

# CLOUGHJORDAN ECOVILLAGE

building • sustainable • community



## Sustainable Projects Ireland CLG Year in Review: 2022



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# Summary

The year 2022 is characterised as a year of re-connection, collaboration and steady improvement for Sustainable Projects Ireland (SPI) and CloughJordan Ecovillage.

Moving out of the covid era enabled the reinstatement of SPI's Education Officer in early 2022. Our education and research programme went on to engage over 1000 visitors across 46 educational events and supported 13 international postgraduate students on topics ranging from agro-ecology to social innovation in intentional communities.

Exciting collaborations with long-standing and new partners led to the fruition of several major funded projects. Irish and international groups shared best practice in place-based learning in order to create centres of excellence for community climate action and disseminate outputs and learning.

Licensees and partners of SPI continued to be strong contributors to SPI's educational objectives with farm European Solidarity Corps (ESC) volunteer programmes, permaculture courses and events, the globally popular Research, Education and Development (RED) Gardens YouTube channel and various tours and events on growing, community seed saving and biodiversity.

The spring and summer boasted striking levels of biodiversity in the ecovillage and these were further encouraged by the establishment of a new pond. A biodiversity audit commenced to improve our understanding of how we can continue to support biodiversity in the ecovillage into the future.

The land supported a bounty of fruit from our apple orchards, cob trees, cherry trees, raspberries, and blackcurrants and kept volunteers busy with thinning, pruning and harvesting throughout the year. This was complementary to the abundance of high-quality produce, grown in the ecovillage without the use of chemicals, from our licence and allotment holders, feeding many in our local community.

The ecovillage provided an impressive natural back-drop to CloughJordan Art's open-air amphitheatre, which delighted many with acclaimed and emerging artists at this unique venue. A three-day event showcasing Folk, Bluegrass and New Country entertained an audience of over 300. Despite this popularity, the knock-on effect of the covid era led to insufficient advance ticket bookings and the curtailing of the summer programme.

Behind these vibrant scenes, SPI's introduction of new sub-committees for finance, health and safety and governance have worked well over the course of the year, enhancing the Board's ability to oversee key areas of governance. This includes moving beyond basic compliance with charity regulations and improved oversight and management of risk.

Some loss of capacity was experienced during the year with many volunteers having less time for their volunteering role/s while transitioning back to fuller schedules in their respective professions (post covid). This impacted progress in areas that require more resourcing on an ongoing basis, including the formation of a new licencing sub-group, IT support and fundraising.

The ecovillage five-year completion plan was under review due to the absence of an on-site solution to the treatment of wastewater. However, SPI continued with other critical work streams and was successful in securing planning permission in July for all other infrastructure works required to gain future planning permissions.

This included approval for Tipperary's, first of its kind, dark sky, biodiversity and people friendly street lighting scheme.

SPI also achieved substantive reduction of its liabilities, removing the principal lien on the land, thereby placing the organisation on more stable financial footing and gaining creditor backing for the development of a revised completion plan over the course of 2022/23.

An initial survey of members was undertaken mid-year to identify priorities for consideration in the forthcoming strategic review. These became agenda items at members meetings into early 2023 and included increasing cohesion, capacity and improving structures and processes, alongside housing and infrastructure development. The learnings from these sessions will feed into the remit of the Strategic Review Group, due to reform in early 2023 to make recommendations on a new/revised strategy.

In late 2022, meetings resumed with Irish Water to explore the viability of alternative waste water treatment options available to the ecovillage. As the year came to a close, talks with Irish Water led to the identification of an innovative hybrid solution to be fully explored by both parties in 2023.



## Governance

Over the course of the year, the Board continued to meet on a fortnightly basis. Two members of the Board stepped down and a new Trustee stepped up bringing the total number of Trustees to five, maintaining gender balance.

One of the Trustees stepping down was also undertaking the role of Company Secretary. Another Trustee immediately stepped into this role, supported by the work of the governance sub-committee and an external professional to ensure all filings were up to date with the CRA, CRO and RBO.

The AGM for 2021 took place in November in accordance with company and charity regulations.

The formation of the governance sub-committee greatly assisted progress on core areas of governance, moving confidently beyond basic compliance with charity and company regulation. Key areas reviewed and improved included membership application processes and dues; Board effectiveness; risk management; conflict of interest; policy documents; contracts and agreements; and the development of an ITC improvement plan to prepare to address fundamental issues with communications, file storage and access.

