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Community Resource Development

Compiled by Balla CRD & Balla Tidy Towns

## Heritage Week 2020

Heritage Week ran from 15<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2020 and Balla CRD submitted a project on the Bird Hide and Swift Conservation. In 2017, conservationist and Swift expert Lynda Huxley informed us that there were Swifts in Balla. However, there were not many suitable places for the Swifts to nest and Lynda suggested that swift nesting boxes be erected. The north gable of Balla Community Resource Centre was identified as a suitable site and nest boxes were installed in May 2018 with an amplifier and speaker to play sounds of the swifts. During August 2020, there were a nesting pair of Swifts using the conservation nest site at Balla CRD Ltd, Lynda filmed the birds, and we hope more will return in 2021. Balla CRD Ltd together with Lynda Huxley and the local authority planned to develop a Bird Hide to encourage awareness among the community and schools of the importance of water resources and wildlife. Thanks also to Tom Carolan Local Authority Communities Water Officer for all his support.



## Highlights of 2020

**Balla are GAA Intermediate Champions for 2020.**

The 19<sup>th</sup> September 2020 will be remembered as the date Balla Intermediate Team and Management, became County Champions for 2020 and won the Sweeny Cup in a thrilling game against their neighbours Kiltimagh. Congratulations to all and best wishes for 2021.



## Balla History and Walking Trail

Stephen Goldrick and John Larkin have completed extensive research on the History of Balla. Balla CRD plans to develop a historical walk, extend existing loop walks surrounding Balla and the Town Park and update the information signs, to enable visitors access information on their mobile phones with maps and the history of the area.

**Bike Week 25<sup>th</sup> September 2020** Thanks to Mayo Sports Partnership, Peter Tondra, Paul Kilcourse, John Brennan Castlebar Cycling Club, Andy Moran, and the Members of Balla GAA Intermediate and Girls U.16 teams for helping us organise a very enjoyable event in Balla Community Centre for National Bike Week. The event provided an opportunity for children and adults to get first-hand information from those involved in Cycling, on the importance of safety, rules of the road, cycling equipment and the health benefits of cycling. In 2021 we will continue to facilitate more events for promoting cycling and encourage people of all ages to keep active.

## this issue

Highlights of 2020 & Heritage week **P.1**

Senior Alert Scheme 2020 **P.2**

Balla Tidy Towns **P.2**

Balla CRD News **P.2**

## Mayo Roscommon Hospice Coffee Morning

On Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September Balla CRD hosted a coffee morning to support Mayo Roscommon Hospice, the people of Balla were very generous and €890.00 was donated to a very worthy cause.



*Seamus Caulfield Manager Balla CRD presenting cheque to Angela Nugent Mayo Roscommon Hospice*

**Shoebox Appeal** Balla CRD was glad to facilitate the Christmas collection of Shoeboxes, given to the children living in Direct Provision Centre's, Meals on Wheels, Mayo Roscommon Hospice and SVP, organized by Hannah Nevin. There was a massive response with over 300 donations from Balla.

## Senior Alert Scheme

Up to now over 100 alarms are installed in houses all around Balla. This is due to Balla CRD and the dedication of several people who delivered the alarms promptly and in a very professional manner. If you are interested in having a personal alarm, please contact the office at Balla Community Resource Centre at 0949365846 or 0871850860

### Eligibility:

Over 65 years

1. Living alone, living with another person that meets the eligibility criteria, living alone for significant periods of time during the day
2. Prepared to maintain contact with Balla CRD



### New Eco Waste Bin

Thank you to PEL and Mayo County Council for installing a new solar powered waste bin in Balla, we will keep our town tidy and Eco Friendly. This new bin is illuminated at night to ensure that all waste is always disposed of correctly!

### Christmas Lights

Balla Tidy Towns and Balla CRD continued their good work by brightening up the town with Christmas Lights, a lot of time and effort went into this project and thanks to Mayo County Council for their support.

### Community Enhancement Programme

Balla Tidy Towns and Balla CRD made successful applications for funding to Mayo County Council under the Community Enhancement Programme (CEP). Essential maintenance, equipment and improvements will be made in 2021 around the Balla area because of this funding. If you would like to assist or become a member of Balla Tidy Towns, please contact Balla CRD office 0949365846 or email [ballacrd@gmail.com](mailto:ballacrd@gmail.com).

### 5 Year Development Plan

Balla Tidy Towns have engaged a consultant to produce a development plan for the Balla area. If you have some ideas or priority areas for development please contact the Centre.

## Balla CRD News

### Funding Applications

Over the last two months Balla CRD has made successful applications to several funding sources. We are happy to announce that funding of €10,000 has been awarded from Mayo Sligo Leitrim Education and Training Board. €3,665 from the CEP for the Courthouse Development, €2,520 for Balla Active Retirement Association and €1,000 for Balla Tidy Towns. We have also been granted €9500 from ESB Future Generations Fund towards the development of the old Courthouse. The work will commence in January and will hopefully be completed by the end of May 2021.

### Creating Networks

Balla CRD continue to engage and network with national and international organisations, we have recently become members of the Irish Network Against Racism and the County Mayo Foundation. The current President of the County Mayo Foundation is John Roche. John's father hails from Clogher.

### Have Your Say

We are always open to discussion and suggestions from everyone in Balla regarding future developments, initiatives or projects which can further enhance our community. If you have any ideas or suggestions for improvements please contact us.

## Free WiFi for Balla

Mayo County Council, David Reddington, WestNet and Balla CRD met with Balla residents to discuss the roll out of the WiFi4EU programme as part of the European Strategy to enable communities access the internet in public spaces for free. Several towns were identified in Mayo and Balla has been chosen as one of the first in the region to receive the service. Mayo County Council will provide details regarding the launch of the service and we are looking forward to the opportunities which this will provide for Balla CRD and the entire community.

## Season's Greetings

2020 has been a difficult year and we would like to wish everyone in Balla, our neighbours, our friends abroad and all our diaspora a peaceful Christmas and a prosperous new year.

