



# ANNUAL REPORT 2019



County Kildare  
LEADER PARTNERSHIP

## INTRODUCTION

### Pat Leogue, General / Social Inclusion Manager



*Launch of the Traveller Roma Integration Strategy October 2019. Michael Cunningham - S3 Solutions, Pat Leogue - Manager CKLP, Bridget O'Brien - Kildare Traveller Action, David Stanton - T.D, Minister of State for Equality, Immigration and Integration, Gabi Muntean - Pavee Point, Peter Carey - CEO Kildare County Council and Sonya Kavanagh - Kildare County Council.*

## Celebrating 10 Years

2019 marked the tenth anniversary since County Kildare LEADER Partnership commenced operation as the Local Development Company for County Kildare. Having taken responsibility for the LEADER programme and the Social Inclusion Programmes as well as FAS programmes and some local initiatives, CKLP has grown over the years with the addition of the former Community Development Projects in Athy, Newbridge and North West Kildare, the addition of the TUS Programme established nationally by the Government, the development of the DARA Programme as a drug rehabilitation CE scheme and successful applications for the Ability Programme, the Roma Employment Programme and the Asylum and Migrant Integration Fund. Throughout the last ten years the Company has continued as the sponsor for Local Training Initiative projects funded by Solas through KWETB and has also acted as host to Older Voices Kildare which also celebrated ten years in existence in the past year.

In recognition of its role in the county CKLP has expanded its role as host organisation and employer for staff on behalf of the Heads Up Programme, the Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force, Kildare Sports Partnership and Kildare PPN.





In the past twelve months CKLP successfully applied for funding under the Youth Employment Initiative, a programme which provided funding to work with 16 – 18 year olds who are not in education, training, or employment. The development of this application was based on the successful work that has been ongoing in the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) in recent years with 18 – 24 year olds who are unemployed. Similarly, an application for funding under the Asylum and Migrant Integration Fund was successful and €150,000 grant aid was approved with matching funding of €50,000 provided by Kildare County Council. This funding will be used to support asylum seekers living in Direct Provision in Monasterevin and Newbridge and refugees in the county.

A celebration of ten years activity by CKLP was held during Social Inclusion Week in September 2019. The past year marked the third annual Social Inclusion Week which is a collaboration with Kildare Public Participation Network (PPN) and celebrates positive action around social inclusion by not for profit organisations who provide services to a range of groups across the county.

The Board of Directors welcomed some new members during the year and the Board has agreed to work in 2020 towards compliance with the Charities Governance Code. I would like to pay a special word of thanks to our staff who take such an interest in their work and display an outstanding level of empathy and support to the individuals and groups that they work with throughout County Kildare. We welcome the new staff who joined us during the year across the Company in the various programmes and to those who left during the year we wish them well in their new careers.

The following reports are drawn from the programmes implemented and hosted by CKLP. I would like to thank the agencies and Government Departments who contract our Company to do this valuable work and I also wish to acknowledge the individuals from a wide range of public and voluntary organisations who we engage with to undertake these activities.



*Eric Donovan speaking at the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration*



## WHO WE ARE



### **Sustainable Development • Supporting Vibrant Communities • Labour Market Activation • Social Inclusion**

County Kildare Leader Partnership is the Local Development Company (LDC) for County Kildare. LDCs are not-for-profit organizations that deliver community and rural development, through locally based initiatives. Their ethos is bottom-up, taking a holistic view of development, both of the individual and of the community. We were established in 2009 with the amalgamation of organisations including KELT and the Kildare Community Partnership as a not-for-profit body, responsible for the management and delivery of a range of Government/EU funded programmes throughout the county.

#### **Our Mission**

To support community groups and individuals to participate fully in social, economic, and cultural activity by contributing to the development of a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable society in Co. Kildare.

#### **Our Work**

Our work promotes the ongoing development of inclusive communities in Kildare where individuals are supported and enabled to reach their full potential and fully participate in the social, economic, and cultural life of the county. It takes place under a number of inter-related over-arching themes, including community and economic development, social inclusion and labour market activation.

We seek to do this through championing the energy and ideas found in groups and individuals all over the county, by promoting social capital, by addressing inequality and the factors which create exclusion, by encouraging community participation and economic development, and by improving the social and economic fabric of local areas.

#### **Our Approach**

We strive to adopt a people-centred approach that is caring, inclusive and empowering. We seek to work through cooperation and collaboration with all stakeholders.



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2019

The Board of Directors underwent some changes in 2019 and at the end of the year consisted of fifteen members drawn from the public and private sector with a wealth of professional and voluntary experience. It includes representation from across the four pillars of Community / Voluntary, Local Government / Local Authority, State Agencies and Social Partners. The Board held 7 meetings in 2019.

### Board of Directors

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Patricia O'Brien (Chairperson)

Colm O'Gógáin (Vice Chairperson)

Paul Croghan (Company Secretary)

Leo Mather (Treasurer)

Ann Breen

Anne Connolly

Deirdre Moran

Derek Barter

Evie Sammon

Fiona McLoughlin Healy

Noel Dempsey

Syl Merrins

Tom Cross

Tom Malone

Zoryana Pshyk



*Chairperson Patricia O'Brien speaking at the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration*



# SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES AND INDIVIDUALS

A key part of the work of County Kildare Leader Partnership is supporting the development of a vibrant community, where all can achieve their full potential, both personally and economically. We work alongside community groups to understand their needs and identify solutions to the challenges that face them, to help them develop economically with greater inclusion and participation. We support individuals through training, mentoring and to progress to employment and self-employment. Two of the main ways in which this is done is through the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) and the Rural Development Programme (LEADER).





## THE SOCIAL INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY ACTIVATION PROGRAMME

The SICAP programme, which is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development, aims to reduce poverty and promote social inclusion through local, regional, and national engagement and partnership.



*Castlefen Residents Association*



*Clane ICA, Flower Arranging Workshop, Dec 2019*



*Fiona O'Loughlin meets some attendees of the 10th Anniversary celebration*



# GOAL 1: WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES

## Key Achievements

### 1. Promote community engagement and stronger communities

- Outreach community development work continued to be focused on hard to reach communities identified in the 2019 SICAP Annual Plan. The benefits of this sustained level of support were evident in local success stories like a Pride of Place Award and ten-year celebration for Andrew Residents group in Athy and Ballymakealy Residents group in Celbridge who celebrated their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
- Increased take up of social inclusion funding from the National Transport Authority for comm transport and collaboration with Local Link to increase passenger numbers on specific transport services.
- Collaboration with Kildare Sports Partnership with funding under the Healthy Ireland Initiative to provide an increased range of health-related activities in hard to reach communities such as Healthy Food Made Easy, Health and Wellbeing talks, Activator Poles, Nutrition talk Community walks.
- Significant promotion of the Heads Up programme in disadvantaged areas to encourage participation in mental health programmes.

### 2. Build capacity of LCGs

- Eight workshops were delivered for community groups throughout the year to build the capacity of the groups. These were Funding workshop for LCGs in Athy in April and in Celbridge in October 2019; Positive Communication & Conflict Management in Celbridge in June 2019; Committee skills training took place in Ballitore in March 2019; GDPR Workshop and Governance Workshop in Naas in November 2019 and a Disability Awareness workshop in Solas Bhríde, Kildare Town in November 2019 in collaboration with the Ability Programme and Kildare Sports Partnership
- A drug and alcohol awareness talk by John Lonergan in Suncroft in November 2019 was supported by SICAP and attended by 50 people.
- Active Citizenship and Voter education programmes were run in the Direct Provision centres in Monasterevin and Newbridge which resulted in 48 people registering on the electoral register.
- Kildare Traveller Action were contracted to continue to support Traveller participation in local community groups across County Kildare.
- 1:1 support continued to be provided to a range of groups including Men's Sheds and Disadvantaged Women's groups.

### 3. Support participation in decision-making structures

- Thirty-nine local community activists successfully completed the Level 7 Community Development & Leadership Certificate and the Level 7 Youth Studies Course delivered by Maynooth University. Nineteen students completed the Community Development & Leadership course and twenty participants completed the Youth Studies course. A further forty-three participants representing thirty-six community organisations/groups commenced the same courses in September 2019 for the 2019 / 2020 academic year.
- A new third level outreach initiative - the Communiversity (Maynooth University Leisure Course) – commenced in the public library, Newbridge in October 2019 with nineteen participants.
- The third annual County Kildare Social Inclusion Week took place in September 2019 with events occurring across the county.



