

## **Wicklow PPN – Annual Members Survey 2025**

### **Overview**

This report summarises feedback from 37 member groups who responded to the 2025 Annual Members Survey. It highlights what is working well, key challenges to engagement, priority issues members want raised, and practical suggestions to guide Wicklow PPN's planning for 2026.

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### **1. Engagement & What Members Value**

Members who engaged with Wicklow PPN highlighted a wide range of supports, with particular appreciation for:

- Newsletters and email updates (frequently described as useful, timely and informative)
- Funding information & grant application support (seminars, training, alerts)
- Governance, compliance and training sessions
- Plenary meetings and local meetings
- Direct support and guidance from PPN staff

Several respondents noted that the newsletter is a key strength and often their main point of contact with PPN.

However, a minority indicated no engagement to date, usually due to capacity or time pressures rather than dissatisfaction.

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### **2. Communication Channels**

How members access information:

- Emailed news updates: used by the vast majority of respondents
- Meetings / events & information sessions: widely used
- Social media: secondary channel
- Website: used by a smaller but significant number

Insight: Email remains the most effective communication tool. Other channels work best as complementary rather than primary methods.

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### **3. Attendance & Participation Levels**

Attendance over the past two years:

- Occasionally: largest group of respondents
- Regularly: a solid core of engaged members
- Rarely or Never: a significant minority

This suggests strong interest, but capacity and accessibility barriers limit consistent participation.

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### **4. Barriers to Engagement**

Key reasons members do not engage regularly:

1. Lack of time / competing priorities (by far the most common issue)
2. Event timing not suitable
3. Topics not always relevant to specific groups
4. Transport or accessibility barriers
5. Unclear understanding of PPN's role or what happens at events (raised by newer members)

Insight: Barriers are primarily practical rather than attitudinal. Members are generally positive but stretched.

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### **5. Preferred Formats & Timing**

Clear preferences emerged for:

- Online or hybrid events, particularly on weekdays
- Shorter sessions (including lunchtime options) for training
- In-person events valued for networking, but less accessible for some
- Weekends generally less suitable for many groups

Suggestion: A blended programme with short online sessions plus occasional in-person networking events would suit most members.

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## **6. Issues Members Want Raised in 2026**

A broad and diverse range of issues were identified, clustering around several key themes:

### Community & Infrastructure

- Road safety, overgrown hedges, potholes, lighting and footpaths
- Public transport (bus and rail), especially in rural and West Wicklow areas
- Greenway development and lack of follow-through
- Hospital parking costs and disabled parking availability

### Funding & Administration

- Funding availability for core / operating costs
- Short notice and complexity of grant applications
- Insurance challenges (including community and volunteer activities)
- Red tape and delays in responses from Wicklow County Council

### Social Inclusion & Equality

- Anti-racism, equality and social inclusion
- Refugee integration and trauma-informed approaches
- Traveller cultural awareness
- Disability advocacy and accessibility

### Young People, Health & Wellbeing

- Youth engagement and substance misuse
- Mental health and wellbeing supports
- Men's health

Insight: Members see PPN as a key advocacy voice, particularly for smaller or rural groups who feel underrepresented.

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## **7. Training Needs Identified**

While responses were diverse, recurring training needs include:

- Funding & fundraising (applications, frameworks, strategies)
- Governance & compliance (Charities Code, constitutions, board roles)

Thursday 12 February 2026

- Engagement with elected representatives & advocacy skills
- Community engagement methods
- Mental health, wellbeing and inclusion-focused training

Several members noted they were unclear what training is currently available.

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## **8. Suggestions & Priorities for Wicklow PPN in 2026**

Members suggested that Wicklow PPN prioritise:

- Stronger support for smaller and rural groups, particularly in West Wicklow
- Simplifying and demystifying funding and grant processes
- Youth engagement initiatives
- More networking opportunities between groups and with funders
- Practical, hands-on support rather than purely informational sessions
- Increased visibility through community visits, showcases and local events

Several respondents emphasised the importance of:

*“Listening to the smaller voices as well as the louder ones.”*

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## **9. Overall Sentiment**

Overall feedback is positive and constructive. Members value Wicklow PPN’s work, particularly communications, advocacy and funding support. The main challenges for member engagement relate to capacity, time and accessibility rather than lack of interest.