



Kilkenny

Age Friendly County
Celebrating Every Generation

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

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GLOSSARY

- CEUD** *Centre for Excellence in Universal Design*
- CGA** *Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment*
- CHO 5 AREA** *Community Health Organisation Area No 5*
- DCU** *Dublin City University*
- ED** *Emergency Department*
- GEMS** *Geriatric Emergency Medicine Service*
- GP** *General Medical Practitioner or Doctor*
- HAPAI** *Health and Positive Ageing Initiative*
- HI** *Healthy Ireland*
- HSE** *Health Services Executive*
- ICPOP** *Integrated Care Programme for Older Persons*
- KAFSF** *Kilkenny Age Friendly Seniors Forum*
- KCETB** *Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board*
- KCLR** *Kilkenny Carlow Local Radio*
- KILKENNY LCDC** *Kilkenny Local Community and Development Committee*
- KLP** *Kilkenny LEADER Partnership*
- KRSP** *Kilkenny Recreation and Sports Partnership*
- LAP** *Local Area Plan*
- MECC** *Making Every Contact Count*
- NTA** *National Transport Agency*
- OPC** *Older Peoples Council*
- PAL** *Physical Activity Leader*
- PHN** *Public Health Nurse*
- PPN** *Public Participation Network*
- SICAP** *Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme*
- SAGE** *Support & Advocacy Services for Older People*
- TÚS** *A labour activation initiative for people who are long-term unemployed*
- WHO** *World Health Organisation*
- WRAP** *Wellness Recovery Action Plan*

FOREWORD BY COLETTE BYRNE

Chair of Kilkenny Age Friendly Alliance

2020 was a challenging year on so many fronts. What started as a normal year quickly changed in March when Covid 19 entered our vocabulary. March saw things change quickly. All St Patricks Days festivities were cancelled and older and vulnerable people were asked to cocoon to protect their health and well-being. Media provided us with daily updates on the virus and the first cases in Europe. The devastating impact Covid 19 was having on older people in Italy made the looming crisis all too real. Employees were obliged to work from home where at all possible, with only essential workers attending work in person. Our High Streets became eerily quiet as people heeded public health guidance, with many doing their shopping on line. There was a palpable sense of fear and concern as the potential impact of contracting the virus became very real. Social distancing, hand washing and wearing masks became the norm.

People and communities adapted quickly, learning to live with the necessary public health guidance and restrictions. Communities responded to the new environment to meet the needs of older and vulnerable people in their area. Kilkenny County Council set up the Community Call and a Helpline to provide assistance and support to people who were required to cocoon or self isolate. The helpline matched people who needed assistance, be it with shopping or collection of medicines, with people willing to help. Assistance came from many quarters including the Civil Defence, the local GAA or local Meals on Wheels. Many people who found themselves having to stay at home, such as teachers, volunteered to support the cause. Some signed up to volunteer with ALONE and other NGOs to keep in contact with people living alone, to make that all important phone call or write that postcard. Older people, who in normal times had the support of family, found themselves needing some help from neighbours and volunteers. People required transport to medical appointments and cancer treatments. Thanks to the combined efforts of so many organisations and individuals the needs of the most vulnerable in our communities were met. The early months were very traumatic for residents in nursing homes who could not receive visitors and relied on technology, phones, iPads and facetime, many of which were alien to us pre-Covid.

State bodies responded quickly by changing how services were delivered, many services moved on line, with in person service being available by appointment if essential. Kilkenny County Council was no different. We continued to provide our essential services, such as water, fire, homeless and housing, all in a Covid compliant manner having regard to health guidelines. Our libraries delivered books to cocooners homes and provided a book delivery service to Nursing Homes where appropriate. We worked to deliver exercise and keep fit in partnership with KRSP and our Arts and Heritage services engaged people in social activities on line. Teams/ Zoom meetings became the norm and the phrase “you are on mute” was all too common.

Collectively, the members of the Community Call was very conscious of the digital divide and that not all persons needing services could access them on line. I want to express my thanks to all the partners on the Community Call who worked to build peoples capacity to use technology and to look at innovative ways of providing technology and services. Kilkenny Age Friendly Forum is to be commended for its work during this difficult time and in particular for their role in articulating the everchanging needs of older people and helping the relevant agencies to respond and meet these needs.

The crisis certainly brought out the best in people. Organisations and individuals showed a real willingness to work in partnership to ensure services were delivered. I want to thank all of the Agencies and Groups who participated in the Community Call, who gave their time to raise issues/concerns, discuss possible solutions and for working in partnership to deliver agreed actions. Everyone on the Community Call played their role and did so willingly. In particular, I want to acknowledge the work of the Civil Defence under the leadership of Katherine Peacock, who quietly went about their business, no task was too menial or too difficult. They helped distribute PPE, pack and prepare testing kits for use in the Test Centres, transport people for tests

and medical appointments and assisted at the vaccination centre. They kept in touch with people to ensure their needs were met. The Volunteers in the Civil Defence are to be commended along with all the volunteers across so many organisations who gave freely of their time. Their tireless efforts reassured people and helped us get through the very difficult phases of the Covid crisis.

Whilst responding to the immediate and early phase of the crisis the Council was planning for the reopening of society and the need to facilitate social distancing in public areas, our streets and parks. We widened and improved paths and provided tables and chairs and canopies to facilitate outdoor dining. We dished footpaths, improved pedestrian facilities and crossings, all of which assisted people, including older people, to re-engage with society when the time was right and people were ready.

The work of Age Friendly continued through the year both locally and nationally with progress being made on many initiatives. The Shared Service managed by Meath County Council nationally prepared and issued guidelines to support policy development and implementation at local level. They also collated a weekly newsletter which was primarily focussed on the needs of older people, but useful for all. This gave up to date details regarding essential contact numbers, information regarding keeping safe and healthy and circulated news stories from across the country.

We are not there yet, but the take up of the vaccination programme and society re-opening is cause for optimism. We need to continue to work in partnership as we emerge from Covid to ensure older people re-engage fully with society and return to enjoying full and active life and social calendars. We need to build on some of the good partnerships, we need to build back better.

Colette Byrne
Chief Executive

SETTING THE CONTEXT

Growing Older in Ireland

The population of Ireland has been getting steadily older since the 1980's. In Census 2016, 37.2 per cent of the population were 45 years or older compared to 34.4 per cent in 2011 and 27.6 per cent in 1986. The proportion of children and young adults aged less than 25 years old was 33.2 per cent in 2016 and this has been steadily declining since the late 1970's when 47.9 per cent of the population were in this age cohort. Persons aged 25 - 44 years old made up 29.5 per cent of the population in 2016 down from 31.6 per cent in 2011.

The 65 years and over age group saw the largest increase in population since 2011, rising by 102,174 to 637,567, a rise of 19.1%. The census recorded 456 centenarians, an increase of 17.2% on 2011. Over half a million or 577,171 in this older age group lived in private households, an increase of 19.6%, while those in nursing homes increased by 1,960 to 22,762.

Evidence shows that it is possible to live longer with a good quality of life by developing healthy lifestyles and social capital in our families, communities and society. Making both cities and rural communities age-friendly is an effective local policy approach for responding to population ageing. The physical and social environments are key determinants of whether people can remain healthy, independent and autonomous long into their old age.

