

The Local Authority Waters Programme works alongside and supports public bodies, stakeholders and communities in protecting, enhancing and maintaining healthy waters and catchments.

UPDATE FOR THE MIDLANDS AND EASTERN REGION COUNTIES:

**DUBLIN,
 WICKLOW,
 MEATH,
 WESTMEATH,
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 OFFALY,
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 LAOIS.**

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 watersandcommunities.ie
 catchments.ie

Sign up to our seasonal newsletter at
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Catchment Catch-up Midlands and Eastern Region

Issue 3

September 2019

Water Quality and the National Ploughing Championship, Ballintrane, Fenagh, County Carlow, 17—19 September, 2019

In 2019 LAWPRO attended the National Ploughing Championships for the third successive year and collaborated — also for the third year in a row — with the National Federation of Group Water Schemes. Our “Water Quality”-themed stand was located in the “Environment, Climate and Sustainability” marquee, which was managed by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE). All agencies and public bodies in that space were linked by their connection to the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals.

The ploughing championship is a fantastic event and is unique in many respects, with its myriad of exhibitors and huge crowds. With such a wide and varied audience, the championship provides us with a great opportunity to raise awareness about water quality and LAWPRO’s goals.

Our core message this year was built around the idea of a “Water Catchment”, a theme chosen in order to highlight links between activities on land and water quality in rivers, lakes and coastal waters. The activities referred to include agriculture, forestry, manufacturing, urban wastewater treatment, domestic wastewater treatment, urban run-off and water-based recreational activities. Instead of focusing on the problems in a catchment, however, the emphasis is placed on identifying solutions and on the need for communities to work together, in tandem with the work of public bodies.



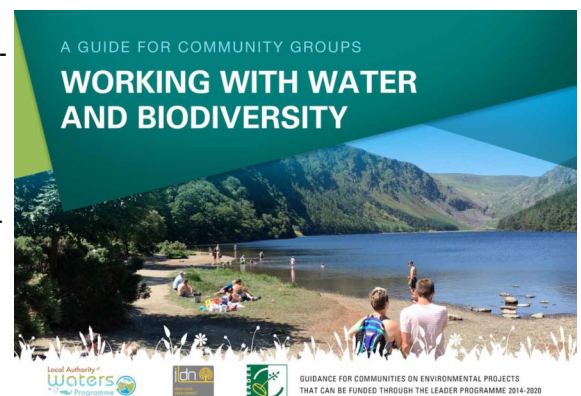
Exhibitors in the Environment, Climate & Sustainability stand: DCCAE, LAWPRO, IFI, OPW, NPWS, CARO, Met Éireann, GSI, SEAI, NFGWS, Office of Emergency Planning, Green Schools, ObServe, EPA, My Waste, Minerals and mining.

L to R: Adrian Smith, NFGWS; Róisín Dowd-Smith, NFGWS; Richard Bruton T.D., Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment; Brian Casey, LAWPRO; John Carley, DoS, Wexford Co Co; Ruth Hennessy, LAWPRO; Jim Croke, LAWPRO.



A Guidebook for Community Groups Working with Water

LAWPRO recently published *Working with Water and Biodiversity*, a guidebook for community groups. This publication was produced in collaboration with the Irish Rural Development Network and provides community groups with guidance regarding environmental projects that can be funded through the LEADER Programme 2014—2020. The guidebook is also a useful tool for LCDCs and Community & Enterprise sections of Local Authorities. To obtain a copy of the guidebook, please contact your local Community Water Officer or email info@lawaters.ie



WATER IS A VITAL RESOURCE, FOR WHICH THERE IS NO KNOWN SUBSTITUTE.

The EU Water Framework Directive (WFD)

The WFD was the first directive to mandate participation by stakeholders and communities in developing and implementing public policies.

River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs)

The WFD requires good water status for all rivers, lakes, estuaries, groundwater and coastal waters. This is to be achieved through RBMPs and programmes of measures, developed and implemented in three six-year cycles up to 2027 .

A healthy catchment provides good quality drinking water and ensures that plants, animals, fish and insects will survive and flourish. People are naturally drawn to locations with good water quality, whether for recreational or sporting activities. For those reasons, it is in our interests to protect and enhance our local catchments.

Good water quality is essential for human health, for wildlife and for vibrant communities.

Ongoing activities

Celebrating Water during National Heritage Week August 17 – 25

Water Heritage Day is organised as a collaboration between The Heritage Council and the Local Authority Waters Programme to celebrate water and our connections with it. Throughout Heritage Week and on Water Heritage Day, Sunday 25th August, communities organised events beside their local well, river, lake, canal and coast. Over 60 events took place around the country and were supported by staff of the Local Authority Waters Programme. This was an opportunity to enjoy the wildlife and learn more about the habitats along our waterways. Some of the events in this region included Athlone Canal Heritage Tour (right), a family day exploring the shores of Lough Ree, Ashbourne River Family Fun Day (below right) and Rathangan River and Canal Walk (below).



Athlone Canal Heritage Group – Walk & Talk Tour



Rathangan Waterways Biodiversity Walk

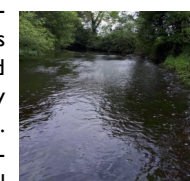


Ashbourne River Family Fun Day

Our Catchment Scientists have delved into another set of public meetings, in September, public meetings were held in: Lough Derravaragh Priority Area for Action (PAA) comprising the Yellow and Gaine rivers and Lough Lene PAA (Adeel Stream). Farmer specific meetings will be scheduled in the coming weeks.

A LAWPRO Catchment Scientist sits on the National Pesticide in Drinking Water Action Group (NPDWAG). This group focuses on ways to eliminate pesticides entering the aquatic environment and therefore drinking water (DW). The DW limit for an individual pesticide is 0.1µg/l, this is 700 times lower than the World Health Organisation (WHO) limit of 0.7mg/l.

Once a pesticide is detected in a DW source, Irish Water (IW) must notify the EPA, this DW source is then placed on an EPA watch list. If a water supply has pesticide exceedances detected in 4 or more calendar months per single growing season, that supply is moved from the EPA Watch List to the Remedial Action List (RAL). Once placed on the RAL, the EPA issues a direction to IW to resolve this issue. There are currently 8 DW sources on the RAL. The DW sources, which were on the RAL throughout 2018 included Abbeyfeale, the Dee, Longford Central and Troyswood. The Animal & Plant Health Association (APHA) carried out monitoring throughout the catchment areas of all of these four DW sources to assist in identifying the pesticide sources. The samples were tested for MCPA, 2,4 D and MCPP. Numerous awareness campaigns, education initiatives and training courses have been delivered out by multiple stakeholders over the past 18 months, this has been rewarded by seeing positive reductions in exceedances in three of these DW catchment areas. Longford Central is the exception and has shown no sign of improvement. As a result, further monitoring is being conducted through a full calendar year from April 2019 to April 2020 in the Longford Central catchment, as there may be an association with pesticide storage and release from the lakes within the catchment. A subgroup was set up to focus specifically on the Longford Central water supply within the Midlands and Eastern Region. LAWPRO are working with the IW Catchment Scientist to analyse the APHA monitoring data for the Longford Central DW source, as the Lough Rinn Forbes PAA overlaps with this DW zone of contribution. The objective of this analysis is to identifying patterns and linkages, which may in turn direct us to the source of the pesticide and where best to focus our resources.



Upcoming Events

Date	Meeting / Event	Venue	Time
7th Nov	Community Information Meeting Derry-Coolboy-Rosnastraw Priority Area for Action, Co. Wicklow	Parkview House, Ballard, Shillelagh, Co. Wicklow	7:30pm