



County Kildare

LEADER PARTNERSHIP



2023

ANNUAL REPORT

*Towards a more equal, fair, and inclusive County Kildare,
where all can flourish and realise their full potential*

2023

ANNUAL REPORT



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Arna chomhchistiú ag
an Aontas Eorpach
Co-funded by the
European Union



Social Inclusion &
Community Activation
Programme



Comité um Fhorbairt Pobail, Rialtóir Chill Dara
Kildare Local Community Development
Committee



The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) is co-funded by the Irish Government, through the Department of Rural and Community Development, and the European Social Fund Plus under the Employment, Inclusion, Skills and Training (EIST) Programme 2021 - 2027

Tá an Clár um Chuimsiú Sóisialta agus Gníomhachtú Pobail (SICAP) cómhainithe ag Rialtas na hÉireann, tríd an Roinn Forbartha Tuaithe agus Pobail, agus Ciste Sóisialta na hEorpa Plus faoin gClár Fostaíochta, Cuimsiú, Scileanna agus Oiliúna (EIST) 2021 -2027.

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“Our mission is to facilitate individuals and communities to participate fully in social, economic and cultural activity by supporting a vibrant and inclusive society in County Kildare.”

Pat League
Chief Executive Officer



CEO Report

Over the past twelve months County Kildare LEADER Partnership (CKLP) has made further progress in consolidating its role as the Local Development Company for County Kildare. The most significant event during 2023 was the launch of the company's Strategic Plan 2023 – 2028 by Minister of State Martin Heydon T.D. on 5th December 2023. The launch of the plan was the culmination of consultation with key stakeholders including Board, Staff and funding organisations as well as individuals and communities that benefit from the work of the company. As the first strategic plan prepared by the company, it marked a further stage in the development of the company and in doing so the Board has set out a vision and key priorities to be achieved over the next five years.

One of the most enjoyable parts of the launch of the strategic plan was an Open Day for the local community in Kildare Town. CKLP was delighted to welcome former students, teachers, members of the Presentation Order and local residents to view the work that has been carried out and to find out about CKLP and its activities.

This annual report documents the activities undertaken across all of the programmes managed by CKLP during 2023. Separate to the implementation of these programmes the company was also engaged in the development of proposals for the 2023 – 2027 LEADER Programme and the 2024 – 2028 Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP). Working in collaboration with Kildare Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) the LEADER Programme was secured with a budget of €5.4 million and following a tender process CKLP was also successful in securing the SICAP contract for 2024 – 2028.

This year's annual report also features the visit by Minister of State Joe O'Brien T.D. which focused on the work that the company is engaged in through SICAP and the two Community Employment Schemes – the DARA Project and the Enterprise Skills CE Scheme. The Minister was particularly interested in engaging with asylum seekers and refugees and had a roundtable discussion with individuals who had engaged with CKLP.

During 2023 Edel Dunne (Company Secretary) and Zoryana Pshyk resigned from the Board. I would like to thank Edel and Zoryana for their service on the Board and also staff members who left the company over the last twelve months for their dedicated service, also thank you to all those who have worked with or on behalf of CKLP during 2023 for your efforts and in particular our Board of Directors and Staff.

In conclusion I wish to thank the agencies and Government Departments who contract our Company to provide the services that we offer, and I wish to acknowledge the individuals from a wide range of public and voluntary organisations who we cooperate with to undertake these activities. Finally, we depend on members of the public and local communities to engage in the services we provide. For this we are sincerely grateful and acknowledge your trust and support.

Pat League

Chief Executive Officer

Our Board



COLM O'GÓGÁIN
CHAIRPERSON
COMMUNITY SECTOR



SYL MERRINS
TREASURER
COMMUNITY SECTOR



NOEL DEMPSEY
COMPANY SECRETARY /
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



WILLIAM O'DONOVAN
COMMUNITY
SECTOR



PAT KIDNEY
COMMUNITY
SECTOR



ANNE CONNOLLY
KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL
(REAPPOINTED NOV.2022)



ANNE BREEN
KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL
(REAPPOINTED NOV. 2022)



DAN O'LOUGHLIN
IFA / DIRECTOR



RAY STAPLETON
COMMUNITY SECTOR



MARY O'CONNOR
COMMUNITY SECTOR



HILARY TIERNEY
MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY

Governance & Compliance

BOARD MEETINGS

During 2023 the Board of Directors held a total of seven meetings and the Annual General Meeting took place on 31st May 2023. Two in-person and five online meetings were held during the year.

Two Directors resigned during the year and an open public recruitment process was held to fill the vacancies on the Board. This recruitment process was advertised on all local newspapers as well as through Boardmatch and the Volunteer Centres. Arising from this process a number of nominations were received from interested individuals and the nomination process was concluded in early 2024.

COMPLIANCE

In 2023 CKLP was in full compliance with the Charities Governance Code. The Company also submitted quarterly returns under the Lobbying Act and annual Statements of Interest to the Standards in Public Office. The Company also submitted its returns to the Companies Registration Office and maintained a register of conflicts of interest for Board, staff and volunteers.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The Company held an Open Day in its Kildare Town offices on 5th December 2023 which coincided with the launch of the Company's

first Strategic Plan for the period 2023 – 2028. The Open Day involved engagement of staff with the local community and tours of the Company offices and training facilities and information sharing on the work of the company.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The 2023 – 2028 CKLP Strategic Plan was launched by Minister of State Martin Heydon T.D. on the 5th December 2023. The launch of the plan was a culmination of consultation with key stakeholders including Board, staff and funding organisations as well as individuals and communities that benefit from the work of the company. As the first strategic plan prepared by the company, it marked a further stage in the development of the company and in doing so the Board has set out a vision and key priorities to be achieved over the next five years.

KILDARE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DAC

As part of the new strategic approach during 2023 the company established a separate legal entity to manage the facilities at the Kildare Community Development Centre. Kildare Community Development DAC is now responsible for the management of the property and a number of tenants are now in place including Cill Dara Housing Association, Kildare Volunteer Centre and Kildare Local Area Employment Service.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Colm O'Gógáin | Chairperson Community Sector |
| Syl Merrins | Treasurer Community Sector |
| Anne Breen | Kildare County Council (Reappointed Nov 2022) |
| Anne Connolly | Kildare County Council (Reappointed Nov 2022) |
| Hilary Tierney | Maynooth University |
| Dan O'Loughlin | IFA |
| Noel Dempsey | Company Secretary / Chamber of Commerce |
| William O'Donovan | Community Sector |
| Mary O'Connor | Community Sector |
| Pat Kidney | Community Sector |
| Ray Stapleton | Community Sector |
| Edel Murphy | Community Sector (Resigned June 2023) |
| Zoryana Pshyk | Community Sector (Resigned November 2023) |

STRATEGIC PLAN LAUNCH

The County Kildare LEADER Partnership 2023 – 2028 Strategic Plan was launched in December by Martin Heydon T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

The launch took place at the new Kildare Community Development Centre in Kildare Town where County Kildare LEADER Partnership (CKLP) is now located. The launch coincided with an Open Day which CKLP held to welcome the local community and to offer an opportunity for local people to view the former Presentation Convent and the work that CKLP undertakes with individual and groups with the assistance of funding from various Government Department and other sources.

