



## 2021

## Annual Report

### Highlights & Impacts



# Contents

Foreword.....	1
UN Sustainable Development Goals .....	3
SECAD Partnership's Vision & Mission .....	4
Achievements & Impacts 2021 .....	5
<b>Section 1: SECAD Supporting Enterprise.....</b>	<b>7</b>
• Enterprise Support Service	
• Women's Rural Entrepreneurial Network (WREN)	
• SECAD & Tourism	
• SECAD & Social Enterprise	
<b>Section 2: SECAD Enabling Employment.....</b>	<b>14</b>
• SECAD Employment Services	
• Rural Development Programme Funded Projects – Enterprise	
• SECAD Online Learning Hub	
• SECAD Health Care Initiative	
• Get Job Ready	
• Strive Programme	
<b>Section 3: SECAD Community Development Supports .....</b>	<b>21</b>
• Rural Development Programme Funded Projects – Community	
• Sustaining Communities Training Programme	
• Tús & Rural Social Scheme Community Work Placements	
• SICAP Team Getting Back Out into the Community	
<b>Section 4: SECAD Environmental Investments.....</b>	<b>30</b>
• Wild Work & the Community	
• REGINA Regenerative Agriculture Erasmus+ project	
<b>Section 5: SECAD Corporate and Public Services .....</b>	<b>33</b>
• Community Benefit Fund	
• <b>safefood</b> Community Food Initiative	
<b>Section 6: SECAD &amp; International Partnerships .....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Section 7: Funds &amp; Programmes Managed by SECAD.....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Section 8: SECAD Governance .....</b>	<b>46</b>

# Statement 2021

Mike Walley, SECAD Chairman and Ryan Howard, Chief Executive Officer

SECAD Partnership has evolved several times over the past twenty seven years. I have been proud to be involved with this phenomenally successful organisation for over eighteen of these years, serving on committees, two different spells on the Board and in this penultimate year of my term as a Trustee, as the Chairman of SECAD.

Many will know SECAD from the more than one thousand LEADER grants awarded to projects ranging from playgrounds to youth and community centres and investments into small businesses; others will recognise the work of SECAD through its networks including Ring of Cork ([www.ringofcork.ie](http://www.ringofcork.ie)) supporting rural tourism, Wild Work ([www.wildwork.ie](http://www.wildwork.ie)) supporting a range of biodiversity actions or from the Healthcare and Female Entrepreneurs' WREN Network, each of which is managed by SECAD Partnership. SECAD also supports over one thousand individuals per year through the Tús, SICAP and Rural Social Schemes.

Today SECAD has a team of over 40 staff, amongst the most effective and professional in supporting rural, social and sustainable development. In 2021 the Board of SECAD has initiated an 'Organisational Review' which will see substantial investment into the organisation (structures, systems, supports and strategies) to underpin our own resilience and sustainability into the future.

However what many people do not see nor appreciate fully perhaps is that SECAD Partnership is a Local Development Partnership operating under the instruction of a Board of Trustees, each of whom are volunteers – giving their time freely to develop, adopt and invest in the strategies that have served the organisation since inception.

As I said from the outset, I have been very proud to play a part in this story and in seeing the huge levels of positive impacts that our work has had on individuals, families and communities across the Island of Ireland.



I would like to express my thanks for the respect and help I have always received from Ryan Howard, the Management and Staff in SECAD.

In particular, I would like to acknowledge the support and camaraderie I have gained from fellow Trustees over the years.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my involvement as a Board Member and Chairman of SECAD, a position which I held for two terms over the years and look forward to continuing to serve on the Board until my retirement in 2022.

**Michael Walley**  
**Chairman**  
SECAD Partnership



SECAD Partnership has prided itself in terms of supporting a range of innovative projects and initiatives over nearly three decades which have underpinned the resilience of communities and small businesses across the Island of Ireland. Many of these developments have been led by SECAD over the years from the development of an eco-tourism trail in the early 1990's which would prove a catalyst for the development of key habitats such as Harpers Island in Cork Harbour a decade later. Supporting networks of small business such as the 'Ring of Cork' would provide the linkages to enable SECAD to support a range of small food and tourism businesses through special LEADER Investments in the past five years. Our deliberate strategy to encourage communities to look at larger more ambitious facilities has led to the development or renovation of numerous community and youth service centres, leaving a legacy that will serve generations into the future.

And one of the most creative and critical initiatives that SECAD has developed has come about as a result of a 'necessity' caused by Covid – this being our online 'tool-kit'. This is located within our website, [www.secad.ie](http://www.secad.ie). It provides a range of training offerings for small business owners and managers to help their business. It offers training opportunities to community volunteers in terms of managing local groups more effectively. One of the key elements of the system is that it offers expert guidance to people looking to return to work, develop new skills and build personal confidence. Across 2021 this platform has continued to develop and expand in terms of the range and quality of supports that it offers.

Through this platform SECAD has successfully developed a series of supports that we can now offer to clients and beneficiaries of all SECAD initiatives from SICAP, Tús, Rural Social Scheme and the LEADER Programme. During 2021, SECAD also continued to develop and expand supporting initiatives funded by the European Social Fund – the female entrepreneur programme called WREN, a Healthcare Skills development programme and the 'Strive' initiative which supports young adults with mental and physical challenges.

SECAD continued to expand our Community Benefit Fund investments with supports provided to 300 community projects with funds provided by Wind Farm Clients across the Island of Ireland. Similarly the **safe food** Community Food Initiative, which is managed by SECAD, supported 14 organisations in the North and Republic of Ireland to deliver their support



online, thus enabling healthy eating programmes to continue to be developed in these targeted project areas which include some of the most disadvantaged communities on the Island.

SECAD Partnership is a professionally supported and managed local development organisation which has a voluntary Board of Trustees.

As Chief Executive Officer I would like to thank each of our volunteer directors and the many people that have assisted our committees across the year. They are at the centre of all of our structures, committing huge levels of their own time and resources to provide direction for our teams and guidance for our management. I would also acknowledge the professionalism and commitment of the management and staff of SECAD to continue to develop and improve the quality of the services that SECAD provides.

We will continue to explore new and creative ways of supporting rural development and social inclusion, as this focus on innovation has been central to building our communities' resilience across three decades.

**Ryan Howard**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
SECAD Partnership

# UN Sustainable Development Goals

## ...How they link with SECAD Partnership and our Work

The UN Sustainable Development Goals were agreed in 2015 to help frame how we can consider and implement an approach to a fairer, most sustainable, and balanced world. Much of our sustainability issues arises from 'imbalance' creating societal division, greater separation between 'rich' and 'poor', powerlessness, exploitation, resource mismanagement and environmental degradation. Collectively the impacts of these will likely lead to increasing strife, poverty, war and a rapid increase in extinction events.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) invite each of us, from Governments to each of us as citizens, to consider how we can bring about the changes needed to seek a 're-balance' and a more resilient world.

Through our work, SECAD is investing in a variety of ways to positively impact the sustainability of our region, local businesses and communities, and supporting initiatives that are aimed at addressing resource gaps and the restoration of eco-systems essential to a more sustainable future.



**Sections 1 and 2** of this report looks at examples of where SECAD is supporting access to employment, self-employment, rural and local business development and initiatives to support more female ownership of enterprises. These are all directly related to UN SDG's (#4, #5, #9 and #10) which promote better employment options and developing the infrastructure to support local enterprise development.

**Sections 3 and 5** outline a range of supports for community and local community-led social services development that relate to UN SDG's (#1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #10, #11 and #12) which offer support to the most disadvantaged, promote and provide new educational opportunities, looks to highlight and address issues of equality and integration, focusing on utilising sustainably produced produce whilst encouraging conversations about designing more sustainable rural towns and villages.

**Section 4**, SECAD Environmental Investments, specifically focus on an initiative developed within SECAD called 'Wild Work' which is a response to the

lack of coordinated or coherent policy instruments and investments to help communities and local businesses (and our citizens) to implement community led projects that would have a true and lasting positive impact in terms of restoring biodiversity and habitat. These in turn reflect the ambitions of UN SDG's #13, #14 and #15.

Finally, as a Local Development Company, SECAD is itself set up a 'Partnership' between the key development actors that are needed to bring about sustainable change and positive action across the 3 pillars of sustainable development (Social, Economic and Environmental) in line with UN SDG #17.

We would encourage all reading this report to consider your response to these challenges and please encourage others to do likewise. We hope this report and the works outlined will encourage more people to play an active role to get involved in positive action with the aim of achieving a more balanced, sustainable future.

# SECAD Partnership's Vision & Mission

## Vision

To be recognised as a leading European development organisation, enabling vibrant, sustainable and inclusive communities.

## Mission

SECAD is a dynamic and pioneering social enterprise which works in partnership with diverse stakeholders to provide services, facilities and investments for the benefit of the communities we serve.

# SECAD Partnership Impact 2021



**115**

People receiving Business Start Up & Business Sustainability support

## SUPPORTING ENTERPRISE



**8**

Social Enterprises receiving SICAP grants

**13**

Social Enterprises receiving LEADER grants

**12**

Businesses receiving LEADER grants

**385**

Number of people taking part in Tourism related training

**34**

Female Entrepreneurs receiving training through WREN



**Wildwork**

HELPING PEOPLE HELP NATURE HELP PEOPLE



## ENVIRONMENT

### SECAD Environmental Investments

**25**

Education & awareness sessions

**15**

Wild Work Videos and Podcasts Produced

**6**

Biodiversity Action Plans & Recommendations Reports

**1,500**

Packs of native wildflower seed distributed to the public

**16**

'Discover the Wild Side' Outdoor Nature & Biodiversity Events for Children & Families

**4**

Wild Work Student Placements



**501**

Individuals supported on a 1-to-1 basis

**131**

Young people 18-24 years towards training &/or employment options including Young Filmmakers Project

**54**

People progressed into Employment

**137**

Active Tús & RSS Participants throughout 2021

**90**

Women receiving tailored personal development training under the PEIL programme (WREN 34 & Healthcare 56)

## ENABLING EMPLOYMENT

**77**

Individuals receiving sector specific skills for work training

**97**

Healthcare Support provided: 1-to-1 support 97  
Progressed into work 61  
Received training 68

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**38**  
sessions

Sustainable Communities Training Programme 2021 - 711 Attendees

**50**

Local Community Groups to govern, plan & represent social inclusion & equality issues

**8**

New Communities' families engaged through community integration projects involved food diversity & celebration through food festivals

**73**

Vulnerable people receiving wellbeing & personal development supports

**61**

Children & families supported through healthy eating & lifestyle programmes

**14**

Community Food Initiatives supported in Northern Ireland & Republic to deliver healthy eating actions through safefood CFI

**177**

Projects throughout the island of Ireland offered financial support from 2021 Community Benefit Funds.



SECAD 

# SECTION 1: SUPPORTING ENTERPRISE

# Supporting Enterprise

## Enterprise Support Service

2021 again saw a very high demand for supports in relation to new start-up businesses. SECAD delivered 7 Start Your Own Business courses throughout the year to help clients progress their journey into self-employment.

After conducting a detailed training needs analysis in 2021, SECAD was in a position to identify the supports that were needed by our existing client base. In response to this, we set up a series of interactive workshops called '6 Steps to Boost your Business'. We looked at zero cost marketing tips, improving B2B synergies (instead of B2C sales which can be more time consuming), setting sales prices and finally tips for productivity within a business. Also in 2021, we invited previous SECAD SICAP clients to come back and speak about their entrepreneurial journey in the hopes that others could learn from that experience both positively and negatively.



Trends wise in 2021, we saw an increase in the number of young people looking at self-employment as a viable career option. Paired with that, and as a follow on from the previous year we saw growth in

on-line businesses again, particularly in the wellness industry (counselling / coaching / personal training). A global client base is now available to business owners in Ireland with the increasing demand for on-line training and supports particularly around mental health and wellbeing. 2022 is likely to see further increases in demand for start your own business courses and business sustainability workshops for the third year in a row while we continue to utilise the Zoom platform as an accessible platform for training delivery.

In 2021, SECAD Partnership was strong in its delivery of supports to the client base interested in starting a business but equally to those who have already started their enterprise, in terms of their business sustainability and continued growth. As the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP) was tapered back throughout 2021, SECAD experienced increasing demand from those looking to re-focus their career and many availed of the social welfare support payment known as the Back To Work Enterprise Allowance (BTWEA).

During 2021, we saw 32 clients progress to starting a business which represented approximately one third of all clients supported, progressing to actually starting their chosen enterprise. Mentoring was also in high demand in terms of support in 2021 where we saw over two-thirds of all clients take up a mentoring session with a dedicated business mentor assigned by SECAD. These one-to-one mentoring sessions are considered imperative to the success of a business and are a welcome support to the client base. Again we used the training needs analysis to react to the needs of clients in order to respond accordingly with relevant supports. We anticipate that 2022 will again see high demand for enterprise supports as we continue to work closely with the Department of Social Protection and those existing clients who have already set out on the entrepreneurial journey.

