



Coiste um Fhorbairt Pobail Áitiúil  
Chill Chainnigh  
Kilkenny Local Community Development  
Committee

# Kilkenny Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) Annual Report 2023

*As Adopted by Kilkenny LCDC at its meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> January, 2024*



An Roinn Forbartha  
Tuaithe agus Pobail  
Department of Rural and  
Community Development



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## Background

Local Community Development Committees (LCDC's) are required, under the provisions of Section 128B of the Local Government Act 2001, to prepare, adopt and submit an annual report to the local authority, no later than the 31<sup>st</sup> March each year, in respect of the performance of its functions in the previous calendar year. The annual report should be co-ordinated with the preparation of the local authority's annual report and include an outline of Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) activities in the relevant period.

## Functions of the LCDC

The LCDC functions set out in the Act are as follows:

- the preparation and adoption of an LECP,
- implementing the community elements of the LECP,
- reviewing the LECP and amending it or amending any element of it,
- monitoring, and reviewing the implementation of the plan on an ongoing basis,
- co-ordinate, manage and oversee the implementation of community development programmes that have been approved by the Council, agreed between the Committee and a public authority and to ensure that any plans or strategies are implemented in accordance with the community elements of the LECP,
- seeking to ensure effectiveness, consistency, co-ordination and avoid duplication between local and community development programmes,
- pursuing the co-ordination of all local community and coordination of programmes so as to optimise resources for the benefit of local communities and improve efficiency with which public funded local and community development resources are used,
- to consider and adopt a statement in respect of the economic elements of a draft plan and
- not later than 31<sup>st</sup> March each year adopt and submit to the Local Authority a report relating to the performance of its functions in the preceding calendar year.

## Membership

The membership of the Kilkenny LCDC includes 19 members. In addition, Kilkenny LCDC has 1 associate member. The composition of the LCDC is such that it brings together the expertise and skills of people actively working with local development, community development and economic, cultural and environmental organisations and local authority members, officials and state agencies to implement a joined up, cross sectional approach to local and community development programmes.

Declan Gibbons, continued in his role as Chairperson until the expiration of his 3-year tenure in August 2023 and Mary Mescal, Ossory Youth, from the Community Pillar of the Public Participation Network was appointed as the new Chairperson of Kilkenny LCDC. Sean McKeown, Interim Chief Executive KCC and LCDC Vice-Chair was replaced on the LCDC in December by Lar Power the newly appointed Chief Executive.. New members welcomed during the year included, Olive Maher, Driochhead Family Resource Centre, Callan, and Michael Walshe of Community Radio, Kilkenny.



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A full listing of members and their nominating bodies is included in *appendix No 1*.

## Role of Chief Officer

The Chief Executive of the Local Authority has a legal obligation to assign staff to assist the LCDC in performing its functions including the assignment of a staff member to the position of Chief Officer.

The Chief Officer has responsibility for carrying out, managing and controlling generally the administration and business of the Committee and for providing ongoing support. In particular, the role envisages the facilitation and promotion of partnership and interagency working, managing membership, being a link and conduit between the LCDC and the Local Enterprise Office and SPC 1 and the Department, providing capacity building interventions, pursuing funding streams and broadening the work of the Committee while also providing advice and guidance and bringing local authority experience to the Committee.

Anne Marie Shortall, Senior Executive Officer for Community & Culture was assigned the role as Chief Officer in March, 2023.

## LCDC Meetings

Post the Covid -19 public health restrictions, meetings returned to in person for 2023 with the added option of hybrid meetings via Microsoft Teams. The LCDC met on six occasions in 2023.

## Engagement with Stakeholders.

It is the policy of the LCDC to meet with Local Economic and Community Plan implementing partners in connection with their LECP actions and to consider issues of mutual concern. During 2023 the LCDC heard presentations from:

- Community Development Programme- Kilkenny Traveller Community movement KTCM
- Healthy Ireland – Healthy Kilkenny Coordinator

## Local Economic and Community Plan. (LECP)

The preparation of our second Local Economic and Community Plan was completed in 2023. The development of the plan was lead by the members of the Local Community Development Committee and the Strategic Policy Committee for Economic Development, Enterprise Support & Tourism, Planning & Development Policy SPC. The Plan covers the period 2023 to 2028 and is accompanied by the initial 2 year implementation plan 2023 -2024 that includes 136 actions. The plan was adopted by the LCDC members in April 2023 and by the full Council in May, 2023. The LCDC monitors and reviews the implementation of the Local Economic Community Plan.