In welcoming the Minister, Chairperson Colm O’Gógáin described how the Board of the company had decided to embark on a review of its direction and focus, and in doing so set out a Strategic Plan that would take account of the very significant changes which have and are taking place in the environment in which it operates. “Some of these challenges have been Brexit, COVID, the war in Ukraine as well as the changing demographics in County Kildare” he stated.

The CKLP strategic plan was facilitated by 2 into 3 consultants, with a substantial part of the planning process taking place during COVID-19.

CEO of CKLP, Pat Leogue, outlined the thrust of the new strategic plan which is committed to supporting individuals and communities in collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders in the years ahead.

He stated that the 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”. Mr. Leogue highlighted the need to support communities to lobby for



(From left to right) Noel Dempsey Company Secretary, Chamber of Commerce, Anne Duggan-Connolly VBOM Director / Councillor, Dan O’Loughlin, VBOM Director IFA, Mary O’Connor VBOM, Paul Crohan, Former Director CKLP, Martin Heydon, Minister of State, Peggy O’Dwyer Board Member Newbridge FRC/Councillor, Breda Stewart SICAP Manager, Colm O Gogain, Chairperson VBOM, Ray Stapleton VBOM Director & Lullymore Heritage Park.

better services particularly for those who are vulnerable. “It also emphasizes the need for all organisations to work together to ensure that the resources that are available are used to best effect”, he added.

Minister Martin Heydon officially launched the plan and commended the Board on their vision and foresight in developing the Strategic Plan. “The board have recognised the challenges around them and developed a plan to build on their strong contribution to date and to help them to address the needs of a growing Kildare population into the future.”

The Open Day in the former Presentation Convent provided an opportunity for local people to view their old school buildings and to meet the nuns who had lived in the convent, some of whom also taught in the school during their time in Kildare Town. Local historian, Mario Corrigan also provided a talk on the history of the Presentation Order in Kildare Town which was well received.

Apart from acting as offices and training rooms for CKLP the former convent is also used by a number of local groups on weekday evenings as well as weekends. Further development work is planned for early 2024 and CKLP plans to have office and meeting room accommodation available for hire by local organisations by March 2024

Visit of Minister Joe O'Brien T.D



In May, CKLP were delighted to welcome the Minister of State at the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Department of Social Protection Joe O'Brien T.D who visited the county to view projects supported by County Kildare LEADER Partnership in Athy and Kildare Town.

Minister O'Brien is Minister of State at the Department of Rural and Community Development with special responsibility for Community Development and Charities and at the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth with special responsibility for Integration.

In Athy Minister O'Brien visited the Empowering Communities Programme managed by County Kildare LEADER Partnership (CKLP) and discussed progress to date of this new initiative with local residents. Since February, a Community Outreach Worker has been engaged in carrying out door to door consultations with residents in five local estates. The Minister also visited the DARA Project in Athy which is a drug rehabilitation programme funded by the Department of Social Protection as a Community Employment Scheme and met the Project Coordinator Alan Gavagan and staff and participants.

The Minister then travelled to Kildare Town to the new CKLP premises at the former Presentation Convent and met with staff and Board members. CKLP has developed a Community Development Centre in the premises with the assistance of funding under the Rural Development / LEADER Programme.

In Kildare Town Minister O'Brien met with representatives of Kildare Public Participation

Network (PPN) and Kildare Volunteer Centre before meeting staff and participants on a number of programmes run at the centre by CKLP. These included the HEADSUP Women's mental health programme, the Enterprise Skills Programme CE Scheme, TÚS, the Rural Social Scheme, Slaintecare and the Kildare Small Jobs Service.

As Minister of State with special responsibility for integration, the Minister was particularly interested in meeting with asylum seekers and refugees who have been supported by the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP). International Protection Applicants living in Newbridge met with the Minister along with Ukrainian refugees who have been living in Ireland over the last twelve months.

"The work carried out by these groups is vital to helping our local communities be vibrant and inclusive places where support, opportunity and friendship is offered to those who need it. The people I have met across all the projects this morning really embody the best of what we mean when we speak of Ireland's community spirit. It is great to see it so alive and well in Co. Kildare."

At the end of the visit, CEO Pat Leogue thanked Minister O'Brien for visiting Kildare: "We hope that the interaction with the people we work with has given the Minister a good sense of the work that is ongoing in the county with limited resources. I would like to acknowledge the additional resources that the Minister has committed to social inclusion and integration and also emphasise that we would not be able to achieve what we do without the support and cooperation of a wide range of agencies and local service providers".

ABOUT OUR ORGANISATION

County Kildare Leader Partnership delivers a wide range of Rural, Enterprise, Social Inclusion and Community Development initiatives throughout County Kildare.

County Kildare Leader Partnership was formed in January 2009, created through the amalgamation of several community organisations, including KELT, the Kildare Community Partnership (KCP), and the Kildare based section of OAK Partnership, uniting their activities into a comprehensive structure, to maximise the reach and accessibility of our programmes. The company has a Board of Directors, sub-committees, and staff that are fully focused on supporting communities and individuals to improve their quality of life and facilitate their playing a full and active role in their local communities.

