

LECP UPDATE May/June 2021

Goal 1: Develop community capacity in disadvantaged communities and engage in urban and rural regeneration

Announcement of Town & Village Funding Scheme to Revitalise Towns and Villages

Following on from the announcement by Minister Humphreys of the launch of the 2021 Town and Village Renewal Scheme, Wicklow County Council is delighted to announce that the scheme is open for applications in the county.

The Town and Village Scheme objectives are being refocused to align with commitments within 'Our Rural Future – Rural Development Policy 2021-2025'. The 2021 Scheme will prioritise the objectives of this policy such as tackling vacancy in towns and villages, remote working and supporting town centre living. Other projects which will be welcomed include regeneration projects that support active and vibrant town or village centres, upgrading shopfronts and street facades, and green spaces and parks, etc.

The measures that will be supported by the 2021 Town and Village Renewal Scheme include (but are not limited to):

- Tackling dereliction in town centres
- Turning vacant properties into remote working and multi-use community spaces
- Investing in town centre living
- Investing in amenities to make town centre living more attractive
- Upgrading and improving shop fronts and streetscapes on Main Streets
- Projects that support and enhance the night time economy and add vibrancy to town centres

Grant Levels:

For the 2021 Scheme, the minimum grant which is available is €20,000. The maximum level of grant funding available is being raised to €500,000 in respect of one application from each Local Authority. A maximum of €250,000 will apply in respect of 2 applications and €100,000 in respect of 4 applications. **2 applications must** be in respect of Towns/Villages that have not previously received funding under the Standard Town & Village Renewal Scheme

Project Development Measure:

A new Project Development Measure (up to €50,000) is being introduced this year. This Measure is being introduced on a trial basis in order to put in place the preparation work needed to progress to a full project.

Connected Hubs Fund

This call is intended to develop and leverage the capacity and quality of **existing remote working facilities & Broadband Connection Points (BCPs)** in support of the National Hub Network initiative.

The total indicative funding available for the Connected Hubs Call is €5 million. The fund will provide grants from €10,000, up to €250,000 for multi-hub applications.

Applicants must be BCPs or existing hubs which provide, or will provide, remote working facilities and can demonstrate they have been in operation for 6 months (NB: this 6 months requirement does not apply to BCPs).

Projects funded through this call must be completed before the end of 2021 and applications must demonstrate credible project timelines to this effect or they will be deemed ineligible.

Announcement of the Rural Regeneration Development Fund Category 2

The Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, on May 12th, announced the third call for Category 2 applications to the €1 billion Rural Regeneration and Development Fund.

This Fund will support landmark regeneration projects across the country that will breathe new life into rural towns and villages.

This fund is for projects that will drive economic growth and footfall, combat dereliction, regenerate town centre and heritage buildings, develop pedestrian zones and outdoor spaces and make rural towns more attractive places to live, work and raise a family.

There will also be a strong focus on developing remote working facilities such as digital and enterprise communities, as well as e-learning, cultural and community spaces.

The Rural Regeneration and Development Fund is a key component of Our Rural Future – the Government’s ambitious five year policy for Rural Ireland.

The €1 billion Fund is also part of the Department’s Rural Development Investment Programme, which is funded under Project Ireland 2040. Projects that will be funded under Category 2 are those that require significant development before they reach the stage of being shovel ready.

The RRDF is being developed and coordinated by an inter-departmental team of Wicklow County Council.

CLAR Projects applied for in 2021

Askanagap Community Group	Astro turf pitch
Knockananna Youth Projects	MUGA floodlights
Knockananna Youth Projects	Pitch renovation
Knockananna Youth Projects	Playground refurbishment
Greenane	Footpath and paving
Knockananna Hall Committee	Garden allotment

Goal 2: Promote Active Citizenship and Public Participation to improve governance, participation and enrich decision making

Age Friendly Programme

The national Age Friendly Primary care centre guidelines were launched in June. These guidelines were compiled by Kildare and Wicklow Age Friendly Programme managers. Walkability audits are still to take place.

The final garda vetting process is being undertaken for the Arklow Befriending service.

Regarding housing, we are looking into making Rathcoran Estates in Baltinglass an Age Friendly estate. It was built by and will be run by Respond.

Comhairle na nÓg

The Comhairle na nÓg, through the Coordinator, are taking part in the COVID-19 Community Response Forum, bringing the perspective of young people to the table. They are also taking part in the Time Machine project which is an intergenerational project.

Funding has been secured from DCYA to continue to support the Comhairle na nÓg. Tablets were purchased for use by the Comhairle in each Municipal District, to help them to keep the youth council going during the COVID-19 restrictions.

