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Welcome to the Maigue Rivers Trust's fifth newsletter. It has been another busy year highlights of which included publication of more reports, an expanding number of catchment volunteers and well attended events celebrating the rivers of the Maigue catchment.

Maigue River Trust Directors

Maigue River Festival 2022

The MRT Festival was a two-part event in 2022. First, a **Kayak Event** from Cherrygrove Bridge to Croom park slip took place on Sunday 29th May. Second, a **Biodiversity, Fish and Angling** event took place in Croom Park on June 18th. Mike Quinlivan and Dave Buston provided the angling fly-casting sessions which proved popular. IFI's Catherine Hayes and Conor Kirby additionally attended and brought an excellent electrofish sample from the Morningstar at Glenma.



2022 Kayak Event on the Maigue



Morningstar electrofish sample

Community Outreach

A range of community outreach initiatives took place over the past year including:

- A Family Fun Day in Granagh - August 2021
- MRT were present at Ballyhoura Beo's SFI Science Week event in Croom Sports – November 2021
- Ballyhoura's Knocklong Earth day - April 2022
- Limerick Show, Patrickswell - August 2022



2022 Heritage Week, Charleville



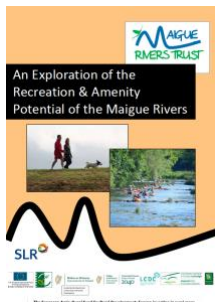
2022 Heritage Week, Hospital



Limerick Show 2022

Amenity and Recreation in the Maigue Rivers

The Maigue Rivers Trust commissioned SLR Consulting to undertake an [Exploration of Recreation and Amenity Potential of the Maigue Rivers](#) in County Limerick which was launched on 17th of August. The report presents development opportunities across five of key recreation types: Walking, Cycling, Angling, Boating, Nature Viewing and Heritage Amenity. Please click [HERE](#) to view report.



Citizen Scientists

A range of Citizen Science events were held across the catchment in 2021/22 (Ardpatrick and Killmallock in July '21; Lough Gur in March '22; Adare in April, and Knocklong May)

Citizen Science Picnic

A Citizen Science water test demonstration and picnic took place at Lough Gur on the 26th of March. This event was a thank you-event to our super volunteers who are helping monitor the Maigue Rivers. The event was attended by 30 current and future volunteers. The day was sponsored by Mary Immaculate College, LAWPRO, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and Analog Devices



Volunteer Water Monitoring

The Trust in conjunction with the Department of Geography, Mary Immaculate College (MIC) has expanded MRTs 2021 [Freshwater Watch](#) project and purchased more water quality monitoring kits for 2022. This water chemistry monitoring project was made possible as part a doctoral project being undertaken by Donna Weiner co-funded by the EPA and MIC. A training session is necessary as part of this volunteer monitoring project can be rolled out. Currently 15 volunteers from local communities across the catchment are conducting water sampling. If you are interested in becoming part of this initiative, please email info@maigueriverstrust.ie

River Deel Catchment Excellence Project

In 2022, MRT partnered with Rivers Trust Ireland and local Limerick company, Central Solutions to deliver the Catchment Excellence Project (CEP) for the Deel. This a private industry-led initiative for the River Deel, created after Nestlé's Wyeth Nutrition facility in Askeaton, Co. Limerick sought to assist development of a community project that would bring all stakeholders in the Deel catchment together to work together on initiatives that would improve local water quality. Central



Solutions Ltd. and Water Stewardship Ireland developed the programme, which was kindly funded by Wyeth Nutrition and the Lean and Green Skillnet. MRT Project Officer Liz Gabbett, planned and guided the field trips for the training course.

Giant Hogweed

Giant Hogweed (GHW) is regarded as one most problematic invasive alien plants due to its threat to human health, and impact on biodiversity and soil erosion. It has become a major issue across the Maigue catchment. In 2021 MRT conducted a survey of the Morningstar for Limerick City and County Council and concluded that the extent of colonization along 5.5km required a 7-year project to get it under control. The MRT estimates the Maigue main channel will require an intensive 20-year well resourced management project.

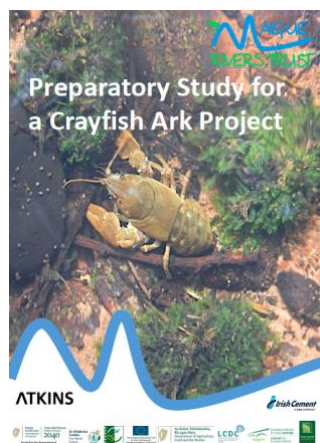
In 2022 the MRT secured funding from LAWPRO and Limerick Council to start GHW treatment, flower head and stem injection, along the Morningstar River. Knotweed Ireland Services did the first round of treatment in July and the second round in early August.



