



STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2028



County Kildare
LEADER PARTNERSHIP

*Towards A More Equal, Fair,
And Inclusive County*



Contents

CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME	2
CEO'S FOREWORD	3
WHO WE ARE	4
WHAT WE DO	4
WHO WE WORK WITH: PEOPLE	5
WHERE WE WORK: PLACE	6
ECONOMIC CONTEXT	7
THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR IN KILDARE	8
THE LOCAL AND NATIONAL CONTEXT	10
THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW STRATEGY	12
DIAGNOSTIC: WORKSHOP AND SERVICE USER FOCUS GROUP	14
CKLP'S STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2029: INTRODUCTION	16
CKLP'S VISION, MISSION AND VALUES	16
THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS	18



CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

A chairde,

Is mór an onóir domsa an Plean Straitéiseach seo ata ullmhaithe ag County Kildare Leader Partnership a chur faoi bhráid an pobal.

I welcome this opportunity on behalf of the Board and management to present the Strategic Plan in which County Kildare Leader Partnership sets out its Vision and Mission as a guide to creating a more inclusive and equal society in County Kildare. The Board decided to embark on a review of Company direction and focus, and in doing so set out a Strategic Plan that takes account of the very significant changes which have and are taking place in the environment in which it operates. Some of the greatest impacting factors have been Brexit, Covid, the Ukraine war as well as the changing demographics in the county.

"2 Into 3" were appointed as Facilitators in undertaking this major exercise and I would like here to take this opportunity of thanking Luna Atkins who coordinated the process, which involved many workshops, both physical and online, attended by Board, Staff, State Agencies, local communities as well as Service Users. To all who participated and were actively engaged, I express my sincere gratitude as it significantly enriched the process and delivered a quality plan.

While this review was taking place, the former Convent building in Kildare Town was being renovated by the Company and adapted to that of Company offices as well as a community training/ support facility. CKLP now has a permanent base / facilities as well as a strategic plan which will contribute to enabling a more inclusive and equal society within the county.

Colm O'Gogain

Chairman

CEO'S FOREWORD

On behalf of the Board and staff of County Kildare LEADER Partnership CLG I am pleased to introduce our Strategic Plan for 2023 – 2028.

This, the first Company Strategic Plan marks an important phase in the development of our Company. Established in 2007 and trading since 2009, County Kildare LEADER Partnership CLG represents the evolution of local and community development in County Kildare from the initial LEADER and Partnership Companies of the 1990's and the integration of Community Development Projects in 2011. In keeping with the changing social economic and cultural environment in County Kildare the work of County Kildare LEADER Partnership has developed to match local needs with the resources made available through the Irish Government, the EU and other sources.

This strategic plan is built around four central themes: supporting individuals; supporting communities; building organisational capacity and finally promoting collaborative engagement. In order to achieve the objectives in the strategic plan there are a number of key stakeholders with whom CKLP must develop and maintain solid relationships. These include local communities in the county who provide the direction, funders who provide the resources to achieve desired outcomes

and the staff of the company who are responsible for the delivery of actions and achievement of outcomes.

The strategic plan sets out a framework for the further development of our company and how it can respond to some of the challenges that face County Kildare. Many of these challenges relate to a lack of resources and services to meet the needs of a rapidly growing population. In such circumstances the funding programmes managed by County Kildare LEADER Partnership are often inadequate to meet the demands. This heightens the importance as highlighted in this strategic plan of building capacity within communities to lobby for better services particularly for those who are vulnerable. It also emphasizes the need for funders and service providers to work collaboratively to ensure that the existing limited resources are maximised and used to best effect.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the development of this Strategic Plan and hope that you will continue to work towards its implementation in the years ahead.

Pat League

Chief Executive Officer



WHO WE ARE

County Kildare LEADER Partnership (CKLP) is a local development company, registered as a Company limited by guarantee and with charitable status. The Company is governed by a voluntary Board and has been active in County Kildare since it commenced business in 2009, as a result of the merging of the former LEADER and Partnership companies. In the fifteen years since this amalgamation, CKLP has consolidated its position as an implementer of Government Programmes in County Kildare working in cooperation with state agencies, local government, service providers and local communities.



Sinead Bashir SICAP Education and Community Development Worker and Ladislav Koky, Roma Employment & Health Support Worker with participants at the Roma and Traveller Information Event, Social Inclusion Week 2023

WHAT WE DO

County Kildare LEADER Partnership supports individuals and groups throughout County Kildare to progress towards reaching their potential with a specific focus on individuals and groups who are vulnerable and impacted by social exclusion.

The main activities of the company involve the implementation of programmes funded by the Irish Government and the European Union and cover the areas of rural and community development, health and wellbeing, integration supports, community work placement schemes (TUS/RSS) and community employment schemes. The company also acts as a host employer for other programmes for specific periods.



