

TRUSTEE REPORT

1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024



Section A Reference and administration

Charity name: The Rural Centre
Company Limited by Guarantee: Company Registration: NI045661
Charity Number: NIC105690
Address: The Old Primary School, 4 Augher Road, Clogher BT76 0AD

Trustees
Mr William Harrison Boyd, Chairperson
Mr Gerald Hackett, Secretary
Mrs Alverta Steen

Manager
Mrs Heather McLaughlin

Section B Structure, governance and management

Governing Document: Memorandum of Association
Recruiting and Appointing New Members: The method of selection for all new members is through appointment by existing Board members.

Bank: Ulster Bank, Main Street, Clogher
Accountant: SP Mc Caffrey & Co Ltd, 50 Campsie Road, Omagh

Area of Benefit: Northern Ireland, UK

Section C Objectives and activities

The advancement of education; the advancement of citizenship or community development and the promotion of religious or racial harmony or equality and diversity among the inhabitants of Northern Ireland to promote peace building and respect for cultural diversity by connecting people to collaborate and build relationships cross community, cross border and between other regions of Europe and internationally through:

- (i) Thematic study visits to share expertise and knowledge; to share different ways of doing things that can be adapted and transferred to improve practice in this region.
- (ii) Educational study visits to explore shared history, and promote good relations and peace building by encouraging mutual understanding between communities around the different perceptions and interpretations that exist.
- (iii) Projects with partners from other regions to collaborate and share expertise and skills to improve formal and non formal education, training and youth work.
- (iv) Cultural awareness training to provide skills to communicate effectively across cultures. promote peace building, respect for religious equality and diversity
- (v) Information on EU funding programmes, partnerships, projects, exchanges, placements and participation in events to develop links across Europe to share expertise.

Section D Activities

Activities – Local and European Projects`

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public including support, EU information, cultural awareness training, exploring shared history, educational and thematic study visits, Erasmus+ European Projects with partners from other regions.

All training and educational materials, videos and modules produced by EU projects are available free to any user.

This report captures the main activities carried out to deliver the projects and outputs to the same high standard as previous years.

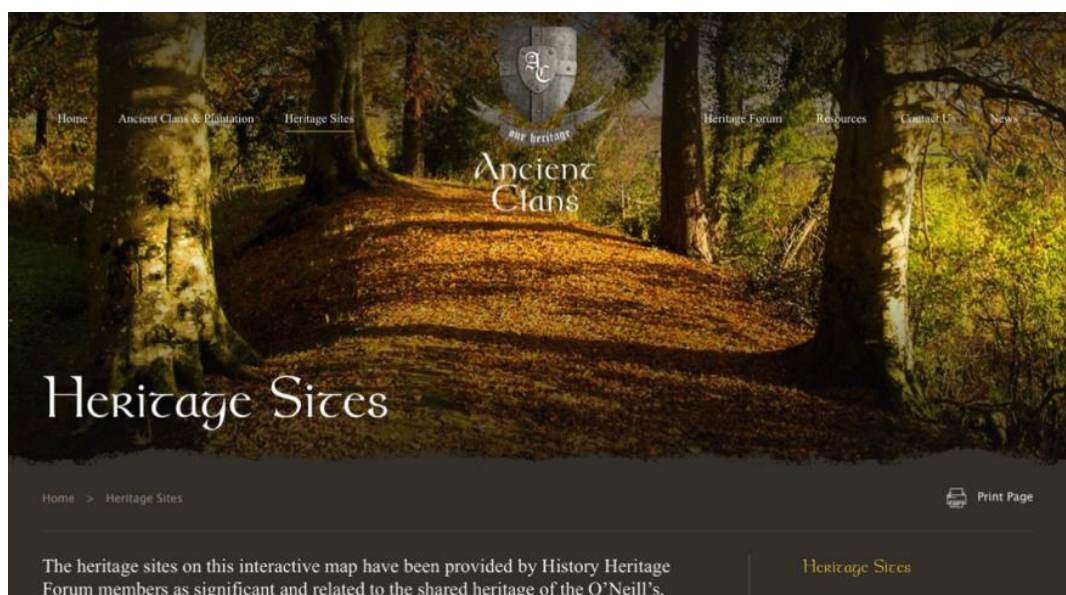
- **Mid Ulster District Council and Donegal County Council: Ancient Clans of Ireland – Our Shared Heritage**