#### 4. Promote collaborative engagement

The highlight of 2019 was the successful launch of the County Kildare Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy by David Stanton T.D., Minister of State for Equality, Immigration, and Integration on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2019 in Aras Cill Dara.

- SICAP continued to support the implementation of the Kildare Integration Strategy with Kildare County Council. SICAP also continued to support Kildare Integration Network which met on a quarterly basis during the year.
- SICAP supported the delivery of a further Strengthening Families Programme in Newbridge in collaboration with staff from other service providers.
- SICAP continued to second a staff member to the SWRDATF to act as Coordinator of the Regional Family Support service at Hope Cottage, Kill.

#### 5. Support SEs which contribute to SICAP outcomes

SICAP supported community shops in South Kildare during 2019, helping to establish a bus service in the Narraghmore / Moone area on Friday mornings for older people following the closure of local post offices. SICAP supported a profiling and needs analysis of social enterprises in County Kildare as a follow up to research undertaken in 2013. The updated needs analysis formed the basis of an application to DRCD for training and mentoring supports for social enterprises. This application was successful and CKLP was granted a total of €51,162. In addition, SICAP supported 53 Local Community Groups to apply for a Small Capital Grant for Social Enterprises with three groups successfully applying for a total of €22,250



*Conferring Ceremony Maynooth University - Youth Studies Course November 2019*



David Stanton T.D., Minister of State for Equality, Immigration, and Integration with the Strategy Steering Group October 2019



The Piers Café & Community Shop



## GOAL 2: WORKING WITH INDIVIDUALS

### Key Achievements

#### 1. Promote personal development and wellbeing

- Two Youth Employment Programmes were run during 2019 for 24 participants in Athy and Kildare Town. In addition, SICAP staff developed an application to KWETB for a Youth Employability Initiative project to work with young people aged 16-18 in Athy who were not in education, training, or employment. The application was successful and €50,000 was secured to run the project to the end of 2019.
- An Integration Project Worker role has been co funded for the last three years by SICAP with St. Stephens Green Trust and Kildare County Council. In 2019 the Project Worker supported 19 individuals/families who are currently living in the Eyre Powell Direct Provision Centre as well as 11 individuals who have moved out. SICAP also supported an application to the Asylum Migration Integration Fund (AMIF). CKLP was awarded €150,000 for a three-year period with co-funding from Kildare County Council for the Integration Project Worker to continue on a full-time basis. The Project Worker will work on a one to one basis with residents of both the Eyre Powell Direct Provision Centre in Newbridge and The Hazel Direct Provision Centre in Monasterevin.
- SICAP worked with Athy Community and Family Resource Centre to deliver a People Parenting Alone Finding Your Feet (personal development) programme in the Family Resource Centre in Athy. Nine participants completed the course.
- Targeted outreach work in Townspark Athy was undertaken in 2019 and 14 individuals participated in a variety of courses that included: Healthy Food Made Easy, Manual Handling, First Aid and HACCP.
- SICAP contracted Newbridge Family Resource Centre to engage with isolated men in disadvantaged estates in Newbridge during 2019. A Men's Outreach Worker has engaged with 25 men in the development of a sensory garden project with a core group of 10 men attending each week.



*Presentation of Certificates on completion of a Finding Your Feet Programme in Athy*



## 2. Provide lifelong learning opportunities

- Two Information Fairs took place in Newbridge and Athy in March during DEASP Jobs Week, with 107 attending in Athy and over 200 in Newbridge.
- Job seeking seminars ran in Newbridge and Naas on 4th and 7th March 2019.
- Outreach information workshops took place in Kilcock and Monasterevin Direct Provision Centre and a clinic service was provided in Ardrew, Athy over a four-week period during the year.
- Seven computer courses and Finding Your Feet programmes were run during 2019. Four basic computer classes were run with 39 participants completing. Three Finding Your Feet programmes were run with 38 participants. 33% of those participating in the Lifelong Learning activities engaged in more than one activity/course. 55% of participants were male compared to 45% female.
- These programmes are flexible and can be adapted to the needs of specific target groups in various locations.

## 3. Provide preventative supports for children and young people

Children participating in the Better Basics programme in the 2018 / 2019 academic year achieved an improvement in reading age of an average of 15 months, a significant progression.

SICAP also supported the retention of 1,852 young people in education through the provision of support to School Completion Projects in County Kildare to run breakfast clubs, homework clubs and summer camps. A further 136 young people participated in visits to Carlow IT targeting 6<sup>th</sup> class students at Primary School level.





#### 4. Prepare people for employment and to remain in work

- 85 people were supported into employment during 2019 (54 full time and 31 part time jobs filled) with 21% going into Construction and 13% each into food, warehouse & transport, manufacturing and schemes such as TUS and Community Employment.
- SICAP supported industry certified and QQI accredited courses with a total of eleven Safe Pass courses delivered, fourteen Manual Handling courses, three Home Repair Care & Maintenance (HRM) QQI Level 4 and two Handling Food Hygienically QQI Level 4 courses.
- Career Skills: Participants on the DARA Project (Drug Rehabilitation CE scheme) engaged in a QQI Level 3 Career Preparation module as part of a specially adapted Career Skills programme. A further 18 individuals completed a Career Skills Programme in Athy in June 2019. A specially adapted Career Skills was run for the Youth Employment Programme also.
- SICAP supported 126 individuals with CV interview skills workshops and a 1:1 CV service in North East Kildare. A further 92 individuals received a 1:1 CV service at other locations in County Kildare

*Thanks  
for your email. Yes, I  
am working away and in fact  
I am interviewing for a promotion in  
the coming weeks as they want to offer  
me a permanent contract, so I am  
delighted and thanks again for all  
of your support*

#### 5. Promote better quality and sustainable employment

Two Kickstart programmes took place in Naas with 29 individuals taking part and six people getting full time jobs. The aim of the Kickstart Programme is to provide the participants with the opportunity to gain relevant work experience and develop both their confidence levels and the key job skills required for each industry. The programme involves two half days training for six weeks followed by four weeks (part-time) work placement.

#### 6. Provide a pathway to self-employment/social entrepreneurship

Over the last twelve months 182 clients were referred for enterprise support. 131 were case loaded (met on at least two occasions) and 73 of these clients progressed to self-employment. 43 clients went on to the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance Scheme and 28 went on to the Short-Term Enterprise Allowance Scheme. Two individuals went on to self-employment who did not qualify for the schemes. Of those who progressed to self-employment the gender balance was 55% male, 45% female, reflecting a rise in female participation from the previous year. 95% of the SICAP clients progressing to self-employment were sole traders and the main business types established were construction related and personal services which accounted for more than half of all businesses set up. Arts / education and trades / professional services accounted for approximately a further 25% of all clients supported in 2019.

SICAP also supported the establishment of the Business Development Programme (BDP) in Athy, providing 1:1 support for participants and progression onto BTWEA scheme. One of the BTWEA clients was selected to participate in the National BTWEA Awards held in Tullamore during 2019.

There is ongoing engagement with other key stakeholders including DEASP Case Officers in Newbridge and Maynooth, the Local Enterprise Office, INOU, KWETB and ILDN Enterprise Workers Network.

## ROMA EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT PROGRAMME



### Background

In October 2019 County Kildare Traveller & Roma Inclusion Strategy 2019 - 2023 was launched by Minister David Stanton, T.D, Minister of State for Equality, Immigration, and Integration. The Launch provided an opportunity to highlight needs identified by the Roma community and provided an opportunity to reinforce the reality that County Kildare is home to a significant number of Roma, many of whom have lived here for more than 15 years.

The need for the **Kildare Roma Employment Support Programme** emerged through the Strategy consultation process with Roma through community focus groups and one-to-one engagement with 70 individuals. Participants highlighted barriers to employment as the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest priority identifying barriers of access to employment as a major challenge while recognising employment as a catalyst for addressing other issues impacting on their lives. Following a successful funding application to the Department of Justice and Equality, Kildare Roma Employment Support Programme was developed.

### Key Achievements

The key achievement in 2019 was the successful establishment of the Programme with a focus on Recruitment, Programme Promotion, Initial Engagement with the Roma community re employment related supports and obtaining membership of the National Roma Network.

Intensive planning on further roll-out of Programme Actions in 2020 also occurred. A recruitment process resulted in the appointment of a full-time Roma Employment Support Worker in October 2019.