*Compiled by Donna Cleary, Development Officer*



# Rural Development Programme Funded Projects – Enterprise

## Camus Farm, Arfield, Clonakilty

Camus Farm was an enterprise project and was approved for LEADER funding in November 2019 for €200,000 (35% of total project costs €637,611). It was approved under the LEADER theme of Economic, Enterprise Development and Job Creation, and sub-theme Rural Tourism, providing stimulus for enterprise and job creation.

Camus Farm is a 30 acre organic farm, home to native Irish rare breed Dexter cattle and surrounded by extensive native woodland. The promoters' vision for Camus Farm is to be a landmark destination in West Cork with a strong symbiotic relationship with other local food producers and hospitality providers, and to create a unique, immersive experience for customers in nature, arts and culture, and community.

The Project involved the construction of a barn building to include a multi-use hall, kitchen, office, and shop area. The barn provides space for dining, a shop for local produce and art workshops and social events.



Camus Farm is fully operational as a Food Tourism and Agri-Tourism Business. Following completion of the barn construction the promoters opened their 'Field Kitchen Restaurant', which is an indoor and outdoor dining experience, specialising in home grown and locally sourced food. In 2021, the promoters reported 12 new full time employees and 6,000 annual visitors after LEADER funding.

The space is also used as a visitors' centre and classroom for workshops on topics including conservation and biodiversity as well as traditional crafts such as willow basketry and hedge-laying. The business strongly supports local food producers, artists, musicians and educators.

*Compiled by Clodagh McGuirk, Development Officer*

## Drury Tea & Coffee Limited, Youghal, County Cork

Drury Tea & Coffee Limited was established in 2013. Nick Flavin, co-founder of the company developed a passion for coffee production in the mid-2000s and went on to qualify as a barista trainer and subsequently a coffee roaster in the UK. He gained a 360-degree knowledge of the coffee industry spanning the supply chain from bean sourcing to alliance management.

Nick returned to Ireland in 2011 and set about exploiting the potential of artisan coffee in his hometown of Youghal, East Cork. In 2013, together with his father, John, Nick created Drury Ireland and under his supervision the business has grown from a two-person micro-operation to a company of full-time staff exceeding a turnover of €1m in 2020. Nick expanded the operation and now occupies a 2,500 sq foot facility with potential to expand a further 4,500 sq feet. Drury are quickly becoming the leading supplier of high-end artisan coffee and organic tea products in Cork.

With the support of SECAD and LEADER South Cork in 2021, Drury pursued a further business expansion of the existing coffee roastery to allow a move away from importing roasted coffee beans to producing 100% Drury branded coffees onsite and allowing further concentration on the export market. This was achieved through the purchase a state-of-the-art roaster that can produce 30 kilos of coffee per 9-minute cycle. This increases the production capability from 11 tonnes to 312 tonnes per annum on the basis of a 5 day per week, 6 hour per day production window.





Drury Ireland has immense knowledge of their market and the potential for an Irish coffee roaster that can produce consistently good artisan coffee at this scale. The purchase of the roaster has enabled the promoters to move away from importing coffee to roasting 100% of their own product and becoming self-sufficient in the market.

Youghal town was badly hit by economic flux over the past 30 years, losing many of its main employers in textiles, fishing and ceramics. Tourism is important to the region, but its impacts are largely

seasonal in nature. Therefore, for the sustainability of the town and the resilience of its local economy, the development of local, indigenous businesses is critical. This is the challenge for Drury Tea and Coffee and other such businesses that SECAD Partnership, in conjunction with the Local Enterprise Office are supporting to become the bedrock to help stabilise future employment opportunities in Youghal and beyond.

*Compiled by Katie Kearns, Development Officer*

## Women's Rural Entrepreneurial Network (WREN)

The WREN programme continued stronger than ever during 2021 but due to Covid 19, the programme was required to continue on line via Zoom. This is a joint programme, with SECAD and Ballyhoura Development working as a team to support Female Entrepreneurs in many parts of southern Ireland.

Past programmes under WREN were delivered to all types of businesses, such as accountants, life coaches, B&B owners, authors, gym instructors plus many others. Towards the end of 2021, it was noted that a large number of craft people were seeking self-employment supports and in response to this, it was decided to provide a specific craft programme. The people who were seeking supports to start up their businesses were bag makers, artists, jewellery makers, pebble artists, a gallery owner, a wedding dress designer and knitters. There were 16 participants in total on this programme.

Participants from the 2021 programme and also participants from previous programmes were encouraged to become members of the WREN Network and to attend the monthly meetings. Each monthly meeting featured a guest speaker and the speakers were people who were running their own successful businesses.

The content of the course included:

- 6 sessions on personal development
- 6 sessions on business training
- One to one Life Coach and business mentoring
- Membership of the WREN Network
- Vast supports for online sales, such as the creation of a website, how to effectively update existing websites, how to monitor traffic to websites and social media, and how to ensure that websites

are designed in the best way possible to attract customers

- Video and Photography training to support product / service creation and placement on the website to support sales
- Support by zoom or telephone from the WREN Co-Ordinator who was always available to listen to issues, signpost on supports and offer supports especially on confidence and self-belief.



*Susan O'Leary, Pebble Artist – WREN Craft Programme 2021*



*Sue Nelson, Painting with Oils – WREN Craft Programme 2021*

### Words of wisdom from Marian McDonald, the Business Trainer:

*You are the most important person in your business, look after yourself*

*Market your product correctly*

*Identify who your customers are and how do you find them*

*Make it easy for your customer to find you*

*Register your company name as soon as possible*

### And from Frances Doyle, Programme Co-ordinator and Personal Development Trainer:

*When making the break from been available all the time to support others, to starting your own business, remember if asked to support others: "The value of your Yes is nothing if you never say no!"*

*Remove "I just & I only" from your vocabulary when asked what you are doing. You are your business, and your business is you!*

*Compiled by Frances Doyle, WREN Co-ordinator*



14th October 2021 - WREN Craft Group with Marian McDonald, Business Trainer & Frances Doyle: Programme Co-ordinator and Personal Development Trainer

## SECAD & Tourism



### SECAD through Ring of Cork Supporting Tourism

#### Training

In 2021, SECAD continued to support the tourism and hospitality industry through the delivery of the Tourism Skills Training Programme. The main focus of the training was on digital marketing, public relations, menu development and customer service. In total, 35 workshops were delivered online for the participants' convenience, on 12 different topics.

The highest demand for training was in digital marketing. 28 workshops were delivered throughout the year and topics included Facebook & Instagram at Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced levels. Video Marketing, Instagram, You Tube, Google Analytics & Adwords & SEO workshops.

In response to the easing of restrictions, training in Public Relations, Menu Development and Customer Service were customised accordingly and delivered during relevant re-opening phases.

#### Networking & Support

SECAD through the Ring of Cork supports tourism businesses. In 2021, due to Covid restrictions we were unable to stay connected with members in the traditional Familiarisation trip way. However, the "Staying Connected" series of outdoor networking events provided an opportunity to bring people together for a coffee and a chat. The series also showcased how businesses adapted and embraced the new challenges. Ring of Cork Members were kindly hosted by Sea Church, Castlemartyr Resort, Leahy's Open Farm, Jameson Experience & Fota House & Gardens.

It was hoped that the annual Ring of Cork AGM Seminar would be held in person on 8th December. Unfortunately, that was not to happen. Nonetheless the “Resilience & Brilliance” Tourism Seminar was held online on 8th December in 2021. The guest speakers, Mary Fitzgerald, owner of Woodlands House Hotel & Spa, Adare spoke about “Leading the way through Entrepreneurship” and Deirdre Roberts, owner of Midleton Greenway Bikes & Bites and Youghal Bike

Hire, spoke about how small steps assisted with her growing business.

We decided to professional our online communication to members and so developed the Ring of Cork Ezine. 24 Ezines were sent to members throughout the year informing members of various training and business supports and relevant tourism announcements.

*Compiled by Elga Ryan, Development Officer*

## Supporting Social Enterprises

During 2021, SECAD Partnership continued to support social enterprises within our SICAP area, with both specific individual organisational supports and supports in terms of networking of groups with a similar mission.

Working in collaboration with Social Impact Ireland, of which SECAD is a partner, a social enterprise incubator programme was offered to budding social entrepreneurs across our SICAP region. This was a four-month (on-line) programme and was created to allow participants to develop their businesses which had a demonstrated social impact.

In February and April of 2021, SECAD worked with Method Consulting in relation to Údarás na Gaeltachta’s social enterprise strategy, as we support many social enterprises in the Gaeltacht area of County Cork. This was a worthwhile collaboration in developing a strategy specific to the region.

A number of Mens Sheds were supported during 2021 and this helped to build a collaborative network of Sheds in the region, while supporting them to become more sustainable in terms of income generation and the ability to respond to the needs of their members.

During 2021, SECAD again through the Social Enterprise Grant facility under SICAP, supported enterprises who were set up to deliver or contribute toward community, social or environmental activities.

The 2021 fund was awarded to organisations who used the grant for the purchase of equipment, professional services, mentoring, advertising, and

marketing activities. This support enhanced the future development of the social enterprise, allowing them to become more sustainable during financially difficult times.

### **List of successful SICAP Social Enterprise grant applicants:**

- Passage West Maritime Museum
- Field of Dreams (Down Syndrome Cork)
- Cork Women’s and Schoolgirls Soccer League
- An Súcán
- Autism Assistance Dogs Ireland
- MY Place Midleton
- Midleton Bike Project

*Compiled by Tara Doyle & Donna Cleary, Development Officers*

### **Passage West Maritime Museum**

Passage West Maritime Museum was created to promote and preserve its unique place in the history of Cork’s maritime heritage and opened its doors in 2018. Locally, there was a great deal of interest in presenting artifacts of the historic shipping traditions in the area. To date, the museum collection extends across a range of categories such as maritime history, shipbuilding and repair, emigration, the US naval presence in Cork and the stories of generations of seamen associated with the town of Passage West. Throughout the year they present several additional historic and heritage displays and exhibitions. They also work with local schools and give tours and lectures to groups.

Funds are raised through donations and by charging a small admission fee to the museum. Currently, the museum is run by a board of management, general committee, a team of volunteers and 2 Tús workers who are supported through the SECAD Tús Programme.

While the focus of the museum centres upon the story of Passage West and its relationship with the sea, future exhibitions will feature aspects of local history such as the Cork, Blackrock & Passage railway, folklore, fishing, rowing, social and political history and noted personalities from the locality. Several years ago, the local historical society interviewed and recorded 40 older citizens in the area. The interviews focused on growing up, education, sport and folklore of Passage and surrounding areas.

As part of this project, the museum was successful in an application for a social enterprise grant to purchase and install a listening post for the collection of interviews. The installation comprises of a touch screen tablet, headsets, and visual and audio displays. It provides access to the stories of local life through the words of generations past and is of great interest to visiting school children, groups and individuals. The listening post also helps to preserve and digitise the content of the interviews which could be lost due to the age and format of the tapes.

*Compiled by Tara Doyle, Development Officer*



*James Murphy, Passage West Maritime Museum and Mark O'Connell, Tús Supervisor, SECAD using the new listening post of local oral history in the museum*





SECAD  PARTNERSHIP

## SECTION 2: ENABLING EMPLOYMENT

**2020** | ANNUAL REPORT

# Enabling Employment

## SECAD Employment Services: Supporting clients to navigate a continually changing labour market

Our Employment Service continued to show its flexibility in adapting to the ongoing significant changes during 2021. The continuation of the pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns meant our traditional one to one in-person services were unable to be restored. As a result, the service continued to adapt to using video conferencing technology such as Zoom and MS Teams to provide one to one support to clients. Those who continued to be particularly impacted by the digital divide and found using digital technologies difficult were supported via telephone. However, some clients who found technology challenging were, if ready to do so, gently supported to begin using applications such as Zoom via their phone or a computer, as an important opportunity to gain new skills.

The ongoing pandemic and lockdowns in 2021 continued to be experienced very differently amongst our client base. It was observed during the year that a significant number of our clients required increased support on personal development and wellbeing. This involved signposting to a range of support services including the HSE's Stress Management video series as well as helplines.

We continued to circulate information including support newsletters from the Local Authority which listed the range of pandemic related community supports and services. Furthermore, there was an increased need for the team to apply their coaching and active listening skills to support SICAP clients around confidence, self-belief, strength spotting, transferable skills, mindful practice, reframing challenges (what is in our control, what is not) more so than employment matters in many incidences. An increasing number of refugees was noted among our client base prompting expansion of continuing professional development to include such trainings as Understanding Trauma offered online by the HSE.

A significant change that occurred in our interaction with our clients, when it came to preparing for a return to work, focused on many clients' desire to take greater control of their career path and gain greater meaning from work. We saw a continued focus on planning to pursue work that offered greater flexibility and work / life balance including working from home. As in 2020, we increasingly worked with clients to explore options and available resources to create a new vision for the future and a new career. We supported clients to reframe their situations, identify clear, realistic options and find the will to carry out those development actions.