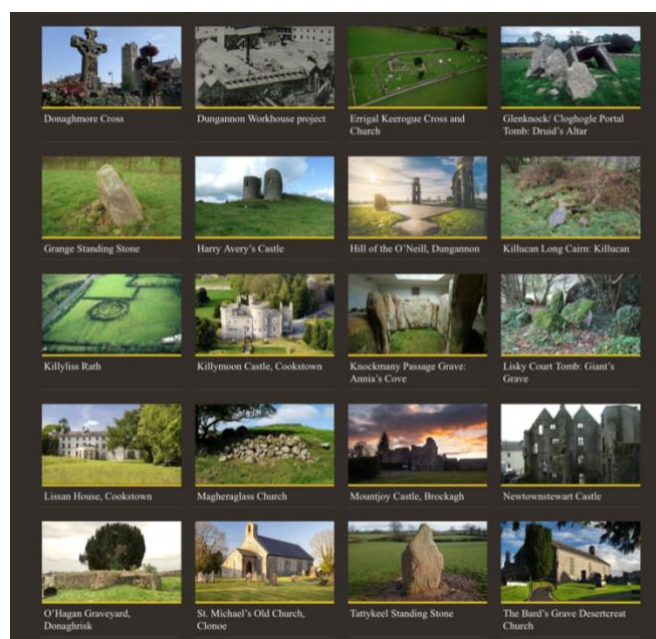
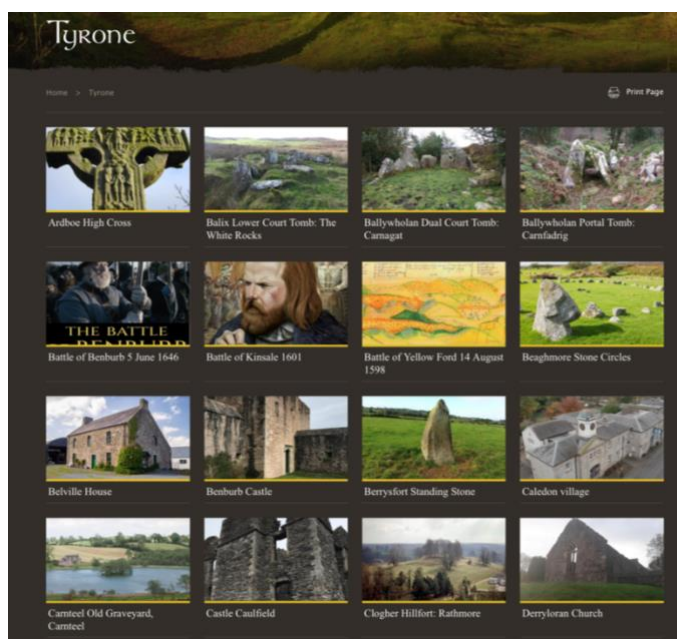
This project facilitates links between Mid Ulster District Council, Donegal County Council and local groups through visits to sites with shared heritage of the O'Neills, other ancient Clans and the Plantation of Ulster. 10 Groups each area reaching 100+ people

Over 30 heritage sites added to the Ancient Clans website April 2023 – Mar 2024. The Ancient Clans website aims to share heritage sites to encourage people to visit and understand our rich history, heritage, language, and culture.

The Ancient Clans website is the result of a cross border project between Mid Ulster District Council and Donegal County Council funded through EU PEACE IV funding. We began by sharing heritage sites in Donegal and Mid Ulster and are now extending it to include heritage sites connected to our ancient history and heritage supported through Mid Ulster District Council funding.

<https://ancientclans.org/heritage-sites/>





- Tourism LED Project**

Erasmus+ funded for 2yrs from 05-10-2020 to 30-4-2023.

Cordinated by Stiftelsen Minerva, Sweden.

Partners from UK, Sweden, Poland, Malta and Turkey.



The Tourism LED project explored how migrants communities have used their cultural heritage in tourism initiatives to generate income and contribute social and economic development to their new region. Partners shared best practice examples from their regions as a way to generate ideas for other regions.

This project was concluded with a short series of short introductory videos with voiceovers in our partner languages of Swedish, English, Turkish and Polish along with Final modules, case studies, tools translated to all partner languages and uploaded to Platform.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3xLIGXC6DTY&t=3s>

- **Women Inspired: Supporting Entrepreneurship (WISE) Project**

Erasmus+ funded for 2yrs from 01.05.2021 to 30.04.2023.

