Irish Rural Link

17th January 2017

**Irish Rural Link welcomes Grant Scheme to Restore Properties in Rural Areas**

Irish Rural Link – the national network representing the interest of rural communities welcomes the Grant Schemes to restore old buildings to incentivise people back to rural towns and villages.

The Grant Scheme is part of the Action Plan for Rural Ireland which is going to Cabinet today and we await the launch and publication of this Action Plan.

IRL have always highlighted its concern about the decline of rural areas due to migration of younger people to cities, the ageing population of rural areas and the decline of services as a result and have continuously called for a revision to rural development.

In particular we welcome the connection between housing improvement and the provision of employment. The improving economy has still to reach rural areas, with the result that for many young people, jobs are more likely to be available in the Greater Dublin area.

IRL calls for the maximum delivery of this scheme and of the Action Plan, once it is launched. It needs to work in conjunction with the announcement Minister Simon Coveney made before Christmas around the development of regional centres. Both plans need to feed into one another, with both Ministers and Departments working together on the delivery of both.

IRL are very happy to support the Government in the delivery of this Scheme and Action Plan as soon as possible.

Ends

**For further information, please contact (anytime):**

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**About Irish Rural Link:**

Irish Rural Link represents the interests of locally based rural groups in disadvantaged and marginalised rural areas by highlighting problems, advocating appropriate policies, sharing experiences and examples of good practice. It has a membership of nearly 500 rural community groups dedicated to sustainable rural development and represents rural communities at a national and international level