The plan contains ten High Level Goals which form the framework for the plan and are structured around the twin pillars of economic and community but are cross cutting and also include the overarching commitment towards climate action. They give us the tools to co-



ordinate existing public funds to maximise their impact and to attract complementary funding from the public and private sectors.

### High Level Goals – LECP Kilkenny 2023 to 2028

**High Level Goal 1:** To ensure that climate action is embraced, and that our actions and interventions are embedded across all areas of the LECP to contribute positively to the global climate and biodiversity crisis affecting our citizens and support Ireland to achieve its climate and biodiversity goals and obligations.

**High Level Goal 2:** To build a resilient, sustainable business base and support new and existing businesses to grow, be enterprising and take advantage of new opportunities.

**High Level Goal 3:** To realise the economic and social value of Kilkenny's built and natural heritage, its cultural reputation and offer, and its growing tourism, creative and cultural sectors.

**High Level Goal 4:** To ensure our rural economy and communities are supported to develop sustainably.

**High Level Goal 5:** To increase the number of economically active people in the County by ensuring access to further and higher education infrastructure and to lifelong learning for every working age resident who wants to work to enhance their educational qualifications and achieve the skills required.

**High Level Goal 6:** To grow the number of third level graduates working in County Kilkenny.

**High Level Goal 7:** To reduce inequalities and promote and enhance the importance of health and wellbeing.

**High Level Goal 8:** To reduce the number of people living in deprivation and promote community development, climate justice, diversity and social inclusion.

**High Level Goal 9:** To develop increased local capacity and improve targeting of social investment through increased engagement and participation with local community groups that will deliver improved community facilities, supports and services.

**High Level Goal 10:** To maintain the provision of appropriate community supports and services for new and existing housing developments.



## Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme. (SICAP)

### Kilkenny Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

Kilkenny Local Community Development Committee (LCDCs) is the Contracting Authority for SICAP in County Kilkenny. Kilkenny LCDC is the key decision-maker in terms of annual planning, monitoring and oversight of SICAP services in County Kilkenny.

### SICAP Sub-Group

Kilkenny LCDC has appointed a SICAP sub-group to undertake the role of annual planning, monitoring and oversight of SICAP services in County Kilkenny. This group makes recommendations with regards SICAP to the LCDC.

The SICAP subgroup is made up of the Chief Officer of the LCDC, the PPN Social Inclusion representative, a Representative from the Family Resource Centre Programme locally, the Department of Employment and Social Protection and the Kilkenny Carlow Education and Training Board. Kilkenny County Council Community section staff support the subgroup.

The Subgroup met three times during 2023 to undertake and agree the SICAP annual Plan, the Mid-Year Review and for the Setting of the Local Priority areas for the new SICAP programme.

The End of year programme evaluation of the 2023 SICAP plan has taken place, notable findings include:

- Over achievement of KPI 1 (working with groups) by 42%
- Over achievement of KPI 2 (working with Individuals) by 21%
- Underachievement of % of KP1 2 from disadvantaged areas by 11%

### Kilkenny County Council

Kilkenny County Council supports the LCDC in managing the programme and provides administrative supports. It also has a role in relation to reviewing and enforcing the obligations of the Programme Implementer.

### County Kilkenny LEADER Partnership

Programme Implementer (PIs) deliver SICAP at a local level as per their annual plan. They report to the LCDC on their progress in carrying out these actions. They engage with the programme target groups. County Kilkenny LEADER Partnership is the current PI for SICAP services across Co. Kilkenny.

### Target Groups

SICAP supports a range of groups in society which are disadvantaged and marginalised and unable or unlikely to access mainstream supports. Pre-defined target groups have been set for SICAP and these have been selected based on the current socioeconomic context, the level of need in society and government priorities. See below for a list of the 13 identified target groups. Further Identified as a specific target group mid 2022 were Ukrainian displaced



persons and specific funding of €89,262 was granted to the PI to support this group. For 2023 Ukrainians are a pre-defined group with further funding of €175,146 made available.

