



COMMUNITY LOAN FINANCE
FOUNDED 1996

GOOD NEWS

FOR A CHANGE!

October 2021

A New Era for Clann Credo – Mary Lawlor, Chief Executive Officer

We in Clann Credo are marking October 2021 as the beginning of new opportunities for community groups across Ireland. As vaccines effectively contain the impact of the COVID-19 virus, we are receiving your message that community groups are planning to resume activities bigger and better than ever before.

Even at this early stage of exiting COVID-19 restrictions, we are experiencing a steady increase in enquiries and loan applications from both existing and new clients. In response to this increase in demand we are confidently expanding our team so that we can continue to provide community groups with an efficient client focused service.



In my new leadership role, I am committed to consistently delivering a first-class social finance service to you and your community group. We know that volunteers give valuable time to developing their community as a better place for all to live, work and visit. We recognise that we have a part to play in ensuring your time is optimised. We have listened to you and are making some changes to how we deliver our service by introducing a shorter application form for certain categories of loans and will be launching our new on-line application process later this year. While many services will remain online post COVID-19 restrictions, I am committed to retaining our in-person and client focused ethos while realising our ambition to generate high impact social dividends in new sectors.

Looking forward, our focus will continue to be on investing social finance to generate a positive outcome for wider society. As part of our work, we are very keen to work with community groups who have ambition to be part of the climate change solution and to work with not-for-profit groups who are delivering quality social housing.

The ambition and optimism we are experiencing from community groups across Ireland gives us the focus and energy to want to deliver a first-class social finance investment service to you. The future is bright, and we are looking forward to meeting with you in person to discuss how Clann Credo social finance can enable your community's ambition.

Mary Lawlor

LEADER Funding + Clann Credo Social Finance = Amazing Community Projects!



Amazing things happen when you combine the knowledge and enthusiasm of community groups with grants from the LEADER rural development programme and loan finance from Clann Credo!

Clann Credo works with rural community groups and Local Development Companies throughout Ireland to ensure that access to finance is not an obstacle to success in LEADER-funded projects. To find your Local Development Company, go to the directory on the Irish Local Development Network's website www.ildn.ie/directory.



Over the past three months, Clann Credo and the Irish Local Development Network have published 10 case studies to illustrate some of these wonderful local achievements. Each project improves the quality of life for people in very different ways. From saving lives on Lough Mask to improving mental and physical wellbeing in Men's Sheds, these projects all contribute positively to the future of their community. These are the 10 case studies:

- [Carrigkerry Playground](#), Co. Limerick
- [Wexford Arts Centre](#)
- [Stoneyford Community Centre](#), Co. Kilkenny
- [Athlone Boat Club](#), Co. Westmeath
- [Corrib Mask Search and Rescue](#), Counties Mayo and Galway
- [Carrigaline Men's Shed](#), Co. Cork
- [Attic Youth Café](#), Co. Longford
- [Leave No Trace](#), nationwide
- [Spring Lake Anglers](#), Co. Monaghan
- [Wicklow Regatta Festival](#)

More customer success stories can be found on the Clann Credo website www.clanncredo.ie/community-loans-success-stories.

The reason loan finance is so important when communities apply for LEADER funding is that groups must show that they have the required 'match funding', or community contribution towards their project. Clann Credo can provide term loans of up to €500,000 where there is repayment capacity from operational income, fundraising and/or other grants.

Groups may also need a bridging loan from Clann Credo because LEADER requires work to be completed and monies to be spent before grants can be drawn down. Clann Credo has a lot of experience providing short-term bridging loans to help community groups over this hurdle.

Clann Credo is proud to be a social enterprise and registered charity. Unlike traditional lenders we take account of the positive impact your project will have on your community, and we never look for personal guarantees.

Since 1996, Clann Credo has loaned over €150M to almost 1,900 community projects, many of which were funded by LEADER. Clann Credo's dedicated €25M LEADER loan fund has already helped many communities to successfully complete their projects. When loans are repaid, the money is 'recycled' and used by another community group for another fantastic project.

Choosing a Clann Credo loan means you are not just building better futures in your own community, you are helping other communities to build better futures in theirs too!

Clann Credo's regionally based staff are very experienced in working with LEADER-funded projects and will guide you through the application process, so contact your local Social Finance Executive now! Find yours here www.clanncredo.ie/contactus. The Government recently announced that over €220 million will be invested in rural Ireland through the LEADER programme during the period of the next National Development Plan, 2021 – 2030, so it's a good time to start planning projects!