## Designing, Developing and Disseminating Programme Promotional Materials

The Coordinator, the Roma Employment Service Worker and a design company collaborated on this process with consultation with local Roma on the final logo. Design components were developed to ensure that the final documents were sensitive to the Roma community, were clear in the message being shared which could communicate to Roma, including those with limited or no literacy skills. Consequently, a great deal of attention was given to the logo design as a means of non-verbal communication. The final design reflected the colours of the International Roma Flag, set within a boundary map of County Kildare. Materials developed included Kildare Roma Employment Support Programme Leaflet outlining the range of services and supports available, A3 Posters for displaying in Health Centres, Garda Stations, Unemployment Services, Citizens Information, and any location where Roma might engage. Course flyers were developed in English and translated into Romanian and Slovak, for the first workshops to be taken place in January 2020

## Outreach to Roma Community

During the last quarter of 2019 outreach support to member of the Roma community commenced linking with individuals and families in Newbridge, Monasterevin, Kilcock and Naas. Areas covered included assessment of training needs, employment needs and assessing levels of interest in employment & pre-employment supports.

## Challenges & Barriers: Initial Roll out of the Programme

As with any new initiative the start-up phase needs to be carried out effectively to put the programme on a solid foundation to develop relationships of trust with the target community. This was particularly important in respect of the Roma community. As highlighted at our Strategy launch, throughout history and throughout the world Roma have experienced extreme levels of exclusion and discrimination. Therefore, effective relationship building needed to establish honest, supportive, and respectful relationships between with Programme staff and the Roma community. This was of key importance to the ongoing success of the Programme. Effective groundwork carried out in 2019 placed the Programme on a sound footing for its continued roll-out in 2020.





## Social Enterprise Supports

Social Enterprises have a key role to play in providing employment and responding to local gap services. County Kildare Leader Partnership supports Social Enterprise in Kildare through the var programmes delivered by the company.



### Social Enterprise Needs Analysis 2019

County Kildare Leader Partnership contracted Ann Clarke, consultant, to out a need's analysis on Social Enterprise in County Kildare September 2019. Thirty-three social enterprises were invited to take part and nineteen responded. The main findings of the survey were that nearly half of Social Enterprises have been business for more than ten years, and one in four was operating for between five and ten years with just over a quarter being in business for less than five years. Nearly half of social enterprises are community centres. Key sources of earned income include rental of office space, meeting rooms, halls, counselling rooms and sports facilities, provision of therapies, childcare, community shops and cafés, providing outlets for local producers (food crafts), tourist attractions and bus services. The needs analysis also helped to identify the training needs of social enterprises in the county.



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## Dormant Accounts Fund – Training and Mentoring Supports for Social Enterprises

County Kildare Leader Partnership was approved by Pobal in October 2019 for the delivery of a training and mentoring programme for Social Enterprises under the Dormant Accounts Fund.

The Kildare Social Enterprise Initiative seeks to support new and existing social enterprises in County Kildare. This initiative focuses supports, mentoring and training for established social enterprises in the areas of governance, business, and financial planning, marketing, and measuring social impact.

Workshops delivered to date include *Governance Code Training for Social Enterprises, Social Media Marketing and Maximising the Social Impact of Social Enterprises in County Kildare*. There are seven social enterprises who are currently engaging with the special Social Enterprise Mentoring support with Gateway.

Further plans for 2020 include the delivery of a retail skills training module, a marketing programme and a financial management programme and HR management skills training for social enterprises.

## Small Capital Grants Scheme for Social Enterprises

County Kildare Leader Partnership administered the 2019 Small Capital Grants Scheme for Social Enterprises which is funded by the Dormant Accounts Fund. This scheme is providing grants of between €2,000 and €15,000 for equipment, repairs or refurbishments which will enable social enterprises to improve their service delivery. Final decisions on funding were made by the Department of Rural and Community Development.

The following Social Enterprises in County Kildare have been successful in securing funding under this scheme:

- Sensational Kids CLG, Kildare
- The Cottage Market, Newbridge
- The Peoples Market, Monasterevin
- Griese Youth Theatre
- Kildare Small Jobs Service

Over sixty applications were received of which fourteen met the criteria laid out by the Department. These were in the areas of food, arts, health, and services. The deadline for completion of work/refurbishment/purchase of equipment has been extended due to the current pandemic and staff at CKLP are in regular contact with the successful applicants to answer their queries.



## The Rural Development Programme (LEADER)

The LEADER Programme is committed to improving the lives of those living and working in rural communities in County Kildare. It is based on a philosophy of “Community Led Local Development”, understanding that Kildare consists of strong communities with ideas and ambition for their futures, and these local communities are often best placed to respond to the challenges that face them.

### 2019 Progress

In 2019 the LEADER Programme supported 15 projects or initiatives, investing €1, 351,226.52 in the county. Five of these projects were under the Economic, Enterprise and Job Creation Theme, four under Social Inclusion, four under Rural Environment, one under Support for Rural Towns and one under Rural Tourism. This represents an allocation of 34.2% of the overall LEADER project budget in the year.

Some of these projects were in response to the energy and creativity of community groups around the county. This strongly aligns with one key aspect of the LEADER approach, namely the bottom-up elaboration and implementation of strategies identified by local communities, such as the running track at Clane.



Another example of this work can be seen in the identification by Roberstown Community Amenities Association of a Barge restoration project to give a focus for the energy in the committee and boost the tourism numbers coming into the village. This project - funded under SA 1.2 To support the growth of Kildare’s tourism sector by improving and expanding on the quality and range of products on offer - involved the restoration and interior fit-out of Heritage Barge 52M will include engine and control works, electrical works, services, internal fit out and commission for use as a heritage museum, community facility and visitor attraction. This type of support for an energetic community association allows them to focus on an idea to change their community and in this way, they focus on a practical win which will benefit the whole community while at the same time maintaining the energy of the group. As Peter Dunne, chair of the group started, “Without [LEADER funding] we would essentially just have a restored hull, that would be little else use than a display piece in the village” The funding allows the groups put the barge to use in the community such as by the local Scouts group in Prosperous.



## Strategic Initiatives

A key part of LEADER work is animation in support of the themes of the Programme. Consequently, a second way in which projects were developed in 2019 was through in-house identification of areas needing capacity building or animation. This allowed the development of skills in different communities to support them to respond to areas identified in the Rural Development Strategy for the county.

An example of this was the Communities4Climate Action initiatives which ran from September 2019 until December. This project responded to the key LEADER theme of sustainable management of natural resources and climate action. It was a 10 Week Programme, aimed at helping communities become climate smart, and started on September 28th with 36 participants. Communities 4 Climate Action supported community groups and clubs to learn about projects to reduce their carbon footprint and become more resilient in the face of climate change. It also identified projects that were eligible for LEADER funding. Over 40 different potential LEADER were discussed during the training, showing the energy and enthusiasm the group brought to this important area for the future of the county.

A third way in which the Rural Development Plan was advanced was through developing initiatives in collaboration with other agencies. These allow the development of social capital in the form of networks, allowing local strategies to be linked and coordinated as a coherent whole.

An example of this can be seen in an initiative commenced in September, - a Craft Network Training in conjunction with the Local Enterprise Office, under the Broad theme of Increasing and expanding enterprise development in rural Kildare, namely SA 2.1 Support Kildare's Creative Network and Craft Design Hubs. The need for the training was identified by craftspeople in the County who were working on their high-quality products, intent on their own business development and marketing, with support from Kildare LEO. They saw a need to work collaboratively and the LEO were keen to support this.





## Targeted Call for 2019

The LEADER targeted call for 2019 was for artisan food projects, which had a budget of €200,000.00. This call was promoted through the Leinster Leader, the Kildare Nationalist, and the Kildare Post. A flyer was also printed, and the call was publicised on social media and on our website and with the assistance of Kildare County Council and the PPN.

The deadline for expressions of interest was 15<sup>th</sup> March. In tandem with this publicity was conducted around the significant funding available towards rural tourism projects and biodiversity projects and initiatives.



## Project Application Workshops

Four application and business plan workshops were held in April 2019. These workshops were targeted towards the EOIs received under the call for Artisan Food projects (and also tourism & environment projects) which took place in February and March. The Artisan food projects were given a deadline of 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2019 to submit their applications. Further business plan workshops with Bernadette Farrell of ACE training took place on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> May.

A total 17 people attended the application workshops and a total 15 people attended the business plan workshops.