The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2018-2022 was extended to cover 2023. SICAP's aim is to reduce poverty, promote social inclusion and equality through local, regional and national engagement and collaboration. It has two high level goals:

**1. Goal 1: Supporting Communities**

To support communities and target groups to engage with relevant stakeholders in identifying and addressing social exclusion and equality issues, developing the capacity of Local Community Groups, and creating more sustainable communities.

**2. Goal 2: Supporting Individuals**

To support disadvantaged individuals to improve the quality of their lives through the provision of lifelong learning and labour market supports.

All beneficiaries of programme supports must belong to one of the 13 SICAP target groups which are:

Disadvantaged Children and Families	People living in Disadvantaged Communities
Disadvantaged Young People (aged 15 – 24)	People with Disabilities
Disadvantaged Women	Roma
Emerging Needs Group	Travellers
Lone Parents	The Disengaged from the Labour Market (Economically Inactive)
Low Income Workers/ Households	The Unemployed
New Communities	

**Funding**

SICAP is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development with co-funding from the European Social Fund (ESF) as part of the ESF Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning. To the end of the SICAP programme 2018-2023 *Kilkenny SICAP have been awarded approximately €3,405,059.*

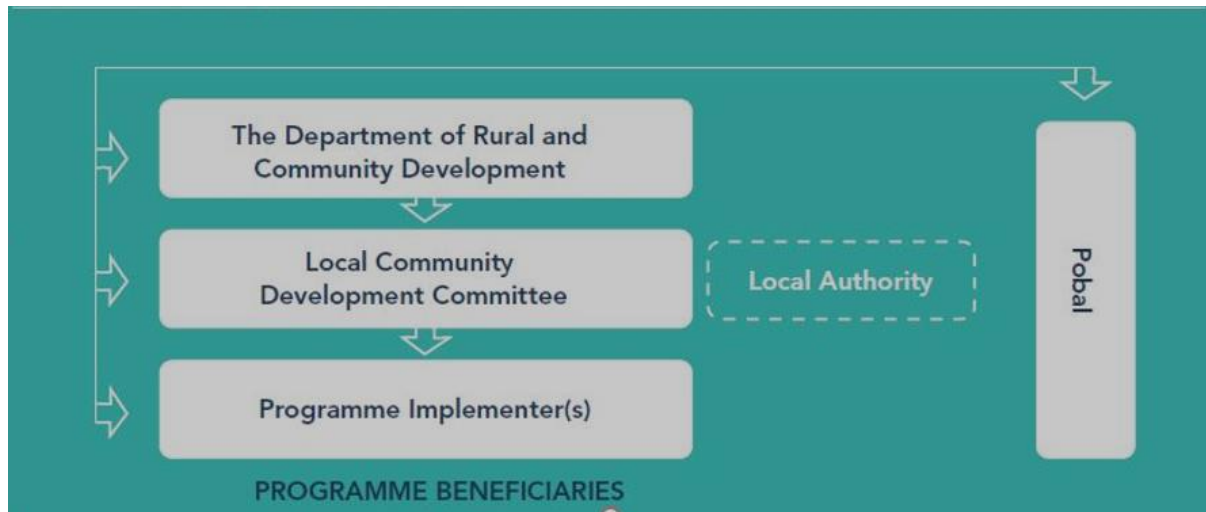
**Delivery Structure**

The SICAP programme is managed locally by Kilkenny Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) with support from Kilkenny County Council. It is delivered on the ground by County Kilkenny LEADER Partnership (CKLP). Pobal acts as the agent of the Department of Rural and Community Development with respect to national management and oversight of the programme.



Nationally SICAP is delivered through the framework for local development.