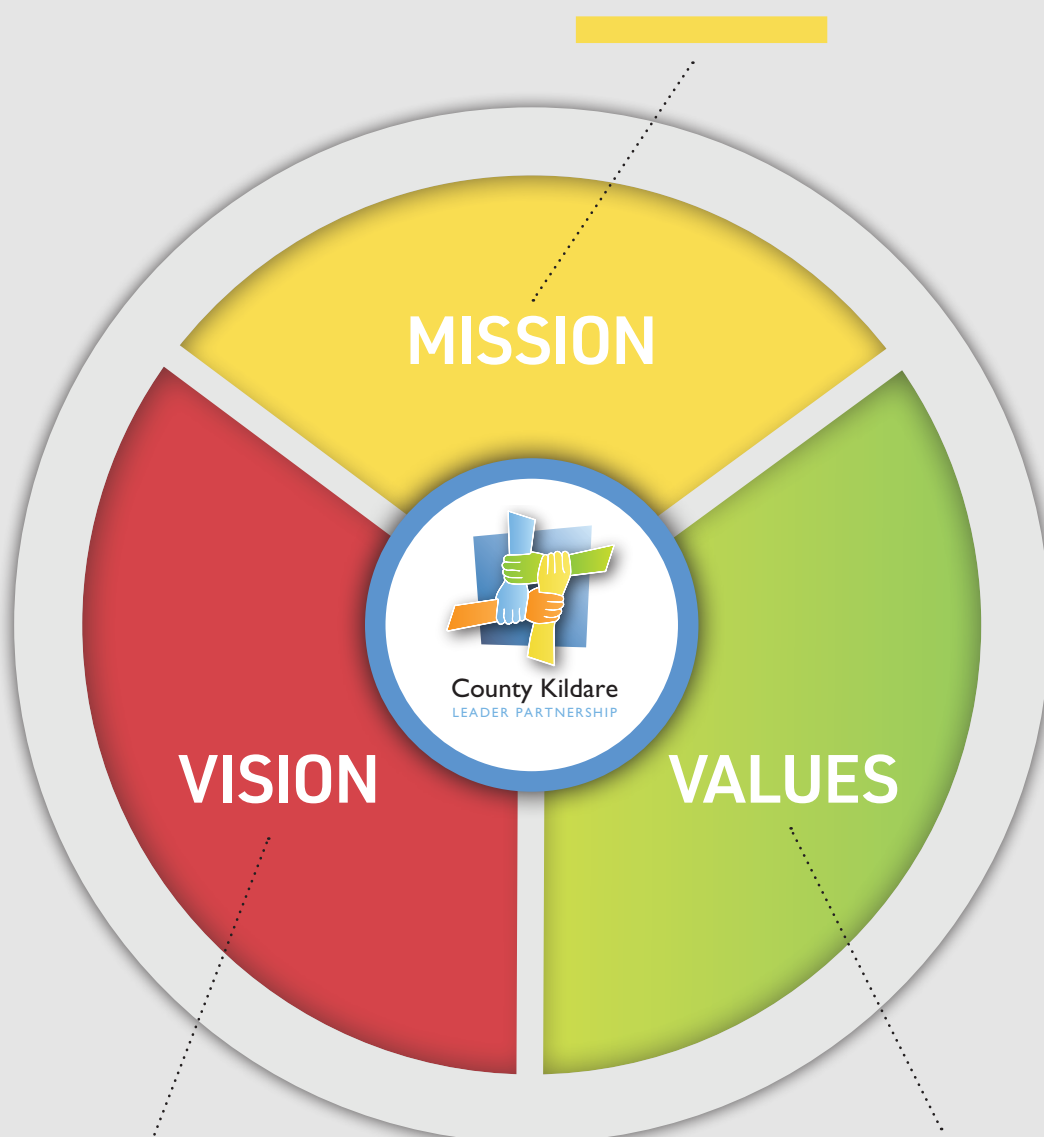
County Kildare Leader Partnership provides support to individuals and groups throughout County Kildare, seeking to enhance their potential, with a specific focus on those impacted by social exclusion, to address vulnerabilities resulting from that exclusion. This involves the coordination of programmes funded by the Irish Government and the European Union, and covers the areas of rural and community development, health and wellbeing, integration supports, community employment and work placement schemes (TUS/RSS). CKLP were pleased to renew the contracts for the Rural Development Programme (LEADER) and the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) in 2023.

CKLP takes a life-cycle approach and aims to aid the development of individuals and communities from childhood to old age. Progress is not measured in simply economic terms, but as an interconnected process which keeps the person at its heart. Central to the ethos that everyone has a contribution to make to society, our emphasis is on inclusivity and equality to encourage participation, particularly ensuring the inclusion of vulnerable and marginalised groups. Therefore, our work at CKLP supports a diverse range of activities for individuals and various communities throughout County Kildare.

We work with a wide variety of agencies, service providers, local authority groups, businesses, and volunteer groups to achieve this. The programmes we implement have a particular focus on those in disadvantaged areas of the county, those who are unemployed, refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, members of the Traveller and Roma communities, people with disabilities, older members of the community, and those impacted by addiction, or poor mental or physical health. We work to ensure those voices are heard, their needs effectively communicated and considered for future programmes. Our approach recognises that to be effective, any work we undertake with our diverse stakeholders is achieved through co-operation and collaboration.

Our Strategic and Operational Framework

CKLP exists to advance social, economic and cultural inclusion in County Kildare. We do this by empowering individuals and communities, and by working in partnership with all stakeholders in the community.



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

Social Justice, Equality, Person-centred, Community-led, Collaborative, Inclusive & sustainable

Testimonials



The Ukrainian Support Worker organised many entertainments for us. When we got here we were frightened and we got here we did not want to leave our accommodation. It was safe inside but we did not want to join the outside world. They organised trips for our children to the National Stud and to the beach and when we went with them we had a chance to see the sea .we had a chance to go to the ploughing event. We are so grateful to them for those events made us feel safe and welcome and very safe here in Kildare.

- *Oxsana, Ukrainian Beneficiary of Temporary Protection*



For me volunteering here this is a small part of what I can do to give to this country in gratitude to Ireland we are Ukrainian people in a difficult moment, I want to say thank you with my skills I am volunteering in my local Tidy Towns, I help when I can and it is a way to get out and meet people.

- *Volunteer supported by SICAP*



I have been struggling for a really long time thinking about getting back to work. I want to thank the SICAP worker who supported me in applying for a course and I took part in manual handling and first aid and with the help of the support worker, she helped me to write a letter to apply for a job, I hope that there will be a job for me and my new skills.

- *Participant, SICAP Employment Support*



I was not in a great place mentally and I contacted HEADSUP to see if there was anything they could help me with, I took part in a Wellness and Wellbeing Course. It was such a pleasure to be in the room with people who were experiencing the same things as I was It helped me feel less alone and I was able to share how I was feeling, HEADSUP offered us a toolbox of skills for helping to cope with stressful situations and thoughts, I am glad I contacted them.

- *Participant, HEADSUP Kildare – Wellbeing Course*



PROGRAMMES

SOCIAL INCLUSION

- Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP)
- Empowering Communities Programme

EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT SCHEMES

- TÚS
- Enterprise Skills Programme CE Scheme
- Rural Social Scheme
- Kildare Small Jobs (CE)
- The DARA Project – Drug Rehabilitation CE Scheme
- Kildare Roma Health & Employment Supports

HEALTH & WELLBEING SUPPORT

- HEADSUP Kildare
- Older Voices Kildare
- Individual Placement Service
- **Sláintecare** -
 - We Can Quit
 - Health Food Made Easy
 - Community Food & Nutrition

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

- LEADER Programme 2023 – 2027

HOSTED

- Kildare Sports Partnership Sports Development Officers
- Kildare Public Participation Network (KPPN)

SOCIAL INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY ACTIVATION PROGRAMME (SICAP) 2018-2023

Through the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP), County Kildare LEADER Partnership offers a variety of services to eligible individuals who wish to access training or education, develop or start a business or to local community groups within County Kildare. The programme has a focus on geographically disadvantaged areas & groups working with specific target groups of the programme.