The World Health Organisation age-friendly cities guide highlights 8 themes that cities and communities can address to better adapt their structures and services to the needs of older people:

- **Built environment**
- **Transport**
- **Housing**
- **Social participation**
- **Respect and social inclusion**
- **Civic participation and employment**
- **Communication**
- **Community support and health services**

STRATEGY OUTCOMES

The Kilkenny Age Friendly Strategy 2017-2022 was prepared and the actions were decided on so as to provide the following outcomes for older people:

- That older people may live in communities that provide recreation, leisure and services that are accessible and responsive to the well being of people of all ages.
- That older people have the necessary information and transport to access the supports and services they need.
- That older people have choice and the necessary supports to live in the home and community that feels the most safe and secure.
- That older people feel and are involved and influential, and are valued for their life experience, talents, and contributions.
- That older people have increased opportunities to engage and be engaged in social, cultural and recreational activities with people of all ages.
- That older people be informed and connected to what is going on in the county through a variety of media from word of mouth to modern technology.
- That older people be involved in civic, social and economic campaigns and fora that enhance quality of life and engagement in the community.
- That older people have improved local supports and services to help maintain mental, physical, social and emotional health and well being.

The Strategy contains eighty four actions to be implemented over a five year period by ten implementing partners as follows:

- **Kilkenny County Council**
- **Health Service Executive**
- **An Garda Síochána**
- **Kilkenny Recreation and Sports Partnership**
- **Kilkenny LEADER Partnership**
- **Kilkenny Age Friendly Seniors Forum**
- **The Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board,**
- **Kilkenny Carlow Contact Be-Friending Service (Now ALONE)**
- **The Alzheimer's Society of Ireland**
- **Kilkenny Age Friendly Alliance**

Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce is also represented on the Alliance and it worked with the business community to develop the Age Friendly Business Recognition Programme for Kilkenny City and County, launched in 2019.

Kilkenny Public Participation Network is also represented on the Alliance. It developed the Kilkenny Access for All Strategy 2018-2021. The programme works with people of all ages who have disabilities, with local businesses, with Kilkenny County Council and community groups to support universal access for all including older people.

REPORT FORMAT

This is the fourth annual report on the current strategy and covers the year 2020. The report outlines the key actions taken in order to achieve the outcomes listed above.



OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS

1. OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS

OUTCOME: *That older people may live in communities that provide recreation, leisure and services that are accessible and responsive to the well being of people of all ages.*

ACTIONS

- The draft Graiguenamanagh-Tinnahinch Joint LAP went on display in November 2020. The final plan is to be adopted by Q3 2021. This Plan contains following objectives relating to Age Friendly:
 - MTO1.6: To support the provision of age friendly bus shelters at appropriate locations in Graiguenamanagh-Tinnahinch
 - CPO1.1: To provide distinctly identifiable disabled and Age Friendly car parking spaces at appropriate locations throughout Graiguenamangh-Tinnahinch
- The forward planning section are currently reviewing the City and County Development Plan, a draft of which was published in December 2020. This draft plan sets out the policy and high level objectives related to Spatial planning or the entire County. The Plan has Universal Design as one of its cornerstones and references Building for Everyone: A Universal Design Approach, which will support age friendly access to public and private spaces.
- Age Friendly was also considered in the following sections of the Draft Plan
 - Section 6.17 Positive Aging
 - Section 12.5.1 – Objective 12N To carry out an appraisal of each of the District Towns to determine measures to facilitate cycling and walking and improve connectivity within the town particularly from an age friendly perspective.
 - Section 12.13 Age Friendly and Accessible Parking
- Objective12AN To provide further age friendly parking spaces in Kilkenny City and the District Towns following consultation with the relevant stakeholders
- Kilkenny Leader Partnership supported the development and renovation of community and youth spaces in Thomastown, Graiguenamanagh Hub, Crosspatrick, Callan handball and Windgap. It also supported studies into the development of a number of community projects and centres in the Old Coop building in Callan, Castlecomer court house, Dunnamaggin, Johnstown, Slate quarries and Linguan Valley.

PUBLIC LIGHTING

- A significant public lighting improvement programme continues to be provided throughout Kilkenny City and County.

AGE FRIENDLY SEATING

- Seating was provided in Green Street, The Fairgreen and at the Motte field in Callan



Seating at Green Street, Callan



Provision of extra walking space at Bridge Street, Callan

AGE FRIENDLY FOOTPATHS

- Clogh Road, Maryville and Ballyhemmin, Castlecomer
- Main Street, Gowran
- The Square, Freshford
- Road safety improvement/footpath, Kellymount Road, Paulstown
- Footpath reconstruction at Church road, Paulstown
- Linear park footpath and public lighting in Slieverue
- Creamery Road, Piltown – footpath to provide access to new playground and park
- Newrath cul de sac
- Abbey Park, Ferrybank
- Kilmoganny



Age Friendly Footpath at Maryville, Castlecomer



Age Friendly Footpath at Chapel Lane, Callan

PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

- Provisions of Belisha type pedestrian crossing at The Green, Gowran
- Templeorum – crossing improvements between Church car park and church/school

AGE FRIENDLY CAR PARKING

- 2 no. parking bays at Church in Owinging
- 7 no. parking bays at Quay carpark in Thomastown



The Quay Carpark Thomastown



Age Friendly spaces at the Quay Carpark Thomastown

SECTION {TWO}



TRANSPORTATION

2. TRANSPORTATION

OUTCOME: *That older people have the necessary information and transport to access the supports and services they need.*

ACTIONS

- Kilkenny Age Friendly Older Peoples Council is an advocate for the advancement and introduction of a public transport system for Kilkenny City. It has collaborated with Kilkenny County Council and the National Transport Agency on this project.
- KLP approved funding for the installation of 6 new bus shelters in rural Kilkenny. The sites for the bus shelters are still being agreed in collaboration with Kilkenny County Council. They are due to be installed in 2021.
- KLP is leading a collaboration project to promote cycling in Kilkenny, this entails
 - undertaking a study into promoting cycling in Kilkenny city
 - Installation of six new bike counters in 2021
 - Promotion of cycling workshops for businesses and for community in the recently.
- Kilkenny Recreation & Sports Partnership is a partner with Kilkenny County Council, LEADER Kilkenny and Cartoon Saloon on the Cycle Kilkenny initiative. This initiative is currently looking at ways of upgrading existing cycle routes and the development of more cycle friendly corridors through Kilkenny city. A marketing and branding campaign have been launched aimed at raising the profile of cycling for transport in Kilkenny city for people of all ages.



HOUSING

3. HOUSING

OUTCOME: *That older people have choice and the necessary supports to live in the home and community that feels the most safe and secure.*

ACTIONS

- Kilkenny County Council continue to deliver housing suitable for the elderly under it's capital housing programme for the period 2018-2021. In 2020 4 units were delivered at Hoban Park, Callan, 9 units delivered at Bregagh Place, Piltown with one bedroom single storey conversion at the former health centre in Windgap.
- 20 older persons were allocated houses in 2020 - 15 of them were allocated Local Authority houses county wide and 5 were allocated houses by approved housing bodies: Oaklee Housing, Focus Ireland, Mount Carmel, St. Patrick's VHA, and The Good Shepherd Centre.
 - 204 Older Persons homes were adapted to meet their housing accommodation needs in 2020 as follows:
 - 83 Housing Adaptation Grants were processed and paid by Kilkenny County Council.
 - 33 Mobility Aid Grants were processed and paid,
 - 88 persons over 66 years of age received assistance under the Housing Aid for Older Persons Scheme.
 - Kilkenny LEADER Partnership continued to take referrals from Public Health Nurses and Community Welfare Officers to deliver the Housing Aid Scheme to assist older identified adults and other vulnerable groups with the maintenance of their home. All services are provided by "Trusted Tradesmen" on a referral basis that are Garda Vetted and approved.