Linked to the above, we were actively creating awareness on what a changing labour market now demanded, to support clients to move beyond feeling stuck and make informed decisions. We also provided support to generate new awareness on a wide range of blind spots around CVs, interview skills and general job hunt approaches. There was a misconception amongst some clients that because they engaged in other services their CVs and interview skills were up to scratch, but this often was not the case and further development support was required.

*Compiled by Margaret Hartigan, Development Officer*

### Crossroads Webinars

As the impact of the pandemic continued in 2021, the SICAP team pursued new avenues to support our clients' paths to employment, enterprise, and education & training. As part of our broader support response the team designed and delivered a webinar series called 'Crossroads'.



The purpose of Crossroads was to provide a set of online events that covered specific employment, enterprise, and education & training themes. We framed these topics within the context of the pandemic, helping attendees to factor in new information and trends that might support them in their own development plans. Examples of this included changes in consumer patterns & trends for those interested in starting a new business. Others included an exploration of remote working, how this would impact the workplace and what to consider if a person decides to pursue a remote role. In total, 6 webinars were held as part of the Crossroad series which included:

- Mastering your job applications
- Exploring the Pharma Industry: Get the inside track from an industry insider
- Mapping your next steps in your career
- The future of work – Is remote working the future?
- Self-drive your future! – Could you be your own boss? Steps to setting up your business
- Are your skills relevant, or is education the next step for you

There was a strong attendance at our series of webinars with many people booking in for multiple webinars as the weeks progressed.

SECAD's Online Learning Hub now hosts the recording of these webinars, allowing people in the community to explore the content discussed and onboard key learning points.

*Compiled by Kieran Butler, Development Officer*

## Employment Webinar: Tourism & Hospitality Industry

The Tourism & Hospitality industry plays an important role within the economic and cultural life of the region. The pandemic significantly impacted the sector in terms of both the ability to trade and the ability to attract and retain new staff.

Tourism offers a diverse range of career paths and SECAD's Employment Team joined up with the HR team in Fota Island Resort to hold an online event on the tourism & hospitality sector. The purpose of the online event was to explore the latest trends and skill requirements, progression routes including specific apprenticeship options as well as dispel some of the myths that surround a career in hospitality and tourism.

A live Q&A was held as part of the event taking in questions from attendees as part of a broader discussion on career development and employment paths in Tourism & Hospitality.

The event was very well attended by our client base, and we were very thankful to Fota Island Resort for their participation and generosity of time.

*Compiled by Kieran Butler, Development Officer*

## SECAD Online Learning Hub

Starting in 2020, SECAD began a process of moving training programmes to an online learning management system (LMS), which were until 2020, delivered as traditional instructor-led classroom workshops.

These ranged from employment supports including CV creation and design, interview techniques, career planning and skills mapping to enterprise start up supports and business sustainability. In addition, courses in personal development and goalsetting, biodiversity planning, community planning, among many more were provided on the new customised online self-paced learning platform.

During the development process, the learning platform was created to sit alongside the existing SECAD website, with seamless access to the LMS accompanied through a short promotional video which provides an insight into the training units available. With the services of an e-learning specialist, SECAD went on to create a series of new online content and resources across several of the training themes referenced above. Some of this work began in 2020 and continued throughout 2021.

Further to the creation of digital learning content, SECAD progressed to the next phase of this project, which pulled together designated teams within SECAD



to develop additional content. This also involved working with SECAD's web-designer for related technical support, as well as optimising functionality and learner use of the learning management system.

As at end of 2021, there were 432 active users registered on the online learning hub. This has also increased the footfall across the LMS shown by an increase in the number of SICAP registrations. The recent increase also indicates that the digital form is working well and no issues since testing was completed have been raised.

*Compiled by Toni McCaul, Management Team*

## SECAD Health Care Initiative

Cycle 2, Programme 2 of SECAD's Healthcare initiative began in 2021 with Vicki Kelly, the Course Co-ordinator for the programme and the facilitator of the Personal Development module. Due to Covid regulations at the time this was delivered via zoom.

Cycle 1 was delivered in a hybrid format during 2021 to keep the programme on schedule. This hybrid (online and in class) was designed to facilitate the learners and the Covid regulations at the time. It was successful because all parties wanted it to be

successful. It gave a focus and hope to the learners and trainers lives in a year of uncertainty.

The Personal Development aspect of the first class involves an honest sharing of each other's stories and an opportunity to evaluate where each person is in their lives and identifying where they want to be in life and career. The subsequent classes provide techniques on how to achieve their goals efficiently.



The CETB (Cork Educational Training Board) partnered with SECAD and LETB and delivered the accredited QQI modules in an integrated manner which allows all participants to achieve 2 Major Awards. The modules chosen were:

- Care Support
- Communications
- Work Experience
- Infection Prevention & Control
- Palliative Care Support
- Care of the Older Person
- Health & Safety
- Intellectual Disability
- Care Skills

Mary Hartnett (CETB) provided a wealth of experience as a trainer through her background in the Healthcare industry.

The programme was designed around the school year which is beneficial for participants with school going children, so mid-terms and holidays are the programme holidays too. In December 2021, the first cycle of participants finished, and the second cycle was planned to finish in June 2022.

During the year, we held a coffee morning via Zoom and invited our Programme 1 participants to join



*Online Graduation 2021*

us and offer advice. Their qualification meant a lot to them as they were our newly qualified frontline workers working in the eye of the COVID storm. They were exhausted as Healthcare Assistants in a pandemic would be and they were proud of the job they were doing. They told very sad stories of the effects of the virus on our vulnerable in society and the loneliness of our elderly when the nursing homes and hospitals closed their doors to visitors. They also celebrated the patients that survived and left with a clean bill of health and saw the importance of a qualification in Healthcare to help these people be cared for professionally.

*Compiled by Vicki Kelly, Development Officer*

## Get Job Ready

During 2021, the SECAD Employment Support team continued to encourage our clients to up-skill or return to education. The Get Job Ready training responded to needs identified through our Employment Support Service.

SECAD delivered an online Primary Certificate in Food Safety course in April 2021 to 14 participants and again in November to a further 8 participants. This course is designed by Environmental Health Officers and is certified by the Environmental Health Association of Ireland (EHA). It is recognised as the industry gold standard by trainers, employers and enforcement authorities and complies with the legal obligation of food workers to be trained in food hygiene. The certificate is valid for 5 years and is useful for the SECAD clients who plan to apply for work in the hospitality and food preparation sectors.

The course was delivered via Zoom and we found that in comparison to the same time last year, all participants were familiar with using Zoom and did not require assistance with joining the course online. Support was provided to the participants through posting out resources, handouts and workbooks to participants. This was particularly useful for our clients who could only access training through their mobile phones.

SECAD also delivered 6 Safe Pass courses once the opportunity to provide this training became available. 3 courses were delivered in Midleton and another 3 in Macroom. The participants attended the training in person and the Covid guidelines laid down by Solas were strictly adhered to.

*Compiled by Sinéad Conroy, Development Officer*

# Strive Programme

The Strive programme is a 16-month programme which is funded by Dormant Accounts through Pobal. It supports people with disabilities towards employment. During the life of this programme we have worked with 22 participants, 11 of whom are currently working, in work placement or in training. A further 11 participants have benefited from 1-1 supports, training and qualifications.

The referral agencies with whom we have been working with throughout the year include the HSE Owenacurra Day Centre, Cope Foundation Day & Residential Services, the National Learning Network and Doras Training Centre.

For participants, the journey towards employment starts with in-class training. These include delivery of the Cork ETB pilot Life Skills programme, music, growth mindset and interview skills through drama practice. The Crawford Gallery delivered a short art programme through blended learning. This class led to 3 students being put forward to join the MTU and Crawford Gallery supported studios as practicing artists. The group engaged with the Citizen Science programme with Wild Work on the Owenacurra river for a second year of water testing. Sadly, we found the river more polluted than last year and the findings from this work were uploaded onto the Local Authority Waters Programme.

With support from the SOLAS supported Mitigating against Educational Disadvantage fund and the SECAD laptop loan scheme, our STRIVE participants have developed digital skills in online access and browser skills, use of email as well as foundational keyboard skills.

Furthermore, our participants have engaged in certified training through SECAD, which included HACCP (food safety) levels 1 & 2, Manual Handling, Safe Pass (for construction), ride-on mower, strimmer and push mower certification. Feedback from employers regarding this training has been excellent with employers confirming that it made it easy to agree to have a participant in for work experience as they would be able to start work immediately by having the requisite training such as food safety.

Two participants underwent detailed Vocational Assessment with an Occupational Therapist which has provided them with a useful document to help them focus on their strengths and in that vein, the areas of employment they might pursue.



*Katie O'Brien receiving her manual handling certificate from SECAD's Mark O'Connell*

Work placements were provided by Centra Cloyne, Midleton FC, Mr Price and Midleton Park Hotel, with our participants being supported to build up their work skills to work in a supportive and encouraging environment. Through working closely with employers and other support agencies, we have been able to achieve coordinated support for participants which develop their skills for independent working and living.

As well as employment skills, 3 participants have been engaging as artists at Crawford Gallery and Munster Technological University Supported Studios resulting in 1 participant showing their artwork at Midleton Library and having their work included in the Midleton Arts Festival. Another student is publishing an illustrated children's book which will launch in November at Cork City Library and will be sold in Waterstones.

3 participants have progressed onto QQI certified education while on the programme and have been supported during these transitions. They have been assisted in training and help to develop independent living skills to get the most out of their courses.

The Strive programme started during the restrictions of the Covid 19 pandemic and supported parents and guardians of Strive participants through an online parents' wellbeing programme and also a Mindfulness workshop at Fota House & Gardens. Participants were given a Mindfulness journal published by SECAD.

The programme has received additional grant funding from the Cork Education & Training Board, Cork Sports Partnership and funding in kind from the Crawford Gallery, Fota House and Gardens, the Field of Dreams and the Cope Foundation.

This year, we have linked into community initiatives with Cork City Community Education providers, Cork Sports Partnership, HSE Community Health programmes, the Munster Technological University and Crawford Gallery Supported Studio, Cork Citizen Scientist, Fota House & Gardens, the Cork ETB community training and the Field of Dreams with support from Tús in SECAD.

*Compiled by Danielle Sheehy, Strive Programme Coordinator*



*Kevin Shanahan on his first day working at Mr Price*



SECAD 

# SECTION 3: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SUPPORTS

**2020** | ANNUAL REPORT



# Community Development Supports

## Rural Development Programme Funded Projects – Community

### Clonakilty Community Youth Centre



*Clonakilty Community Youth Centre*

Clonakilty Community Youth Centre was approved for LEADER funding in September 2019. This project was in line with the LEADER theme of Social Inclusion and sub theme Rural Youth, supporting the development of social infrastructure of rural areas to provide opportunities for young people. The total project cost was €325,858.50, and they were approved €237,748.51 of LEADER funding (72% of total project costs). The project involved renovation and extension of an existing building (owned by Cork County Council) in a central location in Clonakilty for the use as a Community Youth Centre.

The Committee driving the project had been working for 19 years to secure a dedicated youth space for the town and surrounding areas. The temporary premises being used by youth groups and services, including Foróige and YMCA in the past number of years, had limited capacity and highlighted the need for a comfortable, safe and dedicated space for young people in the town.

The project start date was delayed significantly by Covid restrictions, but work began in early 2021, and the centre now includes 3 new activity rooms and a fully equipped kitchenette. It will be open for use to a variety of groups including scouts, Foróige, YMCA, music groups, support services, and clubs.

The centre now has 2 permanent tenants, YMCA,

and Foróige who will manage the Garda Youth Division Scheme.

The project promoters are continuing to fundraise and plan for the next stages of development of the centre including recording equipment, and possible extension.

### Ballinascarthy Community Hall



*Ballinascarthy Community Hall*

Refurbishment of the Ballinascarthy Community Hall was approved for LEADER funding in 2019. Total project costs for the project were €278,500, and the LEADER programme funded 75% of this at €195,000. The project came under the LEADER theme of Social Inclusion and sub-theme of Basic Services Targeted at Hard to Reach Communities, focusing on improving access to basic services for people living in rural and remote areas.

Ballinascarthy Hall was built in 1961 and had very little work carried out on the core infrastructure since then. The hall has served as a hub of community activity in the Ballinascarthy area since its construction and continues to be heavily utilised. Water ingress had been an ongoing issue which escalated and had resulted in structural and safety issues. While some minor improvements had been made, the resources had not been available to undertake the required major works. The Hall required extensive refurbishment and modernisation to meet the future demands of the community.

