

# Taoiseach Attends Vartry Trails Opening

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*Taoiseach Leo Varadkar with Tom Leahy of Irish Water*

## The Trails

Sat June 9th 2018 – Irish Water welcomed the official opening by An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar of the Vartry Reservoir Trails. The Reservoir Trails consists of a 20km network of trails at the reservoir and are managed by Roundwood District and Community Council and are a magnificent addition to the community for locals and visitors alike to enjoy. Over 1000 people attended the event along with Taoiseach Leo Varadkar as well as Minister for Health Simon Harris who represents the Wicklow constituency.

Speaking at the event, the Taoiseach stated that *“These 20km walks are the perfect facility for getting outdoors and enjoying the best of what Irish forests have to offer.... to bring real benefit to rural Ireland.”*

Mr. Tom Leahy Irish Water Manager said *“The Vartry reservoirs are an important water supply asset for the greater Dublin region which was first developed in the 1860’s. Irish Water provided active support and construction materials for the development of these new walking trails, developed by local community effort, which are a magnificent addition to this scenic area for locals and visitors to enjoy”.*

Irish Water have been involved in the project since 2014 and sponsored the development of the Trails, providing active support and construction materials such as stones and pipes for their completion. The project began to gather momentum when Tom Leahy, the Regional Operations Manager for the Eastern and Midlands Region at the time, was approached by Councillor Shay Cullen and members of the local community to discuss the possibility of developing the trails which had been neglected for a number of years. With active support from Irish water the walkways were developed and managed by the local community group.

Tom also stated that *“This is a magnificent example of the State, Local Government, Irish Water and local community groups delivering a project with major benefits and is regarded as an exemplar for other similar trails projects”.*



Vartry

## The Vartry Water Supply Scheme

This project is part of a wider €200 million investment by Irish Water in the Vartry Water Supply Project which will see the provision of a fit for purpose water supply which will serve North Wicklow and South Dublin. The trails were also part financed by the Department of Agriculture, Department of Rural Community, and Wicklow County Council.

The Vartry Water Supply Scheme is an important asset for the region as it provides drinking water for a supply area stretching from Roundwood, through north Wicklow up to south Dublin. The scheme serves over 200,000 people, including 15% of the Greater Dublin Area. The project will consist of the construction of a new Water Treatment Plant at the site, a new pipeline, the replacement of aging pipes, improvements to the Vartry dam spillway, as well the decommissioning of the existing Treatment Plant and tunnel.

Irish Water is currently working on the construction of the 4km pipeline which will transfer the treated water from Vartry to Callowhill, replacing the existing tunnel which was built in the 1860s and is under threat of collapse. The project is also linked to the Stillorgan reservoir which was also built at the same time and is connected via the tunnel and 40kms of trunk mains.