# BUILDING PATHWAYS TO QUALITY EMPLOYMENT

Another aspect of the work of County Kildare Leader Partnership is supporting individuals to participate fully and with dignity in the economic life of the community. Labour Market Activation initiatives are interventions intended to train, upskill, and help unemployed persons find work. The aim is to offer good progression opportunities to jobs in the open labour market. Through these initiatives, people are supported to expand their knowledge, learn new skills, and develop confidence to pursue their goals. Initiatives such as these are a vital part of a holistic labour market that offers quality, sustainable jobs that are inclusive and accommodating to workers with differing personal circumstances. Tús, RSS, YEI, the ESP and the LTI are examples of these types of interventions.



# THE TÚS PROGRAMME

## How the program works

The objective of the Tús programme is twofold: to improve the employability and work readiness of participants by providing them with work opportunities to put their skills into practice and to learn or up-skill to enable them to progress to mainstream work, while at the same time as supporting local not-for-profit organisations to deliver services in our communities.

Voluntary and Community groups commit to offer a quality work experience to the participant and a working week of a minimum of 19.5 hours per week for a period of 12 Months. All groups also have a duty to provide some supervisory time to the client.



## Eligibility Criteria

All participants must be at least 1 year on a Jobseekers Payment, and any participant previously on Tús must be off the scheme for a minimum of 3 years before becoming eligible again. Selection is on a random basis carried out by DEASP with names furnished to the implementation body. An initial one-to-one interview is carried out by CKLP to assess the skill level, suitability of the participant and to match them with a position that best suited their career path. We are then able to offer a participant a placement in one of the 125 host groups we service across Kildare.

## What is the Benefit?

Participants are allowed to carry out additional work outside of placement hours while not affecting their payment. There is also no requirement to attend DEASP office during placement. Furthermore, participants are able to avail of the added benefit of the services of County Kildare LEADER Partnership during and after placement. We also offer a limited amount of in-house training to all our participants. All participants will be given assistance to progress to full time employment, education, or business start-up at the end of their contract. To date one in four starters on Tús move into full time employment before their finish date on Tús: 25% of starters on Tús progress to full time employment.



*Tús Support for Tidy Town Naas*



## Working with Communities

In County Kildare many groups benefit from participant's knowledge, expertise, and involvement. Groups such as Moore Abbey, Cill Dara Housing, Sporting organisations, charity shops, Tidy Town Committees, and many more offer up to date employment opportunities and valuable work experience to participants. Over the last year Tús has supported and indirectly funded communities with almost €2,000,000 in labour; without this funding many community- based organisations would not survive or would have to look for additional state funding.

### 2019 progress

Over the last year there has been a reduction in the Live Register, and this is reflected in the current numbers on the Programme. Correspondingly, there has been a reduction from 13 Supervisors to 8 at present, with each supervisor now having a quota of a minimum of 25 participants. In 2019, through the dedicated work of all the supervisors, the allocation of 200 participants and 8 supervisors has been maintained. Looking ahead CKLP is determined to manage and maintain the maximum number of participants for the benefit of the host groups and local community organisations that provide the work placements in County Kildare. The challenge remains to encourage those on Jobseekers payments and organisations working with the unemployed to take up the rewarding work experience opportunities that are on offer.

## Communities and groups supported

### PROJECT LOCATION

Naas Sports Centre	TEA Lane Historic Graveyard Celbridge
Clane United	Solas Bhríde Kildare
NCBI charity Naas	Sensational Kids Kildare
NCBI charity Sallins	NCBI Kildare
NCBI charity Clane	SVDP Kildare
Clane GAA	Plains Residents Assoc
Clane Lawn tennis	Rehab Care
Green IT	Cill Dara Housing Kildare
Jack and Jill Naas	Suncroft Graveyards
Jack and Jill Crookstown	Suncroft GAA
Moone Shop	Citizen Advice Newbridge
Moone Parish Church	Rathangan Graveyard
Ottomy Residents Association	Convent Kildare Town
Kilkea Residents	Andrew Meadows Athy
Naas Tidy Town	Athy Tidy Towns
Kill Tidy Towns	Athy Enterprise Centre
Brannockstown Tidy Towns	Bridge United
Ballymore Ball alley	TUS Athy
Poulaphuca Pitch and Putt	Athy Community Resource Centre



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Naas Scout Den	Happy Days Creche
McCauley Place Naas	Passlands Cemetery
Naas Parish Centre	Monasterevin Scouts Den
Acre Project Celbridge	Woodview Res
Ashgrove Residents Carbury	Moore Abbey
Ballynafagh Lake project	SVDP Monasterevin
Breaking Through Maynooth	St Evans Park
Celbridge GAA	Monasterevin AFC
Straffan GAA	Athy Sports Hub
Celbridge Church of Ireland	Athy Rugby Club
Celbridge Community Council	Naas Care of the Aged
Citizens Information Maynooth	Flinters Close Creche
Coill Dubh AFC	Kingdom Life House
Coill Dubh residents	Self Help Africa
Leixlip Tennis Club	SVDP Athy
Leixlip YCC	St Michaels Graveyard
NCBI Celbridge	TUS In It to Bin It, Athy
NCBI Leixlip	Sarsfield's GAA Newbridge
NCBI Maynooth	SVDP Newbridge
St Bridget's Hospice Leixlip	Rosconnell Residents Assoc
SVDP Celbridge	Red Cross Charity shop
SVDP Kilcock	Kilcullen Boxing Club
Kildare Animal Shelter	Open Arms Retail Newbridge
NCBI Newbridge	Jack and Jill Newbridge
SVDP Kilcullen	Newbridge Day Care Centre
Age Action Retail Newbridge	Ryston Sports Newbridge

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## THE RURAL SOCIAL SCHEME (RSS)

### How the Programme Works

The Rural Social Scheme was set up in 2004 to provide income support for low income farmers in return for part time work in the community. It is based on a 19.5-hour flexible week to ensure that participation does not affect the participants farming activities. To qualify for the scheme, one must be in receipt of a means tested social welfare payment and provide proof that they are actively farming. If a person is eligible and does not wish to participate on the RSS, his or her dependant spouse/civil partner/cohabitant can apply in their place. They can also allow a sibling or child to use their Herd Number to participate, once they satisfy the other criteria.

By Participating on the Rural Social Scheme, local communities benefit from your skills and talents by providing additional resources to maintain and improve local amenities and facilities.

### Eligibility Criteria

You must provide a copy of your application for the EU Basic payment for the current year, including a valid active herd number. You must be in receipt of Farm Assist or one of the following qualifying Social Welfare/ Means Tested Payments:

- Job Seekers Allowance
- One-Parent Family Payment
- Jobseekers Transitional Payment
- Widow(er)'s Pension (Contributory or Non-Contributory)
- Adult Dependents of Non-Contributory Old Age Pensioners who themselves are under 66.

### Rates of payment

Rates of payment depend on qualifying Social Welfare Payment. Your Local Supervisor/ Coordinator will advise you of your rates at time of application. A PRSI contribution (Class A) is paid in respect of each participant. Those earning less than €352 per week will not be subject to PRSI. Participants are exempt from USC.

### What type of Work is Carried Out?

- Maintaining and enhancing way marked ways, agreed walks and bog roads
- Energy Conservation for the elderly and less well off
- Village and Countryside enhancement projects
- Social Care and Care of the Older Person
- Community Care for pre-school and after school groups
- Environmental Maintenance work- maintenance and caretaking of community and sporting facilities
- Projects relating to not-for-profit cultural and heritage centres
- Community Administration or clerical Work

### 2019 progress

The Rural Social Scheme in County Kildare currently employs 27 participants and one Coordinating Supervisor employed by County Kildare LEADER Partnership. At present RSS supports twenty-eight Community Groups throughout the county, from Johnstown Bridge in the north of the county to Athy in the South. Potential participants were identified through local agencies, direct media marketing, talks at different events, farmers meetings and through community groups in the County. The majority of participants on the RSS scheme in Kildare are involved in environmental maintenance-type work with sports clubs and local community groups.



The RSS in Kildare has been operational in the County since April 2005 and given the declining income in agriculture in recent years, farmers participating on the scheme can increase their income on an annual basis.

In April 2019 and as part of the promotion of the Rural Social Scheme the Coordinator attended the Kildare/ West Wicklow IFA AGM to address farmers on the benefits of the Scheme and was accompanied by two farmers who are currently on the scheme, one of these farmers is a dairy farmer and the other is a beef and tillage farmer. We are always delighted to support new participants on this scheme and actively welcome any additional places. To this end we are hoping that the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection will allocate more places to Kildare in the coming year.