The refurbishment project involved:

- Replacement of the roof with a new truss and cladding system
- Remove and replace the ceiling
- Replacement of rainwater handling system
- Removal of fixed stage and replacement with a mobile unit
- Associated structural and ancillary works

The construction work was delayed significantly during Covid restrictions but was completed in 2021. The Hall is fully operational and is in high demand from a wide cohort of users and for a wide range of purposes including:

- Macra na Feirm
- Foróige
- ICA
- Local Camogie team
- Wheelchair Association
- Exercise groups
- Whist Drives
- Concerts
- Community festivals
- Community dances
- Cookery Classes
- Active retired groups

*Compiled by Clodagh McGuirk, Development Officer*

### **Cove Sailing Club – Whitepoint Marina Development, Cobh**

One of the most important natural assets with huge impact and potential in the south of Ireland is Cork Harbour.



*Cove Sailing Club – Whitepoint Marina Development, Cobh*

In 2018 with the support of the SECAD LEADER team, the committee of Cove Sailing Club set about to develop their facilities aiming to achieve the purchase and installation of 12 new pontoons along with related engineering support services. The project also received significant funding from Cork County Council, Sports Capital and the Port of Cork. The successful implementation of this phase provided 16 full year berths with a further 10 berths available for

day visitors (i.e. 26 berths in total). The marina also provides a fully accessible ferry terminal for the town of Cobh.

This phase of the project was completed in 2021 and apart from members of the Cove Club, it also supports a range of clubs in Cobh such as Sailing, Angling, Triathlon and Rowing clubs. The project provides a valuable amenity to help develop and continue these sports with full wheelchair access which is badly needed to encourage participation for all users.

In the longer term, Cove Sailing Club hopes that the marina will have the capacity to extend to 34 Berths and potentially 72 berths in the future.

### **Youth Services – The Carraig Centre, Ballincollig**



*The Carraig Centre, Ballincollig*

Until recently there was little provision for a safe, positive meeting place for young people in the Ballincollig area. In summer term 2018, the youth work Leaders conducted 4 'focus groups' with the TY classes in Ballincollig Community School, which helped identify the current lack of provision for an after school drop-in space in the town.

Carraigrohane Union of Parishes currently runs a number of Youth Work programmes from their existing centre just outside Ballincollig. They run a range of youth activities and meetings (such as youth cafés, faith discussion groups, leadership training etc.) with the aim of providing a safe, positive place for meeting friends, having fun, as well as exploring faith issues. They operate an 'open door' policy and anyone is welcome to attend meetings no matter what their faith may be.

The Carraigrohane Union of Parishes purchased the 'Carraig Centre' building on Old Fort Road in Ballincollig in 2017 with the intention of developing a central parish and community centre closer to Ballincollig town.

This was realised in 2021, after a number of years of collaboration with SECAD Partnership and the allocation of a substantial LEADER Investment (via South Cork LEADER LAG / South Cork LCDL). The investment of LEADER included the installation and fit out of a recording studio, the installation of an AV system in the main hall for performances, a playground, an outdoor ball-park area and a lift to the upper mezzanine area where a dedicated youth space is located.

The group hopes to build on the musical, performance and technical creativity of local young people by providing a quality main hall and recording studio. While the secondary schools in Ballincollig provide excellent drama and music participation, their interaction with Cork YMCA has demonstrated that access to a small recording studio (not currently available in Ballincollig) brings an extra dimension and interest level, engaging the technically minded with the musically creative.

The ball playing area will facilitate informal games spaces and potentially be able to host 'mini-

tournaments as part of an after school drop-in provision or similar. The playground may be used for younger youth activities, both for itself and as part of a leadership training location for Growing Leaders activities.

The Mezzanine room upstairs (fully accessible due to the lift) is heavily used by young people in a variety of ways, from a suitable drop-in location (dependent on adult leaders to adequately supervise).

Through implementing this project, the group can now offer the youth community of Ballincollig with:

- Youth development through the availability of drop-in and meeting spaces and the provision of development activities in those spaces
- Music and Music Technology for Youth through the provision of a 200 person auditorium equipped with concert grade Audio Visual equipment and a small recording studio equipped for recording music bands.

*Compiled by Katie Kearns, Development Officer*

## Sustaining Communities Training Programme

Following on from the very successful My Town, My Plan community training programme, SECAD launched the Sustainable Communities Training Programme in South and West Cork in 2021. This was part of a LEADER Transnational training programme with partners in Estonia and Spain.

The programme was designed and developed by SECAD in conjunction with delivery partners Change by Degrees in South Cork and VOICE Ireland in West Cork. Developed with community members in mind, the training programme sought to enable communities to build Community Development Teams who would take part in training, develop Community-Led Sustainability Plans, including detailed plans for Legacy Projects for their own communities. The South Cork participating communities were:

- Douglas
- Youghal
- Cloyne
- Cobh
- Passage West
- Castlemartyr

- Carrigtwohill
- Glounthaune

while in West Cork, the following communities participated:

- Baltimore
- Tracton Parish
- Skibbereen
- Kinsale
- Carrigaline
- Courceys / Ballinspittle



*Launch of the Sustainable Communities Programme*

Due to the ongoing situation in relation to COVID, the programme was primarily delivered online in Autumn 2021. This included weekly workshops with experts covering a wide range of important sustainability topics. Topics covered in these sessions included:

- Listening and learning
- From Vision to Action
- Introduction to Climate Change and Climate Action
- Our Sustainable Community Plan
- Climate Leadership
- Training and Resource Identification
- Biodiversity and Nature
- Green Enterprise
- Sustainable Town Planning
- Circular Economy
- Sustainable Energy and Transport

- Sustainable Agriculture
- Skills Assessment

All of these sessions were recorded and these recordings along with comprehensive course notes are available to participants on SECAD's Online Learning Hub <https://training.secad.ie>. These sessions encouraged communities to think big and look at case studies from other areas. The Sustainable Communities Training Programme will continue in 2022, where participating groups will continue to concentrate on project management training and look at sustainability plans and legacy projects for their own areas.

*Compiled by Nuala O'Connell, Development Officer*

## Tús & Rural Social Scheme Community Work Placements

### **RSS assist Groups with Projects in Youghal and Ballincollig.**

During 2021, the Rural Social Scheme had 18 participants at different locations. With most groups closed to the public, it allowed the workers to continue working once they had the correct protocols in place after a Risk Assessment was carried out by the RSS Supervisor. Some participants continued to support their groups from home through updating the group's website and social media channels with Cobh Community Centre a good example of this.

Other community groups were in a different boat and 2 in particular were singled out for additional support. These were St Mary's Abbey Grave Yard in Youghal and the "Field of Dreams" project in Ballincollig.



*St Mary's Abbey Grave Yard, Youghal*

### **St Mary's Abbey Grave Yard, Youghal**

During Covid, the grass did not stop growing and with no RSS person situated on this site, it was decided that we would request the other RSS participants in the locality, from other groups to come together and blitz the grass at suitable dates. With 10 people helping out, the bulk of the strimming was done over 3 days. This was repeated on a few occasions during the season with social distancing in place.





*SECAD staff helping with the harvest in Field of Dreams, Ballincollig*

## Pumkin Project in Ballincollig

Down Syndrome Ireland has a superb facility at its Field of Dreams location in Ballincollig. This Social Enterprise is supported by an RSS participant on site and the RSS gave support to the group's main Fund Raiser which is its Halloween Pumkin Project. RSS participants working with other groups gathered on site in March to prepare the ground for planting. In April, SECAD staff volunteered to assist with the planting and of course in October, hands were again needed to assist with the harvesting. For those that took part, it was a great experience and it allowed participants and staff to meet socially and also SECAD staff to see some of what the RSS does on the ground.

*Compiled by Declan Barron, RSS Supervisor*



*Passage West Maritime Museum*

## Passage West Maritime Museum

My name is Carmen and I got involved with the Tús Scheme in 2021. It was just shortly after I moved to Passage West in Cork and I got an opportunity to work at the local Maritime Museum. The work itself was a dynamic mixture of office administration, receptionist tasks with a cultural and historical insight into the local and Irish community. I learnt how to prepare exhibitions, how to work with sponsors, how to organise small private tours, some budget planning, how to maintain the museum collection and how to prepare for the international exchange student work placement at the museum. Not only did I learn a lot about Passage West and its importance in Irish maritime history but I got to know people from Passage, Cork and worldwide.

During my time at the museum, I also had the opportunity to complete courses in video creation and marketing which helped me to create a short

promotional video for the museum. In addition, I completed other courses provided by SECAD including Instagram (module I & II), SEO (module I & II) Canva for Beginners and courses on Google Analytics and Google Ads. The Tús programme helped me to become an active board member of the museum where I continue to work as a volunteer Membership Secretary.

On a personal level, the programme helped me to develop new social and professional skills and helped me discover a few new ones. It gave me confidence to interact in formal situations and gatherings, actively participate in meetings and engage in situations where before I would not have been comfortable. Thanks to the programme and to the museum committee, I gained confidence and also more clarity in my professional path, in what I want and what I am able to do.

*Compiled by Carmen Del Maria, Tús Participant*



*Firas Moussa, FoodCloud, Little Island*

### Lebanon to Little Island

Firas Moussa, who is a refugee from Syria, arrived in Ireland from Lebanon in 2018. Firas and his family spent 7 years as refugees in Lebanon before getting the opportunity to travel to Ireland.

He had his first meeting with SECAD in November 2019 and attended a SECAD Tús New Communities workshop in Cobh in March 2020. In September, he was assisted to make a Tús self-referral application as under the Refugee Stamp 4 entitlement, refugees can take up employment opportunities. A Tús work

placement in warehouse/logistics was arranged with FoodCloud and began in November 2020. FoodCloud is a wholesale food distribution charity based in Little Island. Because of Covid, the work placement involved working in a pod while supporting other team members.

During the work placement, Firas was supported by his Tús Supervisor and also received support and guidance through the SECAD Employment Support Team to gain CV and interview skills. When a full time job became available, Firas was successful in gaining the position.

Firas continues to excel at FoodCloud and is now training in and supporting new Tús arrivals onsite while continuing to improve his language and people management skills. He has obtained his full Irish Driving Licence and has purchased a car, thus allowing him to be self-reliant and independent. Additionally, Firas has volunteered his time to attend and address further new Syrian / Arab speaking Tús community workshops. His is a super advocate of the Tús programme and the work and language experience it provides for many.

*Compiled by PJ Dennehy, Coordinating Supervisor, Tús & RSS Programmes*



*Glenbower Wood on an Autumn Day*

### Glenbower Wood

Angela Browne started on the Tús Scheme in 2021 and she has made a significant contribution to how Glenbower Woods looks today. Before Angela came on the scheme, she always had a huge interest in nature and biodiversity and as we always try, where possible, to place people in a placement that suits their interests, Glenbower Woods was a perfect match.

From the start she has shown a great passion for the work and even though it involves early morning starts, Angela loves getting out into the woods and doing the daily tasks that need to be done. Angela has said that the Tús Scheme was of huge benefit to her as she was meeting people every day and she felt that it was not like work at all because she enjoyed it so much.

Angela said of her experience *"I loved doing something that was beneficial and giving back to nature which surrounded me in a zen-like green space that provided a calm grounding presence. Nature is another love of mine, and I was shown great appreciation for my work."*

When Angela was leaving, Glenbower Woods Chairman, Paudie was asked what kind of impact Angela had made and he responded that: *"Angela was one of the most dedicated workers we ever had and it's a pity not to have her there. We would love Angela to stay with us and she is of great benefit to us."*

*Compiled by Aoife Fouhy, Tús Supervisor*



# SICAP Team Getting Back Out into the Community

2021 was another busy year for the SICAP Community Team. The year started with many of the activities being carried out remotely due to COVID restrictions, but as spring arrived, the team engaged with a wide range of clients in many novel outdoor settings. We felt this was a valuable piece of work which enabled us to work to build confidence with clients to pave the way for continued support.

At the start of 2021, SECAD rolled out an online 'Living in Ireland through English' course aimed primarily at the Somali community. This was delivered by SECAD and HSE staff and facilitated by a Somali speaker who outlined the basics of living in Ireland including setting up bank accounts, seeking accommodation, accessing HSE services and seeking employment and training. Of note was the positive interaction which the online setting allowed for residents from a number of different accommodation settings.

As COVID restrictions lifted in 2021, spring and summer saw a wide range of outdoor activities being delivered. SICAP community support work continued with new communities living in direct provision, emergency accommodation centres and private accommodation. One collaboration with HSE support workers was the organisation of family

well-being outings to beaches in Owenahinch and Garryvoe. These outings provided an opportunity for clients to link with SECAD staff and other service providers in an informal setting leading to meaningful interventions in the months which followed.

*Compiled by Nuala O'Connell, Development Officer,*



*Tara Doyle & Nuala O'Connell, SECAD Partnership at Carrigaline Culture Day*

---

## WalkIT Programmes in Midleton and Macroom

These sessions were run over 4 weeks and covered topics such as knowing your community, healthy eating and living, mindfulness and foraging. The diversity of the participants brought a great richness to the programme and helped to build confidence for many following the experiences of COVID which had restricted interaction and opportunities.

