

Sligo Public Participation Network

January to November 2020

REPORT ON ACTIVITIES



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INTRODUCTION

The very ethos of Public Participation Networks is about bringing people together, engaging with our members, sharing voices and generating important discussions. Covid-19 has had serious implications for how we go about our normal business, how our PPN office operates and how we communicate with our members.

Having said this, Sligo PPN has never been busier. We have continued with as much of our core work as possible while sticking to social distancing guidelines, but have also taken on board a number of specific and unplanned for Covid-19 actions.

We have continued to ensure that the public's voice is represented at the decision-making level through supporting our representatives, making submissions with the input of our member groups and through our election processes. We have delivered a number of training and information sessions and have continued with our work under the Vision for Community Wellbeing which has had fantastic community engagement in terms people across the county sharing their ideas, hopes, suggestions and aspirations for a better community and a better Sligo

We are excited to have a whole range of community representatives on our SPCs and for the first time this year have had the opportunity to appoint a community representative to the board of Sligo Leader Partnership Company. You can read more about them and all our other activities below.

If you have any questions or comments please contact 071 91 14439 ppn@sligococo.ie.

MEMBERSHIP

Sligo PPN currently has 437 member groups:

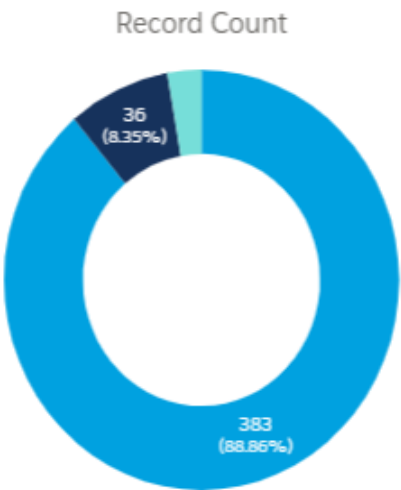
- ▶ Community & Voluntary Pillar 388 (88.79%)
- ▶ Environment Pillar 13 (2.97%)
- ▶ Social Inclusion 36 (8.24%)

Municipal Districts

Groups by Municipal District

Municipal District ↑	Record Co...
-	12
Borough District of Sligo (Strand...	163
Ballymote Tubbercurry	172
Sligo - Drumcliff	101

Groups by Pillar



Group Pillar | ● Community ● Social Inclusion ● Other

[View Report \(Groups by Pillar\)](#)

ELECTIONS & COMMUNITY REPRESENTATION

January started with training for the SPC representatives elected at the end of 2019. A joint workshop with the PPN Secretariat was held to explore what the SPC and JPC roles entailed, what reps expected from the committees and the type of commitments they should make to best represent their community.

2020 Elections to date

New Term Elections

September – **Sligo Disability Consultative Committee**. Elected Representative - Clare Heslin. Substitute - Mark

October – North West Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force



New PPN Seat

October – **Sligo Leader Partnership Co, Environment Seat**. Elected Community Representative - Auriel Robinson



Upcoming Elections

November – Sligo Heritage Forum

November – Sligo Place Names Committee

You can read more about our new representatives at <https://www.sligoppn.com/rep-committees/>

Your Current PPN Representatives

(E) Environment College / (SI) Social Inclusion College / (CV) Community and Voluntary College

Sligo PPN Secretariat; Michael Kirby (E), Michael Bell (E), Ann Dongegan (SI), Gerry O'Connor (CV), Pat Benson (CV), David Tuffy (Ballymote Enniscrone MD), Paul Tolan (Sligo Drumcliffe MD), Lisa Moore (Sligo Strandhill MD). Thanks to Ann MarieSnee who stepped down from her role on the Secretariat in 2020.

Strategic Policy Committees (SPC)

There are 4 SPCs in Sligo County Council .Sligo PPN currently has 10 seats across the four Strategic Policy Committees for community representation.