Old Hardware Café Social Enterprise Narraghmore

WHO WE WORK WITH: PEOPLE

CKLP's understanding of development takes a life cycle approach and is aimed at the development of individuals and communities, from childhood to old age. We do not see progress solely in economic terms, but rather as an interconnected process which has the person at its heart. Therefore, the work of CKLP supports a diverse range of activities impacting on individuals, groups, organisations, and communities in County Kildare. Central to its focus on an inclusive and equal society is the participation of all members of the county, including vulnerable and marginalised groups, understanding that everyone has a contribution to make to the whole of society. Through the delivery of its programmes, we work

with agencies and service providers, local authorities, local businesses and the community and voluntary sector. Through the programmes we implement on behalf of funders we have a particular focus on individuals and families living in disadvantaged areas of the county, those who are unemployed, asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, members of the Traveller and Roma community, people with disabilities, older people, individuals who have been impacted by addiction, those struggling with their mental or physical health and other groups. We wish to ensure that the voices and views of people who are seldom heard are taken into account.



*LEADER Programme supported
Walking/Running Track Rathcoffey GAA*



SICAP Better Basic Reading Programme

WHERE WE WORK: PLACE

County Kildare is a significant population base within Ireland. Over the last two decades, it has experienced the second fastest rate of population growth in the country. It is now the fourth highest populated county, after counties Dublin, Cork, and Galway. It is the fifth largest Local Authority, after Dublin City, Cork County, Fingal, and South Dublin. Up-to-date figures show that the county has a population of 246,977, 4.8% of the total in the country. This marks another 11% rise since 2016, (of 24,473), a level of growth above the State average at 7.6%. The demographic trend indicates that the county has grown by more than 71% in the last 20 years. This growth is explained by both a high birth rate (the birth rate in County Kildare exceeds the national birth rate) and high levels of net migration into the county. County Kildare is a diverse county in terms of population density, with a urban/rural mix. Approximately 72% of the county's population live on 5% of the county's total land area, with urban centres such as Naas and Newbridge holding large proportions of the total population.

At 36.6%, County Kildare has the highest proportion of young people aged 0 – 24 in the State. In fact, the number of young people under 25 years in Co. Kildare is higher than the total population of each of the following counties: Offaly, Cavan, Sligo, Roscommon, Monaghan, Carlow, Longford, and Leitrim. County Kildare also has high levels of youth dependency and a high number of lone parent families with children under 15 years of age (fifth highest in the state). Regarding minority populations, County Kildare has lower than national and regional rates of Travellers, though Traveller populations in the county are concentrated in urban areas. The largest non-national community living in Kildare is that of Polish nationals who represent 30% of all non-nationals in the county and 3.3% of the total county population. The number of people seeking international protection has increased in 2023 with current provision centres located in a number of towns in the county.

Recent history has shown us the uncertain nature of life and the need to develop resilience in our communities. Firstly, COVID 19 had a significant impact on populations in County Kildare, particularly in already vulnerable populations who experienced increased economic hardship, food poverty, mental health challenges and general health and wellbeing issues. More recently, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has led to a significant inward migration of persons from Ukraine. Both the pandemic and the Ukrainian war have precipitated a significant cost-of-living increase which continues to have a profound impact, especially on disadvantaged groups.



Cathal Geaney, Community Food and Nutrition Worker, Slaintecare Healthy Communities, Athy

ECONOMIC CONTEXT

The preparation of this Strategic Plan took place in a period of significant economic flux, due to Covid-19, the climate crisis and the geoeconomic crisis caused by the Russian war against Ukraine. Although the economy in Kildare has performed strongly since the end of the pandemic, the growth in population and the young age demographic of the county places significant strains on infrastructure and services in areas such as housing, healthcare and public transport.

A significant feature of the Kildare economic scene is the fact that it has the second-highest rate of Foreign Direct Investment nationally and its ability to attract FDI is seen as crucial in its economic success. Kildare is home to many multinational companies, including those in the pharmaceutical and information technology fields. This has produced a significant increase in residents in the county, especially in the east of the county, close to two main economic clusters - the Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) Economic Cluster in northeast Kildare and the Sallins-Naas-Newbridge Cluster. Kildare has a well-educated population, with over 36% of the population holding a third level degree or higher, and its proximity to Dublin presents many opportunities. Consequently, in recent years, Kildare's economy has been performing strongly, relative to other parts of the country, with higher levels of participation in the labour force and a higher median gross household income. Kildare also has a well-educated population, with over 36% of the population holding a third level degree or higher. Many of these work in SME and the micro-Enterprise sector represents approximately 92% of all active business in the county.

However, there are significant challenges also. According to Kildare Data Hub, over 40% of the total workforce living in Kildare work outside the county, mostly in Dublin (73% of all who commute). Kildare has the third highest level of commuting times in the state with 15% of all workers having

a daily return commute greater than 2 hours and 47% having a daily return commute of greater than 1 hour. This has a noteworthy impact upon quality of life and on social cohesion of communities.

