



Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

County Tipperary



Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann
Tipperary County Council



South Tipperary
Development CLG



Riailas
na hÉireann
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Tionscadal Éireann
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Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

Contents

Glossary of Terms	3	2.5.3	Natural Environment	37
1 Local Action Group Governance Model	5	2.5.4	Built Environment	38
1.1 Organisation Details	5	2.5.5	Climate Change	39
1.2 Company Information	5	2.6	Community Indicators	39
1.2.1 Contact Details	5	2.6.1	Community and Voluntary Sector Organisations	39
1.3 LAG Composition and Decision-Making	5	2.6.2	Broadband Access	39
1.3.1 LAG Membership Selection and Rotation	6	2.6.3	LGBTQIA+ Community	40
1.3.2 Conflict of Interest	6	2.6.4	LEADER Programme Performance	41
1.3.3 LAG Gender Breakdown	7	2.7	Summary	43
1.3.4 LAG Decision-Making Structures	7	3 CLLD and Participative Planning	45	
1.4 LAG Roles and Responsibilities	7	3.1	Community-Led Local Development	45
1.4.1 LAG Governance Model	7	3.1.1	Community Consultation Stage	45
1.4.2 Risk Management Procedures	8	3.1.2	Engagement with Hard-to-Reach Groups	46
1.5 Implementing and Animation Partners	8	3.1.3	Engagement with Young People	47
1.6 Financial Partner	9	3.2	Consultation Outcomes	48
1.7 LEADER Staffing	10	3.2.1	Economic Development and Job Creation	48
1.7.1 STDC LEADER Staffing	10	3.2.2	Rural Infrastructure and Social Inclusion	50
1.7.2 NTDC LEADER Staffing	11	3.2.3	Rural Youth	52
1.8 Project Selection Procedures	12	3.2.4	Rural Environment and Climate Action	53
1.8.1 Eligibility Criterion	13	3.3	SWOT Analysis	54
1.9 Relevant Experience	14	3.3.1	Economic Development and Job Creation SWOT	54
1.9.1 LAG: Technical Capacity	14	3.3.2	Rural Infrastructure and Social Inclusion SWOT	57
1.9.2 NTDC Implementing Partner: Technical Capacity	14	3.3.3	Rural Environment, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation SWOT	60
1.9.3 STDC Implementing Partner: Technical Capacity	15	3.4	Agreement of Priorities and Objectives	63
1.9.4 Implementing Partner's Combined Technical Capacity	16	3.5	Summary	63
1.9.5 Financial Partner: Technical Capacity	16	4 Strategic Integration	65	
1.9.6 Public Procurement	17	4.1	Networking	65
1.9.7 Monitoring and Evaluation	17	4.2	Cooperation	66
1.10 Summary	18	4.3	Policy Context	67
2 LDS Area Profile	19	4.3.1	International Policy Alignment	67
2.1 Headlines	19	4.3.2	EU Policy Alignment	67
2.2 Demographic Indicators	20	4.3.3	State Policy Alignment	69
2.2.1 Population Change	20	4.3.4	Regional Policy Alignment	71
2.2.2 Age Profile	21	4.3.5	County Policy Alignment	72
2.3 Social Indicators	22	4.5	Summary	76
2.3.1 Headlines	22	5 LDS Action Plan	77	
2.3.2 Ethnicity	22	5.1	LDS Local Objective 1: Green Economy	79
2.3.3 Education	23	5.1.1	Strategic Action 1.1	80
2.3.4 Pobal HP Deprivation Index	24	5.2	LDS Local Objective 2: Agricultural Diversification	81
2.3.5 Urban Rural Classification	26	5.2.1	Strategic Action 1.2	82
2.3.6 Health and Disability	26	5.3	LDS Local Objective 3: Tourism and Recreation Destination	83
2.3.7 Housing	27	5.3.1	Strategic Action 1.3	84
2.4 Economic Indicators	29	5.4	LDS Local Objective 4: Enterprise Development & Job Creation	85
2.4.1 Headlines	29	5.4.1	Strategic Action 1.4	86
2.4.2 Labour Force	30	5.5	LDS Local Objective 5: Rural Food Production	87
2.4.3 Socio-Economic Group	30	5.5.1	Strategic Action 1.5	88
2.4.4 Persons at Work by Industry	31	5.6	Local Objective 6: Social, Community, Cooperative Enterprises	89
2.4.5 Economic Activity	31	5.6.1	Strategic Action 1.6	90
2.4.6 State-Assisted Employment Creation	34	5.7	Local Objective 7: Town and Village Regeneration	91
2.4.7 Employment	34	5.7.1	Strategic Action 2.1	92
2.4.8 Household Incomes	36	5.8	Local Objective 8: Accessible Services	93
2.5 Environmental Indicators	36	5.8.1	Strategic Action 2.2	94
2.5.1 Headlines	36	5.9	Local Objective 9: Youth Support	95
2.5.2 Topography	36			

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

5.9.1	Strategic Action 2.3.....	96
5.10	Local Objective 10: Sustainable Environmental Development.....	97
5.10.1	Strategic Action 3.1.....	98
5.11	Local Objective 11: Climate Change and Biodiversity.....	99
5.11.1	Strategic Action 3.2.....	100
5.12	Local Objective 12: Adapting to Climate Change.....	101
5.12.1	Strategic Action 3.3.....	102
5.13	Anticipated Outcomes.....	103

Appendices 103

A1	LAG Membership.....	104
A1.1	Representation.....	104
A1.2	Gender Balance, Ethnic Diversity and Age.....	107
A1.3	Independent Evaluation Committee.....	107
A2	LAG Auditors Report.....	108
A3	LAG Governing Documents.....	108
A4	Operational Procedures.....	108
A5	Job Descriptions: LEADER Staff Members.....	109
A5.1	Job Description: LEADER Rural Development Officer.....	112
A6	Co. Tipperary LDS Area Mapping.....	113
A7	Consultation Feedback.....	119
A7.1	Theme 1.1: Economic Development and Job Creation.....	119
A7.2	Theme 1.2: Rural Infrastructure and Social Inclusion.....	122
A7.3	Theme 1.3: Sustainable Development of the Rural Environment.....	126
A7.4	Consultees.....	128
A8	GDPR Statement.....	130
A9	Declaration and Disclaimer.....	131