SPC1 Housing & Corporate Alan McMenamin (SI), Pippa Black (CV), Melinda Swan (E) / **SPC2 Environment and Infrastructure**

Sharon Eastwood (CV), Joan Swift (E) / **SPC3Planning, Economic and Community Development, Arts and Culture** Corena Ward

(CV), Sanja Ivandic (SI), Suzanne Tynan (E) / **SPC4 Climate Change** Lisa Moore (CV), Yvonne Lang (E)

Local Community Development Committee : Michael Kirby (E), Mary Murphy (CV), Liz King (SI), Gerry O'Connor (CV), Dr Jennifer Van Aswegen (SI)

Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership : Geraldine Delorey, Joe McDonagh, Maread Connolly

Joint Policing Committee; Gail McGibbon, Vanessa Clark, David Tuffy, Eugene McCaffrey, Michael Collins, Sheila Leydon

Public Arts Steering Committee – Orna McSweeney

Sligo Heritage Forum; Wendy Lyons, Michael Breen, Martin Enright

Sligo Place Names Committee; Larry Mullens

Independent Evaluation Committee; Sharon Boles

North West Fisheries Local Action Group; Mikey Kilcullen

COVID-19 FOCUSSED ACTIVITIES

The PPN Website

Over the first lockdown a whole new section was developed within our website dedicated to Covid-19. This contained; up to date, official guidance and information, information on the Sligo Community Response Forum, an interactive map featuring all listed emergency response groups and an interactive map and listing of all open businesses. As the second wave of Covid-19 reached us in October we have been working to try and keep this content as up to date as possible under changing restrictions.

Key Features of the Website

Emergency Response Mapping – Because of the PPN's existing database and connection with community groups, the network was able to immediately reach out to all member groups with a view to forming an Emergency Response Register to support community groups to provide essential services to the most vulnerable in the community.

This process started immediately as lockdown was announced in March and within less than a week 84 groups had registered. This meant that when the official Community Call was launched and Community Forums formed at county level, that in Sligo we were already prepared to be able to work with Sligo County Council to respond to callers as soon as the county helpline was launched. Community groups were incorporated on an interactive map, detailing the services they could provide, as well as listings made available to helpline staff. This effort was reflected across the country and the Department of Community and Rural Development have publicly highlighted the role of PPNs in ensuring the effectiveness of local community coordination.

Business mapping – as calls began to come through to the helpline, there was a high demand for information on local businesses and essential services. Sligo PPN worked with Sligo BID and Sligo County Council to map and list key services that were open, noting where possible adaptations to service and amended opening times.

Information Hub – very quickly organisations and community were hit with a barrage of information and often found it hard to know where to look for the advice most suitable to them. Through this site Sligo PPN attempted to pull all information together under a series of key headings.

Sligo Community Response Forum

Sligo PPN were a member of the county community response forum, a collaboration of key local organisations who worked together to coordinate the Covid-19 response at county level. The group was chaired by Sligo County Council Chief Executive Ciarán Hayes. The PPN also sat on a number of working groups under the forum dealing with issues such as allocating travel permission to volunteers, sourcing and distributing PPE, supporting community group re-opening and

Step up for Sligo

Sligo PPN were overwhelmed at the immediate and huge response of the Sligo Community to step up and help those most at need as we all adapted to life under Covid-19. While we knew that none of the volunteers who made such a difference in the lives of local people did it for recognition or even thanks, we felt that it was important to try and capture and preserve the huge contribution that the community sector did make as soon as this crisis changed life as we knew it. There is no doubt that the experience of the first lockdown would have been even scarier and isolating, and had more of a negative impact on the health of many people, were it not for the efforts of community volunteers – we believed that this effort should be acknowledged, recorded and kept as a reminder to all. Sligo PPN set up the website Step Up For Sligo (<https://stepupforsligo.com/>) as a portal for people to send us stories about their experience of volunteering (formally or informally) under Covid-19. The Sligo Champion made contact with the PPN about the project and these stories were translated into a pull out keepsake edition, sponsored by Sligo County Council and Sligo Volunteer Centre

Further Covid-19 Related initiatives;

- Sligo PPN supported Sligo County Council to distribute visors made by ITSligo and general PPE to emergency response groups
- The PPN commissioned ITSligo to undertake a piece of national research looking at the societal and economic impact of volunteering under Covid-19
- Facilitated the drop of Nestle food products to support the local Sligo Food Cloud initiative

[HOME](#)

COVID-19 ✓

ABOUT ▾

FUNDING ▾

TRAINING &



[:lincoln.com/#](http://lincoln.com/#)