## Communities supported

### PROJECT LOCATION

Johnstownbridge GFC	Carbury Day Care Centre Elderly Group GAA.
Kilpatrick Graveyard	Maddenstown Wood Way marked Way
Templedoon Graveyard Carbury	Camphill Community Dunshane
Ardkill Graveyard	St Evin's Cemetery & Playground
Moore Abbey Monasterevin The Haven	Carbury GAA
ST. Vincent De Paul Shop Monasterevin	Lackagh Graveyard
Curragh Pride FRC	Donadea Forest Park
Irish Wheelchair Association Athy	Carbury GAA
Inland Waterways NTH Barrow Branch	CKLP
Castlemitchell Community Development Association	Rathangan Community Centre
Narraghmore/ Moone Timolin Parish	Lullymore Heritage & Discovery Park
Mill Celtic FC	Ticknevin Tidy Towns
Clogherinkoe GFC	Broadford Residents Ass
The Range Donadea	St. Vincent De. Paul Monasterevin
Derrinturn tidy Towns	



## YOUTH EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE (YEI)

In early 2019 County Kildare LEADER Partnership (CKLP) were successful in their application to Kildare Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB) in respect of funding under the Youth Employability Initiative based in Athy. The Minister for Children and Youth Affairs announced a new fund of up to €1 million nationally to provide funding to voluntary youth services to support programmes that target young people to improve their employability and achieve career goals. The Youth Employability Initiative was supported by funding from the Dormant Accounts Fund.



The aim of Youth Employment Initiative was to provide support, soft skills training, advice, and guidance to the young people identified and increase their employability. The Initiative employed two youth workers to engage young people from the Athy Municipal Area, through voluntary participation, in one to one mentoring sessions and small group work and training. The Youth Employment Initiative began development work in April 2019, contacting local agencies to form a Steering Group and begin recruitment. The Initiative staff were in place from the end June 2019 to end January 2020.

### The Initiative consisted of two primary elements

- One to one mentoring and coaching sessions weekly, to develop and work through a personal action plan which is young person-centred. This provided practical supports for the young person where they can avail of advocacy and referral to other appropriate local services enhancing their self-confidence and ability to build positive relationships with other adults.
- Group and Residential work. This included workshops and activities to enhance the young people's social and personal development. It was intended to focus on: building communication skills, increasing self-awareness, peer relationships, creativity resilience, determination and generally build a sense of community. The preparation for the residential element involved planning sessions.





Due to the cohort of young people recruited onto the Initiative, the Initiative focused more on the one to one mentoring and coaching sessions. Key components of the Initiative were:

- Personal planning: each participant developed a personal action plan
- Development of specific identified Key Skills
- Coping Strategies to deal with relevant issues, such as anxiety and social exclusion
- Availability of counselling time for participants seeking this support
- Personal and Social Education
- Training including: Driver Theory, Manual Handling, Home Repair Maintenance
- Career Guidance
- Back to School Support
- An element of team building and group work
- Planning for residential experience and residential experience

There were 25 group work and training sessions in total throughout the 9 months of the Initiative. This included 8 driver theory sessions and a driver practical trip. It included 6 residential planning sessions, 7 group socialisation sessions, 1 social inclusion event and 1 end of programme outing. Overall, 7 young people engaged in group work. A number of young people engaged in day trips and 2 engaged on an overnight trip.

The Initiative targeted vulnerable young people who have left school and who are not engaged in training or employment. Many of the young people identified live in the most disadvantaged areas of Athy which is the most disadvantaged district in County Kildare. 14 young people engaging on the Initiative had a range of strengths and some serious challenges. Their challenges mainly related to a spectrum of mental health and wellbeing issues ranging from low self-esteem and high anxiety levels which are common to many in their age group to more serious mental health issues. All were out of full-time education, some for more than 3 years.

Young people highlighted the range of ways in which the Initiative supported them. This included the basic support of having a safe place to go or something that they could attend without feeling under too much pressure *“it helped me because I got out of bed and had somewhere to go”* it was *“good to have people to hang out with”*; *“It’s like a safe place, there is no one who is mean to us here”*.





They recognised that their behaviour was changing on the Initiative, that it was helping their motivation and supporting them to feel more positive for example “... *feeling more like an adult*”, “*my mental health is better, before I was stagnant and now I have a routine and see new people*”.

The youth workers were complimented by all the young people involved for their support. They highlighted the importance of the role of the staff as role models “... *positive role model*”, “*I really liked the relationship built with her*”.

When asked how the Initiative could be changed or improved, the young people had no suggestions, except to say in a number of cases that they personally found the group work or training in groups very difficult. Two specifically noted that they did not want to engage in group work or very limited group work at this point in their lives. Two young people said that they personally would like the option only to work with the youth workers on a one to one basis. However, in interview one young person said that it was probably “*good to do it*” but “*hard to do*”.

Young people saw the Initiative as a bridge between school and work and recognised that it was helping them back into training and education. Some of the courses they completed while attending the Initiative, included First Aid, Manual Handling and QQI Level 4 Home Repair Maintenance.

Participants progression varied from engagement in short courses to return to education or employment. Outlined below are the progression routes for participants on completion of the programme.

- Youthreach to complete Leaving Certificate (2)
- Returned to school to complete Junior Certificate (1)
- Progressed to engage on a Social Care PLC Course (1)
- Progressed to full-time employment (1)
- Short courses (Level 4) in Athy Further Education and Training Centre with the intent to enrol in a PLC Course in September or moving onto employment (2)
- Attending literacy and numeracy: one to one Athy FETC (1)
- Referred to Ability Programme (1)
- Home on-line course (with the intent to attend PLC) (1)
- Commenced a full-time course, disengaged but re-engaged in short courses, work experience, employment, YEP (3)
- Seeking apprenticeship (1)

Alongside these measurable education, training and employment progression routes, the young people were also supported to engage with or continue to engage with organisations that could support their social and emotional wellbeing. For example, 2 young people were engaging on a Substance Misuse Programme, 2 young people continued to engage with KYS, and others remained attending their counselling sessions.

The programme funding ceased in January 2020 and participants were registered under the SICAP Programme and continued to benefit from the support of the Youth Employment Programme in Athy, which caters for 18-24-year olds.



## ATHY RETAIL SKILLS PROGRAMME LOCAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (LTI)

During 2019 CKLP continued as sponsor of the Local Training Initiative project in the Athy Training Centre at Woodstock Street, Athy. The Local Training Initiative is funded by Solas through Kildare Wicklow Education and Training Board and provided a QQI Level 4 Major Award in Retail Skills.

On 22nd February 2019 a presentation day was held in the Clanard Court Hotel to present awards. Eileen Cullen Training Services Manager KWETB, Sheila Bradley Senior Development Officer KWETB (Kildare Wicklow Education Training Board) and Pat Leogue General Manager County Kildare LEADER Partnership congratulated the participants and presented them with their certificates. The modules undertaken on this course were: Information Technology Skills, Teamworking, Stock Control, Retail Payment Procedures, Retail Sales Techniques, Communications, Work Experience and Plant ID, Care and Maintenance. The horticulture module on the programme has been made possible with the acquisition of a greenhouse and tool shed at the Training Centre.

In March 2019 the Retail Skills Programme collaborated with other CKLP managed programmes in Athy to enter a float in the St. Patrick's Day Parade. The staff and participants from the Athy Retail Skills LTI worked with the SICAP Youth Employment Worker and staff from the Ability Programme, TÚS, and the DARA Project as well as the Rural Development Programme staff to prepare a "green" float which featured recyclable materials and distribution of wildflower seeds. The preparation of the float pictured below was an opportunity for the participants to provide a practical example of the skills that they had developed on the course.

A further course commenced on 24th June 2019 and was due to end in March 2020. This is the last LTI project sponsored by County Kildare LEADER Partnership. The Athy Training Centre has been running Local Training Initiatives since 2002. By the end of 2019 over 400 trainees had passed through its doors since the centre opened with many of the participants engaged in employment locally and in retail outlets in Dublin and Kildare.







## The Business Development/Enterprise Skills Programme

The Business Development Programme was a specialised Community Employment (CE) Scheme which provides a 14-week start your own business course in Kildare for unemployed individuals in receipt of a welfare payment. It is funded by the Department of Employment and Social Protection. In 2019, following a review, the Business Development Programme was restructured and renamed the Enterprise Skills Programme. The Programme supports individuals to explore self-employment, in order to ascertain if they have a viable business and if self-employment is the correct option for them.