FIRE SERVICES

- Outside of Lockdown level 5 during Covid -19 the Fire Service continued with their "Home Fire Safety Visits" to elderly/vulnerable persons. Specifically focusing on adequate working smoke alarms these home visits are requested through local community groups across the County.
- In 2020 31 Home fire safety visits were undertaken, advice on home fire safety was given and the installation of smoke alarms took place.
- Unfortunately, due to Covid -19, it wasn't possible to partake in any Community Fire Safety talks.
- However, Callan fire Brigade attended a former firefighters 95th Birthday celebration at his home. It really made it a memorable occasion for Mr Fitzgerald and his family.





RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

4. RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

OUTCOME: *That older people feel and be involved and influential, and be valued for their life experience, talents, and contributions.*

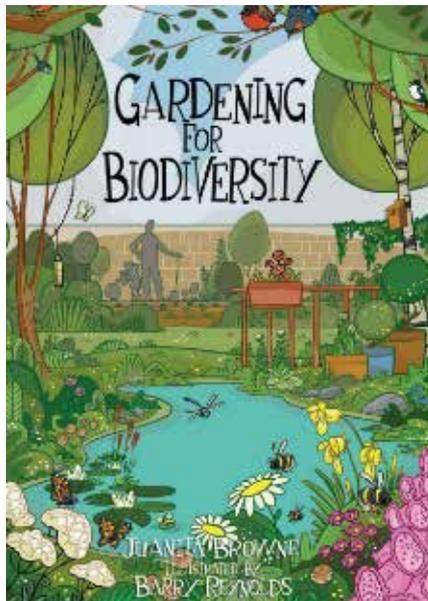
ACTIONS

- As part of Kilkenny Library's Door to Door delivery service, **4,839** books were delivered to **1,109** Cocooners across the county in 2020. Each library contacted their local cocooning members by phone to offer a personalised service. Staff then carefully selected and packed books and other small gifts. These were then delivered directly to the door of members' homes and nursing homes across the County. The service helped the most vulnerable in our communities by keeping their minds active and engaged.
- Significant investment was made in both physical books and eBooks in response to demand from cocooning library members throughout the year. The library continued to develop their collections to ensure they remained relevant to older people's needs, in formats that are accessible and appropriate for older adults with varying abilities and resources.
- Investment was made into PressReader a new digital newspaper service and Freegal, a new library music streaming service.
- From mid-March, the library programme transitioned from physical to online, and the library service took a pivotal role in developing and supporting programmes and initiatives as part of the governments Keep Well Campaign.
- Kilkenny Age Friendly OPC continue to represent the voice of older persons through its engagement on the various Strategic Planning groups (SPC's), the Public Participation Network (PPN) Kilkenny Recreation and Sports Partnership (KRSP), Kilkenny Education and Training Board, and the Kilkenny Local Community and Development Committee (LCDC) to advocate on behalf of older people. The Forum was ten years in existence in 2020, with celebrations postponed due to COVID.

Kilkenny County Heritage Office supported a comprehensive programme of community wellbeing projects to facilitate community resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic.

18 heritage podcasts, created by members of the public, were aired on KCLR as part of the "My Local Area" series. <https://kclr96fm.com/documentary/my-local-area/>





1,200 copies of the “Gardening for Biodiversity” booklet and pollinator advice leaflets were purchased & disseminated by the Heritage Office to the public to support the huge increase in interest in biodiversity and gardening during the 1st lockdown.

The Heritage Office also provided packs of pollinator friendly bulbs for people cocooning at home.

- Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board continues through Community Education to provide funding for courses in communities around Kilkenny City and County. Tutors are available in subjects such as art, music, dance, seated dance, yoga, gardening, photography, cookery, mindfulness and many more topics. Classes take place in the community to reach the groups who may not be in a position to travel to courses. Community Education funds the cost of a tutor and in certain cases may be available to assist with some materials for new groups.
- In 2020 Community Education in partnership with the PPN offered training to groups in the use of Acorn tablets for those who needed support with digital literacy. The importance of digital literacy was highlighted due to the Covid pandemic.
- Community Education delivers courses which respond to the needs of the group and can facilitate groups in areas of interest to their own group. Community Education works closely with Kilkenny Library services to provide classes countywide.
- Groups are invited to avail of funding from Community Education. Classes usually run for a period of 6 to 8 weeks, one per week depending on the needs of the group.

#BeActive at home



A guide to keeping active at home during the Covid 19 pandemic, brought to you by Kilkenny Recreation & Sports Partnership and Kilkenny County Council Community Wellbeing Campaign

This guide features tips, plans, links and ideas for keeping well physically and mentally during this crisis.



Simple Exercises from your HSE Physiotherapist for you to do during Covid-19 Cocooning Phase.



Follow the 8 daily exercises overleaf, then tick the boxes below when each session is completed. Please complete all 8 exercises twice daily (AM and PM).

	WEEK 1		WEEK 2		WEEK 3		WEEK 4	
	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
MON	<input type="checkbox"/>							
TUES	<input type="checkbox"/>							
WED	<input type="checkbox"/>							
THURS	<input type="checkbox"/>							
FRI	<input type="checkbox"/>							
SAT	<input type="checkbox"/>							
SUN	<input type="checkbox"/>							

- Following suspension of activities and with full lockdown in place, **Kilkenny Recreation and Sports Partnership** focussed immediately on helping those who do not have access to online resources. In collaboration with partner agencies, a 16-page booklet was produced, and 2,000 copies distributed throughout the city and county. Kilkenny County Council Library assisted with this. This resource contained suggestions, exercise programmes, an activity planner, breathing and wellbeing tips to support older adults and people with disabilities to remain active. Following on from this KRSP brought the idea to the national network of LSPs and Sport Ireland. As a result, two similar resources were developed and distributed nationally which were specifically for older adults and people with disabilities.

The network of 29 Local Sports Partnerships nationwide delivered an exercise at home programme on Sunday June 28th and this encouraged household members living together to be physically active regardless of age or ability

- An Garda Síochána has an ongoing liaison with Public Health Nurses (PHN's) and an open communication channel with Director of Nursing in relation to venerable persons.
- An Garda Síochána visit Nursing Homes and Day Care Centres regularly and provide music and song on the occasion of the visits in December of each year.
- An Garda Síochána also undertook ongoing visits to older persons living in Co Kilkenny as part of community engagement, especially those living alone.