Information & Guidelines

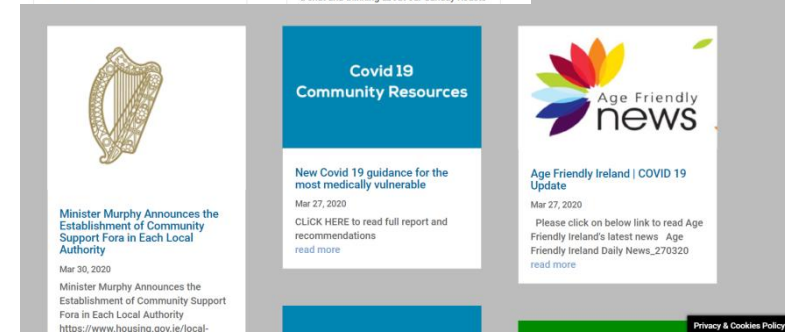
IRELANDS

**COMMUNITY CALL –
Local Groups Offering
Support /Interactive
Map**

SHOPS/TAKEAWAYS/
HOT FOOD DELIVERY
OPEN During Covid-
19

Stop Shop For Community

[Interactive Map Showing Groups & Individuals In Your Local Area Offering Support](#)



ACTIVITY REPORTS

Environment Series

The Environment College of the PPN organised and hosted an online environment series which featured key speakers presenting on current environmental priorities and allowing for questions and answers. The initiative was intended to help PPN community representatives to learn more about key environmental issues that would be relevant at the decision making table.

KidsOwn-Children's Public Consultation

Sligo PPN has commissioned KidsOwn to develop a brand-new children's book publication and manifesto which meaningfully reflect the voices of Sligo-based children and their hopes for the future. In light of the current circumstances, we believe it is vital to garner stories from children about their experiences of COVID-19 and how this has impacted on their lives. This will be framed under the broader constructs of health and wellbeing; local environment and sense of community, which connects with the broader objectives of the PPN. Through the manifesto, the children will put forward visions for the future and recommendations, which will contribute to the overall wellbeing vision for the county. This will give the project a strong legacy for local policy and infrastructure and support children to have a role as change-makers and visionaries with the power to have a positive influence on their community.

Community Representatives Training

The year started off with a networking and training session for all PPN representatives to facilitate them to sit comfortably at the decision making table, to understand the PPN and associate structures and to put together recommendation for committee organisers that would

Session 1

Thursday 6th August 2020, 7pm : Professor John Sweeney talked all things Climate Change, how it will impact Sligo and what community representatives should be advocating for at decision making tables.



[CLICK HERE](#) for presentation

Session 2

Thursday 27th August, 2020, 7pm : Karen Kennedy, Community Water Office discussed the EU Water Framework Directive, the current River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021, the work of the Local Authority Waters Programme, examples of community engagement activities and community-led initiatives that support water quality protection and improvement.

[CLICK HERE](#) for presentation

Also to view most recent Catchment Catch Up from the LAWP [Click Here](#)

Session 3

Thursday 10th September 2020, 7pm : Sheila Ginnane of #BetterEnnis who will be discussing her experience of being a co-founder of Better Ennis and the difference liveable streets, focused on the movement of people rather than vehicles, can make to community health and well-being.



Private

facilitate the community voice to be heard. We will be building on this with representatives training with Social Justice Ireland in December 2020 and in 2021 there is to be a national roll out of PPN representatives training, commissioned by DRCD, to support reps to fulfil their commitments and ensure cultures of true commitment to public participation. This training will be available to PPN representatives, Local Authority staff and elected members.

Community Needs Analysis

In September 2020, Sligo PPN undertook a needs analysis to find out how we could best support our member groups over the next 6 months in terms of training and information.

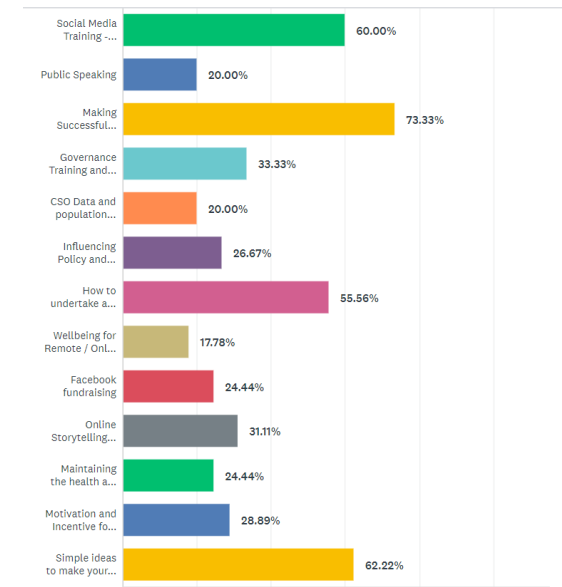
Key Issues to Emerge

Funding, governance, becoming more environmentally friendly, social media and group promotion

It is our aim to try and ensure that something is in place to address all the ideas you prioritised.