Is Community Led Housing Part of a Brighter Future for Your Community?

Housing is one of the most contentious issues in Ireland today. The problem is complex and there will not be a simple solution, but Community-Led Housing may be able to play an important role in the creation of new homes in both rural and urban settings.

Community-Led Housing is evolving across Europe and the world. In Ireland, community groups are exploring ways to collectively create new homes through a process which empowers communities to develop solutions which address their own specific housing needs.

This approach provides a framework for residents and communities to collaborate in the creation and revitalisation of new and existing neighbourhoods. The unique feature of Community-Led Housing is the empowerment of future residents to meaningfully participate in both the design and long-term management of their homes.

“Community-Led Housing is an example of bottom-up, active citizenship at its best, with the potential to put the humanistic perspective of housing provision centre stage, with communities and citizens at the heart of neighbourhood development, embracing the idea of homes as a social good.” President Michael D. Higgins from *Roadmapping a Viable Community-Led Housing Sector for Ireland*, which can be downloaded here <https://soa.ie/> along with four valuable handbooks on specific topics related to community-led housing.

Community-Led Housing can help address a wide range of issues that community-based organisations are already working on, such as:

- Creating affordable and accessible housing
- Rural and urban regeneration
- Promoting inclusive towns and neighbourhoods that cater for people with additional needs
- Environmentally sustainable living
- Establishing community spaces and retaining public services
- Supporting economic and artistic activities

Clann Credo was delighted to host an event on community-led housing in June with SOA (Self Organised Architecture). SOA is a non-profit organisation whose goal is to provide information on models for socially and environmentally sustainable housing. You can find the full recording of the event via our website Events page or click [HERE](#).



Community-Led Housing



Is your community interested in local solutions to local housing needs?

Join us to hear about Community-Led Housing.
Housing by the community, for the community.



SOA is a partner in The Sustainable Housing for Inclusive and Cohesive Cities (SHICC) project which seeks to support the establishment of more successful Community Land Trusts (CLT) in cities across the North-West European (NWE) region. Community Land Trusts are seen as a useful structure for the establishment of Community-Led Housing. For more information, visit www.soa.ie/shicc.

If you are interested in exploring community-led housing, get in touch with your regional Social Finance Executive. www.clanncredo.ie/contactus.

Sports Capital & Equipment Programme

The Sports Capital and Equipment Programme is a vital support to local sports clubs and groups providing leisure activities in their community. Each year, Clann Credo works with many applicants to ensure that their application clearly shows enough finance to complete the proposed project.

If your club or community group is awarded a grant but doesn't get the full amount you applied for, Clann Credo may be able to help...

This year, the Sports Capital Programme closed for applications on the 1st of March. In the lead up to the application deadline, Clann Credo assisted over 130 clubs and community organisations by providing loan approval to boost their match funding contribution.

While the announcement of larger Sports Capital grant allocations is anticipated later this year, equipment grants totalling €16.6 million were announced in August. If your club or community group was awarded an equipment grant but needs a short-term bridging loan to finance the purchase, please get in touch! If your club was previously awarded a Sports Capital grant which has not yet been spent, we may also be able to help. Our Social Finance Executives have plenty of experience working with clubs and groups who have big plans, but not quite enough finance! The first step is to contact your local Social Finance Executive for a discussion about your project. You can find their contact details here: www.clanncredo.ie/contactus.

And remember! It is never too early to start preparing your application for the next round of the Sports Capital & Equipment Programme. There are small changes to the programme each year, but most of the requirements stay the same. So, if you're planning an application, it's not too early to contact us – particularly if you're planning a larger capital grant application.

COVID-19 Operational Update



The community and voluntary sector has shown huge resilience throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, and we are proud to support many who have gone above and beyond the call of duty during this time.

Thankfully, COVID-19 restrictions are easing, however, caution is still required. Clann Credo offices are not yet open to the public and we continue to work remotely.

We are planning a gradual return to in-person meetings and events as it becomes safe to do so.

Our regional Social Finance Executives are available to discuss your community project's financial needs - you can find contact details on our website www.clanncredo.ie/contactus.

Please stay safe and protect others.

Follow Clann Credo – Community Loan Finance on Social Media

For interesting news about the sector and information about grant aid opportunities, follow Clann Credo on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) or [LinkedIn](#).



Clann Credo Company Limited by Guarantee is a self-financing, not-for-profit organisation serving the community, voluntary and charity sectors. All its capital comes from private sources; religious charities and the retail banking sector through the Social Finance Foundation. The interest paid on its socially directed investments covers its operational costs.

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