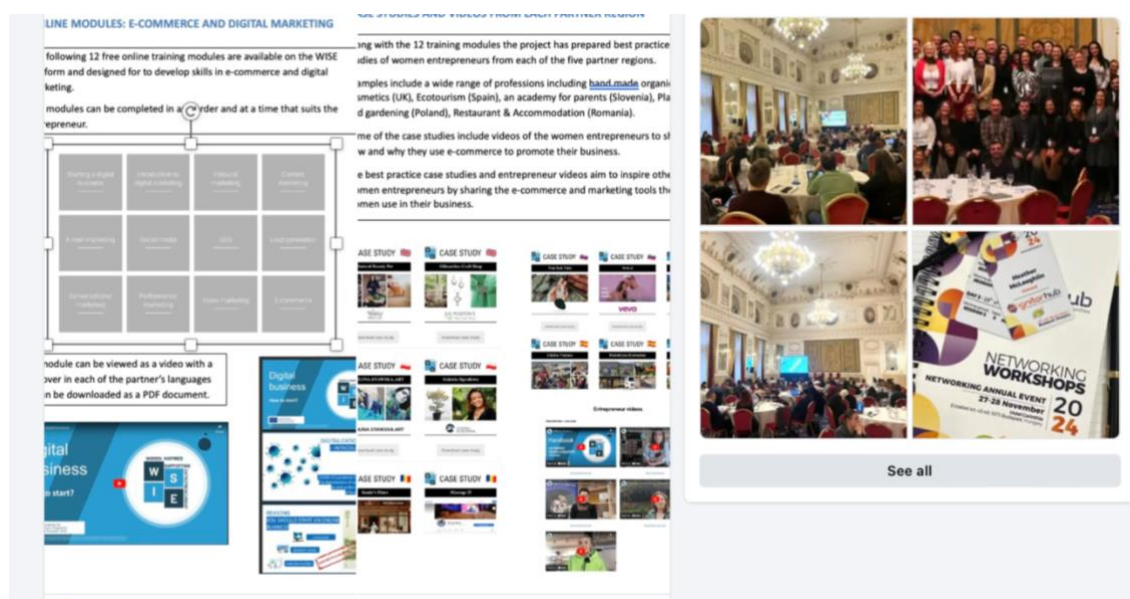
Project Number: 2020-1-PL01-KA226-VET-095420.

Coordinated by Linking Foundation, Poland

Partners from Romania, Slovenia, Spain and Northern Ireland (UK)

WISE project final meeting took place at the end of March 2024 in Krakow, Poland. The project produced some excellent e-commerce and digital training modules and case studies of women entrepreneurs from our partner regions of Poland, Spain, Slovenia, Romania and N Ireland.

All materials are available and free to use <https://wisesupport.eu/en/>



Support and Representation Activities

Serving on various Boards and providing support to local groups such as web design, funding applications, providing administrative support and meeting space etc.

- COSTA Board member attending meetings.
- Support to a range of groups including Aughnacloy and Traugh, Ancient Clan O'Neill, Broughderg Area Development Association, Cinéal Eoghain, Caledon Regeneration Project, Clans of Ulster, Clogher Playgroup, Clogher Village Community Forum, Desertcreat Church of Ireland, Hnads on Heritage, Killeslial and Clonanesse, Local History Society.
- Mid Ulster District Council Clogher village development plan meetings

Sliabh Beagh Partnership

The Rural Centre sits as community representative on the Sliabh Beagh Partnership with Monaghan, Mid Ulster, and Fermanagh Omagh Councils to develop a tourism Masterplan for the area attending meetings.

Mid Ulster District Council Heritage Strategy August 2023

Submission of five year heritage strategy for Mid Ulster District Council to foster greater community participation and visitor engagement, to enhance awareness of heritage assets to promote the built, natural and cultural heritage owned, managed and supported by Mid Ulster District Council.

Erasmus+ Project Tenders, Funding Activities

Development of Erasmus+ project applications with partners from other regions of Europe across a variety of themes.

ROSE Project – Remote Work Education

The main goal of the ROSE project is to equip individuals with remote work skills for personal and professional growth to empower them to excel in remote work careers and attain economic independence

Preventing IT October 2024

A project proposal was submitted to Erasmus+ Youth with the aim to prevent Young people from developing any types of addictions to develop resources on how to work with youth on addictions.

Adapt Ability October 2024

This project proposal was submitted to Erasmus+ to addresses the priority of adapting existing vocational education and training to better meet training labour market needs by developing the skills of SMEs in cognitive flexibility.

Approved - Build it together Project - Project Term: Jan 2024 – Dec 2025

The project aims at promoting awareness and building knowledge of EU citizenship rights and associated European common values and common democratic standards through building knowledge and sharing best practices on the benefits of diversity as well as effective measures on how to tackle discrimination and racism at the local level.