In 2019, the decision was taken to deliver the programme at different locations throughout County Kildare. In August, the ESP was delivered in Athy to 16 people, as a 14-week programme, to accommodate more potential entrepreneurs in each 12-month period.

Group training was delivered in core modules of business planning, such as Accounts, Book-keeping, Financial Planning, Marketing, Sales, Market Research, Social Media, Customer Service & exploring the realities of self-employment. The training was delivered in an adult learning environment and support was given to improve knowledge and confidence around becoming an entrepreneur. Furthermore, participants were encouraged to undertake additional individual training which increased their skills and made them better prepared for running their own business. An integral part of the programme was the regular one-to-one support from the ESP coordinator. Eligible participants were supported by the SICAP Enterprise Support Worker to apply for the Back To Work Enterprise Allowance (BTWEA). Those who decided against self-employment were supported by the coordinator and the SICAP Employment Support Worker to plan their next career step.



# FULL PARTICIPATION IN THE LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY

County Kildare Leader Partnership is working towards a more inclusive society where everyone, regardless of their personal situation, has equal access to education, employment, and healthcare and can participate as fully as possible in the lives of their communities. At the heart of this is the holistic development of the person and their full participation in society, regardless of their age, ability, or challenges due to mental health issues or addiction.



## The Ability Programme

The official launch of the Kildare Ability programme took place on June 10th, 2019 in Solas Bhríde Kildare Town. Minister of State for Disability Issues Finian McGrath launched the programme with over 70 people in attendance. These included steering committee members, representatives from DEASP, agencies from around the county, and participants and their families.



### The Programme Structure

The programme is funded by the European Social Fund and Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and is due to run until July 1st, 2021. Funding for this programme is for the period July 2018 - July 2021. The steering committee for the programme has been extended to include the Youth Advocate for the county and the Sports Inclusion Disability Officer. The original committee includes: LESN, DEASP, NLN, KARE, St. John of God's, KWETB, Employability Kildare, CKLP, HSE. This group meet on a quarterly basis to guide and monitor the programme. The programme has two staff positions, a Coordinator and Employer Engagement worker. The Coordinator has been in post since October 2018, the employer engagement post programme has been vacant for a period of time.

There have been a number of rounds of recruitment however these have been unsuccessful. It is hoped this position will be filled for year 3 of the programme.

The Ability Programme currently has 38 young people officially on the programme, with two more people in the process of registering. The programme capacity is 40 young people, there is a waitlist in operation with 11 people at present. The programme works with young people across the entire county aged between 16-19 with a disability. The aim is to work with young people who are not engaging with education, training, work, and services in general. Each young person is given an appropriate person-centred support to assist them in achieving their goals. A number of young people have progressed back into education or training as a result of their participation in the programme. Many of the other participants are currently exploring areas of interest and opportunities for training or education in their locality. At present there are six participants are back in education and three others have places secured to return to education.



The referrals for the programme have come from a range of agencies across the county, these include: HSE Training and Guidance, Youth Workers, Juvenile Liaison Officers, Tusla, CAMHS, HALO, CKLP, schools, Network Disability Teams, Local Employment Service and parents of young people. Each referral meets the coordinator and engages in a process to identify suitability and needs. Any young person who is not eligible or feels the programme does not meet their needs can avail of a sign posting service. Every effort is made to help the young person and their family advocate for themselves and access an appropriate support. A number of families have been supported to access other more appropriate services. To date there have been 83 referrals to the programme.





## Work in 2019

A national Ability Programme networking event was hosted in CKLP on November 26th, 2019. This event was designed and hosted by the Kildare Ability Programme to provide a space to share ideas and resources. All 26 other Ability Programmes were invited and over 40 people were in attendance on the day. Pobal also sent a representative to brief the group and thank Kildare Ability for organising and hosting the event. This was a very successful event with a strong desire from all participants to replicate the event in the future.

As a result of the increasing need for parental support on the Ability programme, a collaborative piece of work took place between, Kildare Sports Partnership, Kildare Ability Programme and SICAP Goal 1. On November 28th, 2019, an Autism Awareness Workshop was hosted in Solas Bhride Kildare Town. There was a staggering demand for the workshop with over 90 people in attendance.





## HEADS UP

Heads up Kildare is an interagency suicide prevention programme funded through the H.S.E. Mental Health Service and local agencies, hosted by C.K.L.P. supporting men in distress through the delivery of a wide range of programmes and initiatives across the county.

# HEADSUP

## KILDARE

supporting U and  
your mental health

These programmes focus on four main elements:

- Wellbeing and Resilience supports men who have experienced adversity to gain an understanding of mental health recovery and wellness so that they can build their resilience and respond positively to stress and stressful situations.
- Physical Activity: builds participants fitness levels as well as enabling participants to recognise the strong link between being physically active and feeling well.
- Life Planning: enables men to set their own personal goals and be supported to access relevant services in pursuing these goals. The men determine new pathways for themselves and are equipped with the tools, knowledge, and information to progress.
- Social Connection: creation of a male space to enable men experience support and connection. This gives participants a safe space to develop a new understanding of what it means to be a man that supports a sense of wellbeing.

Heads Up Kildare has supported over 500 men since it was established in 2015. Originally a pilot project focusing on Kildare town, it was established as a county wide programme in June 2016 as recommended in its external evaluation. Demand continues to outstrip the places available on Heads Up programmes. An average of 32 referrals are received for the 14 places on each programme.







## Our Work in 2019

During 2019, Heads Up Kildare ran a number of programmes and initiatives across the county which engaged with one hundred and twenty-four men. These included

1. Three 12-week programmes in Athy, Newbridge and Maynooth
2. A ten-week programme working with young men aged 18 – 24 years in Kildare town
3. Four 4-week mini programmes in Newbridge, Allenwood and Maynooth
4. Once off workshop exploring Parenting for separated Dads
5. A Reboot programme in Newbridge focusing on physical activity and mental health
6. A peer space for past participants in Athy
7. Peer Supporters training with Heads Up Peer Supporters

We were delighted to offer our programme to men living in the Allenwood and Maynooth areas during 2019 for the first time. Predevelopment work is key to ensuring local buy in, engagement of services, greater promotion and ultimately ensuring access to vulnerable men. A series of meetings were held with local services and community leaders in the Allenwood area (June 2019) thus enabling those men who are or are not involved in services to be aware of Heads Up and its potential for them.

Men who participated on these programmes ranged in age from 18 to 69 years. Heads Up Kildare had an 88% retention rate on our programmes during 2019. This is significant as the men themselves choose to attend the programmes. They do not receive any payment for participation. The impact of the programme for participants is wide ranging from better understanding of their own mental health, positive coping strategies, greater ability to advocate for support to increased confidence, improved fitness levels, motivation, and clear progression plans. Over 75% of men progress onto further education, training, or volunteer opportunities or re-enter the workforce.



## Young Men's programme

During 2018 Heads Up Kildare focused on young men living in the county aged 18 – 24 years with funding from Department of Children and Youth Affairs. In quarter 1, 2019, with funding from Healthy Ireland and in partnership with a number of organisations – C.K.L.P., Kildare Youth Services, Foroige and The Hive Youth Hub – we delivered a bespoke programme for young men in Kildare town. Following a successful external evaluation,





the programme put a useful focus on the needs of vulnerable 18-24-year-old men in Kildare and the potential for them to fall through the agency net at this critical period in their lives. In doing so, it highlighted that this cohort of young men would benefit from further collaborative working. It is clear that the needs of young men in Kildare and young people more generally require a broad interagency commitment to ensure the resources and supports are available and accessible across the county. The external evaluation commissioned highlighted the impact that this project had both on the young men themselves and their families.

The Interagency Advisory group prioritised to collectively highlight the outcomes of the work and the challenges faced due to service gaps for young people in Kildare – e.g. Jigsaw. Presentations were made at both Kildare L.C.D.C. and at Kildare Children's and Young Peoples Services Committee, both of whom have been supportive and have taken on board the recommendations from our evaluation.



## Peer Support

During 2019 we continued to upskill our Peer Supporters. Peer support is a relationship of mutual support where people with similar life experiences offer each other connection and understanding as they move through difficult or challenging experiences. Peer Supporters played an integral part of the Heads Up engagement with vulnerable men during each programme using their knowledge, skills, and experiences to support those men, who are struggling. More specifically they can understand and support the man as they too have walked in his shoes.

Six peer supporters participated in training to enhance their role. Peer supporters have monthly support and supervision meetings with the Heads Up manager. A recruitment drive to identify new peer supporters also took place during the year. Training will be implemented during 2020.



