also inform future policy in DCCAE with regards to priorities for mobile phone services.
247	Convene a forum of all stakeholders annually to discuss issues impacting on the rollout of telecoms infrastructure across the country.	DRCD	2017	Completed	The second Annual Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce Stakeholder Forum took place on 12th October 2018 in Ballinasloe (the first Forum took place in 2017). This event brought together representatives from Local Authorities, Government Departments, telecommunications operators and community groups to engage in open dialogue around issues impacting on broadband and mobile phone coverage, and to identify solutions to those challenges in order to enhance and improve services. Some of the key discussion points that emerged at the Forum informed planned actions for the Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce in 2019 (see Action 233).
248	Progress the major roads projects detailed in the 7 year transport element of the Capital Investment Plan which will help deliver economic and business benefits across rural areas and regions.	DTTAS	Ongoing	In progress	Major road projects in the CIP are being progressed. Further info may be obtained in the Capital Plan Tracker which is available on DPER's website https://www.per.gov.ie/en/investment-projects-and-programmes-tracker/
249	Improve transport services for the off-shore islands to support the sustainable and inclusive development of island communities and to encourage tourism and other economic benefits, including improved co-ordination with relevant Local Authorities and DTTAS as appropriate.	DCHG	2017-2019	In progress	DCHG is continuing to subsidise transport services, renewing contracts as they arise, and is working with the island communities and ferry operators to enhance the services being provided. In November 2018, a Heads of Agreement was signed between the owner of Connemara Airport and DCHG which enables a process whereby DCHG could become the owner of

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
				that airport thus bringing added stability to the future of the Aran Islands air service.	
250	Continue capital investment in island piers and harbours.	DCHG	2017-2019	In progress	Project Ireland 2040 specifically refers to capital investment for marine infrastructure at Inis Óírr, Inis Meáin, County Galway and for Machaire Rabhartaigh, County Donegal. This will greatly benefit those islands. The pier development at Inis Óírr should progress to construction stage before the end of 2019. With regard to the piers at Inis Meáin and Machaire Rabhartaigh, these projects are still in a pre-construction phase and plans will be progressed through 2019. Construction stage is not expected to commence until 2020 at the earliest.
251	Conduct a full review of public transport policy, including the rural transport dimension, to ensure that it meets the needs of rural communities.	DTTAS	2017	Delayed	A round table discussion on public transport policy was conducted in May 2018. DTTAS has substantially completed the significant research and analysis required to inform a public consultation as part of its review of public transport policy. The Minister expects to launch the public consultation process in the near future.
252	Work with rural communities to assess and implement improvements to existing rural transport routes and develop new rural transport routes as necessary.	NTA	Ongoing	In progress	A total of 65 new evening/night time Local Link services were approved for funding in 2018 and the majority of approved services commenced operations in July 2018. Funding was provided for services operating up to 31 December 2018 (six month pilot). A review of the extended evening and night time services in December 2018 showed a gradual increase in patronage, particularly over the Christmas season. The majority of services were performing well, with 4 non performing services ending in December 2018. New routes commenced in January 2019 and Demand Responsive routes will continue to be developed nationally throughout 2019 in response to local need.
253	Rollout a programme of awareness of the Rural Transport Programme amongst rural communities.	NTA	Ongoing	In progress	The Local Link website – www.locallink.ie has experienced a very significant increase in user experience as a result of a refresh and upgrade in 2018. In 2018 Local Links services had 74,486 users, a significant rise from the 2017 total of 20,168 users. Continued investment in national and local media campaigns promoting Local Link services with a specific campaign for evening and night time services in 2018 and the forging of a strategic alliance with Fáilte Ireland to promote Local Link services that connect with the Wild Atlantic Way have both resulted in successfully further promoting the Local Link brand.

