

## Farewell to Charmain



We say Goodbye to our CSI Officer Charmain Jones after 12 years in RCN. We wish her every success in her new role with NIRWN. Charmain has been a huge influence on rural community cohesion issues and has brought imagination, passion, and integrity to the role. Working collaboratively with a wide variety of agencies across the sector, Charmain has championed rural peacebuilding on behalf of our membership. At the tables of governments in UK, Ireland, Europe and USA she took the voice of rural community groups to the people who were making policy decisions and informed them of the likely impact of their decisions on people's lives. She was equally at home in rural halls and community centers working diligently and creatively with groups to hear what they thought, undertaking strategic planning and challenging prejudice and sectarianism. She has been a great worker, friend, and colleague. We look forward to future collaborative working with her and the team in NIRWN.

## Policy Link July

July's Policy Link is now available on our website for anyone interested in keeping up to date with recent policy changes. To view the document, please click the link below:

<https://www.ruralcommunitynetwork.org/app/uploads/2022/07/Policy-Link-July.pdf>

## Summer At RCN

Our offices will be closed from the 11<sup>th</sup> of July to the 18<sup>th</sup> of July with all staff on leave. There will be no Rural Brief in August, but if you would like your information posted for September's Rural Brief please forward it on to [kelly@ruralcommunitynetwork.org](mailto:kelly@ruralcommunitynetwork.org).

We hope you all have a lovely and safe summer.

## Diploma in Community Development Practice

Working with NUI Galway, we are bringing a Diploma in Community Development Practice course to the Ballymoney area. The Diploma course commences October 2022 and ends June 2023. The course is aimed at those who wish to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of community development and enhance effective leadership within the sector.

- Applicants must be aged 21+
- The course will take place on Wednesday nights from 7-10pm and a few Saturdays
- Course duration is October 2022 to June 2023
- This is a level 7 qualification
- Cost to the course is £150

The deadline for applications is the **20<sup>th</sup> August 2022**. To apply follow the link below, and email the forms back to [kelly@ruralcommunitynetwork.org](mailto:kelly@ruralcommunitynetwork.org):

<https://www.ruralcommunitynetwork.org/news/diploma-for-community-development-practice-2022-2023/>

The course is being offered by the Investing in Community Leadership partnership between



## The Amp Survey

Do you care about housing? Your community? Want to make it better?

The "Amp" survey series aims to amplify the voice of residents in order to influence the decision makers who can effect real change in the areas of housing and community development. The survey takes a few minutes to register and once you do you will receive 4 or 5 surveys a year on topics we think will be of interest.

To find out more visit the website below:

<https://supportingcommunities.org/the-amp-registration>

## Village Catalyst Funding

Applications are invited from charities, social enterprise and other not-for-profit groups in rural villages of less than 5,000 people who want to tackle rural poverty and social isolation in their area by developing a sustainable use for a disused historic building in their village.

The programme builds on a 3-year pilot, which resulted in 4 projects being developed, highlighted in a short film accessed via this link:

<https://ahfund.org.uk/news/latest/4.2m-innovative-village-catalyst-programme-launched-at-caledon-woolstore/>

To be eligible, the building must be listed or within a conservation area. The 3 available funding routes and details on how to apply are listed below:

1. **Project Viability Grant** – To carry out viability work, with support offered up to £10,000. Please complete the enquiry form via the following link: <https://ahfund.org.uk/enquiry/> prior to making an application. This is a rolling scheme. For more information on what this grant can fund, see: <https://ahfund.org.uk/grants/northern-ireland/>
2. **Project Development Grant** – To further develop your plans with support offered up to £20,000. For enquiries and applications for this scheme, please contact [Villagecatalystsupport@communities-ni.gov.uk](mailto:Villagecatalystsupport@communities-ni.gov.uk). Please note, this scheme will close once our available budget has been expended. Therefore, early application is recommended.
3. **Delivery Grant** – To deliver your project, with capital funding offered up to £200,000. For enquiries and applications for this scheme, please contact [Villagecatalystsupport@communities-ni.gov.uk](mailto:Villagecatalystsupport@communities-ni.gov.uk). Please note, this scheme will close once our available budget has been expended. Therefore, early application is recommended.

## Rural Engagement Arts Programme

Community groups, arts organisations and local authorities in rural communities across Northern Ireland can now apply to the Arts Council's new Rural Engagement Arts Programme (REAP). The programme, which has a budget of £1.5m of National Lottery funding over 3 years, invites online applications for grants of up to £10,000 to deliver arts projects benefitting rurally-based communities. **Applications are open from Wednesday 8 June 2022 and will close on Thursday 28 July 2022.**

The Rural Engagement Arts Programme aims to provide an integrated, cohesive approach to the needs of local rural communities as they emerge from the global Covid-19 pandemic. The overarching theme of the programme is to tackle isolation and loneliness, and promote social inclusion and wellbeing.

<http://artscouncil-ni.org/mobile/news/arts-council-announces-new-three-year-1.5m-funding-programme-promoting-arts>

## Cost of Living Crisis

A cost of living support package has been put in place for 2022 that includes one-off payments to those on income related benefits, disabled claimants and pensioners. These payments are intended to provide support to you with the current rise in the cost of living. To find out more follow the link below:

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/cost-living-support>

## Community Foundation NI Funds

The Older People's Fund offers funding for projects that are planned and run by and for older people. In recognition of the needs of older people, the Community Foundation has therefore developed a new Older People's Fund, Small Grant Programme with a particular focus on food and fuel.

To find out more and eligibility check out the Community Foundation NI website:

<https://communityfoundationni.org/grants/the-older-peoples-fund-food-and-fuel-small-grant-programme/>