## Training

Heads Up Kildare hosted a number of training initiatives to services and organisations in Kildare to enable frontline staff broaden their skills and knowledge base as well as providing networking opportunities.

- Understanding Anger - sixteen participants from a broad range of agencies working with young people in the county participated in this workshop which aimed to equip workers with skills to respond to service users' complex anger related issues.
- Decider Skills – forty participants from thirty one services and organisations in the county participated on this training - based on Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) and Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) - to support people manage distressing emotions, increase confidence and build resilience. This also provided an excellent opportunity to promote our work in the county.

## Collaborative Working

In line with the Heads-Up model, the Kildare Interagency Advisory Group have met six times during 2019. There are seventeen representatives from a broad range of agencies on Kildare IAG. The majority are senior staff who either direct staff or are operational in areas that are central to the Heads Up programme. A number of new members came on board during 2019. Key decisions in terms of work priorities, youth mental health and the ongoing running of Heads Up Kildare are decided at the IAG.

Practice Group have met four times during 2019. These provide key working with participants, advise on programme content etc.

Finance and Governance have met six times to date in 2019.

Regional Forum Bi-monthly meetings of Heads Up Kildare and South Dublin. Areas of work collaboration include: Principles and Practice of Heads Up; Branding; Website; Testimonial Videos.

Key to our success during 2019 is our collaborative working with organisations and services across the county. This is done in a variety of ways with a broad range of services, key staff, community leaders through their knowledge, experience, and expertise. Most of our participants come from referrals from a broad range of services who identify men who might benefit from our programmes. Many services give directly to our programme through the provision of staff inputs, these include, Kildare Adult Mental Health Services, HSE Addiction Outreach, D.E.A.S.P., K.W.E.T.B., L.E.S., C.K.L.P., I.A.S.I.O. etc. Kildare Sports Partnership ensure that the physical fitness element of our programme is appropriate to the varied needs of every group, enabling men to recognise how being active positively impacts on their mental health. Heads Up Kildare has been a catalyst for a collaboration of South West Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force and Adult Mental Health Service which we hope will lead to more effective services to those living with a dual diagnosis. Local organisations like Family Resource Centres, ACDAL, Maynooth Scouts, the Sports Hub Athy, The Hive,

Kildare town give us access to their premises to deliver our programmes or meet participants in accessible and welcoming spaces. These collaborations clearly demonstrate that effective support for marginalised or vulnerable members of our community cannot be effectively addressed without the partnership of a broad range of service providers at local and county levels, ensuring men from our target group are at the centre of the intervention.



## Older Voices Kildare



2019 marked 10 years of the work of Older Voices in Kildare. Older Voices Kildare (OVK) is a Social Inclusion Initiative which specifically targets isolated categories of older persons, including Older LGBTQI

persons, Travellers, People with Disability, and Individuals who are experiencing social exclusion through lack of or limited social capital. Our mission -- to build the confidence and capacity of older people in Kildare -- works towards creating a county where older people are included and empowered within a vibrant community.

Older Voices Kildare (OVK) has a proven record of success in working with older people in the county. We have been successfully offering programming to older persons in the Kildare area for 10 years, providing them with an opportunity to meet, express their issues and ideas, and find their voices, both individually and collectively. We do this through a variety of programs, including Voices Through Art, Aging with Confidence, yearly seminars on issues of interest to the community, and community and outreach programs. With older people reasonably expecting to live into their 80s, the challenge is to enhance the quality of their lives and their participation in social and civil life. Involving older people in projects in their communities increases their self-confidence skills and social networking ability, which in turn impacts positively on their mental health and on the social capital of the community.

### Funding

Core funding is provided by the HSE Health and Improvement Department in Community Health Organisation 7 (CHO7) which takes in Kildare and West Wicklow. While based in Naas, Older Voices Kildare is a countywide Initiative. Older Voices Kildare is hosted at no cost to the project by County Kildare Leader Partnership as their contribution to the work of the project. HSE Lottery grants have been secured to carry out specific pieces of work. Kildare Wicklow Education and Training Board provided funding for specific programmes.

### A response to the needs of Older Persons

Loneliness is a serious health issue, and one in 10 older people in Ireland identify as chronically lonely. Loneliness is particularly identified as a primary concern of an aging demographic, contributing to negative impacts on physical and emotional well-being. Higher levels of loneliness are associated with living alone, adverse physical health symptoms, lack of spousal confidante, marital or family conflict, and a generally poor quality of social relationships.

To address this issue, Older Voices Kildare, in March of 2017, began exploring the need for a Befriending Service in the County. This service has not yet been advertised widely, and currently has a referral list of 30 individuals awaiting assessment and visitor matching. Befriending offers a societal change, a cultural shift towards greater community contact. Social inclusion occurs through this relationship, which becomes an exchange--a relationship--and increases connections and engagement. Older people in the county--particularly in rural areas--are increasingly isolated and lonely. Over a one-year period, the Befriending Project has reached out to and befriended older people of all demographics in the county, particularly Naas, Newbridge and Athy.

**The Befriending Project** relates directly to enhancing mental and physical health and supporting vulnerable members of society. Indirectly, the service can impact on the need for homecare packages, and hospital discharge. In 2019 volunteers provided 650 hours of visits to lonely older people across Kildare.

**Social prescription** and befriending services give an older person a more varied choice of options for them to explore, and identify for themselves where possible, what suits them rather than what a health professional or family thinks they need.





It also allows for the targeted inclusion of people with dementia and their carers, where a social prescription such as Yoga, can be tailored to individual cognitive needs. This will allow either an hour of respite for the carer, or an opportunity to engage in an activity with their loved one that is not related to their condition.

Social Prescription allows the individual to take an active role in their own health and wellbeing. In 2019 the pilot phase of the model was completed with a participant number of 70. Participants were referred primarily from Integrated Care within the HSE, Social Work Teams, Self-Referrals, Community Referrals, and residential and long term care settings. The evaluation is currently with an external evaluator, and the final analysis and focus groups have been delayed owing to Covid 19. The results will be published in 2021 at the latest and recommendations considered for the future.

### Capacity Building / Personal Development Programmes

- Aging with Confidence
- Voices Through Art
- Self in The Big Picture
- On Track
- Voter education
- Human Rights and Older People
- Dementia Specific Yoga
- Dementia Awareness Training for carers and caring staff
- Volunteer befriending trainings
- LGBT Awareness Training for Volunteers

2019 also saw the development of a dementia specific yoga class for older people with dementia and their carers, which was run 6 times in all. It afforded carers the opportunity to have two hours of respite, or to engage in an activity with the person they are caring for that was not related to their diagnosis, as well as building up social capital and peer support.

A mindfulness programme for carers over 6 weeks was also run, which was a huge success and gave people some of the tools to manage the stress of their lives as carers.





# The DARA Project

## Introduction

The DARA Project is a Community Employment Drug Rehabilitation Scheme for those in recovery from addiction. Our support is through a weekly drug-free structured day programme. It was first established in September 2013 under the Innovation Community Employment. This Project was identified through Service User Involvement as a need for Co. Kildare. The project first operated in Kildare town and is now located in Athy, Co. Kildare. It is approved for 30 CE participants.



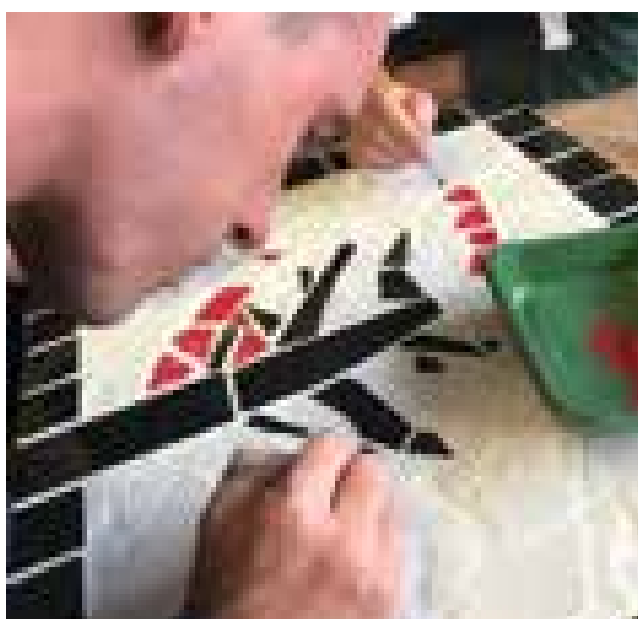
The Dara Project is funded by the DEASP and hosted/sponsored by County Kildare Leader Partnership. We provide a range of supports to people who have become drug free and empower them to reach their full potential. We believe that every person can recover from addiction. We seek to support, empower, and equip each person to live a substance free life.