SECAD was delighted to join with the Carrigaline My Town, My Plan group at the Carrigaline Culture Day outdoor event in the Town Park in September which gave the opportunity to link up with residents leading to a successful WalkIt programme in Carrigaline.

*Compiled by Nuala O'Connell, Development Officer*



*WalkIT with Karen Loxton, SECAD Wild Work Team*

## Local Authorities Water Programme

A collaboration with Local Authorities Water Programme (LAWPRO) using Community Water Development Funds resulted in very successful community art workshops in Midleton and Macroom. Local artists worked with a broad range of community members to develop individual and community art pieces based on rivers and waterways both in these towns and in other parts of the world where participants had previously lived. The Midleton artwork from the 2 Rivers Art Workshops was displayed at Midleton Art Festival in July 2021.

*Compiled by Nuala O'Connell, Development Officer*

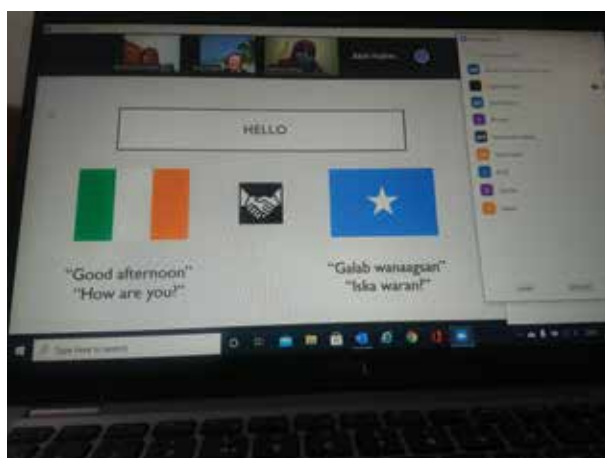


*Community Art Workshop funded through the Local Authorities Water Programme*

## Laying the Groundwork for the New Fáilte Isteach Branch in East Cork

SECAD invested time during 2021 in the setting up of a local East Cork Fáilte Isteach branch as an additional support for New Communities. Fáilte Isteach is a community project involving predominantly older volunteers who welcome migrants through conversational English classes. This has transitioned for the most part to an online setting due to the pandemic which has opened up access across a broader geographic base. Through the combined effort of funding support from the Communities Integration Fund coupled with SICAP, we were able to provide essential resources including books and stationery supplies for the project set up.

*Compiled by Tara Doyle, Development Officer*



*Online Fáilte Isteach Session*

## Healthy Food Made Easy

During 2021, 2 online Healthy Food Made Easy (HFME) courses were delivered on zoom during the lockdown periods. This attracted individuals from across the SICAP area who wished to explore healthy eating and better health.

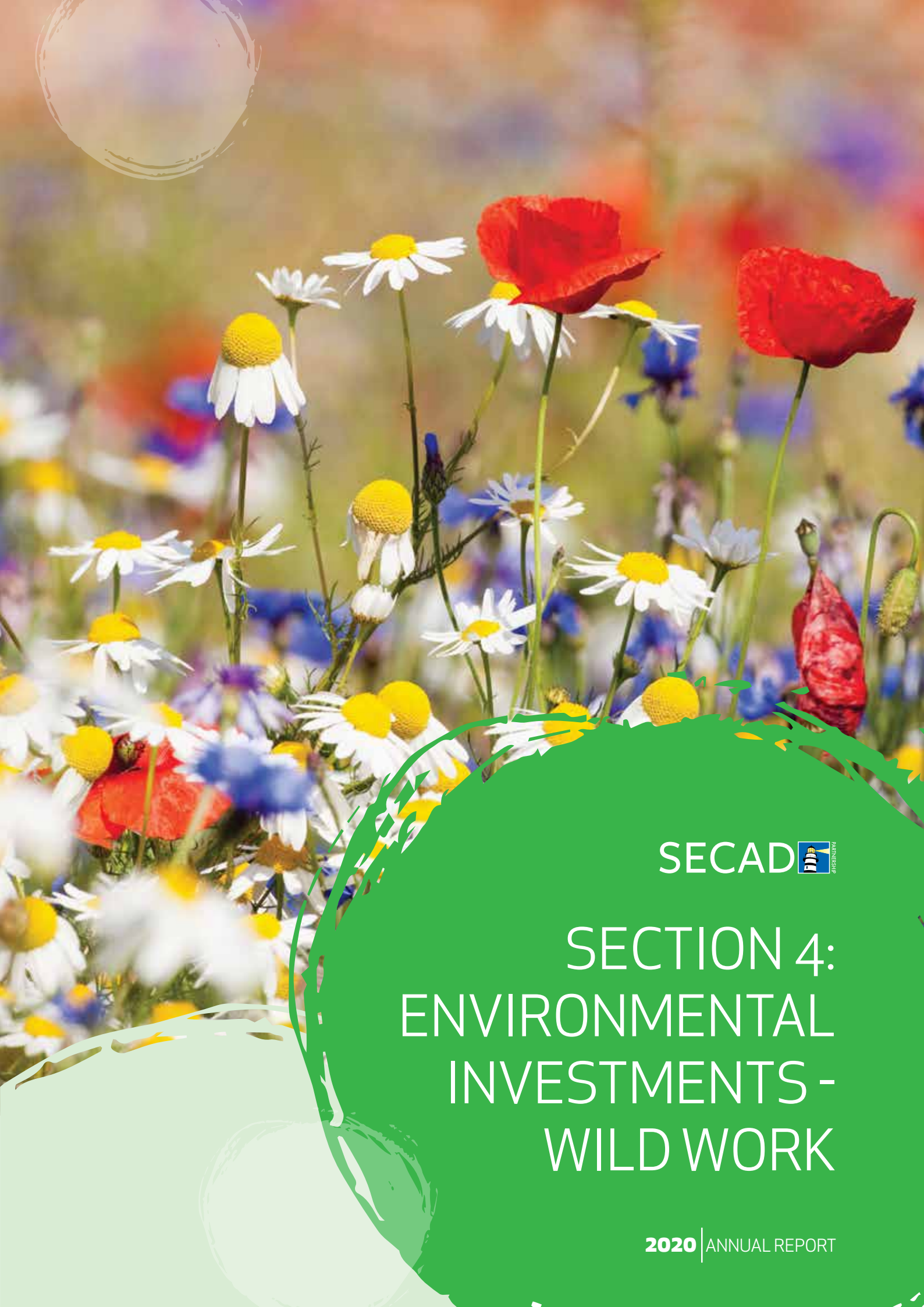
An in-person programme was delivered with residents in the Riverside Accommodation Centre in Macroom. This was delivered during November and December 2021 but unfortunately as Covid cases climbed rapidly during this time, we decided to discontinue the in-person programme until it was deemed safer to resume in early 2022. The sessions which were held were very well received and served as a strong engagement tool.

*Compiled by Tara Doyle, Development Officer*



*Healthy Food Made Easy Session in Macroom*





SECAD 

# SECTION 4: ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTMENTS - WILD WORK

**2020** | ANNUAL REPORT

# Environmental Investments

## Wild Work & the Community



### Haulbowline Amenity Park – A Wild Work Pollinator Project

The Wild Work Pollinator Project at Haulbowline Amenity Park showcases a biodiversity project in the community, a story with international appeal and a wonderful turnaround for the environment in terms of transforming a contaminated site into a healthy place for people and nature.

Haulbowline Island was formerly the location of Ireland's only steelworks from 1939 until its closure in 2001. During this time, 650,000 cubic metres of waste products were dumped or stored on the eastern tip. In the largest remediation project undertaken in the State of its kind to date, the Haulbowline Remediation by Cork County Council has transformed the former east tip site into a 22-acre People's Park in the middle of Cork Harbour.

In 2018, Wild Work began working on Haulbowline Island to develop one of its principal sites for the Wild Work Pollinator Project. As part of its work on the island, Wild Work has developed 4 different habitat types which visitors to the park can explore:

- Wildflower Meadow
- Wild Work Amenity Grassland
- Coastal Grassland
- Wet Grassland



Haulbowline Amenity Park

The official opening of the park on 17th July 2021 was attended by An Taoiseach, Micheál Martin, Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr Gillian Coughlan, Simon Coveney, Minister for Defence and Michael McGrath Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. Ryan Howard, SECAD CEO and William O'Halloran from the Wild Work team were among the invited guests.

As well as managing the habitats, Wild Work and SECAD are making use of the site as an outdoor classroom for nature and wellbeing projects such as seed saving and meadow management workshops. The establishment of this project on Haulbowline is an excellent example of SECAD, the local community, Cork County Council, industry partners and others working in collaboration. The project is supported by the Port of Cork, Pfizer, Biomarin, Thermo Fisher Scientific and the Ringaskiddy Residents Industry Liaison Group.

The island has been transformed from one of Ireland's most polluted sites to a place for people to enjoy and, with Wild Work's help, a place for nature to thrive.

*Compiled by Karen Loxton, Development Officer*



Launch of Haulbowline Amenity Park



# REGINA Regenerative Agriculture Erasmus+ Project

The 'REGINA' project is the assigned title for the longer project name; *"Regenerative Agriculture: an innovative approach towards mitigation of climate change through multi-tier learning"*.

The REGINA project is centered around investigating Regenerative Agriculture (RA) practices in Europe, and subsequently, the creation of a learning module for university students, and a learning platform for farmers and other interested stakeholders. Regenerative Agriculture is a new term used to describe a progressive approach to farming that tries to cause minimal destruction to the land. It aims to do what it says on the tin, "regenerate" the natural ecosystem of the land, to leave it in a healthier state than when it was found. Regenerative agriculture promises a range of benefits for soil health, biodiversity, water availability and quality, animal welfare, and community resilience and livelihoods.

The REGINA project group was formed in 2021, led by Euracademy in Athens, Greece. After running a successful 2-day webinar on Regenerative Agriculture in 2021, Euracademy recognized the demand for Regenerative Agriculture information, and the gap in knowledge extension tools for this new style of alternative farming. SECAD, along with 6 other organizations from Hungary, Greece, Slovenia and Italy applied to be involved in this project. An application for Erasmus+ funding was submitted and approved this year. The project is scheduled to begin in early 2022 and will run for 33 months.

SECAD will be involved in the collection and analysis of data, the creation of an education module, and the dissemination of project results to interested parties. SECAD will also be tasked with the collection of surveys and case studies of farmers and stakeholders engaged in Regenerative Agriculture around Ireland.

*Compiled by Isabel Power, Graduate Development Officer*



*Cow grazing on DerryDuff Regenerative Farm, Bantry, West Cork*



*Happy Cattle grazing in a fresh paddock of mature grass and trees. Clondarrig Farm, County Laois*



SECAD  PARTNERSHIP

# SECTION 5: CORPORATE & PUBLIC SERVICES

**2020** | ANNUAL REPORT



# Corporate and Public Services

## Community Benefit Funds

SECAD has 25 years as a Grant Making Organisation (GMO), supporting and working with Renewable Energy providers in administering Community Benefit Funds and assisting Communities Groups to access the funding.

The range of projects developed are immense, both large scale and small, and their benefit to the communities they belong to is immeasurable, leaving a long term impact to the fabric of the community they belong to.

Here are just a few case studies of projects that have grown from the Community Benefit Funds.

### Newcastle West Regional Athletics Hub

A steering committee was set up in January 2015 to plan and develop a fully equipped 400m, 8 lane athletics track for the athletic community in Newcastle West. The project received huge support from schools both primary and secondary, the athletics clubs, the disability sector, community games areas and the general public.



*Newcastle West Regional Athletics Hub*

Through the ESB Grouselodge Wind Farm Community Fund, a total of €60,000 (€6,000 per annum for a duration of 10 years) was allocated towards the project. A large area of County Limerick and part of North Cork and North Kerry will benefit from having the facility which is due to open in the spring of 2023.

“It was a pleasure to experience the professional and warm way in which the staff of SECAD have worked with us throughout the project, the pandemic and everything else we met along the way”

*Jim Galvin- Newcastle West Regional Athletics Hub*

### Cloughmills Community Action Team

Cloughmills Community Action Team has been around for more than 20 years promoting community development and good relations in the rural village of Cloughmills. By 2011, the group developed the confidence to become a charitable company and obtained a licence to use the back land at an old derelict flax mill where it developed a community allotment garden. This became its base for developing family focused, community food initiatives and also courses and classes on social and therapeutic horticulture to combat social isolation and poor mental health.



*Willow weaving with Cloughmills Community Action Team*

The group were funded £1,060 towards a capacity building project designed to bring people of all ages together to learn new skills in crafts and creative arts with the intention that craft groups can be promoted to provide much needed recreational and social opportunities for a community coming out of the Covid 19 pandemic restrictions. The crafts include willow weaving which is being grown as a local resource on site at the mill and creative arts such as felting, painting, pyrography as well as some wood working/ wood turning, using the facilities at our men's shed.