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
254	Ensure that Rural Transport Programme vehicles are accessible, having regard to all passenger needs.	NTA	Ongoing from 2017	In progress	As cited in previous updates, it is the aim of the Rural Transport Programme to provide fully accessible transport services on all routes with a target to achieve at least 95% fully accessible trips by 2020. The procurement process for rural transport services requires that “buses used for the provision of the Services are to be Wheelchair Accessible within two (2) years of the date of this Contract (save where..(it is provided)...that buses must be accessible from the outset of the Contract).” As more services are procured, there is a significant uplift in the numbers of accessible vehicles in use nationally to deliver rural transport services.
255	Examine the potential for, and where possible, integrate Health Service Executive non-emergency transport services with rural transport services.	NTA	Ongoing	In progress	Significant progress was made in 2018 in terms of developing strategic initiatives between the Rural Transport Programme and the HSE. Key areas of activity included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafting of a research proposal to potentially undertake a nationwide audit of identified transport services funded by the HSE including the collation of routeing and timetable information. The purpose of this research is ultimately to identify opportunities to integrate these transport services, where compatible, with public transport services • To identify opportunities where Local Link companies can tender for relevant HSE contracts where the focus is on managing the delivery of transport services for HSE clients.
256	Support rural communities by bringing eligible children to their local school through the provision of safe, efficient and cost effective school transport services.	DES	Ongoing	In progress	There are currently over 117,500 children, including over 13,000 children with special educational needs, transported in over 5,000 vehicles on a daily basis to primary and post-primary schools throughout the country covering over 100 million kilometres annually.
257	Conduct a review of the small public service vehicle driver licensing framework to ensure, amongst other things, the availability of taxi/ hackney services including in rural areas.	NTA	2017	In progress	Changes to small public service vehicle (SPSV) driver entry testing at the end of 2017 resulted in a 27% increase in candidates completing the test with 66% of these achieving a pass. On foot of this there was an increase of 51% in the average number of new SPSV Driver Licences issued per month in 2018. Following the 2012 SPSV Industry Review, the Local Area Hackney licence was introduced in 2013 and continues to be offered by NTA as another path to address local transport deficits in certain more isolated rural areas. The number of active licences remains low overall, with a stable 11-12 licences active nationwide. A review of the position on Local Area Hackneys is being undertaken at present as part of the development

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
				of a strategic framework for the SPSV industry. It is expected that this will be completed in 2019.	
258	Examine the scope for increased investment in regional roads in the context of the review of the Capital Investment Plan 2016- 2021.	DTTAS	2017	Completed	Action Completed. For further details, see the Second Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
259	Promote increased funding for Local Improvement Schemes (for non-public roads and laneways) and Community Involvement schemes (for regional and local roads), on an annual basis, as resources permit.	DRCD	Ongoing	In progress	<p>€20 million in funding was allocated under the Local Improvement Scheme in 2018. Over 1,200 private roads in rural areas have benefitted from investment of over €38 million under the Local Improvement Scheme during 2017 and 2018.</p> <p>€25.3 million in funding was allocated under the Community Involvement Scheme over a two year period (2018-2019). A total of 288 schemes were completed in 2018. 150km of road were treated in 2018 under the Community Involvement Scheme. The overall cost of the works was €12.2 million approximately, with a community contribution of 17% approx. €15.3 million has been allocated for the Community Involvement Scheme in 2019.</p>
260	Implement the capital and operational support schemes, as appropriate, under the Regional Airports Programme 2015-2019 at the regional airports in Donegal, Kerry, Waterford and Ireland West Airport Knock, utilising the additional €10m of support provided for under the Programme for a Partnership Government.	DTTAS	Ongoing	In progress	<p>In 2018, a total of €3.65 million was paid in capital funding in respect of safety and security related projects at the regional airports of Donegal, Kerry and Ireland West Airport Knock, Funding of operational support for the regional airports totalled €3.77 million.</p> <p>€21.7 million has been allocated to the Programme in 2019, divided between Capital (€10.4 million) and Current (€11.3 million). The latter amount, which provides for operational support to airports, includes an annual payment for PSO air services of €7.25 million.</p>
261	Arrest and reverse the decline in passenger numbers at Cork Airport and increase connectivity by air into and out of Cork.	daa	2017-2019	In progress	Cork Airport passenger numbers for 2018 were up 4% to 2.4 million versus 2017, following on from growth of 3.5% in 2017. Recent airline announcements place Cork Airport in a strong position to facilitate continued growth of 7% in 2019 to 2.6 million passengers. Underpinning growth in 2018 and into 2019 is the expansion of capacity on existing routes and extending the route network, with both Ryanair and Aer Lingus now providing a greater choice of destinations. Having welcomed a new