The Board actively supported the review of the ecovillage's five-year completion plan, led by SPI's Roadmap Manager.

## Finances and Staffing

It was a welcome boost to have our Education Officer and Financial Administrator both back off furlough for 2022, playing crucial roles in delivering the educational remit of the charity and upholding SPI's financial commitments and responsibilities.

The role of Roadmap Manager was also formalised, working under contract on a no fee basis. The purpose of this role is to increase effectiveness, efficiency and collaboration across all of SPI's projects and operations. This includes supporting and assisting groups and staff to deliver SPI's Roadmap and related work plans and to lead on specific projects where necessary, including the review of the ecovillage's completion plan.

The development of this role is with the intention of it becoming a paid staff position when SPI is able to secure the funds to do so. The role will be undertaken in a voluntary capacity until the end of 2023. This will enable evaluation of the benefits, limitations and any additional requirements of the role, prior to the recruitment of a paid staff member.

Further to SPI's repayment of the principal loan, removal of the associated lien on SPI's land and the continued forbearance of our ethical creditors, the company is in a much improved financial position in 2022 compared to previous years. The newly formed financial strategy and audit (FSA) sub-committee greatly assisted the Board and Financial Administrator in ensuring annual budgets, monthly and quarterly reports were prepared and circulated to the Board ahead of meetings.

The Board actively sought the addition of a Treasurer to the Board of Trustees who would work closely with the FSA sub-committee.



## Infrastructure and Services

Cloughjordan Ecovillage Service Company (CESC) CLG provides estate management services such as landscape maintenance, operation of the wastewater treatment plant and district heating system to the ecovillage.

Board capacity issues and the review of the ecovillage completion plan led to the postponement of bi-board meetings over the course of the year. Key services continued to be delivered and maintained by the CESC for residents and businesses in the ecovillage.



## Village Education, Research and Training (VERT)

The remit of VERT is to establish CloughJordan Ecovillage as a leading national and international centre for education for sustainability, resilience, community living, rural regeneration and for re-thinking and modelling low-carbon transition as an essential part of society for the future.

### Education

#### VERT Educational Events/Visits

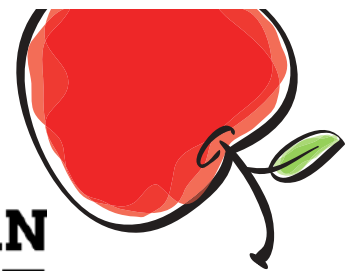
VERT held 46 educational events throughout the year, welcoming over 140 virtual visitors and 1090 visitors in person. Net Income through educational visits, activities and events totalled €14,000 and gross income totalled €45,500. This is a marked increase on 2021 on-site activity and educational turnover despite slowly emerging from the covid lock down period. Most of the supplier expenditure incurred directly supported local CloughJordan businesses, residents and initiatives. Below are some of the highlights:

#### Biodiversity Week

Five events were organised for Biodiversity Week in May with funding from the IEN. Michelle Carey gave a talk on Calling the Curlew Home exploring the connections between the Eurasian curlew and Ireland's cultural heritage. Rachel Hussey led a Medicinal Tree walk. Kevin Dudley gave a talk on the importance of a community seed bank which was recorded for wider dissemination. There were two Dark Skies events: a talk on the wonders of the night sky; and the impact of light pollution on biodiversity.

**Sustainable Skerries: Climate Education and Capacity Building Course:** This six-week course was delivered to the Skerries Community Association for 20 members of their community. Starting with a two day site visit to the ecovillage, followed by six on-line sessions, the course covered an introduction to the ecovillage, climate action and biodiversity, energy, community resilience and social enterprises, local food systems, and waste, local food systems and governance. The course was well attended and received a very positive evaluation by participants.

**Féile na nÚll, a 'Taste of CloughJordan Ecovillage':** The annual community apple festival took place in September. There were talks on local food and sustainability, community climate action and Dark Skies, as well as visits to different features of the project including the Community Seed Bank, the Community Farm and the RED Gardens. The Night Orchard pressed apples and served food in the Food Hub. Tours of the ecovillage, meditations at the labyrinth and apple walks were also held. This was one of hundreds of events that took place across Europe to mark the European Day of Sustainable Communities.



