



Comhairle Chontae Liatroma
Leitrim County Council

RE-IMAGINING RURAL IRELAND

13 October 2025



MC - Colin Regan

10.00 AM Welcome & Opening Remarks



Cllr. Paddy Farrell
Cathaoirleach

10.10 AM SESSION 1: Smart Towns - Their Place in the World



Bridging the Gap:

Local Rural Futures in the Context of National and European Strategies

Dr. Karen Keaveney, Rural Development, School of Agriculture and Food Science, UCD

From Connectivity to Community: How Digital Transformation Empowers Rural Europe

Dr. Emilija Stojmenova Duh, Associate Professor, Electrical Engineering, University of Ljubljana, and former Minister for Digital Transformation of Slovenia



Understanding our Towns: Building an Evidence Base to Support Sustainable Growth

Mr. Justin Gleeson, Director, All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO), Maynooth University

Session ends with Panel Discussion - Followed by Tea Coffee & Networking

12.00 PM SESSION 2: Vision & Local Action



Keynote Address

Minister Dara Calleary TD, Minister for Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht

Digital Placemaking: A Strategy for a Connected Leitrim

Mr David Minton, Director of Services, Leitrim County Council



SESSION 2: Vision & Local Action

Smart Community Spotlight – Mohill, Co. Leitrim

Ms Mary Reynolds, Chair of Mohill Town Team and Mohill Community Enterprise Centre



Session ends with Panel Discussion - Followed by Lunch at 1.00 pm

2.15 PM SESSION 3: Innovation & Digital Futures



Rural Development Policy in Ireland

Mr Gareth Makim, Principal Officer for Rural Strategy at the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht

Panel Discussion: Digitalisation & Development of Rural Communities



Dr Carolyn Owen

Mediterranean Agronomic
Institute of Chania, Crete,
Representative of Interreg
Europe Digital Rural Project



John Daly

Economist, Northern
& Western Regional
Assembly



Mr Gareth Makim

Principal Officer,
Department of Rural and
Community Development
and the Gaeltacht

Panel Discussion: Innovation Hubs & Smart Solutions



Mr Colm Keane

Manager, The Hive,
Leitrim's Technology
Enterprise Centre



Mr Fergal McPartland

Manager, The Food Hub,
Drumshanbo, Leitrim



Mr James Donlan

Unit Manager - National and
International Collaborative
Projects at WestBIC

4.00 PM Closing Remarks