## Collaboration

We recognise that the important work of recovery is not achieved by one service alone but is rather through an interagency approach of professional services coming together to reach a similar goal. We continue to build strong working relationships with other services in the wider community including but not limited to ARAS, Hope Cottage Family Support Centre, Cuan Mhuire, Peter McVerry Trust, Sports Partnership and Merchants Quay.

## Training & Education

The DARA Project continues to source, facilitate and promote training & education for the benefit of participants engaged in its community employment programme. We do this through the support of local training providers. Participants of The DARA Project have engaged, contributed and completed a wide range of training & education programmes within the current CE year.





Here is a list of some of the programmes completed

#### INDUSTRY STANDARD & PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Healthy Eating Made  
Easy First Aid  
Manual Handling  
Mental Health Workshop  
Health & Fitness Program  
Improvisation Workshop  
Relapse Prevention  
Therapeutic Check in Groups  
Therapeutic Weekend Planner Groups

#### QQI ACCREDITED

Career Skills QQI 3  
Art & Drawing QQI 3  
Personal Interpersonal Skills QQI 3  
Youth Studies QQI 7  
Home Repair & Maintenance QQI 4  
Establishing Trees & Shrubs QQI 5  
Community Reinforcement Approach  
Motivational Interviewing  
Key working & Case Management

#### Recovery & Therapy

The DARA project seeks to assist those referred to become independent, socially integrated, emotionally-balanced, and personally productive through person-centred, rehabilitation, community employment, educational and vocational interventions.

As part of our recovery & therapy programme, our project delivers:

- Structured Day Program
- Randomized Drug Testing
- Group Therapy
- Key working
- Training & Education QQI
- Career Guidance
- Life Skills Development
- Relapse Prevention
- Reflection & Reviews





## SOUTH WESTERN REGION DRUGS AND ALCOHOL TASKFORCE

The South Western Regional Drugs & Alcohol Task Force (SWRDATF) is a co-ordinating body established in 2005 with a partnership approach mandate. The function of the Task Force is to research, develop and implement, a co-ordinated, regionally-appropriate response to substance misuse, as outlined in our National Drug Strategy “*Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery – a health led response to drug and alcohol use in Ireland 2017 – 2025*”.

The taskforce was setup specifically to work with the communities of South and West Dublin, West Wicklow, and Kildare, to significantly reduce the harm caused to individuals, families, and communities by the misuse of drugs. County Kildare Leader Partnership hosts the project.

### Projects supported by the Task Force in 2019 included

Abbey Regional Addiction Service (ARAS) Addiction Service for adults.

HALO Counselling Service for young people.

Drugs Prevention & Educations Initiative (DPEI) comprising two Foróige workers.

Aha Campaign.

Community Action on Alcohol. Service User Involvement Community Addiction Studies Course

Hope Cottage - Family Support Service





### The work of Hope Cottage in 2019

Hope Cottage is a family support service for Kildare and West Wicklow supporting families and anyone affected by a loved one's substance misuse. Its work is overseen by an interagency Steering Committee which met 6 times in 2019. Hope Cottage employed 2 staff, one Admin at 12 hours per week and a Project Worker for 28 hours per week

Hope Cottage ran a number of programmes in support of families throughout the year including two 5-week Mindfulness and Art programs, both funded through SICAP under Goal 1. A Family Support Group was run every 2nd Thursday night. 2

Respite days for family members were funded through Kildare County Council (Local Property Tax) and a Family Support Handbook was developed and printed, using the same funding source. One to one key working and case management is ongoing. Referrals are steady from both agencies and self-referrals, while there has been an increase in the complexity of cases and severe issues that family members are experiencing. A short family support programme was piloted in Celbridge.

Funding was applied for and secured through Healthy Ireland to employ a project worker for 18 months (2020 / 2021), while HSE Lottery funding was secured to cover refurbishment and Respite for 2020.

As part of ongoing development of the service, Rita Burtenshaw was contracted to convene and explore funding options and mechanisms for Hope Cottage.



## Kildare Sports Partnership



Kildare Sports Partnership's remit is to increase participation in sport and physical activity, particularly among certain target groups such as Disadvantaged Communities, the Unemployed, Older Adults, Ethnic Minorities, Youth etc. Therefore, its work and that of CKLP is very much interlinked and in the past year KSP has been involved in a range of collaborative initiatives with CKLP.

Currently CKLP host the employment of three staff for Kildare Sports Partnership, namely the Community Sports Development Officer, the Athy Sports Hub Coordinator, and the Women in Sport Coordinator. The following are examples of how both organisations work in partnership and help each other to achieve their objectives.

### Our Community Sports Development Officer, John Doran, has

- Organised the Physical Activity support modules for the "Heads Up" programmes in Athy and Maynooth.
- Coordinated the physical activity element of the "DARA project" personal development programme in Athy.
- Provided a Physical Activity support module for the "Finding your Feet" programme in Kildare Town and Kerdiffstown House.
- Engaged with the "Older Voices" programme and advised in the establishment and organisation of a mass participation event.
- Engaged in the CKLP focus group for the establishment of a Pre-retirement course for CKLP staff.
- Engaged in the establishment of a "healthy Food Made Easy" programme for Naas Active Retired group
- Partnered with CKLP, and Kildare County Council to design, coordinate, and provide a Women's Community Wellness Programme (Operation Transformation Plus) for community groups in Newbridge and Kildare Town.





### Our Women in Sport Officer, Anna Deegan, has

- Delivered the Physical Activity support modules for the "Heads Up" programmes in Athy and Maynooth.
- Facilitated an evaluation of the Women in Sport programme in association with CKLP for young female students at secondary schools in Athy, Kildare Town, Newbridge, and Rathangan.

### Our Sports Hub Coordinator, Deborah Foley, has

- Provided the Sports Hub facility for a water-based activity programme for the DARA project in Athy.
- Been a working member of the CKLP programme Lead group.
- Provided a suitable facility to run the Head's Up physical activity module
- Provided a meeting space for Head's Up staff and participants to engage in a one-on-one setting
- Provided water-based activity for KYS participants and KYS Traveller youth.
- Provided water-based activity for Kildare Youth Employment Services
- Coordinated with the Rural Development programme to secure funds for a long-term feasibility study for the proposed Shackleton Outdoor Education Centre
- Provided a workplace for three Tús workers since 2018

In addition, other Sports Partnership staff, based in Kildare County Council, work closely with CKLP, including Disability Inclusion Officer, Pádraig Healy who is a member of the CKLP Ability Programme Steering Committee where he attends quarterly meetings and provides support to programme coordinator Laura Whelan. Pádraig and Kildare Sports Partnership also hosted the Kildare Sports Ability Day as part of CKLP & Kildare PPN's Social inclusion Week in Sept 2019.





## Kildare PPN

One of the key challenges in modern society is to ensure participation by local communities and citizens on the structures which make the decisions that affect their lives. The Kildare Public Participation Network (PPN) was established to allow communities within Kildare to have greater involvement with the Local Authority and to give the community a greater voice and influence on issues and policies of interest to them. Its work with community groups, therefore, and the work of CKLP are very much interlinked.



Public Participation Networks (PPN's) were set up all around the country following the Local Government Act 2014 to act as an inclusive and independent structure that facilitates public consultation and public participation in policy and decision making. The PPN provides the structure to facilitate the two-way flow of information between the Local Authority and the Community and Voluntary, Social Inclusion and Environmental groups in County Kildare. The PPN facilitates this through electing PPN representatives to sit on various committees within Kildare Council to have their impact.

CKLP host the employment of two staff for the Kildare PPN, namely the Coordinator Bernard Higgins and Support Worker Grace Clarke.

Bernard's work focuses on supporting the work of the Secretariat and the overall development of the PPN as a structure in Kildare. Grace works with communities and groups in developing the PPN as an effective structure for public engagement and participation.

One of the main ways in which the collaborative work between the PPN and CKLP was seen in 2019 was in the organization of Social Inclusion Week, which ran from the 23rd to the 28th of September. This week showcased a number of organizations around the county which work towards full inclusion of all and sought to raise awareness of the ongoing challenges faced on the road towards full inclusion and participation.





County Kildare  
LEADER PARTNERSHIP

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