SECTION { FIVE }



SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

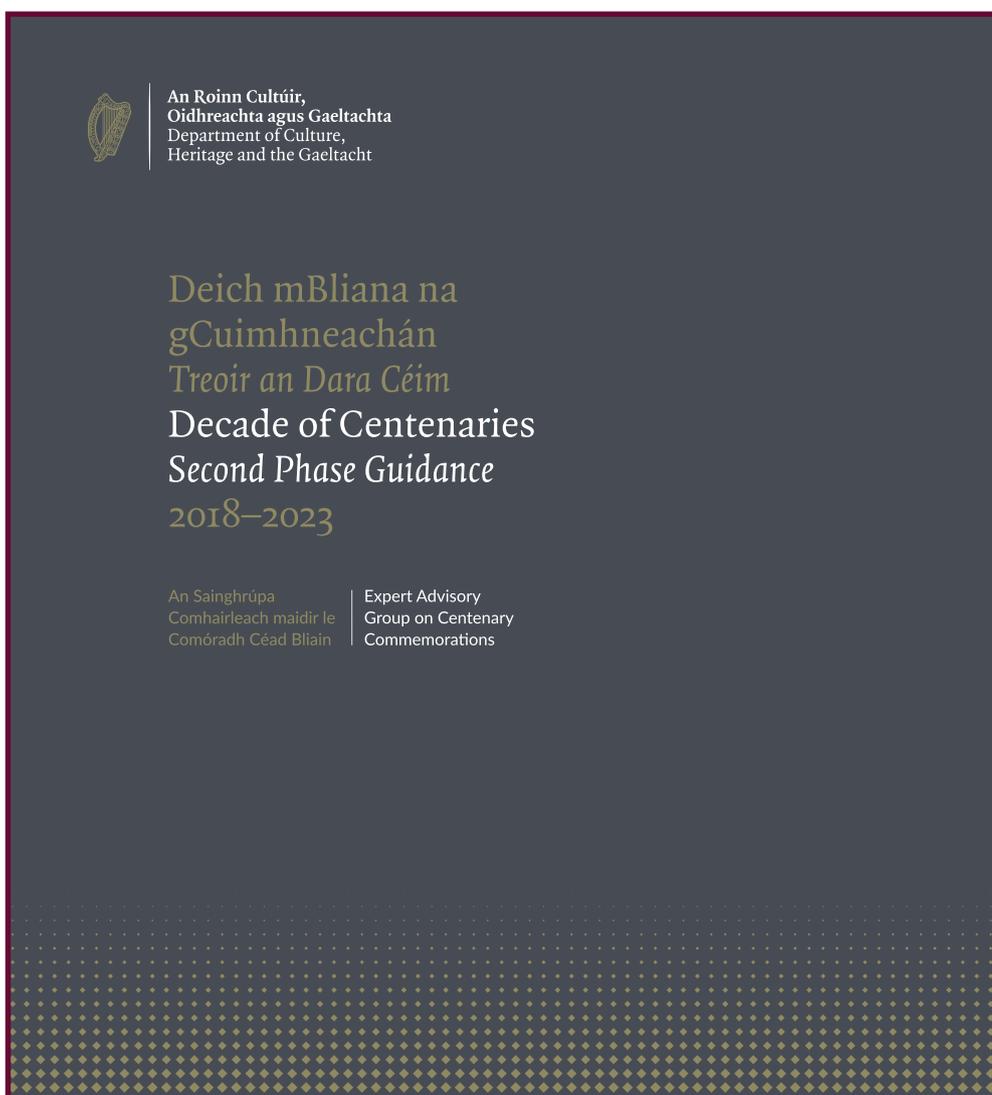
5. SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

OUTCOME: *That older people have increased opportunities to engage and be engaged in social, cultural and recreational activities with people of all ages.*

ACTIONS

- Kilkenny County Council Arts Office initiated a knitting and crochet blanket project as part of our Community Wellbeing in April 2020. This project helped to improve the lives of children in South Africa through the Elkana Charity and various local charities. The Elkana Charity transforms the lives of children who live in severely adverse situations which negatively impacts on their positive development and future. This charity has very strong connections to Kilkenny, and so is very dear to our hearts.
- This project supported local communities and positive ageing by mitigating the negative impact of social cocooning and social distancing by facilitating engagement in a project that connected the participants to a 'bigger than self' goal through creativity. Throughout this project the Arts Office engaged with a diverse range of groups and individuals to create seventy-five beautiful blankets.
- Overall the Knitted Together project was very successful and engaged with over 180 groups and individuals across the county and from Laois, Carlow and Waterford. It enabled engagement with a whole new cohort of individuals and groups across the county, further building and strengthening existing relationships.
- Kilkenny Library worked closely with a range of partners to continue to provide a range of classes and workshops online, offering people opportunity to stay engaged, develop new skills, and stay active from the safety of home. The library held 37 Age Friendly events throughout the year.
- Kilkenny Library's Light Up Your Nights Programme ran throughout the winter, with a series of online workshops such as Mindfulness talks, Gardening crafts, flower arranging, exercise videos and paper crafts. The library also offered over 500 Christmas craft packs to their Door to Door users.
- Kilkenny Library purchased 2 additional mobile Magic Tables for both Castlecomer and Graiguenamanagh Libraries, following the success and positive impact from Loughboy Library's table. The tables help stimulate creativity and help those on their dementia journey to enjoy interactive experiences.
- A virtual book club for adults began in 2020 through facebook page @kilkennylibrary. With over 90 members, this was designed to offer people from all over Kilkenny the opportunity to engage and discuss books at a time that suits them.
- As part of the Library Decade of Centenaries, library staff researched and developed content of local interest which was made available via podcasts, commissioned photographs of decade themed sites.
- Hear our Story Project: Staff developed a series of online podcasts to give people confined to home a taste of Kilkenny City and County's rich history and heritage. Themes included - Woodstock House and Estate, the Cuffes of Desart, and The Spanish Flu in Kilkenny

- The library service participated in a range of other national and local festivals to encourage older people to re-engage, participate and develop new skills – Keep Well, Bealtaine Festival, Heritage Week, Culture Night, Poetry Day, Savour Kilkenny and Yulefest.
 - 65 people attended the World Wetland Day event at Newpark Marsh (1st Feb), organised by Birdwatch Ireland and funded by the **Kilkenny County Council Heritage Office**.
 - Seven projects were awarded funding under the Kilkenny Decade of Centenaries Programme 2020. The programme was co-ordinated and administered by the Heritage Office of Kilkenny County Council. It comprised films, podcasts, postcards and an online workshop. The projects were undertaken by local historians and authors, historical societies and the Local Studies Section of Kilkenny County Council Library. Funding was provided by the Dept of Tourism, **Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport** and Media.
- <https://www.kilkennycoco.ie/eng/Services/Heritage/Kilkenny%20County%20Council%20Decade%20of%20Centenaries%20Programme%202020%20.html>
- When restrictions were eased in September, **Kilkenny Recreation and Sports Partnership** recommenced face to face delivery of certain programmes. Personal Protection Equipment was purchased, and all staff and tutors underwent Covid-19 Return to Sport (Covid Officer) training prior to the return to programme delivery. Programmes were delivered in a safe manner until restrictions were reimposed. Participants in the Older Adult Pilates, Monday Night Walking Group, Men on the Move were then offered the option of transferring to online classes.







COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

6. COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

OUTCOME: *That older people be informed and connected to what is going on in the county through a variety of media from word of mouth to modern technology.*

ACTIONS

- Kilkenny Library Service continues to work as a key communication channel throughout the county, providing regular dissemination of relevant information through a variety of media channels.
- As part of the library Door to Door Service for over 65's, library staff phoned and connected with their members regularly.
- Library staff manned and were available as part of the Community Call Service providing support and advice to people across all areas.
- Libraries across the county continued the National Healthy Ireland at Your Library Initiative, providing a core collection of books and programmed events on health and wellbeing including positive ageing, healthy eating and active living and wellbeing.

The services of the **Kilkenny County Council Heritage Office** continued to be a popular interest of, and topic of engagement with, older adults.

Information on Kilkenny's heritage was disseminated via traditional local print & radio media, aswell as through regular heritage news emails, via our website (www.kilkennyheritage.ie) and social media.