### Operating Structures



### New SICAP 2024-2028 Tender Process

The tender for the new SCIAP programme 2024-2028 was published on 17<sup>th</sup> July with a closing date of the 8<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

A SICAP subgroup within the local Authority was formed in accordance with the recommendations and guidance documents from Pobal. This subgroup consists of Anne Marie Shortall as Chief Officer, Aileen Mc Grath, LEO representing the wider LCDC, Katherine Peacock the LCDC administrative support and Adrian Waldron, procurement unit as chairperson without voting rights to oversee the procurement process. Kilkenny LCDC received one tender. On the 18<sup>th</sup> September, 2023 the subgroup met and evaluated the tender, in accordance with the guidelines the tender was invited to a negotiation meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2023. A revised and updated tender was submitted on the 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2023. The evaluation committee met and re-evaluated the tender on the 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2023. On the 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2023 the tender bid was formally approved by the LCDC. On the 13<sup>th</sup> December, 2023 the contracts were signed between Kilkenny County Council and the successful tenderer the Kilkenny Leader Partnership Company.

### The Department of Rural and Community Development

The Department is the lead and funding department for SICAP, including in respect of ESF co-funding and the YEI special allocation. The Department channels funding directly to LCDCs.

### Pobal

Pobal provides a national oversight role in respect of the SICAP programmatic and operational requirements and provides the Department with regular county, regional and national programme progress reports.



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## Public Participation Network (PPN)

Kilkenny LCDC has 3 Social Inclusion Representatives, 1 environmental and 2 community representatives from the PPN. The PPN have held the chair of the LCDC since its inception. The PPN increased its membership in 2023 to 454 member groups, with 18 new registrations in 2023.

Groups registered within each pillar:

Social Inclusion	98
Community	324
Environment	32

*PPN Membership by pillar*

## Community Enhancement Programme Funding (CEP)

The Scheme is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and administered by the Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) in each Local Authority area. It provides funding to communities across Ireland to enhance facilities targeted towards disadvantaged areas as identified in the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP).

In 2023 Kilkenny LCDC received €290,749, under the above grant scheme, the total amount comprised of €142,467 for use towards running/operating costs and €145,375 capital funding and €2,907 ring fenced for Women's sheds. As with previous rounds it was recommended that 30% of the overall funding was to be made available for small grants of €1,000 or less.

Kilkenny LCDC received 101 applications the amount of funding requested was €820,519.80.

The fund was allocated across 85 community groups and organisations as follows:-

- 34 small grants averaging €1,000 per grant
- 41 medium grants averaging €3,000,
- 7 larger grants to a maximum of €20,000 were allocated to projects across the county
- 3 Women's Shed Grants

*Some examples of the type of projects supported in County Kilkenny include:*

- Contribution towards utility bills, insurance costs etc
- Develop on site meeting facilities
- Purchase training equipment
- Additional lighting for outdoor recreational areas
- Development of outside garden area





## Healthy Ireland Funding 2023-2025

Healthy Ireland is a government-led initiative aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of everyone living in Ireland. The Healthy Ireland, A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025 has 4 key goals:

Goal 1: Increase the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life

Goal 2: Reduce health inequalities

Goal 3: Protect the public from threats to health and wellbeing; and

Goal 4: Create an environment where every individual and sector of society can play their part in achieving a healthy Ireland.

In 2023, The Minister for Public Health, Wellbeing and the National Drugs Strategy, Hildegard Naughton, announced the allocation of Healthy Ireland funding to each of the 31 Local Authorities for a three-year period 2023 – 2025. In County Kilkenny, an extensive consultation was undertaken to support the Healthy Ireland Round 4 Application. In collaboration with Kilkenny Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), the consultation process also informed the selection of two of the Health Outcomes from the Healthy Ireland Framework. Following this, two key areas were agreed by Kilkenny LCDC as a priority for County Kilkenny; increase in physical activity levels and increased incidence self-perceived health that is rated 'good' or 'very good'. The funding will support initiatives targeted at a diverse range of groups and populations including; Adolescents and Young People, One-Parent Families, People living with a Disability, Traveler's and Disadvantaged Areas.

## Healthy Kilkenny Health Outcomes

### Physical Activity

The Healthy Ireland funding will support key target groups and communities to increase their physical activity levels and aim to achieve physical activity guidelines. Regular physical activity promotes positive health benefits and plays a key role in prevention and severity of disease, some examples include; cardiovascular disease, diabetes & certain types of cancer. The national physical activity guidelines include recommendations for children and young people as well as adults, people with disabilities and older people.