PPN – report attached

Goal 3: Strategic Direction – Develop high quality integrated services, available to all communities, in particular, disadvantaged communities and vulnerable groups

Healthy Wicklow Strategy

1. Round 3 of Programme is underway but implementation has slowed down because of COVID-19. An extension to 31st December 2021 has been granted. €30,000 has been allocated to a number of groups under the Healthy Ireland Mental Health Small grants Scheme. 10 projects have been allocated funding under this stream and with the lifting of restrictions are well underway.
2. Under the Healthy Ireland Fund, Wicklow County Council received €67,225 and Wicklow CYPSC received €18,519 to help with the 'Keep Well' campaign.
3. A number of initiatives have been running since November 2020 to June 2021 to especially target the most vulnerable and isolated. The main Themes covered were under the following headings:
4. In Your County – with 50% going toward Age Friendly Collaborative Activities.

5. Being Creative/Switching Off – this included initiatives from the Arts office, Age Friendly Coordinator, Heritage office, Libraries, Bray Area Partnership and County Wicklow Partnership.
6. Staying Connected – which was 50:50 split between Community Call and Befriending Activities.
7. Minding Your Mood – Wicklow CYPSC partnered up with all youth services and family support services in Wicklow to ensure a number of initiatives were successfully ran under this action.

Migrant Integration Strategy

This has been passed by Wicklow County Council and is now in the implementation stage

Goal 4: Develop a vibrant and innovative community and social enterprise sector

Bray Area Partnership (BAP)

Bray Area Partnership has continued to work within its operational area of Bray and north Wicklow to advance social enterprise activity and initiatives. A summary of this work includes:

- As part of SICAP resourced actions, BAP are providing ongoing support, advise and guidance to pre-establishment, early stage and trading social enterprises with respect to structuring; business planning; accessing viability and more sustainable operation etc.
- Planning and information session will be held later in the year, for potential and new social enterprises covering various topics related to day to day business requirements underpinning a sustainable operation.
- Diversifying the range of services provided by an existing managed social enterprise by developing a service range to be made available to older members of the community in the Bray and north Wicklow areas supporting independent living.
- Completing the programme of work under the SEED Initiative that provided training modules and individualised mentoring together with a promotional video production for up to nine local social enterprises.
- Finalising the market research and feasibility study being undertaken to inform the development of a social enterprise having ex-offenders within its workforce.
- Developing a proposal, as a collaborative venture with two other LDCs, seeking funding to implement a six months programme for social enterprises focusing on governance, compliance and sustainable trading.

County Wicklow Partnership (CWP)

The Leader Programme 2014 – 2020 programme seen nearly 1 Million invested in Social Enterprise development

The Training and Mentoring Programmes undertaken as part of that – Rural Youth Climb, Covid 19 Supports for new and existing SE's (Ascend Programme) and the Forest Bathing Training programme will all be completed by end of August 2021 and see nearly 50 participants through their intense programme of entrepreneurial business development training.

This is now starting to bear fruit as new applications are starting to flow in for funding under the transitional LEADER programme from SE's. Further encouraging news is that we now have a

strong group of new start up Social Entrepreneurs growing in the County and Wicklow would be considered nationally as having very strong SE activity.

It is envisaged that a new fund from DRCD for new start-up social entrepreneurs will be announced in the next two weeks and so in Wicklow we now have a very strong cohort of trained SE's who would be ideally positioned to apply for funding.

County Wicklow PPN Report – June 2021

Membership	Total Members 376 (20 new 2021)
Networking/ Working Locally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participating in Community Response Forum (CRF) meeting 22nd June Contact through the Community Call has decreased significantly. Acknowledged that meetings are useful for information sharing and will continue on a monthly basis. • Collaborating with WCC and Local Link Transport Service to address transport and access issues for the residents of the Rathmore Direct Provision Centre. A response to a letter from the PPN was received from The Dept. Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth stating that the Rathmore centre has “recently been allocated with funding in order to improve transport links to and from the centre. There is now a bus running from the centre into Wicklow and Ashford on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. In addition, there is also a bus that runs to Newtown Mount Kennedy, a shopping bus once a week to Greystones, a post office bus to Ashford on Friday and a church run on Sunday to Ashford. As such there is at least one bus a day into Ashford or Wicklow”. Seeking clarification that these services are now being implemented. • Attended the WCC Access and Inclusion Group meeting 3 June. The PPN Resource Worker presented a proposal put together in collaboration with Disability Federation Ireland, Childre & Young Peoples Services Committee, Bray Area Partnership, Co Wicklow Partnership and Cllr. Miriam Murphy. The proposal contained a Tender to engage a consultant to develop a guide for community groups and service providers that would support them to be more inclusive of people with disabilities. The committee is reviewing the proposal with the possibility of providing funding for it to progress.
Networking/ Working Regionally, & Nationally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended a Dept Rural & Community Development’s webinar which focused on Our Rural Future. Presentations, Questions & Answers were conducted by Minister Joe O’ Brien and Dept officials • Attended a meeting organised by Feasta which explored the development of creating a Wellbeing Economy Hub for the Island of Ireland
PPN Meetings/ Specific Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPN Secretariat Meeting 8th June. Secretariat minutes are available on the PPN website. • PPN Policy Development Sub-Group Meeting 16th June. Continue Constitution review, and the development of Nomination & Election policy. • Collated the information from PPN Reps and various reports to fill the 2020 Annual Report Template which was submitted to Dept. Rural &