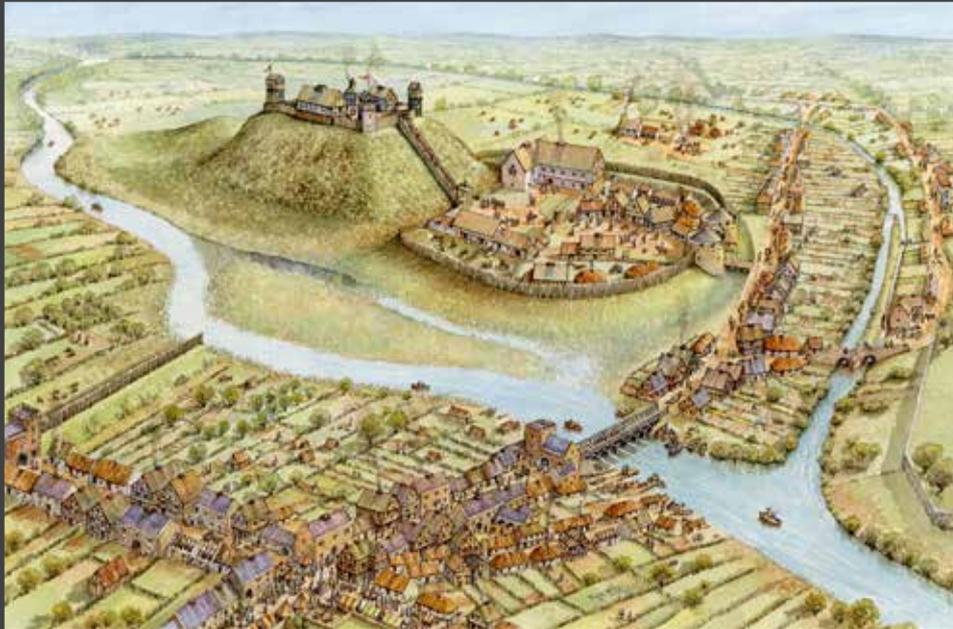
The Heritage Office commissioned a series of local radio adverts encouraging people to engage with their local heritage and biodiversity

The Heritage Office provided advice and information to groups and individuals on grants for heritage projects.

The Heritage Office, in partnership with Yulefest Kilkenny and KCLR, developed a programme of cultural and creative activities which ran throughout December on KCLR LIVE, funded by Creative Ireland.

An Móta | The Motte

AN ÁIT AR CUIREADH CALAINN AR BUN
WHERE CALLAN BEGAN



Lá margaidh i gCallainn i rith an 14ú haois. Mairsitheoir: Philip Armstrong | Market day in Callan during the 14th century. Illustrator: Philip Armstrong

Maidir leis an gcnocán mór atá os do chomhair agus ar a dtugtar móta, ba iad na hAngla-Normannaigh a thóg é níos mó ná ocht gcéad bliain ó shin. Bhí túr adhmaid nó caisleán ann ar a bharr. Bhí bábhún nó lonnaitheoir ann faoina bhun, mar aon le ceardlanna, stáblaí, tithe agus cistineacha, agus bhí clais agus fál adhmaid thart air. Dála áiteanna eile in Éirinn, tógadh an móta agus bábhún seo chun na lonnaitheoirí Normannacha a chosaint ar na Gaeil agus mar ráiteas i leith a gcumhachta agus a smachta sa cheantar.

Úsáideadh taighde cartlannaíochta, radar talamh-thréiteach agus tocháilí seandálaíochta chun a dhéanamh amach cén chuma a d'fhéadfadh a bheith ar Pháirc an Mhóta tráth.

The large mound, known as a motte, in front of you was built over eight centuries ago by the Anglo-Normans. On the top was a large timber tower or castle. Below was a bailey or settlement, with workshops, stables, houses and kitchens, enclosed by a ditch and a wooden fence. Like elsewhere in Ireland, this motte and bailey was built to protect the Norman settlers from the Gaelic Irish and as a statement of their power and control.

Archival research, ground penetrating radar and archaeological excavations were used to figure out what the Moat Field once possibly looked like.



Kilkenny County Council
Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh



OPW



2040



Rinneadh méid measta 7,700 méadar ciúbach ithreach agus gairbhéil a bhogadh de láimh chun an móta agus bábhún seo a thógáil. Is ionann méchan an abhair sin agus méchan 733 eilifint láimhástáil!
An estimated 7,700 cubic metres of soil and gravel was moved by hand to build this motte and bailey. That is the equivalent of 733 fully grown elephants!

4 new interpretive panels were created for the new park at the Motte Field, Callan. The Callan Area Office and the Heritage Office commissioned and oversaw the production of bi-lingual panels telling the fascinating story of the site, its history and natural heritage.

- Kilkenny Public Participation Network (PPN) provides updates and information in respect of the Age Friendly Alliance to its 372 member organisations, via the PPN weekly newsletter.
- Throughout 2020, Kilkenny PPN had 13 representatives sitting on the Strategic Policy Committees (SPC's) within Kilkenny Local Authority. 2 of these representatives were nominated by Kilkenny Age Friendly and were successfully elected. PPN representatives play an important role in influencing policy development and the decision making processes at Local Authority level.
- The PPN sponsored a variety of activities and events throughout the year that were inclusive and participatory.
- The PPN worked closely with the Men's Shed organisations and elderly associations around the county to develop capacity and leverage required supports.

- Since July 2020, Kilkenny PPN in conjunction with Kilkenny Older Person's Council has overseen and managed the delivery of Age Friendly tablets which are specifically designed to facilitate digital connection for Older Adults as well as mitigate social isolation which became more pronounced since the pandemic.
- As of December 2020, Kilkenny Older Persons Council are in receipt of 34 tablets in total. 13 tablets in question have been specifically targeted towards residents of long term residential care facilities or Community and Voluntary Nursing Homes.
- Following the suspension of face-to-face programmes in March, **Kilkenny Recreation and Sports Partnership** conducted a series of follow up phone calls with older adult participants. The purpose of these calls was to offer support, encouragement and practical suggestions on how to safely remain active during a time of great uncertainty and cocooning. Support resources were distributed to older adults throughout the city county.



CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT

7. CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT

OUTCOME: *That older people be involved in civic, social and economic campaigns and fora that enhance quality of life and engagement in the community.*

ACTIONS

- In partnership with Kilkenny Carlow ETB Community Section, a range of online workshops were provided throughout the year from exercise to garden crafts.
- One to one digital support for library online services such as eBooks, eMagazines, and eNewspapers was available for members to assist older people in using technology and library digital platforms.
- **Kilkenny LEADER Partnership** will support creative older entrepreneurs working with the traditional creative sector to grow and support their expansion sustaining skills and jobs and recognising that older adults are the new start-up generation.
- KLP continued to deliver enterprise supports through the Rural Development Programme and the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme.
- The OPC attended Age Friendly Alliance meetings in 2020, providing an active voice for older people in Kilkenny City and County. It also has membership of the Service Providers Forum and participated on the National OPC. From March all meetings were held remotely.

Community Forum

Two representatives from the OPC sat on the newly established Community Forum as part of the government's response to COVID-19. The Forum initially met every fortnight and then monthly. The purpose of the forum was to ensure a co-ordinated community response and to enable all voluntary and statutory agencies to collaborate in support of the community and it's most vulnerable members, including ensuring delivery of targeted social care supports, ensuring the resilience of existing community services, harnessing offers of assistance from enterprises/businesses generally and collecting and mapping information on services and voluntary groups across the county to help direct requests for assistance and identify gaps in service. The Forum provided an opportunity for the Seniors Forum to raise their issues and concerns with a wide audience of 24 groups made up of state and community and voluntary sectors.