The group bonded well and were supportive of each other. The key lesson learned was how to prepare willow for weaving which was important as we grow willow on our site. The basic techniques for starting a piece of weaving were also very important and this will be enhanced through use of online tutorials as we go along.

The finished articles from the workshop were put on display at an open day at the mill in November under the caption 'Made at the Mill'. This was well attended by the community and new recruits were registered for the future. The group made willow trugs for use in the garden and also completed willow baskets for storing logs or vegetables from the garden.

*"Our project was a great example of how the NTR Community Benefit Fund can be used to build capacity within the community by opening up a whole new craft experience for local people to enjoy. Barbara, one of our volunteers, commented that 'There was a real sense of achievement from everyone on our willow weaving workshops. To take something that is growing naturally on our garden site and making it into a small and beautiful work of willow art gives you an inner belief that you can go on and inspire others to enjoy the same experience. It's all about sharing skills for everyone's benefit and we are grateful for the funding that made this possible'. We held an open day at the mill to show off all the different craft products (wood turned bowls, picture felting, basketry, floral art, ornamental works from recycled cans, etc) that we make at the mill as a promotional event for the community"*

Jim Whitten - Treasurer

### Moyvane/Knockanure Care of the Aged

The group aim to provide the elderly in their community with friendship and social opportunities. They arrange social outings which are inclusive, appropriate, and enjoyable for all members. This helps to reduce the problem of social isolation experienced by many senior residents in rural areas. The group planned a social outing and dinner party that elderly citizens could attend and benefit from being reintroduced to each other and the outside world after the considerable time that they have had to isolate and cocoon themselves due to the Covid-19 restrictions.



Moyvane/Knockanure Care of the Aged

The group were awarded funding of €3,000 from the EirGrid Sponsorship fund, towards the cost of a social outing and dinner party for members to attend and enjoy.

*'The day trip to Bunratty Castle and Folk Park gave a memorable experience to our members with its historic environment, traditional rural life experience through its 30 buildings and its traditional Irish farm and woodland walk'*

*'For those who were unable to travel or participate in the day trip we provided a dinner party in our local community hall with entertainment'*

*'The highlight of this project was 'getting to enjoy the day'*

Noreen O Connell - Moyvane/Knockanure Care Of the Aged

### Moyvane Development Association

Moyvane Development Association was formed in 1985 to promote community development and the protection of the natural environment, and to improve and enhance the social and cultural wellbeing of the people of the parish of Moyvane. This is being achieved through planning, scheduling, progressing and completing new projects, along with maintaining existing ones throughout the village and its environs. In 2020, the group decided to upgrade the Nature Trail Walk, adding a tarmac finish, upgrading rail fencing to composite material, upgrading information boards & signs and provide information lecterns.



Moyvane Development Association

Moyvane Development Associations' application to the EirGrid Community Sponsorship fund was successful and they were awarded €33,000 in funding towards upgrading the Nature Trail Walk.

*'Providing a safe environment is a priority for our group, therefore new fencing and a tarmac surface ensured this condition. The increase in footfall throughout the Walk & Village is very noticeable in recent times and has a beneficial impact on local businesses'*

Ursula Enright - Moyvane Development Association

Compiled by Eilish Walsh & Elaine Barrett, Development Officers

The Community Food Initiatives (CFI) programme runs in 3 year cycles and in 2021, the CFI came to the end of the second cycle under the administration of SECAD. We have co-ordinated the CFI on behalf of **safefood** since 2016.



The CFI was established by **safefood** to create awareness of the benefits of healthy eating and to provide families with the skills and knowledge to be able to provide healthy food options for themselves and their families. The current format was developed by **safefood** and SECAD, and encourages the 14 partners (CFI Leaders) based throughout the island of Ireland to use a community development approach to engage and work with families.

In 2019, 14 CFI Leaders were recruited to deliver the CFI in their local areas; 5 organisations in Northern Ireland (NI) and 9 in the Republic of Ireland (ROI). A successful launch event was held in Dublin, where the 6 new CFI Leaders were introduced to the CFI and had the opportunity to network with the 8 CFI Leaders who were returning to deliver the CFI for a second 3 year cycle.

The roll out of the CFI in 2020 began with the CFI Regional Workshop which took place on Wednesday, 11th March 2020 in the **safefood** office in Little Island, Co Cork. On the following Wednesday, the Taoiseach announced the first of the lockdowns which would become a feature for the remainder of the CFI. Covid 19 provided a challenge for the CFI Leaders to find new and innovative ways of supporting their communities and encouraging participants to take part in the CFI activities.

The CFI Leaders met this challenge and successfully delivered activities that involved the 6 CFI themes and which allowed families to connect with one another online when they could not meet in person.

One positive outcome from this new delivery method was that whole families became involved and learned how to cook together.

2021 was again a challenging year where most of the activities continued to be delivered online but some of the CFI Leaders decided to organise outdoor activities during the Summer to provide their participants with the opportunity to join other parents while adhering to social distancing guidelines.

During 2020, parents were only beginning to learn how to interact with the rest of society through online tools. By 2021, most people had become familiar with Zoom and other video conferencing platforms and were happy to join in online with the Small Projects and Community Events. During 2020, the CFI Leaders were also learning how to provide support to their clients remotely and by 2021 were in a better position to support the participants using this new format.

The CFI Leaders continued to support their participants and during 2021, 127 organisations supported the CFI Leaders through joining the CFI Steering Groups. 365 families took part in Community Events and 608 families participated in 45 projects which focused on building the healthy eating skills of the participants and promoting best practice under the CFI themes.

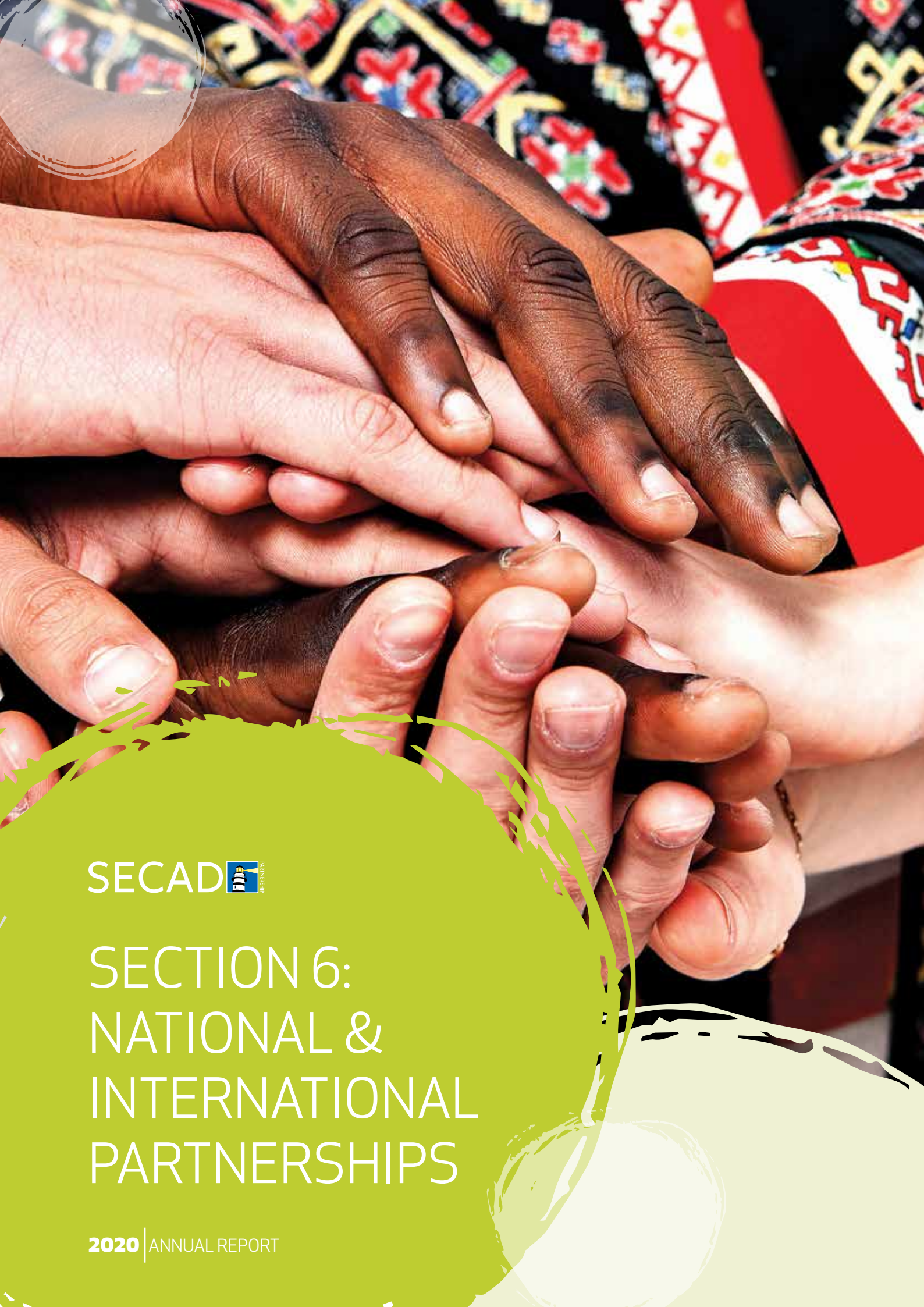
## 2019 – 2021 Outputs

	Number of support agencies / organisations participating in the Community Events	39
	Number of organisations involved in Steering Groups	127
	Number of families who will have taken part in a Community Event	365
	Number of families that participated in a Small Project	608

In 2021, **safefood** issued a request for tenders for the administration of the CFI during 2022 – 2024. After a successful tendering process, SECAD will continue to coordinate and administer the CFI on behalf of **safefood** until 2024.

*Compiled by Sinéad Conroy, Development Officer*





SECAD  PARTNERSHIP

## SECTION 6: NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

2020 | ANNUAL REPORT



# Supporting Enterprise

## TWINLAG – Connecting with LAG Vichy



*Group travelling from Ireland*

Between 16th -19th November 2021, a group of 10 people, representing LEADER West Cork travelled to meet with some of our TWINLAG partners in Vichy, France to delve further into one of the many projects' themes of 'Rural Urban Connections'. It was a packed 4 days of visiting projects, conversing with our partners and most importantly building on the TWINLAG partnerships to grow our knowledge and skills.

In the photo above there are Judith Gilbert & Mary Lavelle from Comhar na nOileán, Valerie Murphy, Anne Barry and Niall Walsh from Avodhu Blackwater, Suzanne Kearney, Elga Ryan, Tara Doyle, Patrick Cronin & Eilish Walsh from SECAD.

Other themes of the project are, 'Young People in LEADER', 'Local Economy and Digital Solutions' and one which will be hosted in West Cork in Spring 2023, 'Environment and Climate'.

TWINLAG is a Transnational Cooperation project in which SECAD is participating as 'LEADER West Cork' with partners in Avondhu Blackwater & Comhar na nOileán. TWINLAG is essentially a training project, where SECAD, along with 6 Local Development Companies across Europe, explore our many commonalities and challenges. The 6 Local Development Companies are a mix of both long-established EU members, Finland, France and Ireland

and newly emerging EU partners, Moldova and North Macedonia.

The true aim of the project is to improve processes and efficiencies in our respective local economies, to build a toolbox of resources that we can all access and find solutions to shared problems. It is also to give support to those newer EU countries, offering guidance and advice as they become more established in the EU.

While in Vichy, we saw at first-hand some very novel solutions that our equivalent organisations had developed with communities to support unemployed young people to stay in the region, to help isolated regions to access social services and revenue supports and to tackle the issues of rural isolation.

One such project we visited, 'Mission Locale', is a state financed support mechanism directed at young people who are finding it difficult to get a start in life, get a job, housing etc. Many participants in this project are aged between 17-24 and had not completed their final state exams, 'The Bac', our equivalent to the Leaving Certificate.



*Mission Locale*

The project benefits from utilising new technology, because through using VDU headsets, young learners and unemployed people can experience 40 different jobs including occupations from warehouse manager, to nursing, office work and everything in between. It is a very motivating tool and can really spark interest in young people to consider careers they may not have otherwise.

During our visit, we had the opportunity to meet with young people who are supported by the organisation and to try on the headsets. The project supports people to find work and stay in their home regions.

The second project we visited involved the use of a Mobile Public Service Vehicle. This is an admin service bus in the Community of Saint Pourcain Sioule et Limagne, a small village similar in size to Cloyne village. The bus brings tax, insurance, retirement, family, and social services to rural villages on selected days. The service is open to all and cost free and is particularly used by seniors who find it challenging to do their banking and other services online. This is basically Citizens Information on wheels!