SICAP aims to tackle poverty, social exclusion and long-term unemployment through local engagement and partnership between disadvantaged individuals, community organisations and public sector agencies and can make a real difference to those in our communities that are suffering disadvantage.

Videos can be found on our website: www.countykildarelp.ie to demonstrate this work.

SICAP PROVIDES A RANGE OF SUPPORTS TO TARGETED INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS INCLUDING:

- > Community development support for projects and participation
- > Educational supports for children, families and young people
- > Training and Education
- > Enterprise Supports
- > Work placement programmes
- > Youth employment supports



Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme

SUCCESS STORIES

Educational Supports

In May 21 SICAP-supported students completed the level 7 Youth Work Studies, with a further 19 completing the level 7 Community Work Certificate in June. Two other students received support from a SICAP coordinator, to assist with CAO and grant applications to apply for the Bachelor of Social Science degree in Maynooth.



Three students who received bursary awards in previous years continue their studies and look forward to progressing further.

SICAP continues to support work placements where appropriate. Following a very successful three-month work placement with CKLP, a third year TU Blanchardstown student continued part-time work with SICAP and the Empowering Communities programme during the summer.

SUCCESS STORIES

Know Your Community

The NWK (North West Kildare) Network event "Know Your Community" had positive outcomes in combating social exclusion and rural isolation. As part of the North West Kildare Initiative, the "Know your Community Event", which was organised in Coill Dubh aimed to foster social inclusion and alleviate social isolation in the broader North West Kildare region. This one-time event successfully brought together local community groups, organisations, and agencies, with a turnout of over 200 people, featuring 20 community groups and 34 organisations and agencies. While no additional local events like this were planned for the year, there was an ongoing inter-agency collaboration with Social Farming Ireland and rural farmers, focusing on addressing social isolation and enhancing mental well-being in rural communities.



CROSS-PROGRAMME STATISTICS FROM 2023



LEADER PROGRAMME

The LEADER Rural Development Programme focuses on rural economic, social and community development, based on the “EU Long Term Vision for Rural Areas” and the National Strategy “Our Rural Future”, with the aim of achieving balanced development in Kildare, and stimulating economic growth.

It is rooted in a philosophy of community-led local development (CLLD), meaning that it believes that local communities are best placed to develop ways to improve their economic, social and environmental conditions, through innovative, sustainable solutions and digital technologies. LEADER has operated in Kildare for the past 25 years, supporting communities and individuals all around the county as they addressed challenges and responded to gaps in services.

It is focused on initiatives that improve the quality of life, but also on enabling rural communities to develop the necessary skills and resilience to respond to transition and adversity. achieving balanced development in Kildare, and stimulating economic growth.



SUCCESS STORIES

Brian, Hazel and Mark Gray run the Gray Dairy Farm Partnership near Prosperous, Co. Kildare. The farm, which has been in existence for 4 generations, was originally a traditional liquid milk operation before switching to spring milk production in 2013. They have around 95 dairy cows on 55 hectares. The farm won awards in 2020 and 2021 for its milk. Mark was visiting his brother in London and saw there examples of milk being sold directly to the consumer, which were very popular and reflected a change in consumer demand. Mark formed the opinion that this was the future of milk production and wished to establish it at the farm in Prosperous. He made one or two initial attempts to get the idea off the ground, which were unsuccessful. The COVID 19 pandemic crystallised the idea which

had been forming as to the value of developing a local product which would create brand loyalty in consumers as well as increasing potential sources of off-farm income. Consequently, Mark applied for LEADER funding and was approved in late 2021 for grant assistance of €54,451.06 towards a direct-sales fresh milk enterprise.

The vision of the project was to get awarding-winning, farm-fresh top-quality milk, which is pasteurised on site, directly to consumers. The grant was used to purchase the pasteurization unit required to process the milk, a small metal unit where the milk is sold and landscaping around the shed area. The milk is sold in 500ml and 1 litre measures and is sold in sustainable, reusable glass bottles. There is ample parking and full access at a special sales cabin.



KEY OUTCOMES 2023

Mark successfully applied for LEADER assistance in 2021. The grant assistance facilitated business growth which led to the creation of four new part-time roles in December 2023.



The target beneficiaries are consumers in local towns such as Clane, Naas and Prosperous and added benefit for the environment is the reduction in emissions as the milk travels just

100 metres from the milking parlour to the vending machine.

The business has been very successful and is selling out each day since it opened in September 2023.

TÚS PROGRAMME

The Tús Programme, a government initiative facilitated by Local Development Companies, has been instrumental in providing meaningful employment opportunities within local communities throughout County Kildare.

BENEFITS FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS

Since its inception, **over 165 community and voluntary groups in County Kildare have benefitted from the Tús Programme.** These groups have experienced a significant reduction in workload pressures, allowing them to focus more effectively on their core missions. The additional workers provided through Tús have become integral parts of these organizations, bringing fresh perspectives, skills, and enthusiasm to their roles.

EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS

For individuals enrolled in the Tús Programme, the experience has been transformative. By offering part-time employment opportunities and access to training, **Tús has enabled over 2090 individuals to re-enter the workforce,** regain confidence, and acquire new skills. Participants have expressed gratitude for the chance to make meaningful contributions to their communities while preparing themselves for future employment opportunities.



SUCCESS STORIES

SUPPORTED BY TÚS IN LEIXLIP / CELBRIDGE

The ladies, who are Tús participants in the Leixlip Youth and Community Centre are Vira and Diana. Diana is currently on CE. Diana progressed from the Tús scheme to community employment. Both ladies are from Ukraine. They are both living in Ireland a number of years before the current trouble in Ukraine, but the centre has found them to be a great asset to the LYCC/Confey Coffee serving the local community and in LYCC's efforts to help integrate the Ukrainian community into the greater Leixlip area. LYCC is quickly becoming a meeting hub for the Ukrainian community, Tús are delighted to be able to extend County Kildare LEADER Partnerships support to the LYCC and the local Ukrainian community in some small way by having Vira work alongside Diana. It makes such a big difference to that community to be greeted by someone who understands your native language.



SUPPORTED BY TÚS IN KILDARE TOWN – LYNSEY'S STORY

RehabCare Kildare Lynsey's journey showcases the transformative impact of the Tús Programme. After a long break from work, she joined Tús in 2017, which changed her life. With her Tús supervisor's help, she found a placement in Social Care at RehabCare. Within six months, she was offered a job as a programme facilitator, leading to part-time employment. With RehabCare's support, she transitioned to full-time work and pursued a



An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí
Department of Social Protection



Có-mhaoinithe ag an
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KEY OUTCOMES 2023

degree in disability studies. Her academic journey fuelled her professional growth, leading to promotions to supervisor and manager. Lynsey credits Tús for her success, recommending it to those re-entering the workforce. Her story highlights the program's ability to offer support and opportunities for personal and professional development.