Tables, Figures and Maps

Table 1	EDs with Population Decline >10% 2016-22.....	21
Table 2	HP Deprivation Labels.....	25
Table 3	Very Disadvantaged SAPS 2016.....	25
Table 4	CSO Business Demography Co. Tipperary 2020.....	32
Table 5	Protected Sites.....	37
Table 6	Publicly Accessible Monuments and Places.....	38
Table 7	EDs Benefitting Least from LEADER Funding 2007-2022.....	42
Table 8	Economic Development Issues (1).....	48
Table 9	Economic Development Issues (2).....	49
Table 10	Community Development & Connectivity Issues (1).....	51
Table 11	Community Development: Rural Youth Issues (2).....	52
Table 12	Rural Environment & Climate Action Issues (2).....	53
Table 13	LAG Membership.....	104
Table 14	STDC LEADER Staffing.....	109
Table 15	NTDC LEADER Staffing.....	110
Table 16	Green Economy - Consultation Feedback.....	119
Table 17	Agricultural Diversification.....	119
Table 18	Rural Tourism Consultation Feedback.....	120
Table 19	Enterprise Development Feedback.....	121
Table 20	Rural Food Feedback.....	121
Table 21	Social Enterprise Feedback.....	122
Table 22	Rural Infrastructure Feedback.....	123
Table 23	Accessible Services Feedback.....	124
Table 24	Optimising Digital Feedback.....	124
Table 25	Rural Youth Feedback.....	125
Table 26	Rural Environment Feedback.....	126
Table 27	Climate Change - Capacity Feedback.....	127

Table 28	Mitigation and Adaptation Feedback.....	127
Table 29	Summary Table of all LDS Consultees.....	128

Figure 1	STDC LEADER Staff Organogram.....	10
Figure 2	NTDC LEADER Staff Organogram.....	11
Figure 3	LEADER IEC Scoresheet Template.....	12
Figure 4	NTDC Governance Structure.....	15
Figure 5	STDC Governance Structure.....	15
Figure 6	Population Trend 2006-2022.....	20
Figure 7	Population Age Profile 2016.....	21
Figure 8	Educational Attainment 2006-2016.....	23
Figure 9	Type of Tenure 2016.....	28
Figure 10	Home Heating Fuel 2016.....	28
Figure 11	Co. Tipperary by Principal Economic Status 2016.....	30
Figure 12	Socio-Economic Group 2016.....	31
Figure 13	Persons at Work by Industry 2016.....	31
Figure 14	Co. Tipperary Unemployment Rate 2006-16.....	35
Figure 15	Co. Tipperary Live Register Male 2023.....	35
Figure 16	Co. Tipperary Live Register Female 2023.....	35
Figure 17	Distribution of LEADER Funding 2007-2022.....	41
Figure 18	Priorities and Objectives Development Model.....	63

Map 1	Co. Tipperary LDS Area by ED.....	113
Map 2	Co. Tipperary Population by ED 2022 (Prelim).....	114
Map 3	Co. Tipperary Pop Change by ED 2016-22 (Prelim).....	115
Map 4	Co. Tipperary Deprivation Score by ED 2016.....	116
Map 5	Co. Tipperary Most Disadvantaged SAPS 2016.....	117
Map 6	Spatial Distribution of Community Consultation Meetings.....	118

Glossary of Terms

Abbreviation/Term	Definition
AFS	Annual Financial Statement
BER	Building Energy Rating
BTWEA	Back to Work Enterprise Allowance
CAP	Common Agricultural Programme
CARO	Climate Action Regional Office
CDP	County Development Plan
CE	Community Employment
CLG	Company Limited by Guarantee
CLLD	Community-Led Local Development
Cllr.	Councillor
Co.	County
CSO	Central Statistics Office
CSP	CAP Strategic Plan
CYPSC	Children and Young People's Services Committee
DAFM	Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine
DCEDIY	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
DECC	Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications
DEIS	Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools
DHLGH	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
DRCD	Department of Rural and Community Development
DSP	Department of Social Protection
ECTC	Energy Communities Tipperary Cooperative CLG
ED	Electoral Division
EI	Enterprise Ireland
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ETB	Education and Training Board
EU	European Union
FP	Financial Partner
FRC	Family Resource Centre
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
HAP	Housing Assistance Payment
HPSU	High-Performance Start-Up
HSE	Health Service Executive
ICMSA	Irish Creamery and Milk Suppliers Association
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IDA	Industrial Development Authority
IEC	Independent Evaluation Committee
IFA	Irish Farmers' Association
IP	Implementing Partner
JPC	Joint Policing Committee
LAES	Local Area Employment Service
LAG	Local Action Group
LAWPRO	Local Authority Waters Programme
LCDC	Local Community Development Committee

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

Abbreviation/Term	Definition
LDS	Local Development Strategy
LEADER	Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale Links Between Actions for the Development of the Rural Economy
LECP	Local Economic and Community Plan
LEO	Local Enterprise Office
LGBTQA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, and Others
MB/s	Megabyte per second
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTU	Munster Technological University
NBP	National Broadband Plan
NCRS	National Countryside Recreation Strategy
NDP	National Development Plan
NEET	Not in Education, Employment, or Training
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPF	National Planning Framework
NTDC	North Tipperary Development Company CLG
PHCP	Primary Health Care Programme for The Travelling Community
POWSCAR	Place of Work, School or College Census of Anonymised Records
PPN	Public Participation Network
Q	Quarter
RAPID	Revitalising Areas through Planning, Investment and Development
RRDF	Rural Regeneration Development Fund
RSES	Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy
RSS	Rural Social Scheme
SAP	Small Area of Population
SEAI	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
SICAP	Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme
SME	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise
STDC	South Tipperary Development Company CLG
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
TEA	Tipperary Energy Agency
TGBN	Tipperary Green Business Network
TPHCP	Traveller Primary Health Care Project
TUS	Technological University of the Shannon
Tús	Community Work Placement Scheme
URDF	Urban Regeneration and Development Fund
VEDP	Visitor Experience Development Programme
WSTCYS	Waterford and South Tipperary Community Youth Service

Acknowledgements

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All mapping has been produced using open-source GIS software (QGIS) and contains Irish Public Sector Data (data.gov.ie) licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CCBY 4.0) licence. Data Source: OpenStreetMap, CSO Census 2016

Unless otherwise stated, all statistical data is based on the CSO Census of Population 2016. Deprivation Index information and mapping are based on Haase, T. and Pratschke, J. (2017) The 2016 Pobal HP Deprivation Index, accessed at www.trutzhaase.eu

Extracts from 'Analysis of the Distribution and Social Inclusion Focus of LEADER Funding in Co. Tipperary 2007-2022: Evidence from Project-Level Data.
Conor Judge, Department of Sociology, Nuffield College, University of Oxford

1 Local Action Group Governance Model

1.1 Organisation Details

Tipperary Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) is the Local Action Group (LAG) responsible for delivering the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 in County Tipperary.