Community Call - Helpdesk

With the onset of COVID-19 the Council were tasked with setting up the "Community Call". This consisted of setting up a helpdesk and Community Forum. The helpdesk was operational from 27th March and manned by staff from across the organisation with opening hours from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week. The call centre offered supports in relation to collection and delivery of fuel, medical prescriptions, delivery of meals, other medical needs, and social isolation supports and engagement. At it's busiest the call centre received approximately 350 to 400 queries per week, with the majority of calls around food, fuel and prescriptions. The helpline staff also made direct contact with Council pensioners and all local authority housing tenants aged over 70. The helpline was supported by the many voluntary groups who registered with the Council, which enabled the delivery of many services to the elderly and vulnerable in our society.

Keep Well Campaign - 2020

The Community Resilience Fund was launched by the government in October 2020. Each local authority received a fund to prepare and implement a plan as part of the "Keep Well" campaign. Kilkenny County Council received €67,225 to focus on three themes of the Plan – "Your County", "Switching Off and Being Creative" and "Staying Connected". A minimum of 50% of funding under the "Your County" element had to cover age friendly actions. Following consultation with members of the Seniors Forum, Kilkenny included in it's plan an age friendly radio programme called "The Tonic", age friendly promotions and digital support for older people in nursing homes and also "Eating Well for Older People" programme.

In addition under the theme "Switching Off and Being Creative, €7,973 was allocated to a joint action with Ossory Youth, called "My Home Place". Under "Staying connected, €5,000 allocated for digital and befriending supports for older people in rural areas and the door to door library delivery service to upscale by supplying resources for creativity and engagement with the older members of the library service. In total €29,098 of the overall fund was dedicated to Age Friendly initiatives.

Care Box Initiative

Care boxes and Overnight hospital bags were delivered to vulnerable persons across the five counties of the south east in May and June 2020 as part of a regional positive ageing initiative funded by Healthy Ireland. The

care boxes (80 per County) provided essential items for those who were vulnerable and cocooning/self-isolating due to Covid 19 but also communicated essential public health messages including;

- Minding your Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Physical Activity
- Information and advice on chronic health conditions
- Supporting people to document their current medications and provide a bag for medications in the case of them having to go to hospital so that they would bring them with them and reduce the medications checking burden on hospital staff if they present in emergency situation.

The 80 Care Boxes were assembled and distributed by the Kilkenny Civil Defence through Janette Boran Healthy Ireland Co-ordinator. The vulnerable persons were identified through the following organisations/Forums;

- Kilkenny Travellers Health Unit
- Local Authority Helpline
- Kilkenny Civil Defence
- Public Health Nurse (Primary Care)
- Community Gardai

Challenges of Implementation; During COVID-19 restrictions in March/April/May it was difficult to get supplies for the Care Boxes. Some of the essential items were very difficult to purchase in large bulk due to high demand e.g sanitizer, soap and thermometers. However, working in collaboration between the five Counties allowed support for each other and ability to solve problems. This initiative had an impact and supported vulnerable people in our communities during very challenging times.

Delivery of Care Boxes



Community Gardai



Katherine Peacock, Civil Defence Officer & Janette Boran, Healthy Ireland Co-Ordinator





COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES

8. COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES

OUTCOME: *That older people have improved local supports and services to help maintain mental, physical, social and emotional health and well being.*

ACTIONS

- An Garda Síochána commenced hospital watch in February 2020. This involved the appointment of a liaison Garda who took the bus service to St. Lukes, did a sweep of the hospital and gets the bus back.
- An Garda Síochána community engagement programme was put on hold with the onset of COVID-19 and public health restrictions.
- During the pandemic Gardai assisted people by delivering groceries, collecting prescriptions and providing assistance where needed.
- The HSE and the Gardai worked on a joint initiative to write to vulnerable adults in the North Kilkenny area who are in receipt of home support from the HSE. This pilot initiative was launched in December 2020, with letters being issued. If successful, initiative rolled out further in 2021.
- In response to the challenging circumstances the library service had to respond and adapt rapidly to ensure services were delivered to all the individuals and communities we serve. Throughout the year all public health guidelines were implemented allowing the library to provide services in a safe and controlled manner transforming the traditional service into a flexible hybrid model.
- Over 180 people attended Healthy Ireland events in February which included walking groups, Grow it Yourself workshops, Mindfulness for exams and a musical memory singalong. Additional physical and digital resources on topics such as healthy eating, wellbeing and mental health, physical activities and parenting were purchased for each library in Kilkenny.
- Dial A Story storyline for adults was developed to keep people connected throughout the year. It began as part of the national Keep Well Community Resilience Campaign. There are 10 stories written by local writers and recorded by library staff for callers to enjoy. Stories are changed regularly.
- KLP supports the development of community shops following on from the success of Windgap Community café and shop Ballyhale. Muckalee community is currently being supported
- Under mental health, KLP supports Lifelink committee to pilot an out of hours Crisis Café for adults in Kilkenny.
- In 2020, 35 Local Community Groups and 5 social enterprises with a social inclusion remit were supported under the SICAP Programme.
- Support through the Tus and Rural Social Scheme for the 'keeping open' of community facilities and the delivery of community/ voluntary services to older people.

- Kilkenny Recreation & Sports Partnership continue to provide and develop accessible, affordable and age appropriate opportunities for older adults to participate in sport and physical activity.
- The Keep Well campaign was launched in November 2020 and built on the “In This Together” campaign which happened earlier in the year. The “Keep Well” campaign focussed on five main themes one of which was keeping active. Keeping active and being outdoors, even during the winter, is important to help physical and mental health and wellbeing. The programme focussed on showing people of all ages how to mind their physical and mental health and wellbeing by adding healthy and helpful habits to their daily and weekly routines. It provides guidelines, information, and programmes to help people of all ages to keep well. The programmes were successfully planned in 2020 to be delivered by KRSP in 2021 and will be reported on in the Kilkenny Age Friendly Alliance 2021 annual report.

Developing community capacity to support on a Wellbeing Digital Champion model with Family Resource Centres

As a result of the Covid-19 restrictions, many healthcare supports, services and training have been reconfigured to be delivered online. Data from the Central Statistics Office and the Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA) and from local research shows that a significant number of people cannot access online supports and services. The **digital divide** is considered as any uneven distribution in the access to, use of, or impact of **information and communications technologies (ICT)** between any number of distinct groups, which can be defined based on **social or geographical** criteria, or otherwise. Evidence indicates the digital divide disproportionately affects older people, rural dwellers and those from more deprived backgrounds.

This is a partnership action which aimed to build on existing relationships with Family Resource Centres across the South East to pilot the development of a model of digital supports specifically to increase digital engagement on wellbeing initiatives and services with target groups including older people, rural dwellers and people from more deprived communities. All 17 FRC’s in the south east were invited in Nov 2020 to respond to an Expression of Interest to deliver digital supports within their centres to target groups to access health and wellbeing initiatives via HSE resourced Acorn Tablets. Target groups would also be supported to access healthcare programmes while building the user’s digital capability. Wellbeing programmes prioritised for delivery include:

- Living Well
- Ways to Wellbeing for adults under 55 years
- Ways to Wellbeing for adults aged 55+ years
- Virtual Pulmonary Rehab
- Diabetes Education
- Chronic Disease Support Groups

5 FRCs expressed interest including the Fr McGrath Centre in Kilkenny. The FRCs were required to nominate at least one member of staff as a digital champion to engage in training and support the initiative. This gave the security of existing compliance with GDPR, Health and Safety etc. under existing FRC policies. This also had the advantage of building on existing rapport and community partner relationships. Champions were provided with digital champion training to include use of the technology involved, teaching skills and understanding of the content of the wellbeing initiatives. Technical support was provided by Cliffrun Media as the supplier of the Acorn Tablets.

