

**DO: GACH BALL DE CHEANTAR BARDASACH DHÚN GARBHÁN/LEASA MHÓIR
TO: EACH MEMBER OF THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF COMERAGH MUNICIPAL DISTRICT**

Economic Development Report October 2023

1. Mount Congreve

Since last reporting progress on the various elements of the project has been as follows:

New Visitor & Retail Centre:

- Both substantially complete and operational since last October,
- New café operator now in place.
- Visitor numbers remain strong.
- Opening hours have been reduced from 7 days per week to 4 since last week (Thursday to Sunday).

Dairy Car park

All works now complete.

Integrated Constructed Wetlands

All works complete.

Interpretation, Orientation & Wayfinding

All works complete.

Garden Works & Play Features

The latest update on these works is as follows:

- The resurfacing 3kms of the path network – complete.
- Repair works to the waterfall – ongoing.
- Restoration of the temple - complete.
- Cleaning of the façade of the house – complete.
- New Play Scheme – complete.
- New potable water source – complete.

Avenue Car Park & Universal Access Improvements.

- Part 8 Planning complete.
- Works tendered and contractor (Tony Kirwan Civil Engineering Ltd) has commenced works on site and is due to be complete by the end of the year.

Glass House Restoration

- Contractor has been appointed and has commenced works on the restoration of the 'Central Section' of the Glass House.
- Works are scheduled to be completed by end of the year.

2. Trails

Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) 2023.

• Measure 1 Applications submitted to Dept of Rural and Community Development 5th September:

Community Group	Project name	Project description
Portlaw Community Enhancement Group	Tower Hill Woods Walking Trails Development	Development of a network of three walking trails at Tower Hill Woods, Portlaw, Co. Waterford with trailhead information unit, interpretative signage, way markers and ancillary infrastructure including amenity seating.
Siúl Eile	Comeragh Mountain Trails Upgrade Works	Comeragh Mountain Trails Upgrades works to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Munster Way • Nire Valley Walks • Rathgormack Walks To include directional signage, way marking, fencing and installation of kissing gate
Visit Waterford	Visit Waterford – Outdoor Recreation Induction	A training video for new starters in tourism businesses highlighting the outdoor offering of county Waterford, to ensure consistent knowledge and understanding across tourism businesses in Waterford.

Project development measure application submitted to Dept of Rural and Community Development 28th July:

Community Group	Project name	Project description
Communities and stakeholders in the Comeragh Uplands	Comeragh Mountains Outdoor Recreation Management Plan	Comeragh Mountains Outdoor Recreation Management Plan: Development and management of high-quality Outdoor Recreation Opportunities in the Comeragh Mountains focusing on core environmental, conservation, landscape, and socio-economic factors

Measure 2 and 3 applications due to be submitted under ORIS 2023 by 27th October.

ORIS 2022:

- Measure 1: Munster Vales – Installation of information kiosks and digital marketing campaign for the Munster Vales region in collaboration with Munster Vales. Munster Vales promotes the 5 upland areas in the region including the Comeraghs. Measure 1. Project complete.
- Measure 2: Anne Valley Walk – Phase III. Project to raise 900 metres of the trail which was prone to flooding. Substantially complete.

ORIS 2021:

- Measure 1: Developing a revised 'Walk Waterford – From Sea to Mountains' booklet and trail mapping to include recently developed trails. New resources have been distributed to tourism and other stakeholders Sept 2023.
- Measure 2: Kilmacthomas River Walk improvement works. Substantially complete. Signage and way marking to be installed before end October.
- Measure 2: Installation of 18 footfall counters at key trail locations across Co. Waterford. Tender evaluation complete. Ready to award contract. Project complete.
- Measure 3: Mahon Bridge/Crough Wood trailhead and improved car parking area. Project progressing.
- Project Development Measure: Copper Coast Walking Trail Feasibility study. Landowner meeting took place in July. Draft planning statement, drawings, NIS, and archaeology report currently being reviewed. Further landowner and stakeholder engagement planned with a view to lodging planning application with ABP before year end.

ORIS 2020:

- Measure 2: Mahon Falls improved trailhead, parking and passing bays. Works complete. Amenity seating installed. New information unit to be installed before end of October.

Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) 2019:

- Durrow playground opened in August.

Waterford Greenway to Suir Blueway Connection:

- Feasibility study ongoing with a range of route options being considered in advance of further public, stakeholder, and landowner engagement.

Waterford Trails

- Continuing to engage with Sport Ireland Outdoors and local trail development groups around Waterford with regard to ongoing monitoring, maintenance, development and promotion of Waterford's existing recreational trail network. www.visitwaterfordtrails.com

3. Rural Economic Development

Shared Island Funding

Delegation from Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, along with community representatives from the villages of Glenarm and Portglenone travelled southwards to visit Waterford City and County Council as part of the Shared Island programme on 12th September 2023. The focus of the Waterford-Antrim project under the programme is around the theme of Rural and Urban Regeneration



Curraghmore Group