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
				<p>daily hub connection to Paris CDG with Air France, along with new routes to Lisbon with Aer Lingus and London Luton with Ryanair last year, the airport is heading into 2019 with confirmation that six new, presently unserved routes, will be added to its route map, namely Budapest, Dubrovnik, Malta, Naples, Nice and Poznan.</p> <p>Cork Airport's route developments for 2019 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ryanair twice-weekly service to Poznan, April 2, 2019; • Ryanair twice-weekly service to Budapest, April 4, 2019; • Ryanair twice-weekly service to Malta, April 4, 2019; • Aer Lingus twice-weekly service to Nice, May 1, 2019; • Aer Lingus twice-weekly service to Dubrovnik, May 4, 2019; • Ryanair twice-weekly service to Naples, 3 July 2019.
262	Grow existing routes and services at Shannon Airport which will benefit the region.	Shannon Group	Ongoing	<p>In progress</p> <p>Some challenges are now being experienced here as Norwegian has reduced planned winter operations for 2019. Additionally, new routes have been added to Ibiza and East Midlands but the new Liverpool route from 2018 will not return in 2019. Airlines remain very cautious on growth in Ireland outside of Dublin.</p>
263	Agree and implement a Code of Practice with relevant infrastructural providers to ensure timely and efficient transport links and other key infrastructure are maintained across rural Ireland whilst safeguarding Ireland's archaeological heritage.	DCHG	2017-2020	<p>In progress</p> <p>DCHG is working with OPW on development of related coherent management structures for archaeological components of high risk projects, from planning through construction.</p>
264	Increase Capital funding for flood risk management schemes up to €80m per annum by 2019 and increasing to €100m per annum by 2021, as provided for under the Capital Plan 2016- 2021, to accelerate delivery of flood defence schemes around the country that will provide protection for properties at risk of flooding.	OPW	2017-2021	<p>In progress</p> <p>The Government's National Development Plan (NDP) 2018 – 2027 includes a total funding allocation of €940 million over the lifetime of the Plan to underpin the delivery of the existing flood relief capital works programme and additional prioritised flood relief schemes. The NDP allocation taken with the funding allocations already made in 2016 and 2017 under the capital investment plan <i>Building on Recovery: Infrastructure and Capital Investment 2016 - 2021</i> represents total investment of over €1 billion in flood defence schemes. The annual allocation for flood defence measures will increase to €100 million by 2021 demonstrating the priority placed by the Government on addressing Ireland's flood risk.</p>
265	Approve and implement Flood Risk Management Plans setting out flood risk management measures identified for areas of significant risk around the country, including over	OPW	2017-2027	<p>In progress</p> <p>The Flood Risk Management Plans were approved by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform in April 2018. A €1 billion investment in an additional 118 flood relief schemes over the coming decade was launched</p>