*Compiled by Eilish Walsh, Community Benefit Funds Officer*



*Mobile Public Service Vehicle*



SECAD 

# SECTION 7: FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES MANAGED BY SECAD

**2020** | ANNUAL REPORT



# Funds & Programmes Managed by SECAD

## SECAD Partnership CLG

SECAD Partnership CLG is a local development company established in 1995. SECAD is a not for profit, community led organisation with charitable status. SECAD works with a range of clients and stakeholders in rural areas including community and voluntary groups, disadvantaged target groups, job seekers, businesses (including private and social enterprise), farmers, schools, the corporate sector and academia.

SECAD provides a range of innovative rural development and social inclusion supports, to motivate and enable our communities to create a more vibrant, sustainable and inclusive society, in partnership with public, private, academic and community partners.

SECAD has evolved from managing a single funding programme into a platform for managing and delivering a wide range of funds and services including, social investment and employment supports, on behalf of the Irish Government, State Bodies and the EU.

SECAD currently delivers a number of major programmes alongside other smaller schemes and initiatives, including LEADER 2014-2020, the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme 2018-2023, the Rural Social Scheme, Tús, PEIL 2014-2020 (WREN, Healthcare & Ability) and the Community Development Initiative.

## Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP)

The aim of SICAP is to reduce disadvantage and promote social inclusion and equality through local, regional and national engagement and collaboration. Its vision is to improve the life chances and opportunities of those who are marginalised in society, living in poverty or unemployed through community development approaches, targeted supports and interagency collaboration, where the values of equality and inclusion are promoted, and

human rights are respected. SECAD has delivered previous iterations of SICAP since the mid-1990s.

SECAD is currently delivering SICAP 2 which began on 1st January 2018 and runs until 2023, across the South Cork area, with an annual contract value of €812,902.

## LEADER

SECAD has delivered the LEADER Programme since 1995. SECAD is an Implementing Partner for LEADER 2014-2020 in two 'Local Action Group' areas, South Cork and West Cork with a budget of €5,295,634 across the two LAG areas.

The LEADER Programme supports projects across a diverse range of themes including: rural tourism, enterprise development, rural towns, access to broadband, basic services targeted at hard-to-reach communities, rural youth, protection and sustainable

use of water resources, protection and improvement of local biodiversity, and development of renewable energy. SECAD is also accessing funding through the national LEADER Food Initiative for food enterprises and food related initiatives. In addition, SECAD is delivering significant LEADER Co-operation projects (within Ireland and with European partners) with funding coming from the national LEADER Co-operation project. LEADER is co-financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.



# Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020

SECAD is delivering three projects under PEIL 2014-2020:

## 1. Female Employability (Healthcare Opportunities)

SECAD is a partner in a Healthcare Opportunities Training project with Ballyhoura Development CLG. The Healthcare Opportunities programme is running in various locations throughout Cork and Limerick over a three-year period offering participants the opportunity to gain a Healthcare Assistant Level 5 qualification.

The programme is specifically aimed at women who have been out of the workforce and who are not in receipt of Jobseekers Allowance. It particularly appeals to women who are interested in training to

work as a care assistant in a care home, community setting or a hospital. The training is free, flexible and an excellent way to upskill and gain a new career option.

The programme is co-funded by the Irish Government through the Department of Justice and Equality and the European Social Fund, through PEIL 2014-2020. Funding is being provided under the Employability strand of PEIL to promote gender equality and to create new employment opportunities for women.

## 2. Female Entrepreneurship – Women's Rural Entrepreneurial Network (WREN)

SECAD is leading this female entrepreneurship project, WREN, to support female entrepreneurs living in Cork and Limerick who have a concrete business idea and wish to become self-employed or who are already in the early stages of business development.

The training programme includes personal development and business skills training, one to one and group mentoring, female 'role model' sharing of

experience and networking. SECAD is working in partnership with Ballyhoura Development to deliver WREN.

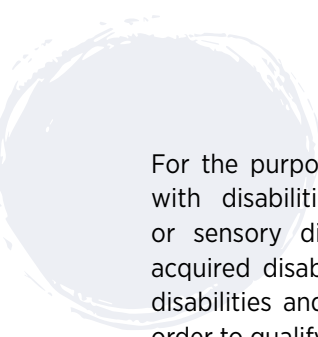
The WREN Project is co-funded by the Irish Government through the Department of Justice and Equality and the European Social Fund, through PEIL 2014-2020 to promote entrepreneurial skills and business start-up amongst women in the region.

## 3. Ability Programme

SECAD is currently delivering the Ability Programme with our partners, IRD Duhallow (lead partner) and Ballyhoura Development CLG, on behalf of the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (via Pobal). This programme concluded in mid-2021.

The Ability Programme aims to support young people with disabilities (18-29 years of age) to improve their employability through a range of person-centred supports. Participants on the Ability programme will be supported with tailored training and career guidance support.

Training includes the development of soft skills, confidence, communication, self-awareness, life skills & personal development. A focus is placed on work preparation training for young people with disabilities, including job search strategies. Existing linkages on the ground with local employers are utilised to facilitate supported work sampling, work experience placements, work shadowing, volunteer placements and place and train schemes.



For the purpose of the Ability programme, people with disabilities refers to people with physical or sensory disabilities, mental health conditions, acquired disabilities, intellectual disabilities, hidden disabilities and people on the autistic spectrum. In order to qualify for support, Ability participants must also be:

- in receipt of disability allowance or invalidity pension; or
- in receipt of illness benefit for more than three months

## STRIVE (Strive to achieve your potential) September 2021-December 2022

The STRIVE programme is a strengths-based approach to increasing labour market participation of people with disabilities through a range of person-centred and wrap around supports in order to enhance opportunities for career progression, increase opportunities for paid and voluntary employment and support greater engagement in community life.

This regional project is delivered within the territories of IRD Duhallow (North West Cork, South East Kerry and Mid Cork), Ballyhoura Development (South and East Limerick and North Cork) and SECAD (South and East Cork). As public services have been scaled-

back and reduced in rural areas, there are fewer opportunities for people with disabilities to access education, training and employment. While the scale of social exclusion is beyond the scope of this Dormant Accounts Programme alone, the Programme represents a very important employment activation vehicle in enabling people with disabilities to achieve their potential.

SECAD worked intensively in 2021 with 12-15 people with disabilities to provide them with work placement opportunities and enhance their engagement in the broader community.

## Tús – Community Workplace Initiative

The roll out of the Tús Programme was announced by the Irish Government in December 2010, as a direct response to the downturn of the Irish economy, which caused unemployment numbers to rise considerably. The aim of Tús is to provide short-term, quality work opportunities for those who are unemployed, by providing 12-month work placements in local not for profit/community organisations, who provide services of benefit to local communities.

While responsibility for the operation of Tús rests with the Department of Employment Affairs and

Social Protection, it is managed at a local level, on the Department's behalf, by Local Development Companies (LDCs) like SECAD. LDCs (and in the Gaeltacht areas, Údarás na Gaeltachta) were selected by Government to deliver Tús which SECAD began operating in July 2011. SECAD has a current allocation of 293 places for people coming from the Live Unemployment Register and can employ up to 11 Tús Supervisors to manage those placements.

## Rural Social Scheme (RSS)

The Rural Social Scheme (RSS) was launched in 2004 by the Irish Government and is aimed at supporting low-income farmers and fishermen/women. The RSS was set up to provide income support for farmers and those in the fishing industry who are in receipt of long-term social welfare payments, and to provide services of benefit to rural communities.

The RSS allows those on low-incomes, who are unable to earn an adequate living from their farm holding or from fishing, to earn a supplementary income in return for 19.5 hours work per week, undertaken within the community and voluntary sector. SECAD delivers the RSS on behalf of the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP).

## Community Food Initiative (CFI)

In 2016, **safefood** invited tenders from either non-governmental organisations or state bodies who have knowledge of and strong links with the community sector, to manage their Community Food Initiative (CFI) for 2016-2018. SECAD was the successful tenderer and was awarded the contract to deliver the CFI 2016-2018. In 2018, **safefood** initiated a new tender process to deliver the next round of the CFI. SECAD once again was successful and managed the CFI from 2019 to 2021. SECAD responded to a request for tender towards the end of 2021 and will continue to administer the CFI until 2024.

**safefood** is an all-island organisation set up to promote awareness and knowledge of food safety and nutrition issues on the island of Ireland. Since

2016, SECAD Partnership has delivered **safefood**'s Community Food Initiative (CFI) to positively influence the eating habits of low-income families and to identify and promote best practice in communities.

On behalf of **safefood**, SECAD works with 14 community-based organisations across the Island of Ireland – 5 in Northern Ireland and 9 in the Republic of Ireland. Each of these organisations (CFI Leaders) has a 'social inclusion' focus and experience of working with local communities. SECAD supports CFI Leaders to act as champions for the CFI in their area, to develop strategic links with key agencies and to deliver a combination of large-scale workshops and smaller initiatives with target groups.

## Community Benefit Funds

Since 2015, SECAD has had the role of Grant Making Organisation for a number of developers to administer their Community Benefit Funds across the island of Ireland. The aim of Community Benefit Funds is to make a contribution back to local community activities and projects'. SECAD is currently contracted by ESB, Coillte, NTR, RWE, EirGrid and others to manage their community funds.

SECAD's role involves engaging with community representatives and other stakeholders in the vicinity

of windfarms and other infrastructural developments, forming local community panels where necessary, designing the fund, managing the grant application process, screening and assessing fund applications, presenting project recommendations to the developer, managing and distributing grants to successful applicants and preparing reports and case studies for the developer. SECAD also provides capacity building supports to community groups / potential applicants in the area of benefit.

## Wild Work

SECAD has a long history of involvement in environmental projects and initiatives.

Wild Work is a unique initiative developed by SECAD with biodiversity at its heart. Wild Work 'helps people, help nature, help people' and has a particular focus on connecting business and communities with biodiversity. Wild Work also supports the work of both local and national organisations involved in the conservation and protection of our natural environment.

Wild Work supports employment activation, providing work experience for people interested in nature and biodiversity and also employs workers who have been long term unemployed, to undertake physical works such as the creation of wildflower meadows to support pollinators.



Awareness raising, training, technical support and physical works are among the services provided by Wild Work to promote biodiversity. This may involve awareness raising and training for communities or employees of industries in the area or technical support for industries and community groups to develop biodiversity action plans and physical work on public and private land.

SECAD has provided services to a range of bodies and organisations in the area e.g. Cork County Council, Cork Airport, local Tidy Towns organisations, Pfizer Ireland Pharmaceuticals, Midleton/Fermoy Garda Youth Division, Hovione Cork, Dairygold, GSK, Crann Centre, Glenilen Farm Ltd., and PJ Hegarty among others.

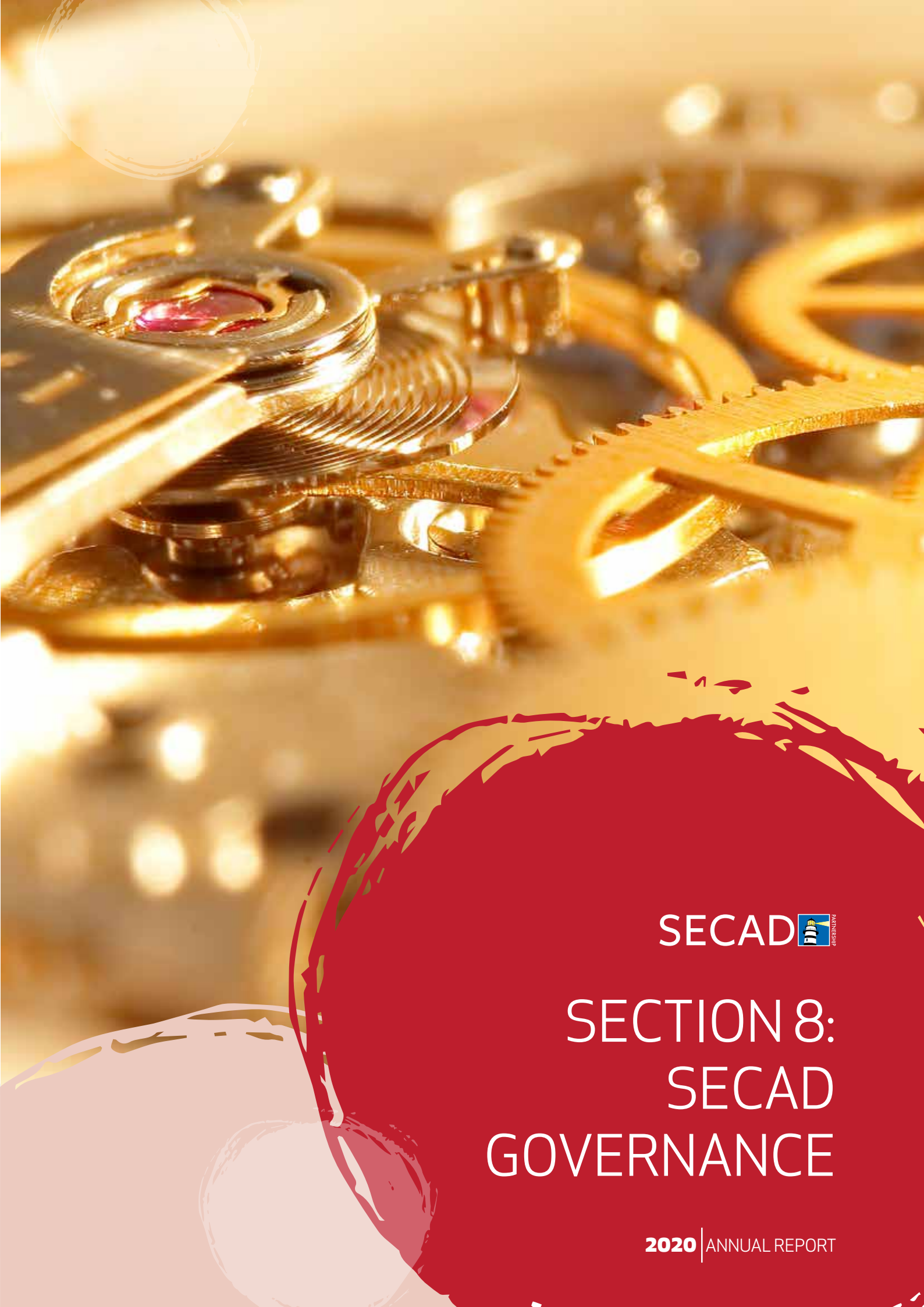
## Community Development Initiative (CDI)

The Community Development Initiative (CDI) is an initiative developed by Cork County Council in partnership with LEADER Implementing Partners across the County of Cork and its three Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs). SECAD is a LEADER Implementing Partner for LEADER South Cork and LEADER West Cork.