**CloughJordan  
ECOVILLAGE**

**FÉILE NA NÚLL**  
**THE COMMUNITY APPLE FESTIVAL**  
**FRIDAY 23 & SATURDAY 24 SEPTEMBER**

**APPLE PRESSING | MARKET AND FOOD STALLS | TOURS | TALKS**  
**KIDS ACTIVITIES | APPLE BAKE CONTEST | MUSIC | GAMES**

WeCreate Workspace, CloughJordan Ecovillage  
[www.thevillage.ie](http://www.thevillage.ie)

## Just a Just Transition?:

In April SPI hosted an online event on Just Transition, supported by the IEN agriculture policy fund. A recording of this event was made available on the ecovillage website. A report entitled *Rural Ireland on the Move: farm diversification and just transition*, supported by ARC2020 and UCC's Centre for Cooperative Studies, was released before the event. The report reviews the literature on Just Transition and makes the case that diversifications (farming, on-farm, off-farm, rural) can aid the process of delivering a true Just Transition in Ireland.

## GEN Twinning Regenerative Educators:

Over the course of the year VERT was a partner on the Global Ecovillage Network Twinning Regenerative Educators project. GEN facilitated the development of a community among 20 educator collaborators, established direct 'twin' relationships, and co-created three educational resources: a living showcase and toolkit, a teacher training curriculum, and ecovillage principles design cards for children. Spanning every region, collaborators brought experience from ecovillage schools, traditional schools, and community projects. The final version of the resources will be made available in early 2023.

## Heritage Keepers Programme:

In January SPI and the Thomas MacDonagh Museum were jointly awarded a grant from Burren Beo to participate in their Heritage Keepers Programme, a new pilot national Place-Based Learning and Stewardship initiative in partnership with the Heritage Council. The grant provided training and attendance at five workshops online and a weekend workshop which explored our local place.

## Tours:

Weekly tours continued every Sunday throughout the year. There were 10 volunteer tour guides for the tours. Overall 132 visitors attended the tours.

# Funded Research and Development Projects

## Community Climate Action Programme:

Funding for this project was awarded in October, under the Community Climate Action Programme: Climate Education, Capacity Building and Learning by Doing (Strand 2) through the Department of Environment Climate and Communications. The project is entitled 'Catalysing Change – Creating Centres of Excellence for Community Climate Action'. The purpose is, through peer learning, to develop best practice approaches and resources for place-based sustainability education centres, demonstrating the actions needed for communities to transition to a low-carbon society. SPI is the lead partner and the other partners are Sonairte – the National Ecology Centre, the Burren College of Art and Carraig Dúlra Organic Permaculture Farm. The project commenced in October and continues for 18 months.

## IEN Circular Economy Grant:

In August SPI was awarded €15,000 through the IEN Circular Economy Fund for a project titled 'Community Scale Recovery of Phosphorus from Human Urine'. The project is to be delivered in partnership with Zero Waste Alliance Ireland (ZWA). ZWA and SPI will co-operate together to initiate a community-based wastewater treatment project to recover and recycle phosphorus (in the form of Struvite) from separated human urine in compliance with the EU Circular Economy Policy and the United Nations Sustainability Goals. The project is due to commence in 2023.

## The iACT partnership:

'iACT: The 'i' is for the international network, and ACT stands for Activating Community Transformation. The delivery of this project was ongoing throughout the year, it is due to finish in 2023. The purpose is to help grow an international network of learning and demonstration centres; to share good practice in the fields of sustainability, regeneration and resilience between those centres; and to help centres activate community transformation by offering a range of demonstration and learning programmes and resources. The Permaculture Association of Britain is the lead partner with 5 EU partners: Cloughjordan Ecovillage (SPI); Centre for Ecological Learning, Luxembourg (CELL); Permakultur Danmark; Green School Village and the Permaculture Association of Bulgaria; Centre for Ecology, Evolution and Environmental Changes (cE3c), University of Lisbon, Portugal. The main outputs will be available in May 2023.