Giant Hogweed along the Morningstar

Crayfish Ark Report

In 2018 The Mague Rivers Trust commissioned a baseline freshwater ecology study of the River Mague catchment, which included an assessment of the population status of the white-clawed crayfish within the catchment. By 2019 the crayfish plague was recorded in the catchment, and it has spread at a rapid rate threatening the crayfish population. A **Preparatory Study for a Crayfish Ark Project** has now been published by the MRT and has identified potential Crayfish Ark sites. Ark sites (or sanctuary sites) enable crayfish populations to survive and breed in isolated sites that are less at risk of the introduction of crayfish plague. In order to establish a Crayfish Ark additional assessments, funding and support of stakeholders are needed.



As of 2022 there are 15 catchment organisations in the network. MRT Project Officer Liz Gabbett is the coordinator. Liz organised 12 training sessions including field workshops on River Processes in January 2022 in Wicklow and Sligo. The iCatch Network is proving very beneficial enabling meet ups, moral support and networking with other Rivers Trusts and community organisations. The iCatch Network was funded by The Wheel and LAWPRO.

River Basin Management Plan Submission

The Mague River Trust made a submission as part of the **Public consultation on the draft River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027**.

The MRT expressed concern that despite new administrative structures, water management remains fragmented. While there has been increased reporting, most of the governance actions proposed are vague and/or there is no concrete action that could be confidently linked to water quality improvements. Common issues that all Community Water Officers, River Trusts and catchment organisations face are lack of resources, core funding and thus sustainability.

MRT Strategic Plan

MRT has been exploring options for a strategic plan and business plan for the Trust to ensure long term sustainability. Financial experts have advised that the MRT needs to provide an income-earning service OR secure government funding that will cover core running costs.

iCatch Network

[The iCatch Network](#) was set up to enhance the leadership, support, training for catchment-based organisations across Ireland.



iCatch Network field workshop, Sligo, Feb 2022

Public Meetings and Trust Presentations

MRT Project Officer, Liz Gabbett, and Chairperson Tom Harrington made formal presentations about the Mague Rivers Trust work to the following organisations in 2021-22.

- LCCC Kilmalock Cappamore Metropolitan District meeting – February 2022
- Colaiste Chiaran – May 2022
- IFA Limerick - June 2022

Placement Student

From January to May 2022, Nina Sabatowska worked with The Mague River Trust on her University of Limerick Co-operative Education (Coop) work placement.



Nina Sabatowska MRT Placement Student



Nina is in her second year studying Linguistics and Digital Media. Nina enjoys computer work and hopes to work in Digital Media in the future. Her work for the Mague Rivers Trust included: Geo-locating natural and artificial river features, collating ideas for school activities focussed on water quality and biodiversity, geo-referencing a photo archive of the Morningstar river, and creating an presentation on the Trust in Polish.

Pollution Incidences

In the August 2021 it was brought to MRT's attention that there is on-going pollution of the Loughmore Canal and the Barnakyle stream. MRT and local landowners are frustrated that the pollution continues to happen despite the monitoring and investigations carried out by Limerick City & County Council. Water sampling results indicate that storm water discharges from the Raheen Business Park often contain extraordinarily high levels of phosphate and zinc. The source of the pollution has not yet been officially identified.

In June 2021 an oil spill occurred over the bank holiday weekend. The inflow stream to the Loobagh R near Beechinors Garage and Firestation in Killmallock

was affected. The spill was the result of green diesel theft from a farm and the thieves leaving a tap run.













Trust Directors

In May 2022 the MRT was delighted to welcome Carol Quish as our new Finance Director. Carol is from Hospital and comes with broad experience that will be very beneficial to MRTs governance

Thank you to our 2022 sponsors

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 Waters & communities Healthy Waters supporting Vibrant Communities	 the wheel Stronger Charities. Stronger Communities.
 Comhairle Cathrach & Contae Luimnigh Limerick City & County Council	 An Roinn Tithíochta, Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreacht Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

Current Mague River Trust Directors

Conservation & Wildlife: (Chair) TOM HARRINGTON : Retired lecturer in Biology (University of Limerick)		Elected Representative: MICHAEL DONEGAN Limerick City & County Council	
Research & Education: (Vice Chair) CATHERINE DALTON Geography Lecturer Mary Immaculate College, Univ. Limerick		Local Development: RHIANNON LAUBACH Ballyhoura Development CLG	
Business: MARY FITZGERALD Owner Woodlands House Hotel & Spa, Adare		Outdoor Leisure & Tourism: SYBREN OGGE Croom Development Association	
Community: KEVIN CRIBBIN Adare Community Trust		Education: JENNIFER LISTON Lecturer in Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick	
Farming: AIDAN GLEESON Cattle farmer and IFA nominee		Angling: DAVE BUSTEN Bleach Lough Anglers	
Finance: CAROL QUISH Project Manager Mulkear EIP.		Liz Gabbett MRT Project Officer	

Reports on the Mague River and Catchment (*click on image to access pdf files*)