1.2 Company Information

1.2.1 Contact Details

Legal Name	Tipperary Local Community Development Committee
Contact Details	Tipperary Local Community Development Committee, Civic Offices, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary.
Primary Contact for LEADER	Brian Beck
Contact details	Chief Officer, Tipperary Local Community Development Committee, Civic Offices, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary.
Email	lcdc@tipperarycoco.ie
Telephone	0818 065000
Date of establishment	Tipperary LCDC was established in 2014 under the provision of Part 6 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014.
Tax Clearance Access	Tax Reference Number: 3259712 MH Tax Access Number: 512378
Companies Registration Number:	Not applicable

1.3 LAG Composition and Decision-Making

The LAG consists of public and private sector partners representing Co. Tipperary. The LAG comprises nineteen members: ten representing the private sector and nine from the public sector, per Article 33 of the EU Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) 2021/1060. A full list of the LAG membership, including names, organisations, and the relevant sector, is contained in Appendix 1.

The LAG brings together all the local stakeholders, including the local authority, state agencies, social partners, the local development companies, community and voluntary sector representatives, and representatives from the environmental and sustainability pillar. The LAG aims to promote economic and local development through a partnership approach to benefit the citizens of Co. Tipperary.

Central to the ethos of the LAG is a collaboration between the public and private sectors, providing the integrated delivery of local, community-based services.

1.3.1 LAG Membership Selection and Rotation

The selection and rotation of LAG membership is guided by the procedures set out for Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs), Section 128E of the 2014 Regulations. Parameters for the selection and rotation of LAG membership are outlined below: -

- The Chief Officer will consult with the Corporate Policy Group to seek and select Councillor nominees to the LAG from time to time and shall submit a list of recommended nominees to the Local Authority members for their consideration
- Appropriate and relevant knowledge and experience will be considered in seeking and appointing new or replacement LAG members.
- All membership is ratified by the Local Authority

Public LCDC Membership

- Regarding any Local Authority vacancies that arise, it will be a matter for the Local Authority to recommend representatives to sit on the LAG, as above.
- Regarding any vacancies arising through the state agencies nominations will be sought directly from these bodies.

Private LAG Membership

- When vacancies arise, the community (2 places), social inclusion (2 places) and environmental representatives (2 places) shall be sought through the Public Participation Network (PPN)
- Nominations are sought from the Social Pillars (e.g., Agricultural and Business Pillars) as well as from the Local Development Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

1.3.2 Conflict of Interest

LAGs are prescribed public bodies under the Ethics in Public Office Acts by virtue of S.I. 678 of 2006. Accordingly, the LAG will ensure it meets its obligations under the Ethics in Public Office Acts 1995 and 2001. Given that the LAG will be responsible for managing the disbursing of public monies, there is a recognised need for transparency in all dealings involving the members and the decisions of the LAG.

Where an application for grant aid is submitted to the LAG from LCDC Members, members of committees or working groups, members of staff of the LAG, Implementing Partner and/or Financial Partner, or any person associated with the LAG, or from an incorporated or unincorporated organisation or body of which the member or staff member has an interest, then such member/staff member shall declare their interest and absent themselves from the assessment procedure and discussion of the projects at LAG, committee, staff and all other meetings.

Each member, members of committees or working groups, and staff member will, at the time of appointment and thereafter annually, complete a Register of Interests form detailing the organisations, groups, etc., that they are members of or have an interest in. The LAG Chief Officer is responsible for ensuring compliance with Conflict-of-Interest requirements.

A LAG member, members of committees or working groups, members of staff of the LAG, Implementing Partner and/or Financial Partner shall be deemed to have an interest in a particular matter where a person connected with that individual has such an interest, and the individual could be expected to be reasonably aware of the existence of that interest. For this purpose, a person is connected with the individual if that person is: -

- A spouse, parent, brother, sister, child or step-child, other relative or cohabitee
- A corporate body controlled by the individual within the meaning of Section 220 (3), (4), (5), (6), (7) and (8) of the Companies Act 2014

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

- A person acting as the trustee of any trust, the beneficiaries of which include the individual or the persons/organisations working as a LAG partner.

Upon appointment, and where any change occurs, each LAG member, members of committees or working groups, members of staff of the LAG, IPs and/or FP shall furnish full particulars of their interests. These interests shall include their employment, all business interests and community involvement, including voluntary work for charities hereinafter referred to as '*interests*', which might involve a conflict of interest or materially influence the individual concerning the performance of their functions or their partiality. This duty to disclose is without prejudice to the ongoing obligation to disclose specific interests relating to any project the LAG considers.

Where a Conflict of Interest is declared that person must absent themselves from any deliberations where such a declaration is made. This declaration must be formally recorded in the LAG/committee minutes.

1.3.3 LAG Gender Breakdown

Of the nineteen filled membership positions on the LAG, six (thirty-two per cent) are female. It is anticipated that following the local elections (May or June 2024) there will be further commitment to gender balance and diversity in selection of new council representation on the LAG.

See appendix A1.

1.3.4 LAG Decision-Making Structures

See appendix A1.

1.4 LAG Roles and Responsibilities

Tipperary LAG is responsible for the implementation of the LDS and associated decisions on the funding of actions. The role of the LAG is to: -

- Provide the overall strategic direction and ensure LDS priorities are followed
- Approve the parameters for proposal calls following the priorities and objectives set out in the LDS
- Approve project applications, extensions and contract changes within the Operating Rules
- Monitor and review the Implementing Partners' performance through their monthly presentation of CEO report outlining project delivery, proposals, drawdowns, extensions and budget remaining for projects
- Ensure Tipperary County Council as lead Financial Partner provides a monthly report to the LAG which sets out the overall budget position incorporating both Implementing Partners; thematic breakdown of budgets, progress on claims and progress on administration spend
- Bi-annually review the partnership Service Level Agreement and agree corrective action or changes if required
- Monitor and review progress under the LDS on an ongoing basis and agree on corrective action where required
- As the budgets reduce, agree in accordance with the Operating rules, any proposed budget amendments across thematic lines

1.4.1 LAG Governance Model

Tipperary Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) will be the Local Action group (LAG) for the purpose of delivering the Local Development Strategy. This will be in partnership with STDC

and NTDC to deliver the LEADER Programme in Co. Tipperary, with Tipperary County Council as the Financial Partner.