AVRIL'S STORY -

RehabCare Kildare Avril's journey began with the Tús Scheme, landing a placement as an office administrator at RehabCare Kildare. Through her work, she transitioned to supporting service users in-house and in the community. Encouraged by colleagues and managers, she applied for and secured a full-time role as a community support worker at RehabCare, where she has thrived for three years. Avril values her job immensely and has embraced continuous learning through various training courses provided by her employer. The Tús programme has been instrumental in her success, with unwavering support from her supervisor. She wholeheartedly recommends the programme to anyone seeking to re-enter the workforce or explore new career paths.



MARY MARTINA'S STORY

Mary Martina Kavanagh started her Tús work placement in RehabCare as the housekeeper for the centre on 10th July 2023. This is Mary's second time on the Tús programme Mary worked in the NCBI shop in Kildare town



doing retail in 2019 and also helped out with charity fundraising events for NCBI throughout her time on the Tús programme in 2019. As well as Mary's housekeeping duties in Rehab Care Mary also helps out with fundraising events with the staff and clients in Rehab Care. She is delighted with her role and looks forward to her work every day.

SUPPORTED BY TÚS IN NEWBRIDGE

SHALIMAR STORY -

Citizen's Information Newbridge I was called to participate in the Tús Programme and although I didn't know anything about it I immediately fell in love with the idea, Terry made me feel comfortable during the interview and explained everything about the programme and was very assuring about my fears of getting back to work; I was after having a break in my career and the prospect of going back to the workforce was terrifying, this was my opportunity to freshen up my skills and get the ball moving again. The programme strives to place you in an organisation that matches your skills and compliments your requirements in terms of career and work path, I got in-house training and the opportunity to develop new and/or update your skills. Participating in the Tús Programme has been an amazing experience for me, it helped me to feel comfortable going back to work, boosted my confidence and allowed me to develop my career and ultimately get to work with my host organisation.



RSS

Rural Social Scheme

RSS is an income support programme for farmers and fishermen/women who are currently in receipt of a means assessed long-term social welfare payment while providing services of benefit to rural communities by harnessing the skills and talents available among farmers and fishermen.

In 2023 Co. Kildare LEADER Partnership supported 27 individuals with additional income who participated on the Scheme.

Co. Kildare LEADER Partnership has retained its current quota throughout this period. Iryna Antonova has been a participant on the Rural Social Scheme since 2018. Iryna is a part time horticultural farmer and operated a quail farm. She is originally from the Ukraine but has been living in Ireland for a number of years.

Iryna commenced work with the St. Vincent De Paul Charity Shop in Monasterevin. Throughout this time Iryna has provided vital support to the shop manager in terms of customer support, cash handling, merchandising, marketing, and managing the tills.

When Ukrainian refugees and families arrived in Ireland seeking Refugee and assistance funding became available to support these individuals under the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme. CKLP approached Iryna who is fluent in Ukrainian and has very good English and she agreed to take on this additional role alongside her 19.5 hours on the RSS. Iryna is now a part-time member of staff within the Local Development Company and has supported many individuals and families.

SUCCESS STORIES

Ukrainian Supports 2023

- Liaised with state and local agencies to provide supports for displaced Ukrainians in the first instance, for example the Department of Social Protection for access to secure PPS numbers.
- Liaised with the temporary accommodations providers through local contact and Community groups members and pledged accommodation providers through KCC.
- Provided supports in Athy, in Ballymore Eustace, Kill Accommodation centre for Ukrainians.
- Family trips for Ukrainians organized and took place and up 288 Ukrainians attended Dublin Zoo, 165 attended Bray trip and 140 attended Powerscourt Waterfall and Gardens trip.
- Mentoring Conversational English in Athy, and Ballymore Eustace.
- Horticulture course took place in Athy Coffee/Info mornings in Moto House, Ballymore Eustace and Bert House for Ukrainians.
- In Kane's Centre, linked with residents and DSP for applying for PPS numbers and submitting Social Welfare applications.
- One-to-one supports provided to residents of 5 accommodation centres and Ukrainians in pledged accommodations.
- Organising and registering people for summer camps around Co.Kildare, for 48 children
- REALT Coordinator support to find school places for Ukrainian children across Co.Kildare.
- Supported people to get TSG grant to pass Safe pass with translation for 4 people from Athy/Ballymore.

08 Supported Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (BOTP) to find accommodation for 8 families. Support was provided to all families in collaboration with Helping Irish Hosts and Peter McVerry Trust.

250 Supported getting places in two Halloween Camps in Athy Community College. Also took part in organising summer activities Ukrainian Independence Day in Newbridge Town FC, attended by approximately 250 people.

- Supported participants getting TSG grant to pass Manual handling courses with translation for 11 people from Athy/Ballymore.
- 2 people started CE and 3 people started TUS. Individual meeting together with TUS supervisors and Ukrainians to support starting TUS scheme job.
- Individual help with getting CV. 3 people got their CV's done.
- Individual support for starting self-employment and moving into it from social welfare.
- Provided one to one support to 111 Ukrainians from all Co. Kildare.



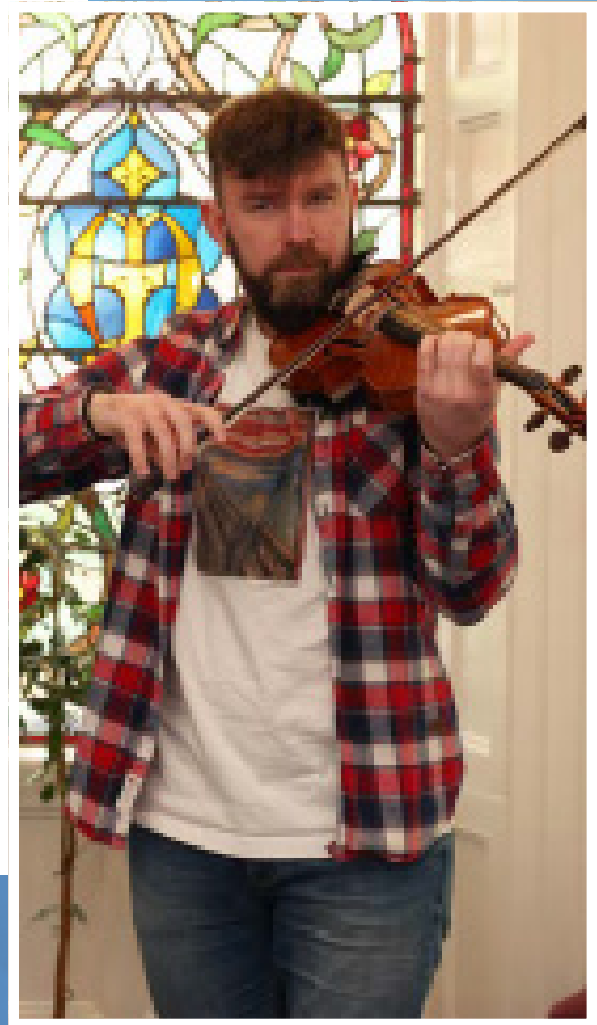
Enterprise Skills Programme & Kildare Small Jobs

Enterprise Skills Programme: Successfully ran 3 start your own business programmes throughout the year with participants going on to self-employment, short term employment and community employment. Some of those included a member of the Roma community and a Ukrainian national who played violin at the launch of the CKLP Strategic Plan.