## SPI Supported Research

- **Ross Gavigan**, Masters student of Utrecht University, studying Cultural Anthropology of Sustainable Citizenship. Spent three months doing field research in the ecovillage.
- **Alice McCarthy**, an architecture student in UCC secured interviews for her dissertation on the influence of regulations on rural architecture.
- **Carla Almazana**, a Masters student in journalism in NUIG, interviewed residents as part of a project for her MA.
- **Mislav Petrusic** and **Emma Kotari**, Masters students at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences undertook interviews on-site on agroecology for Emma and how principles of food sovereignty shape the practices of tourism for Mislav. Mislav's thesis is now in the research database on the ecovillage website.
- **Carla Noqueira** from the Economics Faculty of the Universidade do Algarve in Portugal included CloughJordan Ecovillage in her PhD study entitled 'Intentional Sustainable Communities as Laboratories of Social Innovation: Analysis of European Experiences for a Sustainable Transition'. Carla interviewed seven members of the ecovillage.
- **Andrea Muzzarelli** completed his PhD study entitled 'Information-in-Practice and Education for Sustainability: An Ethnographic Study of the Irish Ecovillage of CloughJordan'. He has actively engaged with VERT during his research and deepened our understanding of what education for sustainability entails and, in particular, the concept of 'communities of practice'.
- **Freija Leeuwenburgh**, a student at Utrecht University studying social connection and social order within international communities, interviewed a member about CloughJordan ecovillage.
- **Ali Crighton**, a Master's student in Sustainability Science, Policy and Society at Maastricht University interviewed a member on CloughJordan as a renewable energy community for her Master's thesis. Her thesis focuses on 'empowerment within renewable energy communities (ECs) in Ireland' and its main aim is to unveil the forces contributing to the (dis)empowerment of Irish ECs.
- **Hannah Wales**, a Master's student of public policy and human development at Maastricht University interviewed a founder member of the ecovillage for her Master's thesis on how funding and support from government affects ecovillages fulfilling their objectives.
- **Logan Gray**, studying a Masters of Interdisciplinary Studies at Prescott College in Arizona, USA, interviewed a member about economic issues relating to the ecovillage, in particular its contribution to economic resilience and to developing a new model of economy.
- **Katie Moen**, a student on the MSc in Environmental Technology at Imperial College London interviewed a member about the vision and practice of sustainability in the ecovillage.
- **Soline Van de Moortele** from Concordia University in Montreal visited the ecovillage in July and interviewed a number of members on their philosophical presuppositions and ethical motives.
- **John Keegan**, a postgraduate student of Climate Entrepreneurship at Trinity College Dublin received answers to questions he posed.



## Land Use

Cloughjordan Ecovillage comprises a total area of 67 acres roughly comprising one third housing, one third woodland, and one third amenity and farming. Land Use is a primary activity group in the work of the charity and its remit is:

- To oversee the care and management of all communal lands, in line with the Village ethos, Eco-Charter and SPI's role as an educational charity
- To manage the design, implementation and maintenance of the urban, amenity/work, farm and wooded areas.
- To be a forum for research, discussion and education about all aspects of Land Use.
- To ensure that the land plays a leading role in making our community resilient and productive.

### Land Plan

Updating the Land Plan has not progressed as intended. Land Use liaised with the Process Group, however technical and capacity issues were the main obstacles with accessing the required information.

### Orchards

There was a bumper crop of apples this year and a lot of work was needed to thin the crop in the early summer. Pruning and maintenance of the apple orchard and other apple trees has been a major task through the year. Kevin Dudley gave a tutorial on pruning heritage apple varieties in February.

Time was spent in summer pruning all the plum trees. Two new plum trees, Victoria and Jubilee were planted in February as many of the older trees have disease, possibly indicating the land is not well suited to them. The grass was cut to create integrated paths through the plum tree walk and the allotments so more people will enjoy the area. The new plum trees were also underplanted with chives and marjoram to attract pollinators.

The cob orchard has been cleared and the trees mulched with stones, removing the old plastic mulch. There was also a good cobnut harvest this year. A Tuesday morning meitheal became established and has mainly worked on keeping the apple, plum and cob trees maintained, pruned and cleared. A meitheal was held in the apple orchard during the Elements of Change festival and in August Land Use and Process groups jointly organised a meitheal in the apple orchard.

### Woodland Management and Planning

An assessment of the hazel trees in the woodland last winter was completed. It was agreed that the community farm would manage the coppicing of the line of hazels in the woodland along the farm boundary next year and the harvest would be shared between the farm and Land Use. Some of these will be made into hurdles and some will be available as rods for plant supports and espaliers. Land Use has been developing plans for planting walnuts and other trees such as mulberry in the woodland edge area between the woodland and the amenity field. This planning is particularly for future generations. Another part of this plan is to have permanent seats and benches under the trees.