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The following are examples of Healthy Ireland initiatives supported during 2023:-

- programmes delivered by Kilkenny Recreation & Sports Partnership to provide programmes for individuals living with a disability.
- Active Travel in Kilkenny County Council implemented cycling programmes with young people and adults including the first cycle to school bus with St. Johns Primary School in Kilkenny.
- Social Farming Placements were also provided for people with additional needs.
- Foroige provided physical activity programmes in Castlecomer for adolescents and young people.

Kilkenny County Council also delivered on work packages for the **UcanACT EU Project**, funded by the European Commission which aims to promote physical activity and cancer prevention in public urban green spaces in Kilkenny targeting citizens over the age of 50 years. Kilkenny County Council developed a Citizen Engagement Strategy for Physical Activity and Cancer Prevention with the project partners in Bologna, Italy and Munich, Germany. In 2024, physiotherapists will deliver physical activity programmes in Public Urban Green Space's in Kilkenny with people living with cancer, in survivorship or people living without cancer over 50 years.

### **Self-Perceived Health**

Self-perceived health is defined as the perception of an individual's health in general. It is a subjective perception of how healthy an individual feel. Health is defined as not only the absence of injury or disease, but as a function of physical, mental, and social well-being. It is useful in evaluating the general health status of the population, as well as uncovering health inequalities and highlighting health needs at the population level. The measurement of self-perceived health is measured in the census, the Healthy Ireland Survey and the European Health Survey. Respondents indicate how they perceive their health on a Likert scale, ranging from 'Very Good' to 'Very Bad'.

The Healthy Kilkenny programme will aim to improve perceived health in target groups that are more likely to perceive their health as 'fair', 'bad' or 'very bad'.

Some examples of initiatives that have commenced in 2023 and will be supported in the next two years are centred around four key projects and partnerships in Kilkenny.

1. In collaboration with Kilkenny Leader Partnership and the Social Inclusion Programme there was a series of community engagement events, programmes and social activities for One-Parent Families. This project also aims to build the capacity of '*Kilkenny-One Parent Community*', a network & advisory group of One-Parent Families in Kilkenny.
2. Health and wellbeing programmes and health literacy campaigns were rolled-out with the Travelling Community through partnership with Kilkenny Traveller Community Movement.

3. Newpark Family Resource Centre are undertaking a health analysis in the wider community to explore the Health Needs and will implement community projects that will aim to improve the wellbeing of people living in Newpark and the surrounding areas.
4. Social Health Education Project (SHEP) are delivering an Experiential 60-Hour Continuing Personal & Professional Development Training for volunteers and community workers to enhance their ability to facilitate groupwork and receive peer and professional support.



Healthy Ireland Committee at the Launch of the Healthy Ireland Fund 2023- 2025 (June, 2023)

**Appendix 1.****LCDC Membership at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023.**

<b>Name of Member</b>	<b>Nominating Body – Public Representation</b>
1. Aileen McGrath	Local Enterprise Office
2. Michael A. Fitzgerald	Teagasc
3. Eileen Curtis	Education Training Board
4. Lar Power	Kilkenny County Council (Vice Chair)
5. Julieanne Power	DEASP
6. Derval Howley	HSE - Associate member
7. Martin Brett	Elected Representative
8. Michael McCarthy	Elected Representative
9. Gerard Frisby	Elected Representative
10. Joe Lyons	Elected Representative
<b>Name of Member</b>	<b>Nominating Group - Private Representation</b>
11. Mary Mescal	PPN Comm & Voluntary (Chairperson)
12. Michael Walshe	PPN-Comm & Voluntary
13. Angela Hayes	PPN-Social Inclusion
14. Toluwani Akaehomen	PPN-Social Inclusion
15. Paul O' Rahilly	PPN-Social Inclusion
16. Martin Rochford	PPN-Environment
17. Bill O'Keefe	Irish Farmers Association
18. John Hurley	Chamber of Commerce
19. Denis Drennan	County Kilkenny Leader Partnership
20. Olive Maher	Family Resource Centres