Kildare Small Jobs:

Secured funding from Pobal to buy a new electric van along with tools to outfit the van allowing them to go from 2 maintenance teams to 3 which increased capacity to do more jobs and help more clients in the Kildare area.

As part of the community employment scheme walking tour leaders were recruited to hold guided tours along the Blueway in County Kildare.



SUCCESS STORIES

One of the CE participants who is a member of the Travelling community, placed in the Athy boxing club completed training in Coaching and did the Safe Pass progressed into full time employment in October 2023 with a construction company.

Participants throughout the scheme took part in training in horticulture, First Aid Responder, HACCP, Manual Handling, Safe Pass and Small Engine Repair.

FACTS & FIGURES FROM 2023



KILDARE SMALL JOBS

36 36 people participated in ESP in 2023. Three programmes were held during the year.

08 By the end of 2023, there was 8 participants working with KSJ made up of three teams of two maintenance people and a further two in customer service.

60 Over 60 training/mentoring sessions delivered over the three programmes which included Marketing Practice, Financial Management, Digital Media, Bookkeeping, Train the Trainer and customer service as well as QQI level 5 Marketing Practice achieved by 11 people.

141 Engaged with 141 subscribed clients in 2023



HEADSUP

supporting U and
your mental health

HEADSUP Kildare – is an evidence-based mental health education and training programme for people who are finding life stressful, feel isolated or lonely and wish to explore and learn positive ways of managing and improving their overall wellbeing. This group programme aims to encourage participants to make positive changes to their lives, develop resilience and offers support to access local services and supports. HEADSUP Kildare is in its 9th year and has gained respect as one of the leading mental health programmes in the county.

While participating on a HEADSUP Programme, there are many opportunities to pick up and practice new skills and strategies to improve everyday living. There are a number of elements to the HEADSUP Programme including physical and mental wellbeing, goal setting and positive social support and connections.

Alongside our three 12-week programmes for men, 2 mornings a week. In 2023 the programme ran its first ever women's programme in Kildare town over 11 weeks, 2 mornings a week. In total in 2023 we championed 63 men and women directly through 264 hours of groupwork supporting them to find their mojo, as well as reach out and get the help they needed to manage their mental health in a way that works for them.



SUCCESS STORIES

HEADSUP were delighted to offer a student placement to one of our programme past participants who embraced the idea of lifelong learning having completed our programme, going on to pursue a certificate Peer Support Working in DCU. Martin and his family were so proud of this achievement all attending his graduation in November 2023. Martin has continued his relationship with HEADSUP voluntarily leading out the 104 twice weekly online Peer Support Group sessions for past participants.



Meet some HEADSUP Participants

Charlie age 65- He came to the HEADSUP programme directly from his stay in Lakeview. He moved into a hostel due to breakdown with his family and in his relationship. He struggled with thoughts of suicide and strong difficult emotions. Throughout his time with HEADSUP Charlie progressed through his temporary accommodation to something more stable with him now having a permanent home to call his own. His relationship with his family has also improved considerably. With the help of HEADSUP he received support from NALA to help improve his literacy skills and is currently doing really well.

Peter age 38- Peter was referred to the programme from an individual support worker that he was working with in CKLP SICAP programme. He has a mental health diagnosis along with addiction issues. He progressed from HEADSUP onto the DARA project a drug and alcohol-free day programme. This is another CKLP supported programme. Here he is able to access various supports. He is rebuilding family connections, gaining renewed access to his children. His social relationships have improved along with his physical and mental health.

Tina age 50- is the head of a one parent family of 4. She lost her husband to suicide in recent times and was really struggling to come to terms with her own grief while minding her children

and their grief. She availed of counselling being offered through HEADSUP which proved to be invaluable on her journey to improved wellbeing. She gained a valuable sense of connection and self-belief through participating in the programme and is now working 3 days per week which supports her mental health and family.

Louise age 37 - She came to the programme struggling with severe postpartum depression. She found great support in the community the group became and made use of all that was available to her while on the programme. She was encouraged and supported to follow her dreams leaving behind her cooperative job and has set up her own business supporting mothers and babies with similar struggles of her own and has just joined the team of coaches with a national monthly magazine.

The HEADSUP Team had more than 1000+ phone conversations, totalling 100+ hours, with past present and future HEADSUP participants offering support, guidance and signposting to local services and supports.

In addition to our regular programme HEADSUP ran 5 WRAP, Wellness Recovery Action Planning, workshops throughout the county supporting an additional 80 people seeing support from this mental health self-management programme.



Older Voices Kildare

The new Kildare Dementia Café was launched by Minister Mary Butler TD in June. Our monthly meetings are providing a vital information service and opportunity for social contact for individuals with dementia and family members/carers.

A particular highlight was 'Festival in a Van' at the Wonderful Barn, Leixlip which was televised by RTE Nationwide and attended by more than 80 enthusiastic music lovers.

We love collaborations between groups and our Windowbox Project in Celbridge brought the great wood-working skills of the Men's Shed together with the gardening knowledge of the ACRE Project to allow 19 people to build, plant and take home their own beautiful windowbox.

Access to cultural, music and social opportunities was facilitated for more than 150 older people across a range of events.

Six multi-week programmes were delivered to a total of 67 individuals, in 7 locations across the county, in areas including building personal resilience, health & wellbeing in ageing and digital skills.

Over 225 hours of individual support were provided in person and by phone to older persons around the county.

98 Christmas Hampers were delivered to older people experiencing food and fuel poverty.



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SUCCESS STORIES



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The DARA Project

The DARA Project is a structured, community employment day programme to support individuals who are drug free and in recovery from substance misuse.

It was recognised that there was a need for support in the area for individuals in recovery from substance misuse. With that, The DARA Project was founded in 2013 in Kildare Town in a small office. This was the start of humble beginnings.

The next step was to turn The DARA Project into a CE Scheme. An application was made to Department of Social Protection for funding for a drug rehabilitation CE Scheme. When this was approved, we began to build and develop the project.

In recent years we have established ourselves as a credible service to the community. **We now have 2 locations, Athy and Kildare Town.** We opened Kildare Town in March 2023 and it has grown every day since.

In 2023, we also secured a part-time project worker through SICAP.

Over the past year, we have developed a strong connection with Cuan Mhuire Treatment Centre. From this we get lots of referrals to our service.



SUCCESS STORIES

John, a participant with The DARA Project for 3 years is an example of how people change their lives around with the support of The DARA Project.