### Wildlife Pond (Peel's Pond)

Stephen Peel led on the creation and establishment of a wildlife pond, recognising that, the small stream aside, there was no body of water in the ecovillage. Funding was secured from the Dept. of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) for delivery of the project and local volunteers helped with installation, landscaping and planting. A smooth newt was seen in the pond and tadpoles and frogs have developed from the frogspawn that was introduced. Increased insect activity was also noted. One interesting development was the presence of breeding dragonflies, so hopefully dragonfly larvae will over-winter in the pond. Educational signage in Irish and English was erected beside the pond.





## Biodiversity Audit

Sophia Couchman supplied a preliminary report on the biodiversity audit. Sophia has offered to extend the audit period for another year at no further cost and will present the final report and plan in summer 2023.

Sophia visited in April to provide training in Flower Insect Timed (FIT) counts. Seven attended the training and some started FIT counts in the ecovillage. Sophia brought bat sound detection equipment with her and there were a few possible soundings of Pipistrelle and Leisler's Bats.

The preliminary report also identified that the colonies of winter heliotrope on the mound and along the road are an invasive species. Land Use will prioritise dealing with those spreading around apple trees along the road by mulching with cardboard. It was noted that although there is still some Japanese knotweed on the mound this is not spreading. Sea buckthorn has been removed from community land where it had spread out of private gardens.

## Allotments

There are currently 18 allotments and three polytunnels in use in the allotments area with an increasing demand for polytunnels. The RED gardens also tend 6 growing spaces in the allotments area under their current licence.

This year allotment holders agreed and signed a new Memorandum of Understanding for allotment and polytunnel holders in order to clarify the responsibilities and commitments of having an allotment and/or polytunnel. The water supply to the allotments was also upgraded during the year. The community polytunnel has seven members who continue to work and grow together in the tunnel and an adjacent bed outside. Joe Fitzmaurice harvested his second crop of rye.

## Sensory Garden

Gay Kieran has taken over coordination of the sensory garden. So far this year work has involved clearing around fruit bushes and weeding out scutch grass and hemlock.

## Educational visits to other Land based Activities

Members of Land Use attended open days on agroforestry, continuous cover forestry and pollinator identification amongst others. Links were made with a farmer in Co Offaly who has offered seeds and plants of *Sorbus Hibernicus*, the Irish whitebeam that is native to the midlands.



## Process Group

The Process group is responsible for the decision-making processes within the ecovillage, and organises the monthly members' meetings (where information is exchanged, discussions take place, and decisions and policy changes are authorised). The group's role includes setting agenda, providing facilitation, and ensuring minutes are recorded, circulated and approved.

During the Covid period, members' meetings were held over zoom, with the first in-person meeting taking place in September. Attempts were made to meet some members' continued needs for social distancing. Feedback gathered from members revealed that while many people had a preference for meeting in person and the renewed sense of community this brings, many also experienced regrets that immunocompromised members were unable to attend. The Process group sought to find an inclusive solution, and began hosting blended meetings. This involved increasing the capacity of those involved, and sourcing equipment and tech support which required additional budget.

In the second half of the year, the agenda for members' meetings focused around the topics highlighted by the Strategic Review, and Process met regularly with the Roadmap Manager, to co-design the process for involving members and the format of these meetings.

As part of this review, Process also prepared and presented an explanation of current structures and processes at the November members' meeting. In the preceding months, Process had worked on collating the notes of the structural review group, which met weekly for several months during 2020. A summary document was prepared and shared with Coordination and the Strategic Review group as there was some overlap between the work of the two groups.

Process also hosted the Annual Review, which took place in January. During the event the group collectively envisioned the future of the ecovillage, reviewed last year's Annual Review and discussed the progress made towards implementing plans.



Licensees of SPI are recognised as playing a key role in facilitating delivery of the charity's core objectives in modelling key features of a more sustainable village, including connection and integration with the wider local and global communities. Their work in the ecovillage is facilitated by SPI through the issue of licence agreements.

## Cloughjordan Community Farm

Cloughjordan Community Farm is a Community Supported Agriculture project stewarding the land, building soil biology and providing vegetables all year round to approximately 80 subscribers from the local area. As a social enterprise, the farm seeks to promote a healthy food culture and to guarantee a secure local food supply, as well as host training in resilient food systems and sustainable agriculture.

