

## **Dingle Hub Expanding** ***New staff for a new era***

**Dingle, Ireland: 25 January 2022.** Dingle Creativity & Innovation Hub - building a creative, sustainable, low-carbon community, and generating well-paid, year-round incomes on the Dingle Peninsula.

The Hub Team at Cooleen, Dingle has had two new faces join over the last few weeks: Hazel Blennerhassett, Shared Workspace Manager and Aodán Ó Conaill, Communications Manager, both bringing years of experience to their roles.

Hazel Blennerhassett is taking responsibility for the Hub buildings and facilities and has a wide background in property management. This Castlegregory native most recently worked with Fexco and is particularly proud of overseeing sustainability projects in her capacity as their Buildings Manager. She is already heavily involved in upgrading the facilities at Dingle Hub and says:

“I’m excited by the challenges of working with this older building and bringing out the best in it for our users. This is a community workspace with all sorts of exciting projects happening, as well as our own. Each day seeds are sown within these walls for growth across the Peninsula and that makes it a unique place to work - the upgrade works I am prioritising this year will ensure this continues.”

Aodán Ó Conaill joins the Hub with a brief of communications, which takes in everything from updating the Twitter account to telling journalists about the work of the Hub. Having returned to settle in Muiríoch two years ago, he brings experience from working across many sectors including with South Kerry Development Partnership and Radio Kerry. Aodán has this to say about the new position:

“Everything we do is linked to improving people’s futures on this Peninsula, from Blennerville to the Blaskets. As a result, there is strong goodwill towards us and I hope to harness that. I hope to find ways to get people enthused to interact with Dingle

Hub, online and in real life, particularly with our Dingle Peninsula 2030 initiative. If people can see how we are working for their futures, then they will also know that Dingle Hub is about much more than hiring a desk for a day!”

Helping Aodán and Hazel get to grips with their new roles is Maggie Breen who has been with Dingle Hub since 2019 and has been performing all of these duties up until recently. She is now exclusively focused on supporting the creative community on the Peninsula in her role as Creative Industries Manager. The Ballyferriter resident is dedicated to supporting the development of creative businesses, which includes music, film and animation among others. This feeds into one of the overall aims of the Hub: to support the creation of viable and sustainable incomes. Maggie has this to add:

“I’m eager to engage with artists and those working in the creative spheres across the Peninsula who want support with their businesses. In turn, we will involve them in a network where they can support one another.”

Taking on new recruits and expanding the work of the Hub has been possible through funding recently secured by General Manager, Deirdre de Bhailís, who leads the initiation of sustainably focused projects. Increasing the workforce is also a good indicator of the Hub’s successes to date and aspirations for the years ahead. Deirdre, from Ventry, adds:

“It’s fantastic to find excellent candidates for these roles locally! It’s also gratifying that we can offer income to residents who otherwise might have to look further afield. Hazel and Aodán both left their home-places and spent years working in the UK, so I hope their experiences of returning to Kerry can be mirrored for others who want to return here. I wish them all the best and I also want to thank our funding partners who afford us these resources, through believing in Dingle Hub and Dingle Peninsula 2030.”

Find out more or contact Dingle Creativity & Innovation Hub via [www.dinglehub.com](http://www.dinglehub.com) or on 066 9150140.

## BACKGROUND NOTES:

### **About Dingle Hub**

Established in April 2017, the Dingle Hub's mission is to build a creative, liveable, sustainable and inclusive community, fostering a vibrant and diverse ecosystem of stakeholders to facilitate the creation and maintenance of well-paid, year-round incomes on the Dingle Peninsula. We work to create strategic antecedents for new employment within three thematic pillars:

1. Sustainability and Green Agenda,
2. Digital Transformation and
3. Creative Industries

[www.dinglehub.com](http://www.dinglehub.com)

### **Deirdre de Bhailís**

Dingle Hub Manager Deirdre's key focus is to build a sustainable community through fostering an ecosystem that supports the creation of enterprise and employment on the Dingle Peninsula. She drives multiple projects which address the community's transition to a low carbon society. These include the development of sustainable transport initiatives and the investigation of anaerobic digestion solutions to address climate change.

### **About Dingle Peninsula 2030**

Established in early 2018, Dingle Peninsula 2030 is a multi-partner initiative on the Dingle Peninsula, Co. Kerry. It involves the Dingle Hub, ESB Networks, North East & West Kerry Development (NEWKD) and the SFI MaREI Centre for Energy, Climate and Marine, at UCC. Partners actively collaborate with each other and with the local community, schools, business, transport and farming sectors to support and enable the broader societal changes required for the sustainable transition.

To date, activities have included home energy trials, community planning, anaerobic digestion, smart farming trial, community energy mentor training, Climate Hacks in schools, and a sustainable transport initiative.

A West Kerry Dairy Farmers' Sustainable Energy Community has been established, as has a new community energy group.

New bus services were launched on the Peninsula in late 2020 and there are plans to introduce electric vehicles (EVs) on the routes shortly.

17 EV's were provided to trial participants across the Dingle Peninsula in 2021 as part of the ESB Networks technology trials.

[www.dinglepeninsula2030.com](http://www.dinglepeninsula2030.com)

## **Connected Hubs**

Connected Hubs Funding provided through the Department of Rural and Community Development Rural Development Strategy is enabling us to improve facilities at the Dingle Hub which helps support the creation of viable and sustainable jobs on the Dingle Peninsula.

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