When John first came to us, he was new to the life of recovery. John had spent some time previously in prison and this had hugely affected his mental health. John was now trying to turn his life around.

At the time he came to us, he was homeless. He was living in a hostel in Athy. He stayed there for a few weeks despite the challenges he faced that come with living in a hostel. John is also a father to one and this caused a strain on his relationship with his

son. He was constantly on the lookout for suitable housing. After a few months, John received an apartment through a housing agency.

Since then, John's relationship with his son has gone from strength to strength and he is a fantastic father.

John has grown stronger in his recovery every day and he is managing his mental health well.

Outside of The DARA Project, he now has a part-time job in a local fast food chain. He has also progressed on his educational journey and has received a number of QQI certs.

Some Key Figures from 2023

47

The number of people who supported the project

07

Types of Courses



FITNESS
TANGO
S.B.S.



A PATHWAY TO RECOVERY

The Dara Project is a structured day programme to support individuals who are drug free and in recovery from substance misuse.

| | |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| RECOVERY SUPPORT | LIFE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT |
| TRAINING QQI | KEYWORKING |
| GROUP THERAPY | RELAPSE PREVENTION |

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

| | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| ALAN GAVAGAN MANAGER | 087 623 8558 | alan@countykildare.ie |
| KENNY HARTNETT CE SUPERVISOR | 087 671 8061 | kenny@countykildare.ie |
| SEAN CURRAN CE SUPERVISOR | 087 767 1065 | sean@countykildare.ie |
| LAUREN BURKE PROJECT WORKER | 086 082 7844 | lauren@countykildare.ie |

County Kildare
LIFE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The Dara Project, Woodstock Street, Athy, Kildare, K14 W2B3
The Dara Project, CRIP, Meadow Road, Kildare Town, K21 R9B8

ASTRO



KILDARE ROMA EMPLOYMENT & HEALTH PROGRAMME

Integration and Inclusion:

KTRIS Implementation Update:

Kildare Traveller Interagency Strategy (KTRIS) has been extended until 2025. Strategy review in September; findings to be shared among Interagency Members. Actions for 2024-26 align with the new National TRIS Strategy.

Kildare Traveller Action (KTA):

SICAP funded 4 KTA staff positions and Summer activities in 2023. Funded a Consultant for Kildare Traveller Peer Education Research. SICAP staff support KTA board meetings, and KTA links with CYPSC to engage with parents, especially fathers.

Roma Supports: (Kildare Roma Support Programme)

Roma Employment Support worker started in February, providing translation, interpreting, and form filling for DSP, HSE, KWETB, and DFA. Roles address diverse

needs, including social integration and employment, considering unique challenges like literacy and technology barriers.

Kildare Integration Strategy: (KIS)

Ongoing implementation of Kildare Integration Interagency Committee (KIIC) actions. KIIC to review and update actions in early 2024, considering events since 2019, such as COVID-19 and the Ukraine invasion. Collaboration with CKLP and SICAP staff to implement strategy actions.

AMIF Integration Programme: (Asylum Migration Integration Fund)

The AMIF-funded programme extended its remit to include Asylum Seekers and Ukrainian Refugees. Conversational English classes have taken place in Athy, Ballymore Eustace, Kill, and Monasterevin. Integration

workshops with music, wellbeing, and creative dance for various groups.

Intercultural Network (KIN):

KIN meetings supported in 2023; plans for reconvening in early 2024. New intercultural groups received support and are expected to join KIN. Activities, events, trips, and summers organised for residents in Direct Provision and Emergency Direct Provision Centres.

Culturally Sensitive Training: SICAP staff participated in training delivered by other agencies to enhance cultural sensitivity.

Minister Joe O'Brien visited County Kildare LEADER Partnership and had conversations with the Ukrainian Emergency Response Team, The Integration Team and members of BOTP and IPAS Candidates.

SUCCESS STORIES



03

FIND YOUR OWN FEET PROGRAMME:
Roma Support Worker has encouraged 3 individuals to register for this programme.



13

SOCIAL & INCLUSION EMPLOYMENTS INFORMATION & OTHER EMPLOYMENT INFORMATIONAL SESSION:
Roma Support Worker supported with translation & interpretation and referrals.



02

SCHOOL ENROLMENT:
Roma Support Worker supported two families with School Application Form.



13

Participants supported to take part in KWETB basic English



11

ALLOCATING FAMILY PRACTICE:
Roma Support Worker supported allocating GP family practice for families and individuals.



15

INTERPRETATION & TRANSLATION:
Roma support worker supported Roma people with translating over the phone & in person to GP visits and HSE medical cards.



05

PROOF OF ADDRESS:
Roma Support Worker supported with getting proof of address to support their Medical Card Application.



172

JOURNEYS ORGANISED for 172 individuals, which were supported and cared for during trips to Roma Day in Longford, Emerald Park and the Holocaust Memorial in Dublin.



SLÁINTECARE

Healthy Communities Athy

The Sláintecare Healthy Communities initiative is a collaborative effort across various government departments, aimed at reducing health disparities among different communities in Ireland.

Through the Sláintecare Healthy Communities programme, a range of evidence-based projects are being funded within local communities. These projects are designed to promote positive changes in behaviour by increasing awareness and knowledge. They also address specific obstacles to health and well-being.

The Athy Sláintecare Healthy Communities programme has fostered strong cooperation among key stakeholders, including the Health Service Executive, Kildare County Council, County Kildare Leader Partnership, and Athy Community Family Resource Centre.

All these entities are united by a shared objective: to enhance the health and well-being of the people of Athy.

Below are a number of the Sláintecare programmes which will be highlighted in this report:

- > **Healthy Food Made Easy**
- > **We Can Quit**

SUCCESS STORIES

Sláintecare

The HSE Sláintecare Healthy Communities programme- Healthy Food Made Easy, We Can Quit, Community Food & Nutrition, Social Prescribing

Healthy Food Made Easy (HFME):

- Secured funding to provide equipment packs for HFME participants. Distributed 200 equipment packs to participants. The feedback included the following:
- 500 people engaged in the HFME programmes in 2023
- Delivered 34 HFME courses in 2023

"I am very motivated to eat healthier meals and use the equipment provided to do this."

"I am thrilled to receive the blender to make soup and smoothies".

"The equipment pack is a fantastic gift to receive especially when the cost of cooking equipment is expensive".

We Can Quit (WCQ):

- After completing the WCQ programme, two participants returned as guest speakers for other WCQ programmes and 1 participant will become a WCQ community facilitator in May 2024. Two WCQ programmes were completed in Athy, with 15 participants successfully quitting smoking in 2023

Community Food & Nutrition Worker:

- Workshops in the community around healthier eating habits engaged over 130 adults and 40 young people in 2023



- Established a Food Support Network in Athy allowing those in the community to work directly or indirectly with food insecurity - an opportunity to meet, discuss challenges, identify gaps and make plans together. 7 meetings were held over 2023 which engaged over 20 individuals.
- Completed a number of cooking and nutrition programmes for children during the school holidays.

