

# LEADER

Community-Led Local Development



National Rural Network

## LEADER 2014-2020 NRN CASE STUDY

**Project name:** Meath River Rescue Equipment Upgrade

**Date:** 5<sup>th</sup> April 2018- 10<sup>th</sup> May 2019

**Local Action Group:** Meath Local Community Development Committee

**Implementing Partner:** Meath Partnership

**Type of Beneficiary:** Voluntary Registered Charity

**Priority & Focus Area:** Theme 3: Rural Environment /Sub theme: Water Resources

**Project Beneficiary Name/Organisation:** Meath River Rescue Service

**Address:** Meath River Rescue Search & Recovery, Beechmont Home Park, Beechmount, Navan Co. Meath

**Further information:**

<https://meathriverrescue.ie/>

<https://www.facebook.com/meathriver.rescue.1>

### MEATH RIVER RESCUE EQUIPMENT UPGRADE

#### Summary

Meath River Rescue Search and Recovery provide a very specialised and important voluntary service within their community of Navan. Set up in 1996, the organisation has grown and expanded its capacity over the years largely due to the help of LEADER funding. This particular project has facilitated the organisation to upgrade their equipment to allow them to carry out their life saving and life-altering search and recovery activities with up to spec equipment which allows them to deliver a more efficient, quicker service in a safe manner for their volunteers.

#### Context

Meath River Rescue Service is a voluntary organisation that was created in 1996 with just a handful of volunteers. The organisation was set up in order to provide a river search and rescue service across county Meath and in the adjacent counties. The demand for their services has grown year on year. The organisation is based in Navan and it operates out of a facility that was part funded by LEADER during the 2007-2014 programme. This funding, along with private funds raised on the ground, was used for a substantial project in the region of €400,000 to build and equip a boathouse where they could store their boats and equipment adjacent to the river, allowing for a better, quicker service and response time. This has facilitated the organisation to grow substantially and today it has five divers, two trained counsellors, and all members have first aid and swift water training. The equipment the service has includes seven boats, four vehicles, three jeeps and a van.



*Meath River Rescue Service Logo – Source: Meath River Rescue*

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Getting ready to launch: Source- Meath River Rescue

this project they carried out fundraising on the ground by going collecting donations from different households in the area and by having church gate collections.

**"Without Meath Partnership, we wouldn't exist"  
Christopher Rennicks, Chairperson Meath River Rescue**

As this was their second time applying for LEADER funding, the organisation was well familiar with the application process and organised the necessary paperwork to support their application. They then approached Meath Partnership and started the process.

### Results

This project helped to support the purchase of 6 new safety suits and 3 new engines. These new engines that were purchased have push start buttons. The older engines that the organisation use are pull cord engines. The push start engines allow the rescue team to have a quicker more efficient start, especially in emergency situations. These new engines allow them to experience less delays that are habitual with pull cord engines, allowing them to provide a more efficient and quicker service.

This particular project was needed in order to update and maintain the equipment which has become degraded due to wear and tear over time. Conducting numerous search and rescue operations and even training can cause damage and wear on survival suits and engines as many of the riverbeds have objects in them which can cause snags and damage to diving gear and engines. Also, each suit is specialised and is custom made for each diver. This funding was used to buy six new custom-made survival suits and 3 new engines. This has allowed Meath River Rescue to keep delivering a high quality rescue and recovery service, as well as ensuring the safety and effectiveness of the rescue team volunteers when carrying out their operations.

### Objectives

- To upgrade and provide up to date equipment to allow the rescue team and volunteers to carry out their manoeuvres safely and successfully, in line with health and safety requirements, and to do so at greater capacity.

### Activities

As LEADER provides up to 75% of funding for projects the organisation had to come up with the last part of the funds for this project. Fundraising is a normal part of the financing of this organisation, and as noted by their Chairperson, an area which they have been very well supported locally. For



3 new push start engines- Source: Meath Partnership



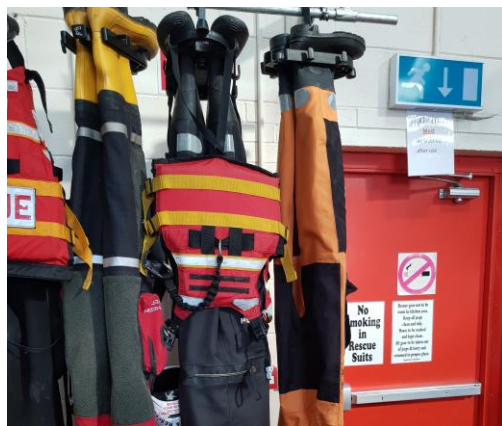




The purchase of the 6 new custom-made safety suits allows the diving team to carry out searches with good quality and safe equipment. Having up to spec safety suits allows them to conduct their jobs with minimal risk to themselves and with the best equipment that meets health and safety requirements.



*New Custom Made Safety Suits – Source: Meath Partnership*



*New Custom Made Safety Suits – Source: Meath Partnership*

Fundraising is a continual activity to maintain and upkeep the boats, engines and equipment. The LEADER application process, as with any public body funding received, can be slow, and given the lifesaving service this organisation provides, equipment has to be up to standard and ready to go. Therefore, they require a lot of their own funds to maintain this crucial service. It is a combination of local voluntary work and contributions and LEADER funds that helps to sustain an excellent Meath River Rescue service and organisation.

### Lessons

#### *Integration with Meath Partnership*

Without their relationship and integration with Meath Partnership, the Meath River Rescue Service would not be in the position it is today. They have built up a relationship with Meath Partnership that has been instrumental to their growth and development. Meath Partnership have helped to guide them through the LEADER application process on two occasions and this has been instrumental to their success. However, Meath River Rescue noted that there is a lot of behind the scenes organisation of paperwork that is required to be successful, and although particularly laborious, especially for first time applicants, it is both essential and achievable especially with guidance from your local action group.

**“If you don’t have the right paperwork, you won’t get the grant” Christopher Rennicks, Meath River Rescue Chairperson**

#### *Local support and Volunteers*

Meath River Rescue rely heavily on local support and the involvement of volunteers to sustain the organisation.

### Funding

<b>Total project budget (i)+(ii)+(iii) =</b>	<b>€21,111.51</b>
<b>+ (i) Rural Development Programme support (a)+(b)</b>	€15,832.53
<b>+ (a) EAFRD (EU) contribution</b>	€9,942.83
<b>+ (b) National / Regional contribution</b>	€5,889.70
<b>+ (ii) Private / Own funds</b>	€5,278.98
<b>+ (iii) Other funding sources</b>	n/a

### Contact details

<b>Project beneficiary name</b>	Meath River Rescue Service
<b>Contact person</b>	Christopher Rennicks
<b>Email</b>	meathriverrescue@live.ie
<b>Telephone</b>	0469028791
<b>Address of beneficiary or implementing body</b>	Meath River Rescue Search & Recovery, Beechmont Home Park, Beechmount, Navan Co. Meath