Tipperary LCDC was established as a committee of the Local Authority in July 2014 under the provision of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 (Part 6). The LCDC is independent of the Local Authority in discharging its functions. The LCDC comprises representatives of the public sector and private sector. The representation between the sectors is balanced in favour of the private sector.

- Regarding any statutory sector vacancies that arise, it will be a matter for the local authority to recommend representatives to sit on the LAG
- Regarding any vacancies arising through the state agencies and private bodies, nominations will be sought directly from these bodies
- When vacancies arise, the community, social inclusion and environmental representatives shall be sought through the Public Participation Network (PPN)

Appropriate and relevant knowledge and experience will be considered in seeking and appointing replacement LAG members (see section 1.3.1)

1.4.2 Risk Management Procedures

Tipperary LAG is committed to implementing an organisational philosophy that ensures risk management is integral to the achievement of corporate objectives, programme delivery planning and associated management systems. Compliance with legislative requirements is central to our risk management policy. Risk management is recognised as being vital to the LAG and Implementer's ability to pursue its goals, commence and operate programmes on behalf of Contracting Authorities, and to perform duties in an efficient and professional manner.

The risk management framework is a scalable, holistic approach to improved decision-making that consolidates and organises risk information from across the company. By embracing this framework, the organisation fosters a strong risk management culture enabling it to drive performance, innovation, and growth, while protecting reputation and stakeholder interests.

The risk management framework consists of six steps for effective risk management as below: -

1. **Identify Risks:** Engage in dialogue with directors and employees to uncover all potential risks, involving all in a comprehensive assessment of current and future risk.
2. **Analyse Risks:** Evaluate identified risks based on likelihood, impact, and operational implications. Create a comprehensive list organised by probability and impact.
3. **Control and Treat Risks:** Develop strategies to manage risks before they arise or as they occur. Consider business impact, likelihood, and cost. Implement risk reduction, transfer, or insurance measures.
4. **Monitor Risks:** Assign responsibility and accountability to employees for monitoring and executing mitigation strategies. Foster a culture of accountability.
5. **Improve Risk Management:** Continuously improve processes, streamline communication, and encourage employee involvement. Reward risk sharing to prevent and minimise risks.
6. **Report Progress:** Establish a systematic reporting system to share progress with stakeholders and other relevant parties. Integrate risk reporting into management meetings and be responsive to inquiries.

1.5 Implementing and Animation Partners

North Tipperary Development Company CLG (NTDC) and South Tipperary Development Company CLG (STDC) will be responsible for implementing the LDS on behalf of the LAG in their respective geographic areas of operation. The innovative formal partnership arrangement is

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

embodied in a Service Level Agreement between the parties, with the Implementing Partners being fully accountable to the LAG in this respect. This arrangement has worked satisfactorily throughout the delivery of the LDS from 2014 to the present day.

The Implementing Partners will jointly carry out all work, from issuing calls for proposals to submitting project recommendations to the LAG for final approval. This role will include, but will not be limited to: -

- Developing and issuing calls for proposals
- Managing call for proposals and open-call project application processes.
- Implementing, managing, and coordinating animation activity in Co. Tipperary
- Developing funding proposals with project promoters
- Receiving and processing funding applications
- Preparing and collating documentation and submitting files for required checks and following up on any issues identified through checks, project development, management, and monitoring work with project promoters
- Developing and advancing Implementing Partner-led and LAG-led projects
- Submitting projects to the LAG Independent Evaluation Committee (IEC)
- Providing all documents to the LAG for project decision
- Submitting recommendations to reject project applications (where appropriate) for ratification
- Preparing, co-signing, and issuing contracts to project promoters on behalf of the LAG
- Managing claims process
- Managing the appeals process
- Reporting monthly on activity to LAG
- Providing general file management services, audit compliance and administration related to the above actions

STDCs head office is Unit 2C, Carrigeen Commercial Park, Clogheen Road, Cahir, Co. Tipperary, E21 HV20. NTDCs head office is Friars Court, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary, E45 KN59. In addition, STDC and NTDC operate through a network of outreach offices.

1.6 Financial Partner

Tipperary County Council will be the Financial Partner of the LAG and will be required to carry out the administrative tasks associated with this role, including: -

- Providing advance administration and animation funding to the implementation partner, including annual reconciliation of same
- Making payments to promoters on behalf of the LAG, subject to administrative checks
- Requesting monthly administration drawdown of monies from DRCD
- Providing a comprehensive monthly report to the LAG, reconciled to Implementing Partners CEO reports, outlining thematic breakdown of budgets, progress on claims and progress on administration spend

