

community

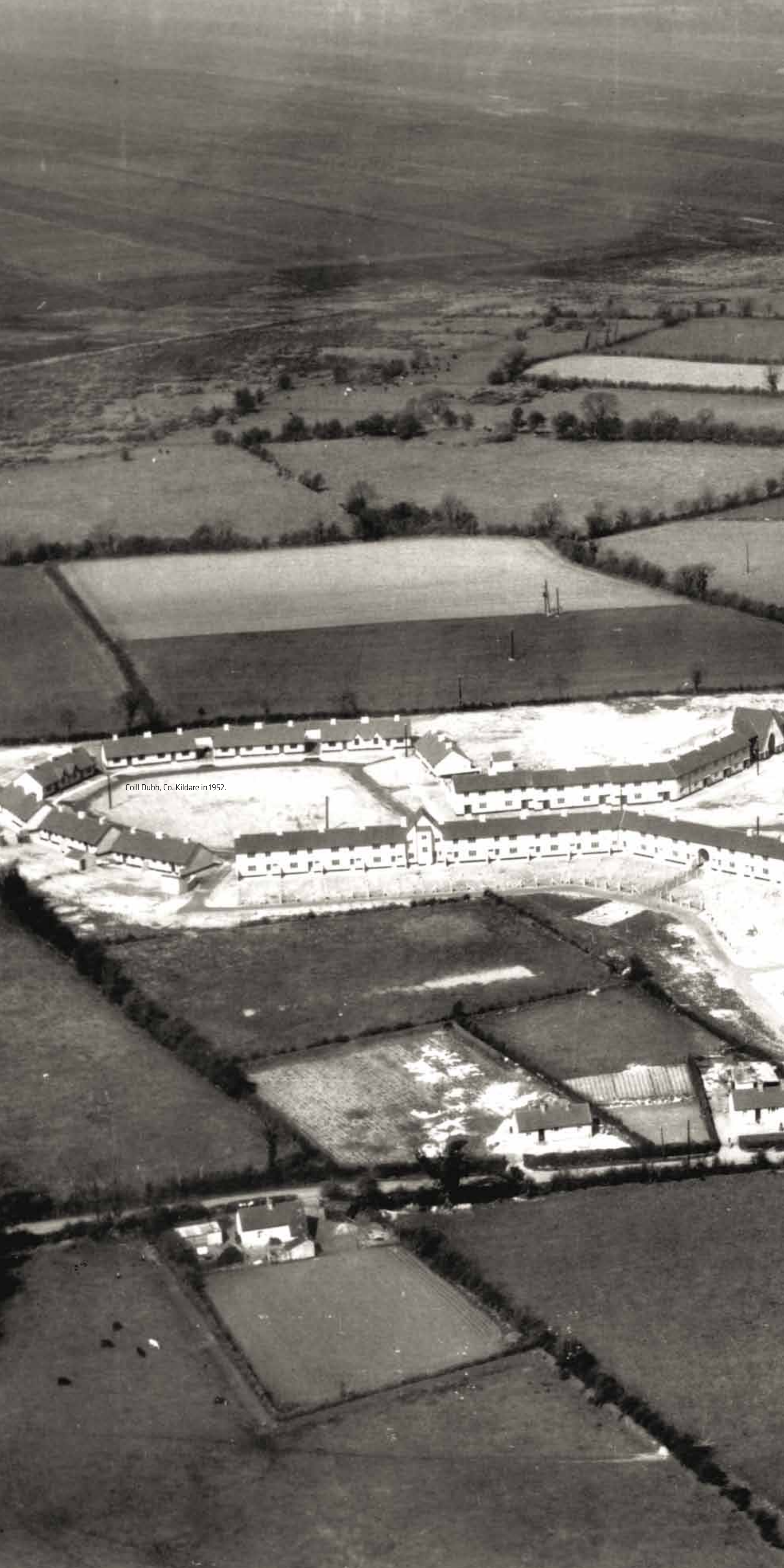
FOUNDATION

IN THIS SECTION YOU CAN SEE THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF BORD NA MÓNA ON THE COMMUNITIES OF WHICH IT HAS BEEN PART FOR SEVERAL DECADES. THROUGH HOSTELS AND HOUSING SCHEMES THE COMPANY HAS INTERACTED WITH AND INTEGRATED INTO THE COMMUNITIES OF THE MIDLANDS. THE DISPLAYS SHOW THE SPORTING AND SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THIS INTEGRATION.