Furthermore, the shift from 'blue-collar' to 'white-collar' emphases in employment, whilst positive in some respects, has differential impacts on different communities in the area. Access to technology and digital resources, is fast becoming a wider issue as those resources are increasingly required to participate not just in the labour market but also in day-to-day life.

14% of the total land cover, mainly in the west of the county, is covered by peatland and with the closure of a significant number of large factories, as well as the de-carbonisation of Bord na Mona, the Just transition area of the county has undergone significant changes in the types of local employment available. CKLP wishes to support communities in the move to Greener, Smarter and more sustainable economic activities, including alternative enterprises like retrofitting, energy conservation, eco-tourism and the use of technology solutions for local businesses.



LEADER Programme support for Malting Equipment Athgarrett Malt

THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SECTOR IN KILDARE

The origins of County Kildare LEADER Partnership emerged in the mid 1990's and is linked to both the advent of social Partnership and as a result of Ireland joining the European Union.

In 1994 Area Development Management Ltd (now known as Pobal) initiated a Global Grant for Local Development co funded by the EU and Irish Government which established predevelopment projects in North West Kildare and South Kildare. In 1995 the Government designated areas of disadvantage using deprivation indices for the first time to identify areas of long-term unemployment and social exclusion. In each designated area an Area Based Partnership Company was formed and North West Kildare/North Offaly (OAK Partnership) was one of the 38 Partnership companies funded under the Operational Programme for Local Urban and Rural Development. Through the same programme the Government funded a number of community groups to establish local area initiatives and Action South Kildare (later to become Kildare Community Partnership) was one of the groups that was established also in 1995. The following year, in 1996 the second LEADER programme commenced in Ireland and an application from County Kildare was successful with the establishment of the Kildare LEADER company (KELT).

While each of the companies established during this period had specific remits for rural development (LEADER) and social inclusion initiatives (OAK and ASK) some collaborative projects had a long-term impact in the county. As is still the case today transport was a major issue and through local needs analysis and community engagement rural transport initiatives were established in North West Kildare / North Offaly and in

South Kildare. In the OAK area this was assisted greatly through the FAS Social Economy Programme where the transport project purchased and ran its own vehicles. In 2014 Local Link was established in County Kildare taking over the roles pioneered by OK Transport and South Kildare Community Transport and is now funded by the National Transport Authority as part of Connecting Ireland. Similarly in relation to small farm holdings the three local development companies collaborated to provide a service to smallholders with non-viable farms to maximise their farm income and to source off farm employment. Today the Rural Social Scheme funded by the Department of Social Protection continues to provide income support for low income farm families as well as contributing to local communities through the work that participants undertake.

In 2008 the Government implemented a rationalization programme called the Cohesion Process which amalgamated local and rural development companies, in many cases in line with local authority boundaries. From this process County Kildare LEADER Partnership was established and commenced trading in 2009. In addition to the LEADER and social inclusion programmes funded by the Government (Local Development Social Inclusion Programme now known as SICAP) County Kildare LEADER Partnership also inherited a number of programmes funded by FAS including a Community Employment scheme (the Business Development Programme now known as the Enterprise Skills Programme) and Local Training Initiatives (LTI's) in Allenwood, Naas (2 projects), Newbridge and Athy. The LTI's provided an opportunity for unemployed participants to achieve FETAC major awards in areas

impacted by a lack of transport and had a high progression to further education, training and employment.

In 2011 the Government embarked on a further rationalization of community and voluntary involvement with the integration of Community Development Projects. In County Kildare this brought the work formerly carried out by Athy CDP, the Bridge CDP (Newbridge) and North West Kildare CDP under the auspices of County Kildare LEADER Partnership. Thus, the work formerly carried out by six separate local organisations had come together under the LEADER Partnership company.

In the intervening years there have been many new developments including the establishment of the DARA Project funded as a Drug Rehabilitation CE scheme by FAS (now Department of Social Protection), the closure of all of the LTI projects, the development of Kildare Small Jobs Service as part of the Enterprise Skills CE scheme, the emergence of the TUS programme in 2011 as a control measure to address long term unemployment and provide 300 placements with local community groups, the development of Older Voices Kildare as one of the first social prescribing projects funded by HSE and in more recently the development of HEADS UP as a mental health programme for men in distress. In 2012 when refugees came to live in Naas the company was involved in an inter agency collaboration and has consistently supported work with asylum seekers and refugees with other key stakeholders. County Kildare LEADER Partnership has forged links with Kildare Sports Partnership and acts as a host for Sports Development staff as well as Kildare Public Participation Network and until 2022 acted as host organisation for the

Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force. Since 2021 the company also acts as an implementing body for the Slaintecare Healthy Communities Programme.

Apart from these specific funding arrangements the company has collaborated with a wide range of individuals, groups and organisations over the last fifteen years. Based in Jigginstown, Naas since 2010 the company moved to its current location in Kildare Town after the COVID pandemic in 2022. This new location provides ample facilities as a base to support individuals and groups in the years to come.