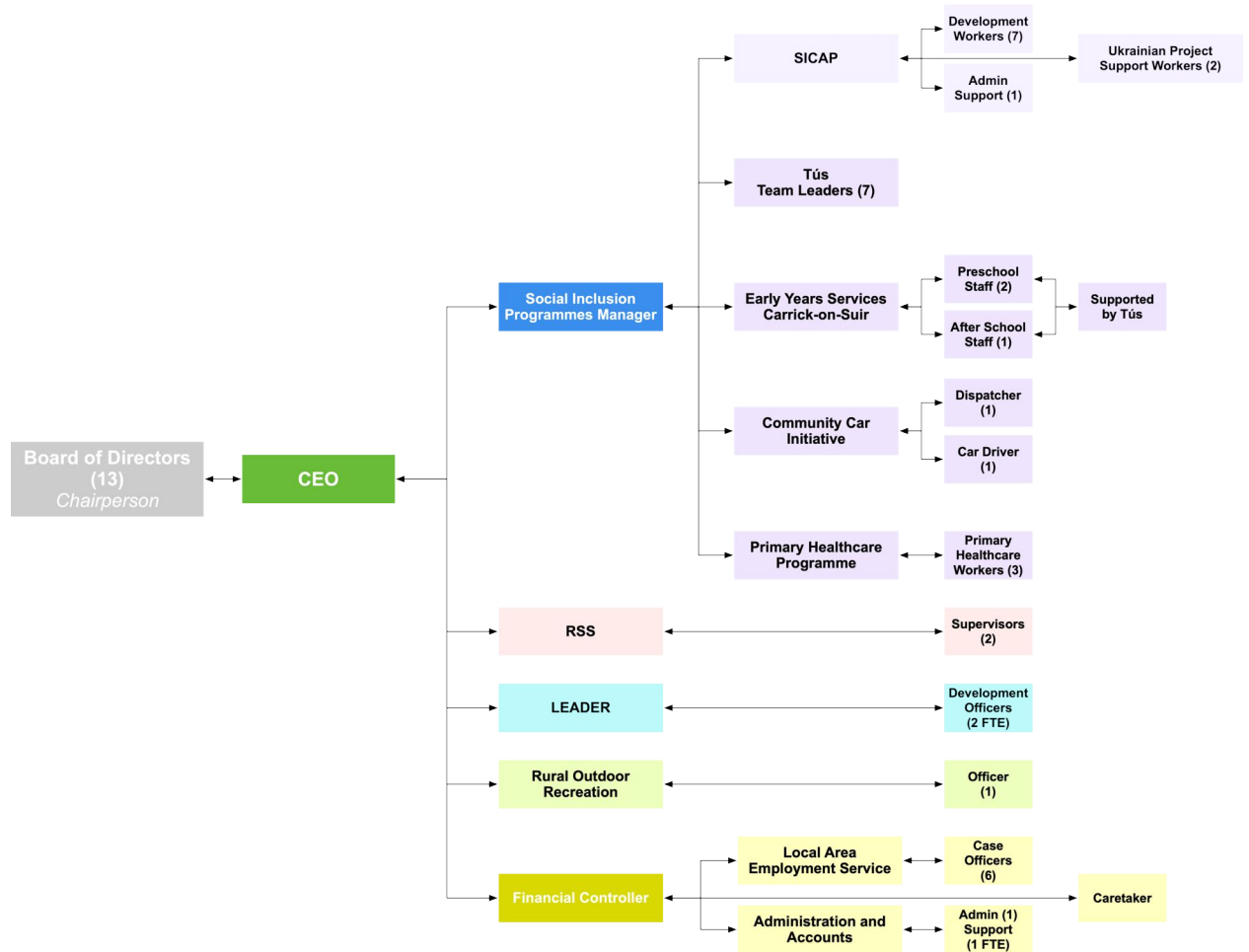
The Financial Partner will indemnify the LAG and its members for actions taken in implementing the LDS. Accordingly, the financial partner will be required to have a robust verification role in respect of processes around decision-making to allow it to underwrite LAG activities under the administrative verification processes.

1.7 LEADER Staffing

The LAG does not directly employ any staff serving the delivery of the LEADER Programme. It is operated by Tipperary County Council through its Chief Officer and the LCDC support staff. Appendix A5 provides detailed job descriptions of all LEADER staff members.