We are therefore using the findings of this analysis in a number of ways;

- To identify existing training and information programmes that respond to issues highlighted - to highlight and promote these to members for uptake
- To share the findings with key local organizations, some of whose core function is to deliver community supports. Organisations include; Sligo Leader Partnership Co, Sligo County Council, Sligo Volunteer Centre and IT Sligo. We will work with these organizations to see if any are in a position to put in place responses.
- Where needs are not addressed by any of these approaches, Sligo PPN will look to deliver training options directly by sourcing external support and facilitators.



Immediate Responses

The needs analysis report at <https://www.sligoppn.com/needs-analysis-results-and-response-plan/> contains a list of existing community training opportunities that are currently being delivered. This was something we researched on your behalf and as well as the information being contained in the report, we also continue to promote these training opportunities via our newsletter, email and social media.

The PPN are;

- directly delivering a social media training package for groups which is a combination of video tutorials, step by step guides and one-to-one mentor clinics. We have engaged the Digital Marketing Institute to deliver this for us and all content will be tailored to directly respond to issues you raised. It will also be delivered in a way that recognises how time poor community members are, that there isn't a team of social media experts on hand and that for many of you this is a brand new way of working. Phase 1 which is the tutorials and guides will be done in 2020, phase 2 which is the mentor clinics will be done in 2021 as we wanted to wait until a point in which groups were operational and able to think about engaging in with these kinds of supports.
- working with SEN to produce a series of simple ideas and initiatives that every group, regarding of their primary nature, can undertake to become more environmentally friendly. Whatever kind of group you are, from sports to active retirement, there are easy changes and improvements that you can make so that the way you operate on a daily basis has a less negative impact on the environment and SEN will support interested groups to take these steps.
- looking to develop a guidebook for Residents Associations with a view to organising facilitators to work with interested RAs in 2021
- working with partners in Sligo Volunteer Centre to put together a programme which supports groups to undertake a community needs analysis of their own, which is an important tool for sourcing external funding streams.
- once again subscribing to The Wheel Funding Digest on behalf of the Sligo Community. This allows us to remain informed about a whole range of revenue streams and as well as circulating the digest to our members we also extract individual funding rounds and promote them across a range of platforms. The PPN will also continue to work closely with funding bodies such as Sligo

County Council and Sligo Leader Partnership Co (SLPCo) to make sure that our members are made aware of all the local funding opportunities open to them. SLPCo also kindly shared with us the great handbook that was produced for their recent funding seminar and this is now available to members on the PPN website

National Networking Activities

Sligo PPN were elected to represent the national PPN network on the National Advisory Group hosted by the Department of Community and Rural Development (DRCD) and Chaired by Principle Officer Ciara Bates. This group deals with the oversight of PPN operations and is currently charged with a national structural review of public participation in Ireland to inform how the networks will evolve into the future.

Sligo PPN also have a role on the recently formed DRCD national communications group which is charged with developing an overarching publicity campaign to raise the profile of PPNs across the country.

National Resource Worker meetings of the PPN take place every quarter to allow workers to share ideas, concerns and information. While normally held in Dublin, these have been taking place online

In addition to national meetings, North West Regional Meetings are also held every 2 months attended by resource workers and Secretariat representatives to allow for discussion around participation and engagement in the North West.

Gerry O'Connor is the Sligo PPN Secretariat representative who sits on the National Secretariat Networ

Sligo County Health and Wellbeing Vision

Wellbeing is an increasingly common term that can describe wider conditions than good physical and mental health, which we need as individual and communities to have a better quality of life, a healthier environment and increased prosperity. Some of these are things that we can easily measure, like the number of pre-school places, or the speed with which an ambulance can get to a sick person. Others are less easily measured, such as our pride of place, our heritage and the way in which we all look after each other. All aspects of wellbeing are connected to each other.

Supports have been provided to all PPNs to develop a Vision of Community Wellbeing for their county. As a PPN we would like to capture all elements of a community's wellbeing not just employment and infrastructure although these are both vital parts of building and maintaining a strong community.