Project Partners: Bulgaria, Estonia, France, Malta, Poland, Slovenia

Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV) Project No: 101136806

First Meeting October 2024, Malta



Events, Study Visits, Cultural Awareness Activities

Social Innovation Conference, Krakow, Poland 11 & 12 April 2023

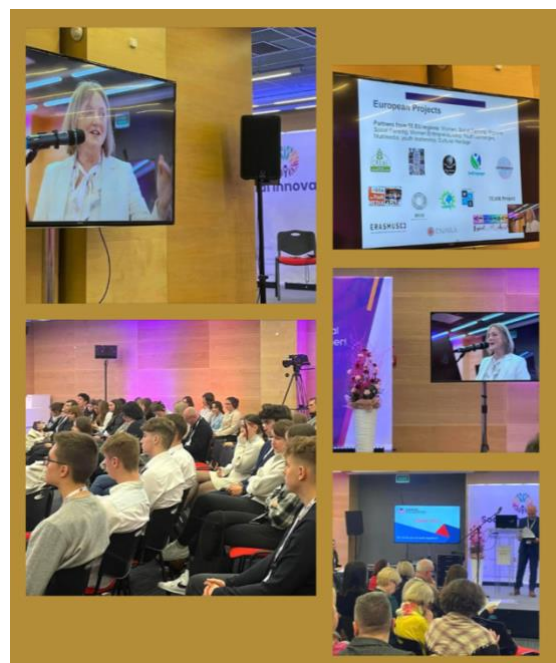
The Rural Centre was invited to speak and act as moderator at the social Innovation Brokers conference in Krakow.

The purpose was to share our work and activities as a way to share and inspire over 200 participants from across Europe.

The aim of the Social Innovation Brokers project is to develop an innovative training for Social Innovation Brokers.

To act as the bridge builders who connect innovators With stakeholders with industry leaders, visionaries, and like-minded professionals who are ready to explore the boundless potential of New Ideas!

<https://socialinnovationbrokers.eu/conference2023/>



“New Ideas New Opportunities” Networking event, Vienna

The [Centre for Promoting Lifelong Learning](#) from Timisoara, together with its associated partners and support networks from Europe organises this event as a network for professionals interested in developing co-financed projects, supporting lifelong learning for our communities.

Members and the developed projects reflect the diversity of the need across Europe, all united under the power of creating lifelong learning spaces.

Heather McLaughlin, The Rural Centre participated in a plenary sharing expertise on managing EU Projects with Q&A.



Red Hugh O'Donnell Study visit Lifford, Mongavlin 10 October 2023

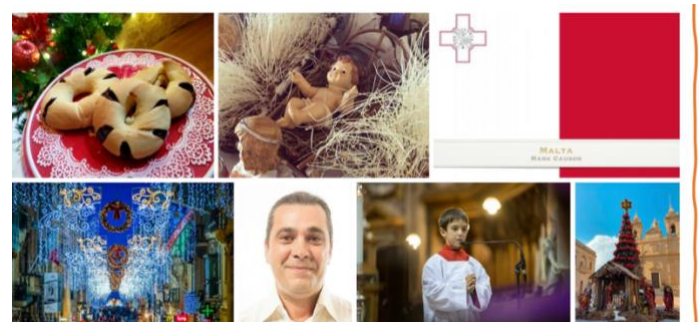
Red Hugh O'Donnell birthday event in Donegal was attended by over 100 people at the various activities. The day began with a guided tour of Lifford's town history, and castle built by O'Donnell's great-grandfather. Mongavlin Castle on the banks of the river Foyle had strategic significance in battles involving the O'Donnell clan and its occupation during the Plantation with a visit from King James II on his way to the siege of Derry in 1690. In the evening the official opening of 'Seomra Aoidh Raiudh' took place in Maggie's Tavern followed by a Hedge School with a panel of expert historians to discuss Red Hugh's life and his association with Chieftan Hugh O'Neill and the Nine Year's War against the English.



Videos to share how Christmas is celebrated across Europe December 2023

Christmas Tree Festival, Cookstown

The Rural Centre used its contacts across Europe to produce a series of short videos to share how different cultures celebrated Christmas. The videos from Spain, Malta, Poland, Germany, Romania and Sweden were shared at a three day Christmas Tree Festival in Desertcreat.



Section E Financial review

Review of the Business

The Rural centre is non-profit making with the net incoming resources of £45,062 for the year. There was no capital expenditure during the year.

The management continues to be engaged in ongoing efficiency savings and is aware of the sustainable use of resources.

Reserves Policy


The trustees of The Rural Centre have set up a reserves policy which requires that reserves be maintained, in unrestricted bank accounts, at a level which ensures that The Rural Centres core activities, could continue during a period of unforeseen difficulty. The trustees consider that this figure should be £5,000 and will endeavour to reach this figure in the next few years. The Company Review Policy is reviewed every year.

Section D Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)



Full name(s)

Mr Gerard Hackett

Position

Secretary