Former HEADS UP Participants at the 21st celebration of the Programme

THE LOCAL AND NATIONAL CONTEXT

Since the establishment of CKLP in 2009 the local and national policy context has altered dramatically. The initial years of operation coincided with the post 2008 economic downturn in the country with the recession leading to large numbers of unemployed and drastic cuts in public expenditure.

One of the initiatives agreed as part of the bailout of the Irish economy was to establish a work placement programme in 2011 called TUS that would act as a control measure to reduce the number of unemployed. In October 2011, FÁS, the national training and employment authority was replaced by SOLAS, the new Further Education and Training Authority, and the Education and Training Boards (ETBs). SOLAS and the ETBs now provide a variety of courses, both full-time and part-time, for different levels and needs. With the departure of FAS responsibility for Community Employment Schemes passed to the Department of Social Protection which also took over responsibility for the Rural Social Scheme.

Tusla, the Child and Family Agency was established on the 1st January 2014 following the passing of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013, and is now the dedicated State agency responsible for improving wellbeing and outcomes for children. It represents the most comprehensive reform of child protection, early intervention and family support services ever undertaken in Ireland.

One of the most significant reforms occurred in local government with the Local Government Reform Act 2014. Under the Act councillors were given stronger policy-making powers and a greater level of control

over the actions of the local authority chief executive. Local authorities were also able to become more involved in the economic development of their communities. The Local Government Reform Act also led to the establishment of Local Community Development Committees in each local authority area. The role of the LCDC is to improve the coordination, planning and delivery of local and community development programmes and interventions in each local authority area. An LCDC is composed of representatives from the local government, public bodies, local development groups and various community interests. LCDCs are responsible for developing and implementing a six-year Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) that sets out the objectives and actions for the economic and community development of the county. LCDCs also oversee and monitor the delivery of social inclusion and rural development programmes, such as the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) and the Rural Development Programme (LEADER).

These significant changes to local and national policy had a major impact on the role and function of CKLP and other Local Development Companies in Ireland. Two of the major changes were the loss of state agency representation from Boards and the responsibility transferred to LCDC's in relation to the contracts for social inclusion and rural development programmes where CKLP now competes in an open tender process for these programmes. This creates uncertainty about the future delivery of CKLP's services, and the tenure of its staff, and creates a value-for-money incentive in the delivery of community development programmes.

In addition to the nuanced social and economic contexts in which CKLP operates it must consider the complex and evolving regulatory environment as well as geographical and topical policy landscapes. As CKLP plans for the future it must therefore hold awareness of policy measures both relating to its activities and its position in County Kildare particularly as they relate to social inclusion, economic development and participation, cultural inclusion, local development, health, and wellbeing.

Operations

In recent years, CKLP's financial performance has been stable, with a small, consistent surplus and modest amount of assets. Approximately 90% of the organisation's income comes from state sources which, to varying degrees, cover overhead and administration costs for the whole company. CKLP has over three hundred employees.

From 2019, the Board has seen a reduction in size and a shift from representation-based to a skills-based model. Currently the Board has a maximum of 12 members.

In 2022, with the support of the Irish Social Finance Centre and Clann Credo, CKLP moved to its new premises in Kildare Town - Kildare Community Development Centre - and provides accommodation and rental opportunities for the community and voluntary groups and other agencies.

Moving forwards, CKLP must continue to respond to the ever-changing landscape within which it operates. As the population in County Kildare and the surrounding areas grows, the organisation must consider how best to build its capacity to continue to serve the community.



Helen Mulhall LEADER Programme Development Officer with the 23rd Kildare Scouts group, Sallins



Visit of Ministers Martin Haydon and Joe O'Brien to the DARA Project, Athy.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW STRATEGY

For CKLP it is vital that we reflect in an ongoing way on the needs in our communities and how we can best respond to them. This is crucial to ensure the sustainability, growth, and continued success of an organisation. The Strategic Planning process arose from this desire. We engaged the consultancy, 2into3, to facilitate the development of a six-year Strategic Plan using a highly participative process. We sought input from a wide range of stakeholders, using a variety of methods. We created a steering committee that was made up representatives from the Board, management and staff. We organised consultation meetings with staff, the Board, and with representatives from the community,

state agencies and service providers, funders and groups that we work with. The process strove to recognise and reaffirm the mission-driven nature of CKLP's activities, as well as the core reasons for its existence.

The process is visualised in Figure 4 below, involving four workshops and a service user focus group. In addition, a dedicated "horizon scanning" roundtable discussion was organised with state agencies and other key external stakeholders. These consultations and sessions were interspersed with Steering Group meetings.



DIAGNOSTIC: WORKSHOP AND SERVICE USER FOCUS GROUP

During the diagnostic phase of the strategic development process, stakeholders were consulted on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing CKLP. These discussions took place in a Board/staff workshop and in a dedicated focus group for service users. The major points arising from these discussions then informed the Priorities and Goals subsequently identified. Below are the key limitations and opportunities identified by stakeholders, as these are considered the most 'actionable.'

