

Easter Break

The Staff and Board at RCN would like to wish its members a happy Easter. The office will be closed from 1st April 2024 and will reopen on 8th of April 2024.

We would also like to congratulate Rachael Power and Fergal Barr on their recent appointments to Community Relations Officer and Community Relations Development Officer (Networking and Skills). Both new staff will start on April 8th.



Making NISRA Data Work for You

This workshop will explore the data available on the NI Statistics & Research Agency (NISRA) website and their NISRA Data Portal.

Participants will learn about some of the basic concepts underpinning area-based statistics and how data available on NISRA and the Census 2021 Area Explorer tool can be used to enhance their organisation's understanding of the place they are working in or of the group / community they are working with.

This is an online session delivered via Zoom. It will involve an interactive exploration of NISRA's websites

Date: Thursday 25th April 2024

Time: 10.30am – 12.30pm

Location: Via Zoom

To register email kelly@ruralcommunitynetwork.org or sign up via Google form [here](#).

Diploma in Community Development Practice

The Diploma in Community Development Practice is a one-year (part time) course accredited by the University of Galway for the year 2024 – 2025. The Diploma in Community Development Practice has been designed to enable Community Activists (volunteers and paid staff in the community / voluntary sector) to develop the knowledge, understanding and essential practical skills and experience required to provide leadership within this field.

One off cost of £150 per person. If you are unwaged then we can talk to you about how we can support you to meet this payment.

Places are limited to 25 students.

Location: Newtownards.

Applications open on the 8th April.

If you would like an application form please email kelly@ruralcommunitynetwork.org for further information.

Meet the Funder

On Thursday 21st March, we ran a Meet the Funder event with The National Lottery Heritage Fund. A brilliant evening at Newcastle Community Cinema where Emma Hannah, Engagement manager at NLHF. Emma shared advice on the Heritage Grants programme and how to apply for funding to support rural heritage projects.



Rural Residents' Forum Site Visit

Members of the Rural Residents' Forum took part in a recent site visit hosted by Positive Carrickfergus. Positive Carrickfergus are a community interest company led by people who live and work in the town and surrounding area. They have developed several initiatives focused on community ownership and community economic development. Their work has included instigating the Carrick Greengrocers which is a co-operative enterprise, owned and operated by its members selling fresh fruit, vegetables and other locally produced foods to the local community. We were hosted on the day by Lee Robb who gave us a tour of the town centre and spoke about their work to date and future plans.



The Grocery Run

We are delighted that 'The Grocery Run', created by Rouskey Community & Development Association and Nine874 Creative, has been chosen, alongside two other short films for the Foyle Film Festival Reel Lives event.

This film was funded as part of RCN's 'Ours to Share' grants programme, supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund Northern Ireland.

If you would like to check out the films, book a place [here](#).

Climate Action Fund

The Climate Action Fund is the National Lottery Community Fund's commitment to help communities tackle climate change. They are supporting communities to be environmentally sustainable. With Climate Action Fund – Our Shared Future they want to involve more people in climate action and to inspire bold and exciting change.

They will fund formal partnership projects that reach more people by either:

- linking climate action to the everyday lives and interests of local communities and inspiring them to take action.
- influencing communities at a regional or national level, like linking up groups across locations or a campaign that inspires change across one country, or the whole UK.

You do not have to be a climate or environment focused organisation to apply.

For more information on the fund follow the link [here](#).



Asda Foundation Grants

The Asda Foundation have launched their second Grassroots Grant round for 2024.

They have a variety of funding available to support local community groups throughout the summer period.

More information on the grants are available [here](#).