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
	100 further proposed measures for rural communities in addition to 28 flood relief schemes for rural communities already in progress.			in May 2018. The OPW and the Local Authorities are pro-actively engaging on the arrangements and structures to be put in place to advance the implementation of the first tranche of projects announced in May. In most cases, Project Steering Groups have been established to oversee the implementation of the projects and Local Authorities are leading on the delivery of the projects.
266	Introduce a prioritised and targeted voluntary homeowners relocation scheme for those again affected by the flooding of December 2015-January 2016.	OPW	2017	<p>Completed</p> <p>Introduction of the scheme is complete, the scheme is underway.</p> <p>In April 2017 the Government agreed arrangements for a Voluntary Homeowners Relocation Scheme for those primary residential properties that flooded between December 4th 2015 and January 13th 2016. This is a once-off national scheme of humanitarian assistance, targeting aid at those worst affected properties, for which there are no alternative feasible measures. The scheme was established immediately after approval and the OPW commenced the identification of properties in consultation with local authorities.</p> <p>The OPW and the Local Authorities are examining the feasibility of engineering solutions for some affected homes. As at December 2018, eligible applicants are being assessed under Stage 2 of the process which involves a site inspection of their property. Site inspections due to be completed in Q1 2019 have been completed.</p>
267	Establish a Working Group comprising representatives from Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine, OPW and Local Authorities to examine in the first instance the feasibility of a targeted and prioritised voluntary farm building relocation scheme for those farm buildings again affected by floods in Winter 2015/2016 and where alternative flood alleviation remedial works and measures are not feasible.	DAFM	2017	<p>In progress</p> <p>A feasibility study is approaching completion following discussions with the OPW. However, it is not anticipated at this stage that the report will be published.</p>
268	Implement Stage 1 of a National Flood Forecasting and Warning Service/Flood Forecasting Service to be established within Met Éireann within 5 years.	Met Éireann	2017-2021	<p>In progress</p> <p>The Chief Hydrometeorologist has been supported by the appointment of two additional hydrometeorologists, with a further three hydrometeorologists commencing in January 2019. The Hydrological Model Contract is progressing as planned and by the start of Q4 2019 Met Éireann will have selected the fluvial flood models for use in the</p>

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update
				operational Flood Forecast Service. Met Éireann is working with other stakeholders in the National Flood Forecasting and Warning Service to produce a Communication Strategy for the dissemination of flood alerts to all parties. A new communications sub-group comprising representatives of Met Éireann, OPW and the Local Authorities has also been established and has met on three occasions during 2018.
269	Assess rural and dispersed flood risk, and where possible develop strategies and actions to manage the assessed risk, under the second cycle of the EU Floods Directive.	OPW	2017 onwards	In progress Following the launch of the Flood Risk Management Plans in May 2018, work to assess any potential flood risk in some of those areas not addressed in the current Flood Risk Management Plans is underway.
270	Strengthen the engagement with the insurance industry to improve the availability of flood insurance cover, given the State's ongoing investment in flood defence schemes.	OPW	2017	In progress The OPW and the Department of Finance meet with Insurance Ireland on a quarterly basis to discuss the means of sharing data on completed flood defence schemes to assist with the availability of flood risk cover to the public. Additional meetings of a technical working group are held, as necessary. Discussions include the provision of data prior to the completion of schemes. Data relating to four schemes has been provided to Insurance Ireland, as the first set of data to pilot a comparative analysis of the levels of flood cover before and after schemes have been completed. Discussions are continuing in relation to flood insurance in areas protected by demountable defences. The OPW has provided comprehensive detail to Insurance Ireland on its demountable defences which is being reviewed by the industry.
271	Review Minor Flood Mitigation Works & Coastal Protection Schemes to support Local Authorities in their work to address localised flooding problems in their areas.	OPW	2017-2021	Completed Action completed. For further details, see the Third Progress Report of the Action Plan for Rural Development.
272	Introduce a trial to lower the water level on Lough Allen in specific conditions in order to help to mitigate potential flood risk.	OPW	2017	Completed A trial was introduced in October 2016 to lower the levels on Lough Allen by 0.7 metres during the Winter season. The Year 1 trial concluded in March 2017 at the start of navigation season. A decision was then taken to continue with the trial for a second year to incorporate any lessons from Year 1 implementation. The Year 2 trial was commenced in October 2017 to run until March 2018. At its meeting in May 2018, the Shannon Working Group agreed to continue to trial the lowering of the lake levels for the coming Winter. The ESB has also commissioned a study of the last 20 years to inform the management of levels on Lough Allen and work is underway to identify the