FUNDING MODEL

This exercise aimed to have participants consider the factors impacting CKLP's financial viability, both in the long and immediate term.

Key Limitations

- Lack of dedicated resource and skills to engage in fundraising
- State funding is uncertain and do not cover core costs (e.g., cover of admin and overheads, training costs)
- Lack of core budget to finance the company
- Fitting programmes to meet funder requirements
- Threat of potential changes to government priorities and associated funding cuts
- Procurement compliance burden; prioritisation of value-for-money over quality.

Key Opportunities

- Pursuing philanthropic funding (e.g., corporate funding / CSR)
- Income-generation opportunities in new Kildare Town building

PERFORMANCE

This exercise sought to identify the challenges and opportunities pertaining to CKLP's ability to serve the community. Participants were asked to consider CKLP's model, its service users' experiences, and overall responsiveness.

Key Limitations

- Not reaching everyone that needs assistance
- Some geographical gaps in reach
- Reporting requirements do not tell full story of impact
- Digital poverty (not all programmes can move online)
- Growing population - can CKLP meet growing demands

Key Opportunities

- Enhancing supports / training for social enterprises
- Enhancing supports / training for community groups (e.g., around climate adaptation, employment, digital skills)
- Lobbying on behalf of Co Kildare (and supporting self-advocacy)
- Differentiating CKLP from other agencies.
- Getting better at demonstrating CKLP's impact
- Kildare Town Project - visibility in the community. One-stop-shop
- Collaborations with other relevant actors in Co Kildare



ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY

This exercise saw participants discuss the key challenges and opportunities facing CKLP in terms of its people, specifically relating to staff capacity and organisational structures.

Key Limitations

- Siloed approach to working
- High staff turnover and burn out
- Unequal T&Cs, contract lengths, job uncertainty
- Limited progression opportunities within CKLP

Key Opportunities

- Increasing collaboration among staff and between staff and other agencies
- Opportunities to provide professional development, recognition, and equalisation of T&Cs for staff and volunteers

DIAGNOSTIC: HORIZON SCANNING

“Horizon scanning” can be used as part of an organisation’s strategic planning process to identify assess future changes or threats within a given timeframe. It can reveal important needs or gaps in an organisation’s current and future priorities and capacities. Horizon scanning can be most powerful when undertaken with diverse stakeholders who each bring a different, nuanced understanding of an organisation, its operating environment, and the community it exists to serve.

As a supplementary exercise to its strategic planning process, CKLP commissioned 2into3 to facilitate a horizon scanning exercise. 2into3 conducted desk research and produced a report into four areas where there have already

been and will continue to be significant shifts that will affect individuals and communities in County Kildare, and that CKLP may therefore need to respond to deliver its Mission:

1. Community Development and Social Inclusion
2. Economy, skills, & enterprise
3. Digital Connectivity
4. Climate adaptation and just transition

The report provided a basis for a stakeholder roundtable discussion on the implications for County Kildare in the coming ten years, and what role if any CKLP should have in addressing them.

Some key learnings from the stakeholder discussion include:

- County Kildare is growing and will continue to grow. This is not new, but has implications for needs analysis, prioritisation of work, availability of funding.
- Local context is important: Bord Na Mona, Barrow Blueway, generational unemployment.
- Diverse local needs: rural - urban; young - old; specific groups (e.g., Roma, asylum seekers).
- CKLP has dual role in providing targeted supports AND generalised community development.
- CKLP’s structure, position and links across communities and agencies is a key asset: ability to advocate for & represent community needs, ability to convene, ability to remain responsive.
- Emphasis on community empowerment may require a new approach to community development (asset-based) with implications for internal capacity with a move towards greater representation of community voices within CKLP.

CKLP'S STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2028: INTRODUCTION

This Strategic Plan encompasses CKLP's newly stated Vision, Mission and Values, a set of overarching Strategic Priorities, Goals, Outcomes, and the individual Strategies to achieve each Priority.

VISION

During a dedicated session, as well as throughout the strategic planning, stakeholders were consulted as to what should be CKLP's Vision: the expression of what kind of future the organisation wishes to work towards. CKLP's agreed Vision is for an inclusive and equal society:

“ An equal, fair, and inclusive County Kildare, where all can flourish and realise their full potential ”



Former Director Zoryana Pshyk and Stephanie Larkin SICAP with participants at the Traveller and Roma Information Event during Social Inclusion Week 2023





Vira Lapuniak TUS participant and Diana Lavrova CE scheme participant at the Leixlip Youth and Community Centre café

MISSION

Stakeholders also helped to articulate CKLP's Mission: its statement of purpose and its roadmap towards to its Vision. This Mission statement forms the cornerstone of CKLP's development in the next five years:

“ CKLP exists to advance social, economic, and cultural inclusion in County Kildare

We do this by supporting and empowering individuals and communities, and by working in partnership with all stakeholders in the County ”



VALUES

Values convey the ethos of an organisation, and they define the way in which it is committed to working. Values guide and inspire how an organisation goes about achieving its Vision and Mission. Again, developed and iterated with stakeholder input, CKLP agreed on the following Values:



Sustainable

Our work is informed by a desire to create a more sustainable world, which conserves the environment and plants for the future. We believe that community development should mirror a living system where human, natural, and economic elements are interdependent. We will work to influence socially sustainable policies and practices.