6 Acorn tablets were purchased for use by the Fr Mc Grath Centre to loan to participants.

Grant Aid Agreement was generated for once off seed funding for 50 hours over 12 weeks of ring-fenced dedicated staff time to deliver on the Wellbeing Digital Champion Initiative starting Jan 2021.

KILKENNY OLDER PEOPLES COUNCIL 2020

Due to COVID-19, most of the OPC's planned activities for 2020 had to be postponed. These included the annual conference and regional gatherings. However, the OPC engaged digitally both locally and nationally with other stakeholders to ensure older people's voice was heard, in particular the challenges they faced during the pandemic.

The AGM was held prior to COVID in February 2020 and was well attended. The OPC also collaborated with the Council, the PPN and Carlow/Kilkenny ETB regarding the purchase and roll out of Acorn and Grandpad tablets and provision of training. The OPC were also represented on the Community Forum and attended these meetings which were held remotely. The Executive of the OPC also recommenced their meetings by remote means and met seven times during 2020.

During 2020 the OPC also relocated offices from Parliament Street to No. 1 Hebron House, MacDonagh Junction, Kilkenny.

The OPC also put together a newsletter for their members with information such as exercising at home, health advice and useful contact numbers.

AGE FRIENDLY IRELAND

Kilkenny received a grant from Age Friendly Ireland of €3,225 to purchase 7 age friendly tablets for use in nursing homes in the County. These tablets were distributed by the HSE to public nursing units and support care homes in County Kilkenny.

They also started a weekly newsletter focused on the elderly, with information and stories particularly related to the older generation. This newsletter was circulated widely and to all members of the OPC.

Regional Positive Ageing Week 2020 - 28th September to 2nd of October

This Regional Action for Positive Ageing was also funded by The Healthy Ireland Fund, supported by the Department of Health and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs

Background

Under Strand 3 Healthy Ireland funding the counties of Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary, Waterford and Wexford continued to promote the partnership and collective action under Regional Projects and hosted a virtual Positive Ageing Week, 28th September to 2nd October, providing an online platform with daily talks of relevant content, healthy eating and demonstration and also physical activity including engaging a facilitator/moderator to support a working group for a 10 week period to act as MC in the recordings and to promote, engage and to administer bookings and run the online platform for Positive Ageing Week with the themes of Health and Wellbeing, Information and Culture and Diversity.

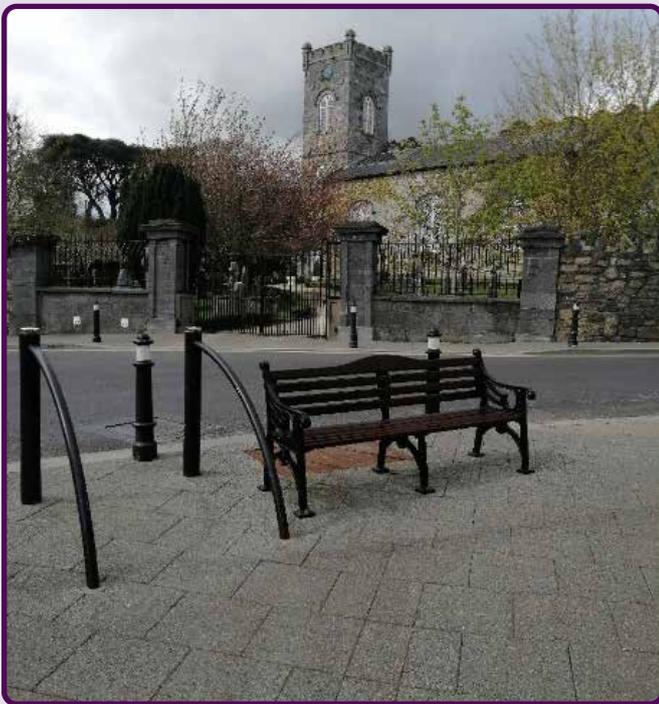
The content was filmed over 5 days, in venues in Kilkenny, Waterford and Clonmel with every effort to ensure compliance with Covid Restrictions and best practice was taken by all those in attendance. Pre recorded content was live streamed for Positive Ageing Week. The content has subsequently been made available on Youtube Channel Regional Positive Ageing You Tube link and also converted to MP3 and is being broadcast on Kilkenny City Radio to a wider audience of older persons.

THOMASTOWN - AGE FRIENDLY TOWN

The Thomastown Age Friendly Town Plan 2019 was submitted under the Age Friendly Initiative category in the Excellence in Local Government Awards 2020 run by Chambers Ireland. This award recognises the excellent programmes by local authorities who take the lead on changing thinking about ageing, and how services are planned and delivered, to encourage communities in which older people live valued lives. While making the shortlist, unfortunately it did not win.

The Thomastown Age Friendly Action Group did not meet in 2020 due to COVID-19 and while COVID interrupted works in 2020, the following was achieved:

1. Works commenced on improving footpaths in Logan/Low Street.
2. Thomastown Mobility Plan was drawn up in February 2020 with the objective of suggesting potential transport management, supporting improvement for vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists and improvement in public transport and car parking facilities.
3. The Quay car park was refurbished which includes 7 single age friendly car parking spaces
4. Installation of additional age friendly benches around the town
5. During COVID restrictions Thomastown GAA, Community Helpers and other groups provided a shopping and delivery service to older people isolating.