The CDI value is €500,000 per year. The funds are distributed periodically (e.g. every two to three years) over the seven years of the fund. The aim of the initiative is to fund local community and voluntary groups for small scale capital projects to a minimum of €1,000 and a maximum of €25,000 per project,

to improve the range and/or quality of community-based facilities and amenities within Cork County, thus leading to a better quality of life.

During the first three years of the fund (valued at €1.5m) SECAD managed 130 applications, preparing them for evaluation by the LCDC, monitoring progress and processing claims for payment by Cork County Council.



SECAD  PARTNERSHIP

# SECTION 8: SECAD GOVERNANCE

2020 | ANNUAL REPORT

# SECAD Governance

SECAD Partnership CLG is a not-for-profit, community-led organisation with charitable status. SECAD strives to ensure that it operates to the highest standards through, for example, implementing the 'Governance Code for Charities' which sets out a wide range of checks and counter-checks to ensure that proper systems and procedures for the management of funding, private and public, are maintained.

SECAD also invests in the governance skills of our Board and staff each year. SECAD continues to invest in technology to protect our processing of financial and personal data adopting appropriate policies, practices and systems to record and store all information gathered as part of our work.

## SECAD's Quality Assurance Systems

SECAD's Quality Assurance Systems comprises of the following key quality assurance principles:

1. **Leadership and Commitment**
2. **Employee Engagement**
3. **Excellent Business Systems & Procedures**
4. **Customer Experience**
5. **Results**



### 1. Leadership & Commitment

SECAD's Constitution and Corporate Governance Policy helps support the company to achieve excellent leadership and commitment in all aspects of management and decision making.

#### **SECAD's Constitution (Memorandum & Articles of Association)**

SECAD operates within the bounds of its Constitution which includes the Memorandum and Articles of Association, and regularly refers to these documents to ensure that the company is continuing to meet the objectives of the organisation and that the company

is operating within the confines of its own governing document.

#### **SECAD's Corporate Governance Policy**

SECAD will be guided by its Corporate Governance Policy which is overseen by the Board of Directors. As a charity in Ireland, SECAD is obliged under the Charities Acts and must operate solely in the pursuit of its charitable objective. SECAD operates in accordance with the Charities Governance Code and is in compliance with the reporting requirements of the Charities Regulator.

### 2. Employee Engagement

SECAD considers its employees to be the single most important resource available to the company and strives to support its employees in every possible way. The company recently undertook a review of the company's HR function, which included a review of all company policies, systems and procedures.

One of the main outcomes was the recommendation to introduce a HR management system called HR Locker which assists with the management of SECAD's entire team seamlessly, whether working remotely or in-office. HR Locker helps maximise SECAD's HR performance by automating absence management, holiday management, timesheets, and training in a GDPR-friendly cloud-based format.



HR Locker software is currently being deployed throughout the company and will be fully operational within the next few months.

#### **SECAD's Health & Safety Management System (ISO 45001)**

To ensure the health & safety of its employees, trustees, beneficiaries, customers etc. SECAD has adopted the standards of ISO 45001 for Health & Safety within the organisation. ISO 45001 is an International Standard that specifies requirements for an occupational health and safety (OH&S) management system, with guidance for its use, which enables SECAD to proactively monitor and continually improve its OH&S performance in preventing injury and ill-health. ISO 45001 enables SECAD, through its OH&S management system, to integrate other aspects of health and safety, such as worker wellness/wellbeing.

#### **SECAD's Employee Wellbeing Supports**

SECAD has in place an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) which is available to all employees. The company also has in place an Employee Wellbeing Programme which includes wellbeing through nature events, volunteering events, social events, peer supports etc.



### **3. Excellent Business Systems & Procedures**

#### **SECAD's Internal Financial Procedures (IFP)**

This is an internally developed document which clearly outlines the way in which SECAD carries out its financial operations. The IFP are reviewed and updated regularly by the Finance Team and are reviewed and approved by the Finance & Audit Subcommittee.

SECAD uses a financial accounting system called 'Insight' (developed by Herbst). Herbst Insight is an intuitive & fully integrated solution designed from a management perspective. The system allows the user to access real-time accurate information. Insight is a modular IT solution which is flexible & scalable as required.

#### **The benefits of Herbst Insight are:**

- Modular software – allows for a scalable & flexible options
- Optimises company operations

- Creates a leaner business approach – removes duplication & spreadsheets
- Centralises information
- Real time data for managers
- Integrated financial and management information capabilities
- Flexible nominal structure and advanced reporting utilities
- Integrated VAT and RCT payment retention
- Money control – live accounts
- Complete customer/supplier CRM
- Security – user level access control with complete audit trail.

Regular **forecasting and budgeting** ensures that SECAD is prepared for an ever-changing environment factoring in internal and external considerations and ensuring that SECAD has resources in place for any commitments undertaken.

### **4. Customer Experience**

SECAD's principle charitable objective is to promote, support, assist and engage in (a) social development, (b) enterprise development to facilitate rural and urban regeneration or (c) community development, designed to benefit and promote the welfare of local communities or to deal with the causes and consequences of social and economic disadvantage or poverty.

All SECAD's activities are undertaken in the pursuit of this objective and to ensure that the company continues to achieve this the company places very high value on the experience of our customers, beneficiaries etc. Customer feedback is built into every action undertaken by the company e.g. training events, grant beneficiaries, volunteers, community development events etc.

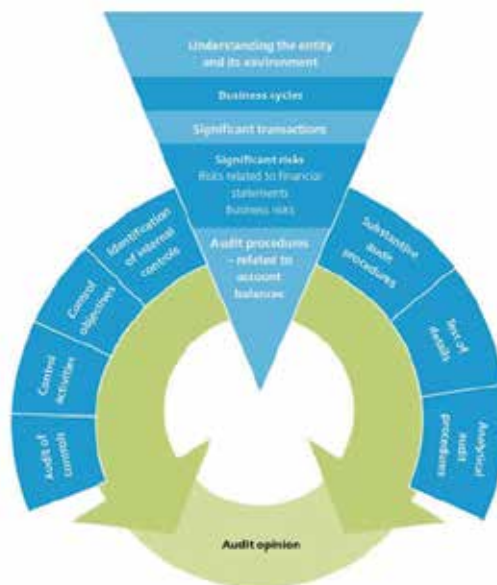
SECAD regularly carries out a cross section of case studies (written and/or video format) to assist with reviewing and analysing the impact of its work. Grant beneficiaries are required to complete end of project reports which allows SECAD to assess the benefit and impact of grant aid investment.

### External Audits

An independent external audit is undertaken annually on SECAD's financial statements to include an examination of company financial transactions for completeness, valuation, existence, correct presentation & disclosure, and compliance with relevant company law accounting standards. This is coupled with an independent review by the external auditor of the company's going concern position, financial procedures, systems of internal control and involves extensive analytical reviews.

The external auditors issue an annual audit report as part of the financial statements together with an audit opinion letter and audit findings letter. By following best practice and continually striving to improve, SECAD continues to receive positive feedback from its external independent review process.

Although not yet compulsory for Irish Charities, SECAD chose to produce its financial statements (since 2019) in compliance with Charities SORP FRS 102 and the Companies Act 2014 as amended by the Companies (Accounting) Act 2017. It is expected that the Charities Regulator will, in the near future, make this accounting standard compulsory for all charities in Ireland.



## 5. Results

SECAD has systems in place to track and monitor all areas of its operations. SECAD is required to track and monitor results for each of its funders and to submit reports as required. The company is also subject to audit from its funders e.g. Local Authority, Government Departments, Comptroller and Auditor General, Revenue, EU Commission, European Court of Auditors, other funders etc.



The following people are central to the management and operations of SECAD Partnership CLG.

## Our Board Members 2021

### Our Board Members 2020

- Gerard Mac Mahon (Chair)
- Tim Hoban (Vice Chair)
- Bill Ramsell (Treasurer)
- Patrick Cronin (Joint Company Secretary)
- Maurice Smiddy
- Michael Walley
- Damien Craven
- Don Stockley
- Michelle O' Sullivan
- Mary Stack
- John Colbert

### Project Evaluation Committee

- Mark O'Keeffe
- Christy O'Sullivan
- Tom Hughes
- Anthony Barry
- Oliver Sheehan
- Michael McCarthy
- Denis Ring
- Adrienne Harrington
- Caroline Gallagher
- Harry Bollard
- Mary Hickey Griffin
- Sinead Morgan
- Susan Gallagher
- Joe Burke (LEO South Cork)
- Deirdre O'Mahony (LEO West Cork)
- Sean O'Callaghan Cork County Council (LEO South & West Cork)

## Our Team 2021

### Management Team

- Ryan Howard – CEO
- Suzanne Kearney – Assistant CEO & Operations Manager
- Laura Mason – Finance Manager & Company Secretary
- Toni McCaul – Strategy & Programme Manager

### Finance & Administration Team

- Mary McCarthy
- Magdalena Bosiacka
- Anne Coughlan
- Miriam Montagne
- Li Chai
- Catherine Scully
- Eilish Walsh

### Development Officers – Enterprise, Employment and Community

- Nuala O' Connell
- Elga Ryan
- Sinéad Conroy
- Katie Kearns

- Danielle Sheehy
- Kieran Butler
- Frances Doyle
- Margaret Hartigan
- Vicki Kelly
- Cora O'Donnell
- William O'Halloran
- Karen Loxton
- Donna Cleary
- Tara Doyle
- Elaine Barrett
- Clodagh McGuirk

### Tús Community Work Placements and Rural Social Scheme Supervisors

- P.J. Dennehy (Co-Ordinator)
- Frances Burke
- Declan Barron
- Joe Dilworth
- Aoife Fouhy
- Magdalena McLeod
- Barry O'Sullivan
- Mark O'Connell
- Billy Mulqueen



# Summary of SECAD Financial Accounts for 2021

## SECAD Partnership CLG

(A Company Limited by Guarantee and not having Share Capital)

### Income & Expenditure Account Financial year ended 31 December 2021

#### 2021

Operating Income	€3,198,569
Operating Expenditure	-€3,035,277
<b>Surplus of Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>€163,292</b>

### Balance Sheet As at 31 December 2021

#### 2021

##### Fixed assets

Tangible assets	€86,457
-----------------	---------

##### Current assets

Debtors	€538,563
Cash at bank and in hand	€1,477,861
	€2,016,424

<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	-€1,102,416
---	-------------

<b>Net current assets</b>	<b>€914,008</b>
---------------------------	-----------------

<b>Total Assets less current Liabilities</b>	€1,000,465
--	------------

<b>Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year</b>	€ -
--	-----

<b>Net assets</b>	<b>€1,000,465</b>
-------------------	-------------------

##### Charity Funds

Restricted funds	€20,715
Unrestricted funds	€979,750
<b>Total Charity Funds</b>	<b>€1,000,465</b>





## **2021 Annual Report**

Highlights & Impacts

SECAD Partnership,  
Owennacurra Business Park,  
Knockgriffin,  
Midleton,  
Co. Cork

---

+ 353 21 4613432

---

info@secad.ie

---

 @SECADCork

---

 [www.facebook.com/secadcork](https://www.facebook.com/secadcork)

---

**[www.secad.ie](http://www.secad.ie)**