Community-led

Our work involves communities and citizens at the local level to develop responses to the social economic and environmental challenges which they face. We believe that local communities should be enabled to contribute to the solutions to the real issues that impact them.



Inclusive

Our work seeks to ensure that it includes everyone who is affected by the outcome of the process. To do this we wish that interventions and arrangements include a diversity of voices.



Person-centred

The full development of the person, from childhood to old age, is at the centre of our work. A person-centred approach to community development considers each individual's life experience, age, gender, heritage, language, beliefs and identity. It focuses on a person's strengths and assets, skills and talents and supports their ability to make choices that affect their own lives.



Collaborative

Collaboration and networking are at the heart of the CKLP approach, from the design of an initiative to putting it in place. This is essential for inclusive community development, and to compliment the work of mainstream agencies and service providers in the county.



Social Justice

A social justice framework is aimed at resisting unfairness and inequality in our community while enhancing freedom and equality for all. It focuses on how policies, practices and institutions may be used to liberate rather than oppress those at the margins of our society.



Equality

We aim to challenge attitudes and practices which discriminate against and marginalize people. We passionately believe that all are created equal no matter what their gender, ethnicity, race or religion.



PRIORITIES, GOALS AND STRATEGIES: TOWARDS A GREENER, SMARTER, MORE SOCIAL COUNTY 2023 - 2028

1

PRIORITY

SUPPORTING AND EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS

WHY THIS PRIORITY...

The Strategic Goals identified under Individuals are oriented towards providing a range of vital supports to individuals particularly in the areas of social, economic, and cultural inclusion, and health and well-being.



2

PRIORITY

BUILDING VIBRANT AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

WHY THIS PRIORITY...

The Goals identified under Communities seek to build the capacity of communities to self-organise and self-advocate around priorities that they themselves identify. A big strategic shift for CKLP will be to become responsive to the needs of communities, and to institute an asset-based community development approach across the whole company.





Following multi-stakeholder consultations, CKLP identified four Strategic Priorities it wishes to focus on between 2023-2028, and a set of Goals and measurable Outcomes under each area. Under each Goal, specific Strategic Actions to deliver on them are identified.

3

PRIORITY

DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION & NETWORKS

WHY THIS PRIORITY...

This Priority addresses that CKLP will need to be more collaborative – both internally and externally – to deliver its Mission. Within the company, this means putting in systems and structures that will break down programme silos. Externally, this means working more closely with other agencies, non-profits, and the community to better understand the needs of people in County Kildare and to identify potential solutions.



4

PRIORITY

STRENGTHENING CKLP'S CAPACITY AND EXPERTISE

WHY THIS PRIORITY...

The Goals under the Strategic Priority of Capacity seek to make CKLP a stronger, more effective, and more sustainable organization so that it can deliver its programmes to the best of its ability.



STRATEGIC GOAL

STRATEGIC GOAL	OUTCOMES	ACTIONS
<p>Support the personal development and social economic and cultural participation of people living in County Kildare</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. SICAP and LEADER funding will have been secured for the period 2024 – 2028. ii. The number of individuals from priority target groups employed by CKLP will have increased between 2024 and 2028. iii. Individuals will have been assisted to engage in social and cultural activity across the county. iv. Individuals will have been assisted to take up further education, training, employment or develop their business. 	<p>Prepare and submit a tender for SICAP 2024 – 2028.</p> <p>Prepare a Local Development Strategy for the 2023 – 2027 LEADER. Programme.</p> <p>Continue to work with the Department of Social Protection to sponsor and develop the capacity of the Enterprise Skills Programme and the Small Jobs Service CE scheme.</p> <p>Continue to work with the Department of Social Protection to sponsor and develop the capacity of the DARA Project Drug Rehabilitation CE scheme.</p> <p>Continue to act as Implementing Body for the Tus and Rural Social Scheme programmes funded by the Department of Social Protection</p> <p>Engage on an ongoing basis with key stakeholders to promote and maximise the uptake of mainstream education, training and employment supports.</p>
<p>Design and deliver a range of programmes that meet the holistic needs of individuals in rural and urban areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Improved uptake of public services among hard-to-reach groups. ii. New initiatives to improve the lives of priority target groups will have been piloted and evaluated. iii. Access to services for individuals in rural areas will have improved. 	<p>Implement the SICAP strategic plan for 2024 – 2028 focusing on priority target groups and specific themes including youth, older people in isolated areas and addiction.</p> <p>Implement the 2023 – 2027 Local Development Strategy for LEADER in the County</p> <p>Support micro, small and medium sized enterprises to generate economic activity in rural communities including outdoor recreation and tourism facilities.</p> <p>Identify and implement supports with other stakeholders to assist individuals impacted by a lack of transport.</p> <p>Establish a process to engage with key stakeholders to identify new solutions to issues identified through outreach engagement with individuals in local communities.</p>
<p>Develop a range of health and wellbeing supports for individuals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. A model of social prescribing will form part of the supports in all outreach work with vulnerable groups. ii. An improved range of supports will be available to older people across the county. iii. An improved range of mental health and wellbeing supports will be in place. 	<p>Evaluate the impact of the Slaintecare Healthy Communities Programme in County Kildare in 2024/2025.</p> <p>Seek to expand the availability of social prescribing supports to all areas in County Kildare by 2027.</p> <p>Refocus the work of Older Voices Kildare to meet the needs of older people living in isolated areas of County Kildare.</p> <p>Carry out a review and develop a five-year plan for the HEADS Up programme.</p> <p>Engage with key stakeholders to include health and wellbeing supports in all programmes offered by the company.</p>
<p>Support social and intercultural inclusion among key population groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Individuals from ethnic minority communities will have been supported and enabled to actively participate in decision making structures in the county. ii. Specific initiatives will have been implemented to address gender inequality in County Kildare 	<p>Integration supports will be offered through SICAP and other programmes in collaboration with agencies, service providers and local communities.</p> <p>Community development and leadership training will be supported to encourage individuals to participate in local communities.</p> <p>A Human Rights and Equality Policy will be adopted by CKLP in 2024.</p> <p>CKLP will implement the Public Duty Directive on an annual basis and will develop a range of specific actions in collaboration with other key stakeholders.</p>