The priorities for 2022 included; ramping up production, bringing all growing spaces into a management plan; growing the membership base and supporting the development of the education area (Cuan Beo) and the Food Hub. The farm currently has 80 members. A special offer to try membership for a reduced price for two months was quickly taken up. From this drive the farm gained four new members at the full rate.

Cuan Beo was further developed as an area of enhanced biodiversity with an emphasis on social care, and educational growing and experimentation.

The educational tunnel was used as a propagation tunnel for a seed saving project as part of an initiative to create a Community Seed Bank. The farm ESC interns continued to help develop Cuan Beo, and the Community Seed Bank group met regularly to share and exchange knowledge on growing, planting and collecting seeds, led by Kevin Dudley. Plans for a social farming area were also progressed during the year. The green cabin was regularly used as a venue for community meetings and events with plans for more public facing events and seed swap days.

### Open Food Hub

Food Hub is a farm initiative held in Bay 1 of WeCreate, this initiative will be continued into 2023 in partnership with Cultivate, Open Food Network (OFN) Ireland and other stakeholders. Activities included:

### North Tipperary Online Farmers Market

The fortnightly online farmers market was held every two weeks supplying farm veg as well as local produce and crafts from 20 producers in the wider locality.

### Feeding Ourselves Training Network

A training network building capacity programme with SolidNetwork and OFN Ireland for regenerative and community supported farms, coops and other community led food systems.

### Feeding Ourselves Annual Gathering 2022

This annual Cloughjordan gathering was held in April for agroecological farmers and workers, community food and environmental advocates, and people interested in cooperatives, local resilience, fair food systems and rural regeneration.

### Soup Cafe

A popular farm soup cafe was held weekly on Tuesdays at the Food Hub.



## RED Gardens Project

### Introduction

The RED Gardens Project is an independent citizen-led research, education and development project located in the ecovillage, which is focused on helping more people grow more of their own food. The project is managed by Bruce Darrell, with the continuing support of Kristina Lomas. It consists of three main elements, the series of RED Gardens in the allotment area, the Black Plot and a YouTube Channel.



### RED Gardens Development

The series of six family scale gardens of the RED Gardens is the longest established part of the project, and they continued for another season in 2022. It was generally a successful growing season with a lot of good crops, and some disappointments and failures, all of which have been great learning opportunities. We increased our focus on variety trials of different vegetables, and seed saving, in addition to a wide range of other crops, issues and methods.

### Black Plot Development

Over the year we were finally able to start growing in the second large polytunnel in the Black Plot. The two large polytunnels were full of crops, with a few variety trials, and exploration of different ways of managing heat loving plants, as well as producing a lot of vegetables. At the end of the year we were able to complete the establishment of a large No-Till trial area, testing five different options for creating a no-till or no-dig growing space, which will be planted in 2023. We have also cleared the section between the two polytunnels for the development of high rotation crop beds.

### Grow Bag Trials

A significant addition to the overall project was the use of about 200 large grow bags to conduct two large trials using potato plants to test different growing medium and soil amendments. One part was located in the RED Gardens, and the other part was in the Black Plot, and they have been a much more focused exploration for the project, which will continue into 2023.

### One Rule Compost

The community composting facility continued for another season, used to compost a lot of the organic material from the gardens and the allotments area, as well as being used for the kitchen compostable waste for quite a few residents in the ecovillage and from the rest of the CloughJordan.

### Videos

The RED Gardens YouTube channel continues to be a key part of the project, where a lot of the explorations and learnings in the gardens are distilled into carefully edited essay format videos which are viewed around the world. The channel passed a remarkable milestone in April, reaching 100,000 subscribers, and has become a significant and respected food growing channel with a global audience.

For the last three months of the year, Bruce was able to upload much more frequently, with about six videos a month, which is significantly increasing the reach and viewing of the channel.

### Outreach

In addition to the YouTube Channel, Bruce and Kris participated in quite a few formal and informal courses, tours and presentations about the RED Gardens. This included educational presentations organised by SPI, the Permaculture Course run by Cultivate, and numerous planned and impromptu presentations to tour groups, and informal discussions with residents and visitors. The farm interns were also given several tours and presentations. A lot of advice, support, supplies and seed was given to other people in the community who are growing their own food.

