



Irish Rural Link
Nasc Tuaithe na hÉireann

A VOICE FOR RURAL IRELAND



IRL Christmas E-news

December 2015

Membership Networks

Currently IRL is encouraging its various members to form single issue networks within the umbrella of the organisation. This is a concept well tried in the Trade Union movement and the Farmer organisations.

In essence it allows each group to focus on the issues close to their every day experience, without the overall worry of maintaining a National Network.

Because of new legislation, new networks will need approximately €20,000 for start-up purposes. This involves legal registration, charitable status application, company registration and all of the processes involved.

It also allows the rural family, largely made up of rural community issues to work as a united front when required and strengthens the representational power because of the larger membership

Current IRL networks include:

- The Wetlands Forum
- Rural Transport
- Meals on Wheels
- Wild Atlantic Way



IRL Launch New Website:

We're very excited to announce the launch of our newly designed website which goes live this month... The site's homepage features bright colours and an uncluttered design. A few of our goals with the new website were to make it faster, easier to navigate and more user friendly.

It was important for us to make information regarding rural issues, as easily accessible as possible for our current and prospective members. We make it a point to provide our members with the most accurate, up-to-date information and share our knowledge and expertise in the field of rural development. Our new site features a Members Login, which gives member's access to Research Papers, Submissions, Publications, Policy papers and access to staff via messenger. We also wanted to give our Members an opportunity to know us better; who we are as a company and the people driving the team. By browsing through our About IRL sections, you'll get a pretty good idea of who we are, what we do as an organisation.



Community Wetlands Forum



22 members attended the latest Wetlands Network Forum in IRL. The main item for discussion was an invitation from National Parks & Wildlife Service to prepare a paper on Community Engagement. It is planned that all future meetings will feed into the paper. There is

also collaboration with NUIG on Service Learning – Students will make themselves available to work and guide the wetlands groups on their projects. This will prove beneficial to both Students and Wetlands groups.

For more go to www.irishrurallink.ie/members/wetlands or click here for Wetlands Forum website

<https://15bf9965609201a94e1fb352fe005422b4cb1e82.googleusercontent.com/host/0B6R0RAp7hdBUQnJzSDhIQWR3Vms/Rural%20Link/index.html>



Benefit 4

The benefit 4 programme is a basic computer training course for people who have never used a computer before – it's an 8 hour course run over 4 days and trains people to;

- Pay bills on line
- Shop online
- Skype friends and family
- Send email etc



We are currently in our 4th year and to date having trained 3900 individuals ranging from Active retired to Farmers.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our Trainers around the country and wish everyone involved a very happy Christmas and to let you know that we will be starting again early in 2016 – watch our website for more



Participants received their Benefit 4 Certificates in Lackagh IT Centre, Turloughmore, Co Galway, with Chrissy Casey Irish Rural Link and Geraldine Delaney IT trainer. December 15

European Rural Parliament

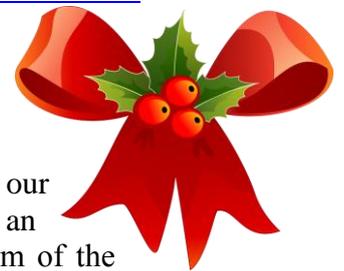
All Europe Shall Live! The Rural People of Europe assert their rights.

A gathering of 240 people representing 240 rural communities from 40 European Countries met at the second European Rural Parliament in November and approved an ambitious European Rural Manifesto. It called for full recognition of the right of rural communities to a quality of life and standard of living equal to that of urban populations, and to full participation in political processes.

The Manifesto, which is advocating action on 30 key issues, resulted from national campaigns in the 40 countries, involving thousands of rural people. IRL held 4 seminars including our annual conference to raise issues to be included in the rural manifesto. 6 Members of IRL attended the Gathering in Austria – keep an eye out for their report early in 2016. Go to our website for the Manifesto link or www.europeanruralparliament.com

Meals on Wheels Network

The National Meals on Wheels Network has grown significantly since our launch in the Autumn by Minister Ann Phelan. 2016 promises to be an exciting year for the network as it builds on this year's success. The aim of the network is to provide a local community led professional facility to assist people who require services to maintain optimum health and independence.



If any meals on wheels organisations wish to join the network, please contact James on 087-2819741 or james@irishrurallink.ie

Rural Public Banking

IRL policy researchers have clearly identified that the need for competition in credit lines for SMEs is vital to facilitate a more uniform economic development across rural areas and by its design, across the country as a whole.

To address this deficit IRL calls for the setting up of a nationwide network of “Local Public Banks”, which are managed independently but with an identical business model working under both a uniform management and ethical principles. Such banks would facilitate the development of regional based economies through the creation of a virtuous economic cycle within the regions while also folding its profits back into the local communities.

For more: <http://www.irishrurallink.ie/component/k2/item/16-irish-rural-link-advocates-a-network-of-regionally-based-local-public-banks-for-ireland>

The Board & Staff of Irish Rural Link would like to wish our Members, Partners, Funders a very Happy Christmas and we look forward to working with you in 2016