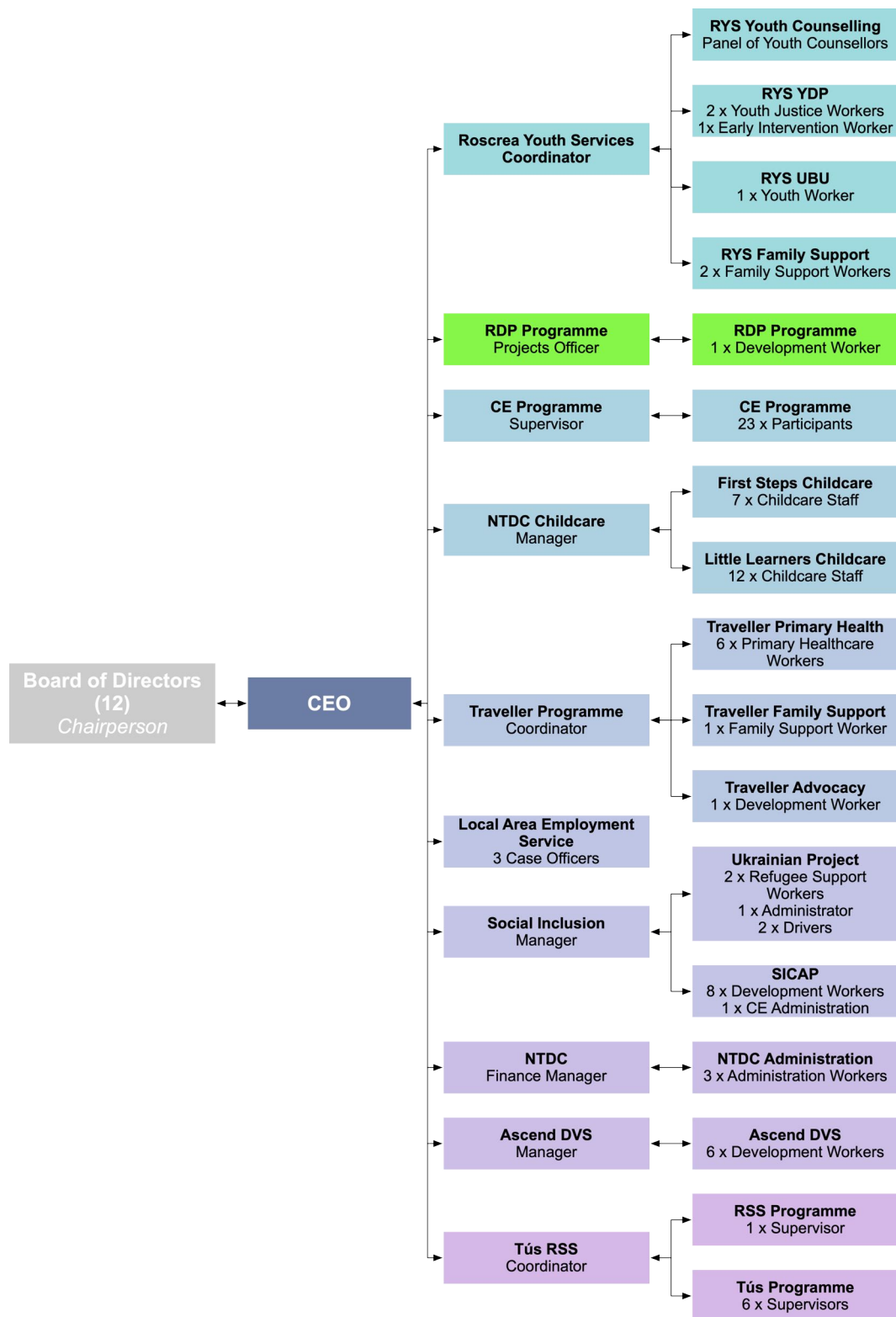
1.7.1 STDC LEADER Staffing

Figure 1 – STDC LEADER Staff Organogram



1.7.2 NTDC LEADER Staffing

Figure 2 – NTDC LEADER Staff Organogram



1.8 Project Selection Procedures

An Expression of Interest (Eoi) is recorded on the LEADER IT system for all potential applicants before they apply for support. In determining a project's eligibility, the LAG must assess if the project constitutes an eligible activity per the Operating Rules and the LDS and, second, the beneficiary's eligibility for LEADER funding.

A fully completed application form with the required supporting documentation is, when submitted, assessed, and a project assessment report with relevant supporting documentation is submitted for project assessment to the Independent Evaluation Committee (IEC).

If the project is scored above a certain threshold across several evaluation criteria with a cumulative score of >65 per cent by the IEC, then the project is recommended for funding to the LAG Board. The LAG then decides whether to award a grant and the contribution level to be awarded. If a decision to award is made, then the Implementing Partner issues a contract on behalf of the LAG to the promoter or beneficiary.

Figure 3 – LEADER IEC Scoresheet Template

LEADER Programme - Tipperary LCDC Evaluation Committee Scoring Record				
Date:		Time:		
Project Ref No	Project Promoter	Project Title		
Assessment Criteria	Objective	Issues raised by Evaluation Committee	Weighting	Average Score
Compatibility with LAG Local Development Strategy	Do the project proposals meet the criteria set out in the LAG LDS for the relevant Theme and Sub-theme?		15	
Innovation	Is the product innovative in its nature or does it displace existing enterprises?		10	
Promoter experience	Does the promoter have the training/skills, track record or experience to deliver?		15	
Financial viability	Are the project costs justifiable (reasonableness of costs) and/is adequate funding available to co-fund the project? Does Deadweight arise?		15	
Project Sustainability	Is the project viable and will the service continue to be delivered?		10	
Requirement	Does the proposal target a specific need or address a specific gap in the market?		15	
Social Inclusion Value	Does the project benefit marginalised groups/communities/individuals?		10	
Environmental Sustainability Value	Will the project compromise the needs of the future generations?		10	
Total			100	
N.B. Projects must receive a minimum score of 65% prior to being recommended for approval				
Has the potential level of deadweight been assessed for this project?			YES / NO	
Would the project proceed without LEADER funding?			YES / NO	
Recommendations of the Evaluation Committee:				
Signature of Committee Chair			Date _____	
Proposed by:		Seconded by:		

1.8.1 Eligibility Criterion

A clear and transparent set of assessment criteria will be devised by the LAG in compliance with the Operating Rules (to be published). The IEC will assess each project against those criteria, potential for displacement and deadweight and award a score. The minutes of the IEC meeting and any comments on the project are circulated to the LAG. The LAG reassesses each project and will decide on approval.

Based on current experience, project applications coming before the IEC for consideration will be formally scored against predetermined criteria, to be applied and collated into a matrix which will form the basis for the final decision of the LAG. In some cases, evaluating a project application against the criteria may result in recommendations or conditions being applied to projects before the award of support. There are two main types of criteria for consideration: -

1. Eligibility criteria for assessing the admissibility of applications under the LDS priorities outlined in the Action Plan.
2. Selection criteria for the qualitative (and quantitative) assessment and ranking of the quality and merit of applications.

The eligibility criterion includes: -

- All projects must meet programme-level eligibility criteria to be admissible for a further qualitative assessment related to the eligibility of activities, beneficiaries and expenditures as set out in the Operating Rules and relevant regulations and the Tipperary scoring matrix including Social Inclusion and Environmental weighting. The implementing partner generally assesses these criteria through a technical assessment; no threshold values are applied.
- Programme-specific eligibility criteria will be associated with the targeting of the strategy in terms of area, beneficiaries and/or types of activity supported. There will be a direct link to the LDS to ensure the consistency of project activity, assessment of strategic fit and contribution of project proposals to the objectives of the LDS. These criteria will examine the following: -
 - The extent to which the project is compatible with and contributes to achieving the LDS objectives and actions.
 - The innovative nature of the project in a local context.
 - The extent to which the project responds to identified needs and is supported by evidence of future demand.
 - An assessment of any possible displacement of existing activities.

The objective of designing these LDS-specific selection criteria is to optimise the decision-making process, assisting the LAG in selecting and awarding appropriate funding to those projects which can contribute most to the achievement of the LDS in an impartial, consistent, and transparent manner.

To guarantee accountability and transparency, each committee operates a Conflict-of-Interest Policy, and any conflicted member absents themselves from the meeting. LAG meeting minutes are published on the Tipperary County Council website, including the rationale for the approval of projects, i.e., the scoring of the Evaluation Committee across the assessment criteria.

Regarding the decision-making process employed by the LAG, there is complete agreement that it must be adequately recorded, providing auditable evidence justifying the decision. This will show that project selection criteria have been used fairly, objectively, robustly, repeatably, and consistently.

By designing the selection criteria into the whole LDS delivery process and linking this to the objectives and indicators broken down under the Local Objectives and associated Strategic Actions, the LAG also can monitor the progress of individual projects and their contribution to the LDS is ultimately strengthened. In addition, this will promote coherent links between the core goals

of the LDS and the actual projects undertaken, enhancing the measurability of LEADER's added value. Finally, this will provide a basis for the ongoing review of the progress of the LDS and, if required, may justify the modification of the criteria to address evolving needs.

1.9 Relevant Experience

1.9.1 LAG: Technical Capacity

The LAG consists of public and private sector partners representing Co. Tipperary. The LAG comprises nineteen members: ten representing the private sector and nine from the public sector. LAG members are selected based on their technical capacity and experience within their sector and geographic area.