Action	Lead Body	Timeframe	Status	Update	
				scope of environmental assessments required if the protocol is to be extended.	
273	Evaluate the benefits from any short and medium term programme of localised dredging and any future piloting to remove some pinch points along the Shannon.	OPW	2017	In progress	The Shannon Working Group has established a sub-committee through which progress is being made in developing proposals for both short and long-term maintenance activities. At its meeting in October 2018, the Group agreed the project brief for a modelling assessment of the potential flood risk benefits from preserving the navigation channel along the reach between Athlone and Meelick Weir. A feasibility study will be carried out in 2019.
274	Assess the use of cutaway peatlands and pumping and peat stock management regimes to assist in flood risk management.	Bord na Móna	2017	In progress	Bord na Móna continued to manage milled peat stocks and water levels in flood prone bog areas to maximise water storage and protect milled peat stocks through Winter 2018/2019. In line with the Company's de-carbonisation policy, Bord na Móna will continue to review its operational footprint and progress with de-commissioning and rehabilitation plans. As part of the development of rehabilitation plans, Bord na Móna undertakes to consider and assess impact on flood risk management in areas deemed appropriate for flood alleviation.
275	Identify potential solutions to address the risk of flooding from turloughs.	GSI	2017-2019	In progress	Turlough flood models developed using installed gauges and satellite data for completion of draft maps in Q1 2019. Historic and predictive flood maps for turloughs will be delivered to the OPW in Q1 2019 for the review of the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) under the EU Floods Directive. Collaborative work is continuing with Local Authorities in Counties Roscommon, Galway, Longford and Mayo.
276	Continue implementation of the Forestry Programme (2014- 2020) by increasing annual planting, carbon sequestration and more effective land management.	DAFM	Ongoing	In progress	The new Woodland Environmental scheme launched in September 2018 to promote broadleaf planting. Knowledge transfer scheme for private forest owners was launched in August 2018.
277	Establish an interagency taskforce to develop and publish a cross-sectoral action plan to address the significant decline in the population of Gaeltacht Uíbh Ráthaigh (Inveragh, Co. Kerry) and to revitalise the area in order to attract enterprise and investment.	Údarás na Gaeltachta	Q3 2017 - 2018	In progress	The Uíbh Ráthaigh Taskforce has completed the draft of its action plan for the area, with plans to publish and implement same in Q2 2019. The Taskforce was successful in securing funding under the second round of the Rural Regeneration Development Fund announced in February 2019. This funding will support the implementation of measures contained in the Action Plan, and the appointment of a Project Manager to coordinate progress.

Glossary of Abbreviations

BIM	Bord Iascaigh Mhara
CIF	Construction Industry Federation
CSO	Central Statistics Office
daa	Company formerly known as the Dublin Airport Authority
DAFM	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
DBEI	Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation
DCHG	Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
DRCD	Department of Rural and Community Development
DCCAE	Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment
DCYA	Department of Children and Youth Affairs
DES	Department of Education and Skills
DEASP	Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection
DHPLG	Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government
DJE	Department of Justice and Equality
DoF	Department of Finance
DoH	Department of Health
DPER	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
DTTAS	Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
EI	Enterprise Ireland
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESB	Electricity Supply Board
ETBs	Education and Training Boards
FLAGs	Fisheries Local Area Action Groups
GSI	Geological Survey of Ireland
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HSE	Health Service Executive
IDA	Industrial Development Authority
ILCU	Irish League of Credit Unions
ISIF	Ireland Strategic Investment Fund
ITI	InterTrade Ireland
LAs	Local Authorities
LAGs	LEADER Local Action Groups
LDCs	Local Development Companies
LCDCs	Local Community Development Committees
LEOs	Local Enterprise Offices
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
NTA	National Transport Authority
NUIG	National University of Ireland Galway
OPW	Office of Public Works
OSI	Ordnance Survey Ireland
PPNs	Public Participation Networks
RAPID	Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development
RGDATA	Retail Grocery Dairy & Allied Trades Association
SBCI	Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland
SEAI	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
SFI	Science Foundation Ireland
SICAP	Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme
TII	Transport Infrastructure Ireland
WDC	Western Development Commission