Under this programme we will look at community wellbeing under the same headings; social and community development; environment and sustainability; work, economy and resources; health; values, culture and meaning; and participation, democracy and good governance. By using these 6 headings across all the country, we can see whether we in County Sligo have the same concerns and causes for celebration as others. This community wellbeing Initiative is being run in conjunction with Social Justice Ireland, Irish Environmental Network and The Environmental Pillar.



The Vision for Community Wellbeing acts as a guiding vision for everything done by the PPN network. It's a benchmark for PPN Representatives and the Secretariat – feeding into policy decisions, strategy development and planning activities. It's a shared vision for the well-being of our communities for this and future generations.

Sligo PPN has conducted extensive consultation for the wellbeing vision including official public workshops, online surveys and targeted consultation with groups such as ITSligo students, older adults, new communities and young people. A consultant has been engaged to work with PPN staff and the Secretariat to develop this large data source into the Wellbeing Vision for the county. We will also be developing an 'index' of issues and using the information to create policy positions for our representatives on decision making tables and to inform future planning and strategy development.



OTHER PPN ACTIVITIES

Training and Supports

- Supported Sligo Volunteer Centre in the delivery of Governance training for community groups from the Carmichael Centre

Public Consultation & Submissions

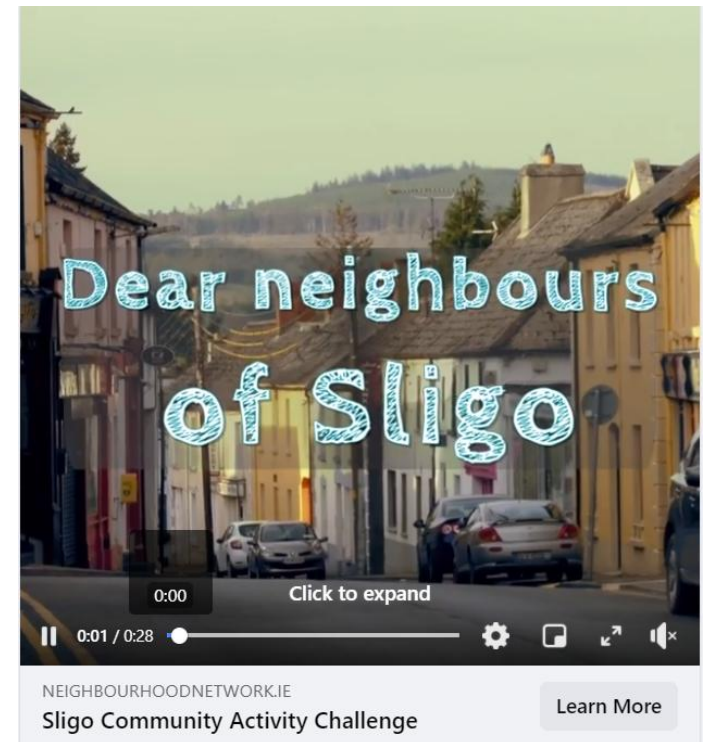
- Facilitated an online public information session on the EirGrid North Connacht 100Kv Project
- Initial consultations with Sligo County Council and consultants on Sligo Wayfinding Strategy
- Hosting information session with Sligo County Council on the proposed N17 Knock-Collooney project
- Sligo County Council Corporate Plan
- DRCD Statement of Strategy

Reporting

- Ongoing reporting on PPN activities to Sligo Local Community Development Committee
- Ongoing reporting to the management team of Sligo County Council
- Reporting to DRCD Community Call Dashboard
- Production of Annual Report
- Reporting to Secretariat

Community Issues

- Active in the Alliance for Insurance Reform reflecting the view and issues from the community sector
- Supporting Neighbourhood Network on the Sligo Community Activity Challenge



SOCIAL MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS

Sligo PPN has a growing social media profile and, especially across the March lockdown, we used our Facebook and Twitter accounts to make sure important information got out.