The LAG and Implementing Partners have a strong track record of engagement with local communities, supporting capacity building, establishing social enterprises, history of partnership with communities through supported TUS, CE, RSS schemes, networks and interagency development, provision of grant schemes and addressing local need based on the CLLD approach.

The LAG and Implementing Partners, working in partnership, have consistently achieved and discharged the full and additional allocations available under the LEADER Programme funds to resource the animation and development of projects/enterprises, i.e. over €12 million, which includes additional core funds (€500,000 as one of the top ten performing LAGs in the country) and drawdown in the region of €1.8 million of cooperation and food project budgets.

The LAG Partnership and LCDC are responsible for the governance of programmes like *Healthy Ireland* since 2017, *Sláintecare Healthy Communities* from 2022, annual DRCD Community Enhancement Schemes, oversight, governance, and delivery of the SICAP Programme. Each partner on the LAG, whether from State agency or PPN sectoral representation, has experience of project management and delivery of successful projects in their area of expertise.

1.9.2 NTDC Implementing Partner: Technical Capacity

North Tipperary Development Company (NTDC) is a not-for-profit, community focused local development organisation, providing a wide range of services in North Tipperary. The company is governed by a voluntary Board of Directors, which comprises representatives of the community and voluntary sector, social partners, and public and elected representatives. North Tipperary Development Company operates within the Nenagh and Thurles Municipal District Areas. Through various programmes the North Tipperary Development Company promote social inclusion and economic and environmental sustainability in Tipperary, including: -

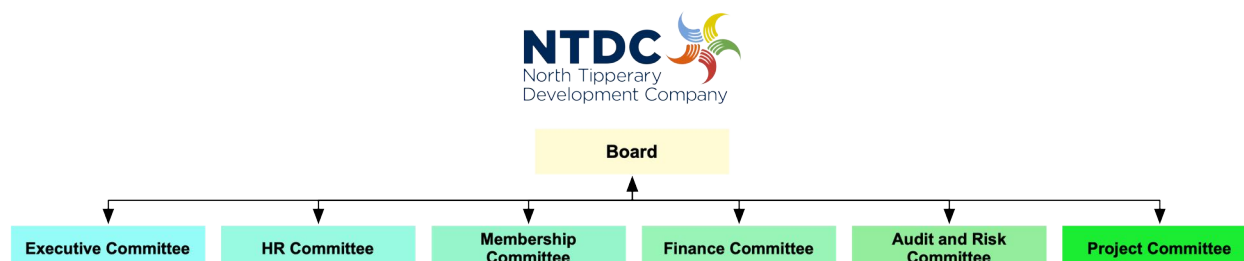
- ASCEND Domestic Abuse Service – Tusla
- Community Car Initiative
- Community Childcare - DCEDIY
- Community Employment - DSP
- Energy Projects
- Family Support Programmes - Tusla
- LAES - DSP
- Rural Development Programme (LEADER) - DRCD
- Rural Social Scheme - DSP
- Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) - DRCD
- Traveller Programme - HSE
- Tús Programme – DSP
- UBU Your Place Your Space– DCYA
- Ukrainian Refugee Support Programme

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

- Youth Counselling – DRCD
- Youth Diversion Programme - DJE
- Outdoor Recreation Walks Scheme (ORIS) – DRCD

NTDC holds charitable status (CHY 17969), with registered charity number 20067946. NTDC is registered in Ireland as a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG), with registered number 451166.

Figure 4 – NTDC Governance Structure



1.9.3 STDC Implementing Partner: Technical Capacity

South Tipperary Development CLG (STDC) (449731) is a community-led Local Development Company. It is a not-for-profit registered charity (18085). It is overseen by a voluntary board of directors. Its mission is to facilitate and resource community led local development that addresses social, economic and environmental challenges for the benefit of all living in South Tipperary.

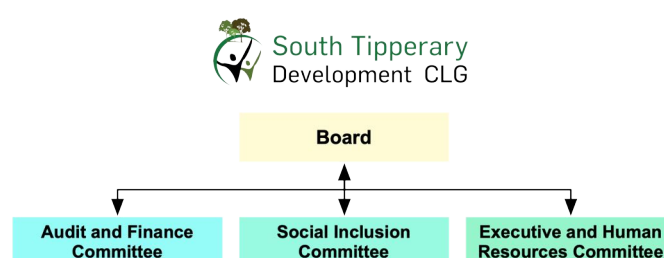
STDC operates within the Carrick-on-Suir Municipal District, the Tipperary, Cahir, Cashel Municipal District, and the Clonmel Borough District of Co. Tipperary

Clients of STDC include communities, families, individuals and businesses in South Tipperary. STDC has successfully managed, coordinated and implemented a wide range of State and European projects and programmes over the past number of years.

Programmes delivered by STDC

- Community After School Service
- Community Car Initiative
- Community Pre School Service
- Local Area Employment Services (LAES)
- Rural Development (LEADER) Programme
- Rural Recreation and Walks Scheme
- Rural Social Scheme (RSS)
- Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP)
- Traveller Primary Health Care Project (TPHCP)
- Tús – Labour-Market Activation Programme
- Ukrainian Refugee Support Programme

Figure 5 – STDC Governance Structure



Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

STDC received in excess of €2.0m from public sources in 2022 to deliver the programmes outlined above. Funders included the Department of Rural and Community Development; Department of Social Protection; HSE; Tusla; Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. Funding for Rural Development (LEADER) Programme and SICAP comes through via Tipperary County Council.

1.9.4 Implementing Partner's Combined Technical Capacity

Area Based Approach to Rural and Community Development

Both Implementing Partners have formulated and implemented the area-based development approach in previous LEADER Programme iterations 2009-2014 and 2016-2020. In addition, the Implementing Partners staff members have been involved in the area-based development model through the LEADER Programme since 1993. Both Implementing Partners have developed and implemented the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme since 2009 and urban based strategies since the late 1990's through Community Partnerships and other programmes in Clonmel, Roscrea, Tipperary Town, Carrick-on-Suir and Nenagh.

Both Implementing Partners have developed and are implementing a countywide area-based strategy for the Local Area Employment Service (LAES).

Leveraging Match Funding

Collectively, the Implementing Partners have leveraged a total of €5.68m in 2022 from a variety of EU/national sources.

