Irish Rural Link
28th December 2017

**Irish Rural Link call for increase in rural policing**

Irish Rural Link (IRL) – the national network representing the interest of rural communities is now calling for the increase in rural policing and supports for community alert and neighbourhood watch programmes.

Following the spate of recent attacks on vulnerable and elderly people and the report revealed today that women and young teenagers, working for crime gangs, are involved in such burglaries and attacks in rural areas more action now needs to be taken.

IRL has been highlighting weaknesses in rural policing for many years and has consistently called for implementation of the following actions;

* More Gardai available for policing duties.
* Increased resources to the neighbour-hood watch and community alert programme.
* Elevation of these programmes so that they can effectively partner policing in rural areas using community models.
* The delivery of the CCTV programme, which is stalled at the moment.

We welcome the crackdown on ringleaders of rural crime and congratulate the Thor programme. However, since Gardai cannot be on every crossroad at all times, it needs the support of the community as well. Such support should be an integral part of policing and be systemised so that it does not rely on voluntary support only.

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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 over 600 rural community groups dedicated to sustainable rural development and represents rural communities at a national and international level.