General Communications

- Promotion of member activities via PPN website, email and social media platforms
- Production of quarterly Newsletter
- Notification to member groups with regard to opportunities for informing strategy and policy development
- Promotion of all emerging funding rounds and circulars from Department of Rural and Community Development
- Promotion of PPN activities and opportunities through traditional local media

We have 1,044 Facebook followers



May 2020 - 31 days

TWEET HIGHLIGHTS

Top Tweet earned 1,410 impressions

0 new cases in Sligo & 0 Covid related deaths reported today

Obvious huge respect to health workers for getting us here, but also wouldn't have been possible without the Community & Voluntary sector whose effort ensured those most at risk could stay safely in their own homes
pic.twitter.com/usag5jUk6C



1 3 27

View Tweet activity

View all Tweet activity

Top mention earned 624 engagements



sligococo
[@slignococo](https://twitter.com/slignococo) May 1

As part of the [#InThisTogether](#) project we have started to gather articles & resources from around [#Sligo](#) that can help us through [#COVID19](#) goto sligococo.ie/Wellbeing [#InThisTogether](#) [#Sligo](#) [#wellbeing](#) [#StayAtHome](#) [@SligoBID](#) [@SligoPPN](#) [@itslgo](#) [@SligoLeader](#) [@StAngelasSligo](#)
pic.twitter.com/MD1RIZjxSY



19 37

View Tweet

MAY 2020 SUMMARY

Tweets	60	Tweet impressions	25.6K
Profile visits	245	Mentions	69
New followers	16		



4,382
People Reached

406
Engagements



SUMMARY WORK OVERVIEW

Administration:

- Management of finances, banking and invoices
- Processed wages
- Produced ongoing reports to LCDC, Sligo County Council Management Team, Secretariat
- Concluded SPC, DCC, SLPCo, NWRDATF elections
- Election to PPN National Advisory Group
- Held pre-meetings with reps to aid preparation
- Held monthly secretariat meetings
- Ongoing reporting to the Department of Rural and Community Development

Communications:

- Circulation of grant schemes & event notices
- Four newsletters circulated by email and on social media
- Maintained website (newsletters, reps reports) and social media
- Set up dedicated Covid-19 hub on website
- Promotional items in local newspapers
- Ongoing circulation of the Funding Digest

Training/Seminars

- Attended Diploma in Social Media Marketing
- Attended IEN Health and Wellbeing Seminar
- Attended NUIG Health Conference
- Attended training on online engagement
- Attended Sligo County Council Public Realm Consultations

Submissions/Consultation

- Sligo County Council Corporate Plan
- Department of Rural and Community Development Statement of Actions
- Sligo County Council Wayfinding Strategy
- Information event on N17 Knock-Collooney Development
- Information event on EirGrid North Connacht 110Kv project

2021 PLANS & ACTIVITIES

- We know that for many groups, even getting restarted in 2021 is going to be a challenge. Some groups may never get back together and for those that do the way they operate may have to change. Sligo PPN will be working with the organisation OneStepCloser on a campaign in early 2021 which helps to raise the profile of a selection of groups, allowing them to tell their story in video format which they can use to encourage new membership and allow them to promote their work as a tool for potential future funding.
- Phase 2 of our social media training programme will deliver one to one mentor clinics to groups who need advice in operating in the online world and offering basic advice of how best to use social media to meet the needs of their group and engage in online forums without it becoming a burden.
- PPN Awards – It was the intention of the PPN to host a county awards programme in September 2020. This was to be done in partnership with ITSligo and was due to take place in the Aviva stadium. The intention of the night was to support groups to raise their profile, to offer our member groups to collectively celebrate the immense work of the sector and to allow for groups to network and learn from each other.

Awards 2021

Never before has the community sector deserved a celebration more than post 2020. We hope to host an awards night that will give our members the chance to celebrate, the chance to look back on 2020 and all they achieved in keeping the most vulnerable in Sligo safe and to simply reconnect and learn from each other

- PPN Environment Seminar

Sligo PPN had scheduled a seminar in partnership with ITSligo and teh SEAI to highlight the options that were available to everyday people in terms of moving towards a more renewable energy focus. This seminar is to be rescheduled in 2021. It will explore the different alternative energy initiatives open to people, what they cost, what options are best for specific needs and how they have a positive environmental impact.

- Needs Analysis

We will continue to work through the needs analysis identifying responses that we can start to deliver early next year

- PPN Community Representatives Training

Sligo PPN will be working with DRCD to roll out a comprehensive training programme for all our community representatives in 2021. The nationally developed programme is currently being piloted in the South East with a view to enhance and roll out to the rest of the country in 2021. This training will be for PPN representative and staff, interested PPN members, Local Authority Staff and Elected Members

- PPN Structural Review

A full review of the entire PPN structure will take place in 2021. This will look at all aspects of PPN operation, identifying best practise but also barriers to effective participation that need addressing. As members of the NAG, Sligo are ideally placed to work with other members of the committee to ensure that this review looks at all aspects of Public Participation and Engagement.