"My child had an amazing time, he is still making food now himself, giving him great confidence"

"The programme was amazing and the kids loved it"

"It was very good, most enjoyed making after at home and seeing what he learned"



Sláintecare.
**Healthy
Communities**



NEW FOR 2023 – EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

The Empowering Communities Programme (ECP) aims to build and maintain trusting supportive working relationships with the residents of the Athy West Urban Area (AWUA), targeting five estates in particular Towns Park, Castle Park, Carbury Park, St. Dominic's Park and Green Hills respectively. The ECP nationwide is engaging with fourteen areas which are experiencing significant disadvantage and were selected using the Pobal HP Deprivation Index. The ECP programme was launched by the Minister of State Joe O'Brien in 2022 and aims to empower local communities to craft their own response to area-based poverty, social exclusion, and the resulting consequences.

The Athy West Urban ED has been selected as one of the areas for the ECP with a community worker has been employed since January 2023. In Athy West Urban Area, the programme is focusing on supporting the individuals, households, families and communities. Some of the areas that the ECP will support are individual supports, family supports but is not limited to include employment and long term unemployed, education and training, health and wellbeing to mention a few.

The programme is being rolled out across the country through the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) with the support of the LCDC the community will be supported and empowered to respond to the needs identified within the community, related to poverty and social exclusion.



The programme is founded on three clear objectives, these are.

- To support a community development approach to area-based poverty and social exclusion.
- Building leadership within the communities, supporting and enhancing collaboration between existing community structures to develop and help implement tailored community work responses to specific challenges faced locally.
- To empower local communities to craft their own response to tackling community challenges.
- The programme has also aligns to and in accordance with the nine principles of inclusive community engagement these are.

1. Genuine.
2. Purposeful.
3. Planned.
4. Clear.
5. Inclusive.
6. Collaborative.
7. Accountable.
8. Accessible.
9. Fit for purpose.





BELONG INITIATIVE!

BECOMING more vocal and involved in what is happening within the local community, be an active participant in shaping where you call home.

ENGAGING in support and service already available within the community also identifying blocks and barriers that can be addressed.

LIMITLESS possibilities to achieving goals short and long term. Improving lifestyles, routines, structures, fitness, health and more.

ONWARD and upward, how to manage, situations, matters, issues and habits. Every step, no matter how small a step is still forward, becoming empowered to take control of things that we are not happy with.

NEVER think that you don't have a voice, never think you will not be heard. We are here to listen and build a better future for ourselves and our community.

GROWING involvement means progressing, succeeding, achieving, empowering you and the wider community.



SUCCESS STORIES

BUILDING RAPPORT

With light engagements having taken place, the ECP explored ways to build rapport with the residents, this was to express support for them and also addressing key issues raised by them. It was felt that national events could help in breaking the ice with residents. The ECP worker used local knowledge of the areas to explore and connect to issues that were raised. Early events were very successful in this process. Although the five estates are in very close proximity to each other there was a polar difference in what had been highlighted as issues. However, one common theme across the board was environmental issues, rubbish, littering and general cleanliness of the areas that the residents called home. It was expected that initially the programme would have to take a reactive approach to building relationships with the residents.

With the national spring-clean month beginning in April and events happening nationwide it was identified as a prime time to mobilise the residents. With a focus on cleaning up the areas and having people getting involved, this would also help propel the ECP as a support within the community. The residents take up was encouraging as they had to register their groups online to receive clean up packs. As this was a national annual event this was an initiative that could be implemented yearly. This event alone throughout the five estates had high participation levels resulting in approximately 150 residents taking part. This was a good indication that the programme and light engagements had taken hold with the residents and had been successful.

Furthermore, it has become more evident that since the launch of the ECP the relationship and the levels of engagement have gone from strength to strength.

It was identified that historically the areas had seen significant supports coming to the estates. While engaging with the residents a key emphasis was placed on what was the reason why some of these support measures had not been successful. It was essential to the ECP that a current and real-world profile be carried out which included the whole area of AWUA. All avenues would be explored and implemented to reach as many residents as possible. This would correlate with the use of

- Door to door engagements
- Phone calls
- Leaflets
- Posters
- SMS text messages
- What's app groups.
- Facebook
- Face to face meetings
- Group meetings



RESEARCHING THE AREAS

At the beginning of April following a full door to door hand delivered leaflet drop the ECP rolled out questionnaires and surveys throughout the five estates. This was to gather some up-to-date information to have a true reflection regarding the demographics of the estates. This was to ascertain what differences there was between the data held within the Census 2016.

The year of 2023 has been a massive year in relation to the ECP becoming an expected figure in the estates of AWUA. The year has



Over the past year together with the Empowering Communities coordinator we have:

- Met with newly established residents groups.
- Build a strong relationship for inter-agency collaboration for various arts projects.
- Grown existing synergies between artists and communities in support of a visual and aesthetic presence.
- Collaborated on the design and development a brief for a long-term arts residency in the Woodstock Community.
- Been part funded financially to support the residency.
- Participated in on-site visits and out of county trips to various projects that build inspiration.
- Worked in collaboration to participate and give feedback to the Arts Council of Ireland research team.

brought with it some amazing moments for all concerned, it has seen the beginning of opening positive, communications, supports, togetherness, collaborations, and inclusiveness. The ECP has stayed true to the nine principles of inclusive community engagement and working in lines with three clear objectives.

Reflecting on this year there has been very positive reception of the ECP. The approach taken as a open, transparent, inclusive, non-judgemental, respectful, and accommodating one has been successful and served the programme very well. Working in the areas has not been without challenges, it has been evident that the majority of areas and residents have moved to the contemplation stage of change. The prospect of entering year 2 is one that must be seen as another step in the right direction.

The areas have developed a true sense of becoming more independent and with it a level of empowerment. Historical, social, cultural issues have been and continue to be diluted with the arrival of the ECP. It is a powerful thing when the residents of the areas are now looking forward to what next year holds in regards consulting, engaging, participating, shaping, developing, and delivering on their vision for the place they call home.

Creative Places Athy embarked on a series of projects with Empowering Communities to identify the challenges facing the communities and explore what they wanted. Through this relationship, it allowed CPA to build connections and bridge relationships to those who do not generally have access or opportunities to arts and culture.

"Being supported in an environment in the community house to co-create and develop ideas. These initiatives provided, continue to act as a space where ideas can form, artists and creatives can share insights to practices and information and supports can be offered. In the event of no bridging into these communities, Creative Places Athy would not have seen such an increase in engagement and participation in the arts, if not the collaboration with the ECP. I look forward to working with the programme in the future and continuing to build capacity with the communities with Jason and ECP".

- **Eilish Langton**, Creative Places Athy Coordinator, Kildare County Council.



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