

## Welcome!

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the first issue of the **Waters of LIFE** Newsletter!

The Waters of LIFE is an EU LIFE Integrated Project (IP) which aims to help reverse the deterioration of Ireland's most pristine waters.

In this newsletter you will find information about the project and its progress.

You can keep up to date with project news via our website [www.watersoflife.ie](http://www.watersoflife.ie), Twitter [@EUWatersofLIFE](https://twitter.com/EUWatersofLIFE), [Facebook](#) or [LinkedIn](#)

*The Waters of LIFE Team*

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## About the Waters of LIFE Project

The Waters of LIFE is an EU LIFE Integrated Project (IP) which aims to help reverse the deterioration of Ireland's most pristine waters.



*Inchavore River, Oldbridge, Co. Wicklow - (Anna Rymaszewicz / Stephen Davis, LAWPRO)*

The ongoing loss of high status waters is among the most concerning, protracted and persistent water quality trend in Ireland.

Other water quality trends have well-understood cause and effect, with detailed plans in place to mitigate impacts. More actions are necessary to protect pristine waters. Many of these waters are small, upland streams. The protection and restoration of these waters

is one of the key underpinning principles of the Water Framework Directive.

The overall objective of the Waters of LIFE IP is to support the implementation of measures to protect and enhance High-Status Waters and thus to support the work of the Blue Dot Catchments Programme.



## Waters of LIFE Project Launch



*Malcom Noonan TD, Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform launching the Waters of Life project*

Following the official launch by Minister Noonan, attendees were taken on field trips in the local area.

The Ballyhoura Development staff led one field trip, which took participants along the Molanna River walk, which runs beside the Keale River from Ballyorgan in Co. Limerick to Darragh in Co. Cork.

This is a beautiful walk that was developed by Ballyhoura Development group in partnership with local landowners.

The Waters of LIFE Integrated project was officially launched by Malcom Noonan TD, Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform on Friday 29th April 2022 in Deebert House Hotel, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick.

The event was attended by a wide range of stakeholders from around the country.



*Derek McLoughlin (Wild Atlantic Nature IP), Karl Cashen (LAWPRO), Bernie White (LAWPRO), Anne Goggin (Waters of LIFE IP) and Minister Malcolm Noonan TD at the official project launch.*



*Minister Noonan with LAWPRO Catchment Manager Cormac McConiglely and LAWPRO Blue Dot Programme Manager Bernie White at the Loobagh Field Trip*

The second field trip was led by LAWPRO catchment scientists, and took participants to two unmonitored sites in the headwaters of the River Loobagh to examine the instream biology.

The participants had a look at how biological indicators vary within the catchment and form the basis for catchment characterisation.

To celebrate the links between our environment and our cultural heritage, a social event was held in advance of the launch on the evening of 28th April.

Attendees were treated to a wonderful evening of songs, stories, tunes, dances and puppetry celebrating our natural environment. They were taken on a musical journey along the rivers of Ireland - starting in the Liffey and ending up on the banks of the Lee.



*Liam Flanagan (Fiddle), Muireann NicAmhlaoibh (Flute) and Seán O Fearghaill (Concertina) perform at the Waters of LIFE Social Event*

You can view a video of the launch on our YouTube channel at the following Link – [Project Launch](#)

The event was a great success, and we thank all who attended. We look forward to your support over the remainder of the project.

## LIFE IP Workshop, Helsinki, Finland.



*Kiskonjoki river at Latokartanonkoski, Finland*

The Waters of LIFE Project was invited to attend a workshop entitled: “Workshop on EU LIFE Integrated Projects - What did we learn?” in Helsinki, Finland, from 12th – 14th September 2022. 49 participants from 46 LIFE Integrated Projects from 22 countries from across the EU related to various themes were represented at the workshop.

The workshop was organised by the Ministry of the Environment of Finland. Its aim was to document what issues that LIFE Integrated Projects (IP’s) from around the EU had encountered, to discuss them in a workshop and to synthesise the results into a report which would be sent to the LIFE programme administrators in order to make improvements to the running of LIFE IP’s.



*Natural fish pass on the Kiskonjoki river at Kosken Kartano, Finland.*

The workshop was a very valuable experience. It brought together project team members from a variety of differing projects, with different aims, from across the EU.

