

**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 2024**

#### **1. Mount Congreve**

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

##### **Avenue Car Park & Universal Access Improvements:**

- All works now complete and car park in full operation.

##### **Glass House Restoration:**

- All works now complete, contractor has de-mobilised from site and MCT are preparing internal area as a venue/amenity location.

##### **2024 Works:**

- Eco pods are now in their final location.
- Works on the required services i.e. water, waste water and electricity are all ongoing
- It is currently envisaged that the Pods will be available for use in early Q4 2024, followed by the 2 x Gate Lodges in Q1 of 2025.
- Works are continuing on all the other elements of the 2024 investments plan and scheduled to be completed by end of Q1 2025

#### **2. Trails**

##### **Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) 2023 – Project Development Measure:**

##### **Preparation of the Comeragh Mountains Outdoor Recreation Strategy and Action Plan:**

This project is being funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) under the ORIS 2023 – Project Development Measure. The strategy will seek to develop a holistic and collaborative approach to managing outdoor recreation in the area, for the benefit of the mountain environment and local communities. It will set out a vision, strategic priorities and actions for the next 5 years to realise this ambition.

As part of the study a highly informative and engaging councillor workshop and a separate public consultation event were organised on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September last. Responses were also gathered from members of the public via an online survey during the month of September.

It is hoped to launch the strategy in April 2025.



**ORIS 2023 Funding allocations for the Comeragh district were announced as follows between April and June 2024 under Measures 1 and 2:**

- Tower Hill Woods Walking Trails Development, Portlaw (Measure 1): €15,885 – now in progress.
- Comeragh Mountain Trails Upgrades works to: East Munster Way, Nire Valley Walks, Rathgormack Walks (Measure 1): €15,840 – now in progress.
- Crough Wood Walk embankment stabilization project (Measure 2): €175,505 - Design work currently being progressed.
- Benvoy Beach Access upgrade works (Measure 2): €143,010. Design work currently being progressed.

**ORIS 2022:**

- Measure 2: Anne Valley Walk – Phase III. Re-surfacing works of trail between main trailhead car park, Dunhill to Dunhill Castle Car Park now complete.
- Project Development Measure: Feasibility study of potential Knockaderry Reservoir walk currently being undertaken in collaboration with the local community. Study due for completion by the end of October.

**ORIS 2021:**

- Measure 3: Mahon Bridge/Crough Wood trailhead and improved car parking area. Project complete.
- Project Development Measure: Proposed Copper Coast Walking Trails - Waterford City & County Council proposes submitted a Section 177AE planning application to An Bord Pleanála in December 2023 for the development a series of walking trails and ancillary works along the Copper Coast UNESCO Global Geopark between Stradbally and Bunmahon, Co. Waterford:
  - Trail 1 Stradbally to Killelton (4.5km)
  - Trail 2 Ballydowane Beach (1.1km)
  - Trail 3 Cooneennacartan to Trá na mBó (2.0km)

A decision to refuse to approve this application was communicated to WCCC on 25<sup>th</sup> July.

**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.

**County Outdoor Recreation Plan**

Work has commenced on the preparation of the County Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) for Waterford. It is an objective of 'Embracing Ireland's Outdoors – The National Outdoor Recreation Strategy' that each county prepares a CORP and forms a stakeholder grouping the County Outdoor Recreation Committee. In this regard progress to date has been:

- A company called Outscape has been appointed to assist in the preparation of the plan over the coming months.
- It is anticipated that the CORP will be finalized by late Q1/early Q2 2025.

**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](http://www.visitwaterfordtrails.com)