STRATEGIC GOAL

STRATEGIC GOAL	OUTCOMES	ACTIONS
Support and build the capacity of community groups and community leaders to meet local needs	i. Local communities in County Kildare will have been supported to develop an integrated local area action plan	The SICAP and LEADER programme staff will support local communities to develop area action plans in 12 localities in 2024 and 2025. Leadership training will be provided on an outreach basis in each of the Municipal Districts of the county. New and existing community groups will be offered specific supports including committee skills, governance training, recruitment of volunteers etc. Local communities impacted by Just Transition in North West Kildare and South Kildare will be assisted to increase awareness of EU and Government funds, develop projects to meet local needs and maximise the benefits for their local community
Support local communities to develop facilities and services in their local areas.	i. Local Communities in County Kildare will be supported as vibrant places to live	Provide support to community groups and other organisations to develop or renovate facilities in their areas to respond to the needs of their communities, especially the most marginalised groups, to support social cohesion and respond to mental health needs. The LEADER programme will support community projects to avail of developments in digital technology to improve access to information and services, with particular focus on marginalised groups and older people.
Support local communities to advocate for change and to engage with decision makers	i. By the end of 2027 at least ten community leaders will have been supported each year to lobby decision makers at a local and national level	Community groups in the Kildare/Newbridge MD will be assisted to lobby to seek funding for projects that are outside the Just Transition boundaries in County Kildare. Local community groups will be encouraged to highlight issues of concern arising from local area planning. CKLP will offer training and support to local community groups to implement climate change projects in their local community. CKLP will support local groups to lobby for additional resources and will engage directly with decision makers to lobby for additional resources for the county.
Implement an asset-based approach to community development	i. By the end of 2024 a pilot programme will have been completed with local community groups to use an asset-based approach in developing and implementing plans	Implement an in-service training programme for all staff as part of a change management process Training and mentoring will be provided to community leaders to implement an asset-based approach to community development work. A toolkit will be developed for use by community groups who are engaging in local planning exercises.
Support and encourage new and existing social enterprises to provide services to contribute to sustainable local development	i. By the end of 2025 the number of social enterprises will have increased, and the range of services offered will have expanded.	A Social Enterprise Strategy will be developed for County Kildare by early 2024. Existing social enterprises will be supported with mentoring, training, and capital support. New social enterprises, including project focused on climate action, will be supported especially in Just Transition areas with training, mentoring and financial support for projects promoted by social entrepreneurs and community groups.

