



An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
Community Development

National Hub Network

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*“To promote rural and community development and to support vibrant,
inclusive and sustainable communities throughout Ireland”*



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Why DRCD is involved

- **Talent is equally distributed, but opportunities are not**
- **Hubs support new businesses / indigenous enterprises**
- **Hubs foster innovation, partnerships and collaboration**
- **Hubs allow us to reduce commuting times/distances and our carbon emissions**
- **Hubs support remote workers and sustainable communities**
- **Hubs support remote employers and create employment**



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BCPs & Connected Hubs

Broadband Connection Points (BCPs)

- Must be rural
- No broadband available
- Community amenity
- Majority community centres / GAA clubs
- Aim to have 300

Connected Hubs

- Can be anywhere
- Must have broadband
- Enterprise / co-working facilities
- Mix of commercial, public-owned, SE
- Aim to have 400



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Clare Island (BCP and CH)

[LINK](#)



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How DRCD is involved

- 2016** Establishment of the Mobile Phone & Broadband Taskforce
Establishment of the Broadband Officer role
- June 2019** Local digital strategy support
(Nov 2019 NBP Contract signed)
- Jan 2020** Commenced build of the Broadband Connection Point (BCP) Network
- Oct 2020** Est. National Hub Network IDG
- Jan 2021** *Making Remote Work* – DRCD/IDG tasked with:
- making a significant investment into remote working infrastructure
 - mapping and classifying hubs in the State
 - investigating the role of hubs in the transition to a low carbon economy



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Mar 2021 *Our Rural Future* – DRCD tasked with establishing a National Hub Network

Feb 2023 Work begins on the National Hub Strategy
310 hubs on-boarded to connectedhubs.ie
11,000 registered CH customers
296 BCPs live

July 2017 to date

€150m+ in funding via RRDF and T&VRS for new hubs

May 2021 to date

€14m between 2021 and 2022 Connected Hubs Calls

Funding for the connectedhubs.ie platform, Voucher Scheme and Marketing



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What next?

- **National Hub Strategy**
- **Complete the BCP build phase / Development Strategy**
- **Another c.100 hubs added to National Hub Network**
- **Further enhancements to connectedhubs.ie**



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National Hub Strategy

Enterprise

- R&D, incubator and scaling hubs
- Economic contribution
- Innovation and smart specialisation
- Funding / business models

Employment

- Remote and co-working
- Skills training and career development
- Connectedhubs.ie
- Equality of access

Community

- Non-commercial activities
- Broader community impact
- Local / regional development priorities
- Governance models
- Funding

Cross-cutting Themes

- Environmental impact / carbon reduction
- Sustainability
- Role re other policies, schemes and priorities
- International comparisons
- Partnerships



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Timeline

- Strategy Working Group established
- Stakeholder engagements March – September
- Quarterly reporting to IDG
- To government Q4

Strategy Working Group

- Department of Rural and Community Development
- Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
- Department of Environment, Climate and Communications
- Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media
- Enterprise Ireland
- IDA
- Údaras na Gaeltachta
- Western Development Commission
- Grow Remote
- CEAI (NACEC)



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Thank you

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