### Food Supply

With all of the growing spaces, and trials, the gardens produced almost 5000kg of high quality local vegetables in 2022. This continues to be a significant supply of local vegetables for the community, complimenting the vegetables produced by the farm for its members.



## CloughJordan Amphitheatre

CloughJordan Arts approached the 2022 season with great hope and confidence. Although no additional funding was secured, it was hoped that audience numbers would return to pre-lockdown levels. The relatively successful 2021 season seemed a solid basis to grow the number and scope of events presented.

2022 was our first time collaborating with an Arts Council funded show as production partners on the 'Swarm' project which went on to tour nationally throughout the summer. The show was workshopped and rehearsed in CloughJordan between March and April and premiered as a free public performance at the amphitheatre in April.

While a busy summer was anticipated, the sheer number of events which were backed up and scheduled to take place between June and August was unprecedented. Many of these were rescheduled (and pre-sold) from 2019 and 2020. The 2022 summer season was characterised by too many events chasing too few punters.

The season opened with an ambitious Folk, Bluegrass and New Country weekend in June with camping and afternoon shows. Three top-tier headline acts were secured and an exciting underbill of emerging artists. Friday (Ye Vagabonds) and Saturday (Lost Brothers) were very successful and well-attended. John Blek and The Remedy Club were superb support acts and feedback was uniformly positive at both concerts. Attendance over the two nights was 300 and there was extensive local media coverage.

June also saw the return of the Elements of Change Festival. The live music was to take place at the amphitheatre, with the adjoining amenity field used for stalls and tents. But this event did not sell the number of tickets anticipated, and due to bad weather the event was moved to consolidate the modest crowd in proximity to shelter (Enterprise Centre).

By the end of June difficulties were mounting in terms of poor advance sales and bad weather. A decision was made that no further concerts would be booked. Eleanor McEvoy (who has been advance booked for July) had to be moved indoors at the last-minute due to rain. This concert turned out to be a really fantastic event with Eleanor being the consummate professional and St. Kieran's Hall again turning out to be an excellent back-up all-weather option.

The CloughJordan Arts licence for the Amphitheatre ends in 2023. Without core funding to cover the fixed cost of insurances, charity administration, facility maintenance and improvement, the current arrangement seems unsustainable. These questions should inform a community-wide discussion over the next 12 months. New ideas and energy are needed for the amenity to fulfil its potential.



## The Community Apiaries

### Allotment Bees

Three strong colonies and a good nectar flow in July and August resulted in a significant honey yield. Three colonies were overwintered in the allotment apiary. Efforts to requeen one of the hives with a native Irish Black Queen in August were unsuccessful. Lian Callaghan did an excellent job reweaving the entire willow fence.

### Woodland Bees

There were some losses to woodland bees but going into winter there were four colonies in the woodlands. The colonies were checked for varroa regularly and treated with a natural thyme treatment in January. With the cold spell expected in December, extra insulation was added to the outside of all four hives. There is also one healthy colony on the farm.

## CloughJordan Soccer Club

The soccer club have continued to use the amenity field for matches and practice and in return keep grass on the amenity field mown.

## CloughJordan Scouts

The scouts met up several times at the ecovillage car park to practice their pioneering skills.. They had several campouts in the amenity field, backwoods cooking sessions and also social cookouts at the farm fire pit. The scouts also took part in educational nature walks around the ecovillage at different seasons during the year. As always when in the ecovillage (as elsewhere) the Scouts practice 'leave no trace' taking anything they had used away and being respectful of nature and wildlife. The scouts continue to make good use of the ecovillage as a valuable resource that enhances their scouting program throughout the year.

## Forest School

Land Use met with Aisling Finucane and Vasudha Krishnamurthy in relation to the Forest School. Unfortunately they weren't able to run the pilot in August as hoped but they have now applied for a license and Land Use are in communication with them and the SPI Board in relation to this.





# CLOUGHJORDAN ECOVILLAGE

Sustainable Projects Ireland CLG,  
North Tipperary Green Enterprise Park,  
Cloughjordan, Co. Tipperary, Ireland

[www.thevillage.ie](http://www.thevillage.ie)



# ÉICEAPHOBAL CHLOCH SHIURDÁIN

ag tógáil • comhlúadar • inbhuanaithe