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FORAS

SA MHÍR SEO TABHARFAR EOLAS MAIDIR LE TIONCHAR SÓISIALTA BHORD NA MÓNA AR NA POBAIL A D'FHÁG SÉ A LORG AR FEADH CÚPLA DEICHIÚR ANUAS. TRÍ BHRÚ ÓIGE AGUS SCÉIMEANNA TITHÍOCHTA GHLAC AN CHUIDEACHTA PÁIRT AGUS CHOMHTHÁTHAIGH SÉ I BPOBAIL AN LÁR-RÉIGIÚIN. LÉIRÍONN NA TAISPEÁNTAIS NA TRÉITHE SPÓIRT AGUS SÓISIALTA A BHÍ MAR THORADH AR AN GCOMHTHÁTHÚ SEO.



Coill Dubh, Co. Kildare in 1952.

Since its early days Bord na Móna has been involved in various ways with its local communities, particularly in the midlands. The Turf Development Board built hostels for the thousands of men who migrated seasonally to work in the midland bogs. These hostels housed over 100 men in some locations. As well as accommodation and meals, the hostels provided 'wet' and 'dry' canteens, film showings and recreation halls.

Later, when less seasonal work was carried out, Bord na Móna decided to build houses for its employees. Nine developments were built across the midlands and the west:

- Coill Dubh, Co. Kildare: 156 houses
- Cloontuskert, Co. Roscommon: 68 houses
- Crossmolina, Co. Mayo: 24 houses
- Lanesboro, Co. Longford: 64 houses
- Derraghan, Co. Longford: 22 houses
- Bracknagh, Co. Offaly: 50 houses
- Kilcormac, Co. Offaly: 104 houses
- Ballivor, Co. Meath: 8 houses
- Rochfortbridge, Co. Westmeath: 100 houses

Many men settled in these houses and married local women or brought their families to the midlands.



MIGRATION AND SPORT

Colonel Bill Stapleton, a freedom fighter during the War of Independence and later an Army Officer, was brought in to manage the T.D.B. hostels. Camp life provided not only food and shelter for these young men but also recreation, particularly in sports. Football and hurling were complemented by tug-o'-war and pillow fights. Sports days held in Newbridge often attracted huge crowds of onlookers from the localities.

In the late 1940s and 1950s many of these young men who had come mainly from the south and the west decided to get married and settle down. The villages were built as a response to the changing social situation. These families got involved in their new communities. Some started local social and recreational clubs, including drama, pitch and putt and GAA.



1. Turf Development Board sports day, 1944.
2. Timahoe Christmas party, 1952.
3. Tug of War final, Newbridge, 1945.



One such person was Paddy Fitzgerald, who arrived from south Tipperary to work in Boora, Co. Offaly. He worked as a trainee supervisor and lived in the local hostel. By 1956 he was married with two young sons and he moved into a new house built by Bord na Móna in Ballivor Co. Meath. He became involved in the local parish, including the GAA club. Paddy passed his interest in football on to his two sons Mick and Pat (who today works in Bord na Móna), who later found themselves playing on the All-Ireland winning Offaly football team of 1982 that famously denied Kerry “Five-in-a-Row”.

Indeed in the 21 years between 1961 and 1982, Offaly contested seven Senior All-Ireland Football finals, winning three titles. Many members of these teams, or their fathers, worked either full-time or seasonally for Bord na Móna or the peat fired power stations.



The Offaly team that beat Kerry in the 1982 All-Ireland senior football final.



Coill Dubh, Co. Kildare Childrens Band