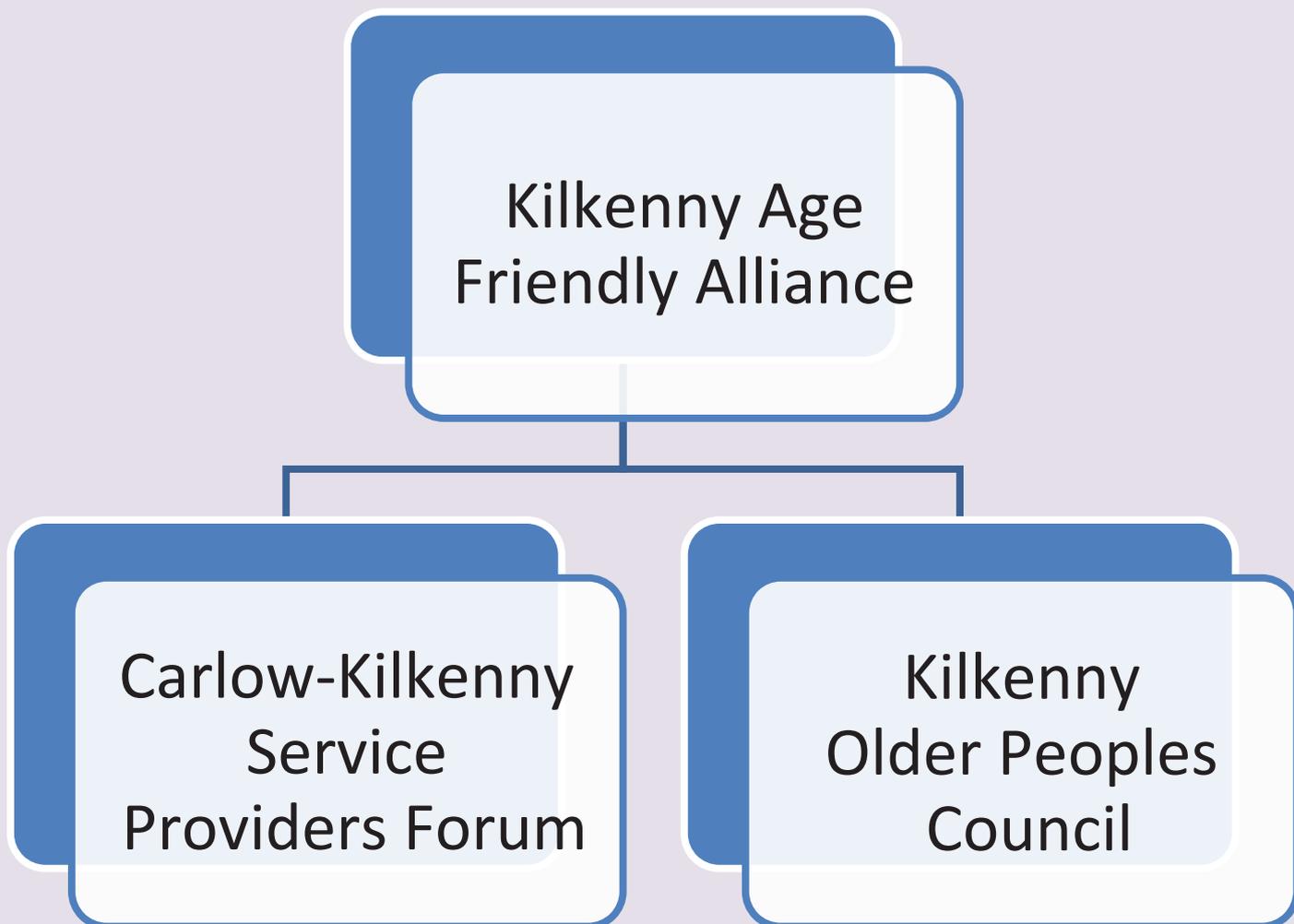


Additional Seating



Parking at Quay Car Park

AGE FRIENDLY SUPPORTING STRUCTURES



KILKENNY AGE FRIENDLY ALLIANCE

The Kilkenny Age Friendly Alliance is a multiagency voluntary partnership that works closely with older people in Kilkenny to ensure that policies and plans reflect their needs. Meeting regularly throughout the year the Alliance holds the responsibility for the development and implementation of Kilkenny's Age Friendly Strategy and manages its progress annually through the publication of their annual report, the preparation and implementation of annual work plans, the sharing of best practice and the exchange of information.

The Alliance met 4 times in 2020, of which 3 were held remotely.

Name	Organisation
Colette Byrne	<i>Chief Executive, Kilkenny County Council</i>
Betty Dewberry	<i>Chairperson, Kilkenny Seniors Forum</i>
Murty Brennan	<i>PRO, Kilkenny Seniors Forum</i>
Conor Nolan	<i>Sargent, AGS</i>
Anthony Farrell	<i>Inspector, AGS</i>
John Hurley	<i>CEO, Kilkenny Chamber</i>
Fergus Horgan	<i>Kilkenny Leader Partnership</i>
Barbara Murphy	<i>Health Service Executive</i>
Tara Hunt	<i>HSE Manager of Older Person Services Carlow/Kilkenny</i>
Teresa Hennessy	<i>HSE Health Promotion</i>
Mary Corcoran	<i>St.Lukes Hospital, Kilkenny</i>
Nicola Keeshan	<i>Kilkenny Recreation and Sports Partnership</i>
Margaret Whelan	<i>PPN Development Officer</i>
Siobhan O' Brien	<i>Kilkenny Carlow ETB</i>
Seamus Nugent	<i>Kilkenny Recreation and Sports Partnership</i>
Josephine Coyne	<i>Kilkenny County Council</i>
Annette Fitzpatrick	<i>Programme Coordinator, Kilkenny County Council</i>
SUPPORTED BY	
Teresa Mahon	<i>Kilkenny County Council</i>

KILKENNY AGE FRIENDLY OLDER PEOPLES COUNCIL

The Kilkenny Age Friendly OPC was established in 2010. The structure of the OPC was agreed by older people during consultation meetings and comprises of members from older peoples' groups and individuals.

The Kilkenny Age Friendly OPC represents the voice of the older people throughout Kilkenny. This voluntary group gives the opportunity for older people to share their concerns as older people living in their community and to work with key agencies and service providers to resolve these issues. The aim of the OPC is to ensure that Kilkenny is a great place to grow old in.

The OPC ensures that older people in Kilkenny participate in the decisions with agencies which affect their lives.

It provides an active channel of communication between the Kilkenny OPC and the Age Friendly County Alliance which is an overarching group made up of statutory and non-statutory agencies that provide services to older people.

It ensures that it represents the views of older people at local, regional and national level.

The OPC has approximately 400 members and it is currently looking for new members with a variety of skills and interests to continue to develop Kilkenny as a great place in which to grow old.

MEMBERSHIP IS FREE

The Kilkenny Older Peoples Council may be contacted at:

***Kilkenny Older Peoples Council,
Hebron House, MacDonagh Junction, Kilkenny***

Phone Number 056-7772787

Mobile 087-6218589

E mail agefriendlycounty@gmail.com

CARLOW KILKENNY SERVICE PROVIDERS FORUM

At the 31st December 2020

Name	Organisation
Dr Mia McLaughlin	<i>HSE Consultant Old Age Psychiatrist</i>
Caroline Kennedy	<i>Alzheimer Society of Ireland</i>
Dr Emer Ahern	<i>HSE Consultant Geriatrician</i>
Teresa Hennessy	<i>HSE - Senior Health Promotion Officer - HSE</i>
Moira Duggan	<i>Kilkenny LEADER Partnership</i>
Joan Doogue	<i>Manager, St. Fiacc's House, Carlow</i>
Marian Manning	<i>St. Lazarian's Carlow</i>
Annette Fitzpatrick	<i>Kilkenny County Council</i>
Karl Duffy / Annette Fox	<i>Carlow Community Development Partnership</i>
Mary Farrell	<i>Sacred Heart Hospital, Carlow</i>
Neifinn Bolton	<i>HSE Occupational Therapist, Dept of Psychiatry of Later Life</i>
Edel Keogh	<i>St. Catherine's Community Centre, Carlow</i>
Wayne Fennell	<i>Carlow Older Persons Forum</i>
Margaret Moore	<i>Carlow County Council</i>
Betty Dewberry	<i>Kilkenny OPC</i>
Deirdre Watson	<i>Kilkenny OPC</i>
Mary Walsh	<i>Family Carers Ireland</i>
Aidan Fitzpatrick / Anthony Farrell	<i>Garda Síochána</i>
Josie Galway	<i>Director of Nursing, St. Columbas Hospital, Thomastown and Castlecomer District Hospital</i>
Agnes Noud	<i>Manager, Carlow Day Centre</i>
Josephine Coyne	<i>County Librarian, Kilkenny County Council</i>
Mary Colclough/Eleanor Doyle	<i>ALONE (Carlow / Kilkenny Contact Befriending Service)</i>