STRATEGIC GOAL

STRATEGIC GOAL	OUTCOMES	ACTIONS
<p>Build strategic partnerships with key stakeholders to develop initiatives that meet CKLP priorities and goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Relationships with key stakeholders will have been strengthened and tangible improvements in service delivery achieved for individuals and groups in County Kildare. ii. By 2028 new inter agency social inclusion projects will have been established to support vulnerable groups in the county. iii. By 2027 new inter agency rural development projects will have been funded to address climate action and the sustainability of rural communities. 	<p>CKLP will engage with key stakeholders annually to identify priority issues which require collaboration and pooling of resources.</p> <p>Annual programme work plans will be developed in consultation with stakeholders and quarterly / six monthly progress reviews carried out.</p> <p>A Social Inclusion Advisory Group and a Rural Development Advisory Group will be formed in 2024 involving agencies, NGO's, target groups and Board members to monitor existing programmes and support the development of new initiatives.</p> <p>A Gender Equality Task Group will be formed to develop a pilot initiative to promote gender equality in the community and voluntary sector.</p> <p>An Environmental Task Group will be established in 2024 to explore a carbon neutral strategy for the company.</p>
<p>Engage in networks, collaborations and consortiums to research and develop new opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. CKLP will have engaged in new collaborations and consortiums to address issues including climate action impacting on local communities particularly the most vulnerable. ii. CKLP will have established an annual list of priorities for collaborations and consortiums to avail of investment opportunities by Govt and philanthropic sources 	<p>CKLP will identify issues from engagement with local communities and will bring these issues to the attention of decision makers and coordinating bodies.</p> <p>CKLP will bring together key stakeholders to address issues that require inter agency collaboration and investment.</p> <p>CKLP will avail of funding under SICAP, the LEADER programme and other sources to research and develop proposals to meet local needs, particularly the most vulnerable.</p>
<p>Invest in CKLP systems and structures to support collaboration, learning and referrals internally and with other organisations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. CKLP will have invested in systems development to create synergies between the various programmes offered by the company. ii. CKLP will have improved referral processes in place with other organisations and among programmes managed by the company. 	<p>A CRM system will be commissioned to provide systems to improve coordination of services and programmes offered by CKLP.</p> <p>CKLP will put in place in service training for all staff to improve stakeholder engagement and partnership working.</p> <p>CKLP will on an ongoing basis review and improve referral processes with other organisations for the benefit of individuals and groups we work with.</p>



STRATEGIC GOAL

STRATEGIC GOAL	OUTCOMES	ACTIONS
Develop the CKLP premises in Kildare Town as a regional community development centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. By 2028 the Kildare Community Development Centre will be fully refurbished. 	<p>Phase 2 of the development works will be completed in 2024.</p> <p>Office and meeting rooms will be offered primarily to the community and voluntary sector at affordable rates.</p> <p>A Facility Manager will be appointed to manage the Kildare Town premises.</p> <p>Phase 3 of the development works will be commenced in 2027</p>
Maintain high standards of governance and financial management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. CKLP will have achieved full compliance with the Charities Governance Code 	<p>Complete the implementation of the company’s action plan to achieve full compliance with the Governance Code</p> <p>Adopt a new Communications Policy and an annual stakeholder engagement plan to improve communications with all stakeholders internally and externally.</p> <p>The Board will publicly seek nominations for vacancies on the Board and will proactively encourage involvement in the company from priority target groups.</p> <p>The Board’s Nomination Committee will establish an action plan to increase community participation in the company’s committees and Board.</p> <p>The Board will conduct a Board effectiveness review and skills mapping on an annual basis in line with the requirements of the Governance Code.</p>
Secure philanthropic funding to support projects that improve the quality of life in County Kildare.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. CKLP will develop a policy to engage philanthropic interests to support projects in County Kildare. ii. Stakeholder engagement will have identified projects requiring investment to improve social, economic, cultural or environmental quality of life. 	<p>External expertise will be sought to develop a strategy to engage philanthropists to support initiatives to address quality of life issues in County Kildare.</p> <p>Engage with stakeholders to identify sustainable projects that would be attractive to philanthropists in County Kildare.</p> <p>Provide a resource to develop business proposals to engage with philanthropists.</p>
Develop and maintain rewarding career opportunities with the Company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. CKLP will have progressed towards a harmonization of conditions of employment for staff employed across all programmes. ii. CKLP will have reviewed its HR policies and procedures in line with best practice for the charity sector. iii. CKLP will have reviewed its organisational structure and will have developed career progressions options 	<p>Appoint a dedicated HR Administrator and maximise the benefits of a HR software system for the company.</p> <p>The Board will lobby to ensure equalisation of pension access for all employees.</p> <p>The Board will carry out regular reviews of pay and conditions to ensure that the company remains competitive in recruiting and retaining staff.</p> <p>Implement a management development programme in the company to encourage staff development and to assist in succession planning.</p>

17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)





An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí
Department of Social Protection



EUROPEAN UNION
Investing in Your Future
European Social Fund



Comhairle Contae Chill Dara
Kildare County Council



BORD OIDEACHAIS AGUS OILIÚNA
CHILL DARA AGUS CHILL MHANTÁIN
KILDARE AND WICKLOW
EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD



EUROPEAN UNION
Asylum, Migration
and Integration Fund



The European
Agricultural Fund for
Rural Development:
Europe investing in
rural areas

Ár dTodhchaí
Tuaithe
Our Rural
Future



ciste na
gcuntas díomhaoin
the dormant
accounts fund



Rialtas
na hÉireann
Government
of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040



European Union
European Structural
and Investment Funds



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Kildare Community Development Centre,
Meadow Rd, Kildare, R51 RF88.

☎ 045 895450

✉ info@countykildarelp.ie

📍 www.countykildarelp.ie