Waters of LIFE made many valuable contacts at the workshop and has since given presentations to the [LIFE IP Richwaters](#) Project in Sweden and the [LIFE IP CleanEST](#) project in Estonia. We hope to work closely with these, and other LIFE Integrated Projects over the lifetime of the Waters of LIFE.



# Waters of LIFE Public Engagement Meetings

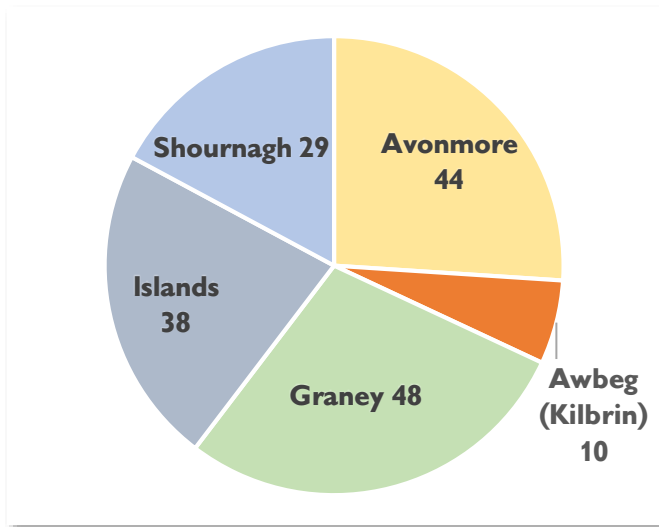
A project has a strong emphasis on community engagement, and wished to get the input and views of local farmers, landowners and people within the demonstration catchments who have valuable knowledge of their own locality.

In order to begin this, Public Engagement meetings were held in the 5 Demonstration Catchments in September and October of 2022 and were very well attended (see below).



*Waters of LIFE Project Manager, Anne Goggin, Presenting to the Graney Public Meeting*

*Attendance at Public Engagement Meetings*



At all the meetings, the project was very well received and there was excellent discussion and questions and answers after the presentations.

The project team is grateful for the warm welcome it received in all of the project catchments and we look forward to meeting you all again soon.

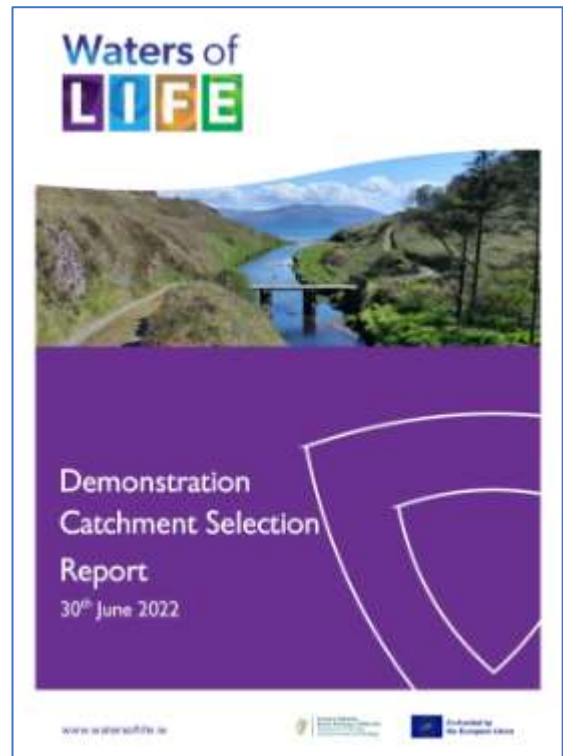
Follow the link to the full [Report on Initial Public Engagement](#)

The project wishes to give a big thank you to the Communications and Engagement Lead, Community Water Officers, Catchment Scientists, Managers and Regional Coordinators of our project partner, LAWPRO, for organising and facilitating these meetings.

## Catchment Selection Report Published

The Waters of LIFE project proposal required that 5 Demonstration Catchments be selected in which measures would be trialled for the protection and restoration of HSO river water bodies. The report details how these Catchments were selected.

Follow the link to the [Catchment Selection Report](#) or see the Resources Section of the Project Website for full details.



## Our Project Partners

Coordinated by the [Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage \(DHLGH\)](#), the project involves several associated partners including the [Local Authorities Water Programme \(LAWPRO\)](#) & the [Blue Dot Programme](#), [The Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)](#), [The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine \(DAFM\)](#) which includes the Forest Service; [Teagasc](#); [Coillte](#) and several Local Development Companies.