	<p>Community Development ahead of the 14 June deadline. The report template consisted of over 120 questions covering all aspects and procedures of the PPN’s work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The June Plenary (members meeting) took place on Wed 30 June. The theme of the summer plenary was “Valuing Our Ethnic Minorities”. The 49 attendees approved the PPN 6-month work & finance report prior to taking part in a brief poll to explore members experiences in access and making a submission to the County Development Plan. They then listened to speakers from Wicklow Travellers Group, Africa Irish Society of Wicklow and Rathmore Direct Provision Centre. The speakers talked about what has helped them to feel included in Co Wicklow as well as the times that they have felt excluded and faced discrimination. Focus group discussions were themed around the questions in the Towards a National Action Plan Against Racism for Ireland Public Consultation Document. The evening ended with a photo montage from Wicklow Travellers Group and an uplifting video that the AISW put together to celebrate Africa Day
<p>Representation Consultations/ Submissions *Submissions available to view on PPN website</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held a meeting of PPN Secretariat members and PPN Representatives 15 June. The meeting included information about the PPN Review, using Chatter as a means to communicate, and training & information opportunities. Reps had the opportunity to meet & discuss their roles & experiences in small groups, creating connections and providing peer support. • Developed a Resource Document to support member groups to access and make a submission to the Draft Wicklow County Development Plan 2021-2027. This included 2 videos that show how to get access to the CDP via the WCC website or by using the PPN Resource (which gives direct access), and how to use the online consultation portal to view the document and make submissions. The Resource also provides support to understand the CDP (the plan and the process of developing it) as well as providing tips, information, and templates to make a written submission. • Working with a sub-group of PPN Reps to use Chatter, an online platform connected to Salesforce. Chatter makes collaboration and networking easier, allowing a number of people with the same interest to share information, post updates & ask questions. The aim is to set up Chatter groups to act as online Linkage Groups for PPN Reps. • Ran a survey to explore PPN members experiences in accessing and making a submission to the Draft County Development Plan. The responses will feed into the PPN submission to the current consultation. • Held focus group discussions at the PPN Plenary on the topic of racism and discrimination of our ethnic communities. Questions were also circulated to those members who could not attend on the night. The information will feed into a PPN submission to the public consultation on the National Action Plan Against Racism. • Encouraged engagement with: Draft Wicklow County Development Plan; Wicklow Town Team Feasibility Study for the Development of a Youth Theatre; SSE Renewables Arklow Windpark Survey; WCC

	<p>Review of Recycling Centres; National Outdoor Recreation Strategy; Eirgrid Sustainability Survey; PPN Structural Review; Conference on the Future of Europe; Alliance for Insurance Reform: Assessing Community Benefits as a Result of New Judicial Guidelines on Personal Injury Damages; Marine Protected Areas for Ireland Town Hall Meetings; National Action Plan Against Racism; Community Foundation Ireland Training Needs Analysis for the Community Sector</p>
Training & Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource Worker & PPN Reps attended AILG Training: Housing Commitments in the Programme for Government and Affordable Housing Delivery 25 June • Highlighted/Advertised Training & Workshops: Community Led Housing Webinar; ILMI CREATE (supporting people with disabilities into employment; Developing A Catchment Wide Restoration Plan; Community Energy Information Events • Highlighted/Advertised Funding Opportunities/Competitions: Communities Integration Fund; Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership Club & Community Supports Scheme; Community Enhancement Fund; Summer of Play Initiative; NALA Student Development Fund; Supervalu Tidy Towns Competition; Coca Cola Thank You Fund; Ecclesiastical Movement for Good Fund; Local Improvement Fund; Connected Hubs Fund; Outdoor Recreation Facilities Fund; LEADER Food Initiatives Fund • Update PPN Members Funding Handbook
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulated Update E Bulletin 4th, 11th, 18th & 25th June • Website updates • Facebook 1669 likes (5 monthly inc) 2001 follows (16 monthly inc)
Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presented the benefits of joining a PPN to the managers of Clan (Age Friendly) Housing schemes across the country.
Administration/HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day to day correspondence, accounting and reporting • Resource Worker & Support Worker Planning meetings • Resource Worker & Support Worker Supervision meetings • HR Subgroup meetings
Planning/Upcoming Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 July National Resource Workers Meeting • 5 July PPN Liaison Subgroup meeting, bring Secretariat, Host Organisation, Local Authority and PPN Resource Worker together. • 6 July Meeting of PPN Reps on the CCSD SPC to develop a proposal to make some amendments to the Community Awards Application Form that will include environmental criteria and links to the SDGs as well as a proposal to run an information meeting about the work of the CCSD SPC. • 13 July Secretariat Meeting • 20 July Community Response Forum Meeting • 21 July Policy Subgroup Meeting • Make Submissions to the County Development Plan and the National Action Plan Against Racism • Planning & Organising Autumn/Winter Workplan • Support Worker Annual Leave 13 – 16 July & 26 July to 9 August