Programme Monitoring and Evaluation

Both Implementing Partners have extensive experience of qualitative, quantitative, and participatory monitoring and evaluation. This is demonstrated through regular monitoring and evaluation of all their programmes as per the relevant guidelines.

Risk Management Procedures

Each Implementing Partner has adopted a Risk Management Plan which includes evaluation of potential risk, impact of risk and steps to be taken in mitigation of risks. This is incorporated under the Governance, Operational, Financial, Compliance and Environment headings.

The Risk Management Plan is reviewed regularly by the respective Boards of the Implementing Partners.

Knowledge of Procurement Procedures

Both Implementing Partners' staff have received procurement training from external procurement specialists and attended DRCD Procurement Workshops in previous LEADER Programmes. Both Implementing Partners staff have advised promoters how to navigate the procurement process in line with DRCD guidelines since 2009 and to date there has been no procurement issue in relation to any files or promoters. In addition, the Financial Controllers in both organisations have experience of the procurement process.

1.9.5 Financial Partner: Technical Capacity

The Financial Partner has responsibility for the flow of funding under the LDS in terms of administration, animation activity, the issuing of payments to beneficiaries, and claim reimbursement of these payments from the Department on a prescribed basis.

Experience shows that Tipperary County Council has suitably trained and specialist staff in financial management and procurement that are available to provide the necessary expertise to

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

support the financial management of the LDS. In addition, sound financial controls and procedures are an integral part of Tipperary County Council operations, with the local authority subject to financial reporting requirements, many of which are statutory.

The Annual Budget schedules are prepared and presented to the elected members for approval at the Annual Statutory Budget meeting. The Annual Budget process and timetable are governed by legislation and circular, while the Annual Financial Statement (AFS) are prepared following the terms of the Local Government Act 2014 and the Accounting Code of Practice.

The Financial Partner operates formal financial controls (division of duties, security, the existence of an audit trail and provision of management information) to verify that activity occurs in accordance with the preordained plans, and said controls would also be applied to the financial management for the LDS, including: -

- Clearly defined roles and clarity regarding where responsibility rests concerning administrative checks, payment processing and final payment approvals. Oversight of the required administrative checks will be completed at Administrative Officer grade, while all payment approvals will be authorised at Director of Service level
- Accurate and timely information, with accounts based on full purchase order processing. The Financial Partner uses the Agresso Financial Management System to maintain control. All supplier payments must be appropriately authorised and paid on time, per prompt payment regulations. In addition, the Financial Partner operates a Central Invoice Processing Unit, which is responsible for matching invoices to approved purchase orders and ensuring tax and prompt payment compliance
- Tipperary County Council will provide a job code/cost centre for each thematic area and use additional opcodes and sub-analysis for subtheme and Implementing Partner activity
- Tipperary County Council will provide unique job codes for each Implementing Partners administration budgets to ensure efficient monitoring and reconciliation with the LDS system
- Use of regular monitoring systems to ensure the detection of any variances at an early stage
- Financial reporting at the appropriate levels of detail is available for each responsibility level within the organisation
- Local Government Audit will verify that expenditure has been incurred on approved activity following statutory requirements

1.9.6 Public Procurement

All procurement procedures will conform with Circular No: 02-2023 *Revised National Procurement Thresholds and Procurement Requirements to Assist Assessment of Reasonableness of Cost by the Department* (LEADER Policy and Operations Unit DCRD, 28th June 2023), and the requirements of the Operating Rules (to be published).

1.9.7 Monitoring and Evaluation

The LAG will implement a monitoring and evaluation process that complies with the requirements of the Operating Rules (yet to be published). The CAP Strategic Plan (CSP) Regulation 2021/2115 is the key governing regulation for the programme setting out provisions relating to monitoring, reporting and evaluation requirements.

The LAG will receive a monthly financial report on the implementation of the Strategy, as well the annual report process for the Department. The LAG will undertake a midterm review of the actions and budgets and agree any changes which may be required to achieve the aims of the strategy a

The indicators and outputs identified in the Action Plan will be integrated with the LEADER monitoring framework. Further, the Financial Plan will record and regularly update all the budgetary-related monitoring and evaluation indicators.

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

Subject to the requirements of the Operating Rules, it is anticipated that the set of common performance indicators (as contained in Annex I of the CSP Regulation) will include: -

- Output indicators, which will be used for monitoring the implementation of the LDS.
- Result indicators, which will be used to monitor the LAGs progress towards its agreed Action Plan targets.

The result indicators that are likely to be applicable to the LEADER 2023-2027 Programme includes the following: -

- Growth and jobs in rural areas: measured by the new jobs supported.
- LEADER coverage: the extent of the rural population covered by the local development actions.
- Developing the rural economy: the number of rural businesses, including bio-economy businesses, developed with Programme support.
- Smart transition of the rural economy: the number of supported smart-village initiatives.
- Connecting rural communities: the proportion of the rural population benefitting from improved access to services and infrastructure through LEADER support.
- Promoting social inclusion: the number of persons covered by supported social inclusion projects.

1.10 Summary

The tripartite collaboration between the Local Action Group, the Implementing Partners, and the Financial Partner has for almost ten years successfully invested over €12 million in LEADER Programme funds to resource the animation and development of projects/ enterprises (including receiving an additional €500,000 as a top performing LAG in the country).

This experience serves as the bedrock to facilitate the community and private sectors to provide integrated production and delivery of local, community-based goods and services.

The LAG ensures appropriate representation balanced in favour of the private sector and a commitment to positive gender and new community representation. The implementing partners share almost 90 years of LEADER Programme experience and have supported multiple and varied projects across a range of sectors for the benefit of rural society and economy. Significant experience in facilitating environmental projects adds capacity in the renewed focus on this theme in the current round of funding.

As a statutory body with multi-layered robust reporting, procurement and accountability practices the financial partner, on behalf of the LAG, is well-placed to oversee appropriate disbursement of programme funds in partnership with the implementing partners. In terms of risk management, the governance structures and processes mitigate against risk with rigorous monitoring and evaluation process that will conform to Operating Rules (once published).

There is a formal partnership agreement, encompassing a Service Level Agreement that will underpin the delivery of the Programme.

2 LDS Area Profile

Co. Tipperary comprises 175 Electoral Divisions (EDs). EDs are the smallest legally defined administrative areas in the State, and all are mapped in Appendix 1.

The LDS has been prepared at a time when the full Census of Population 2022 data was unavailable. In certain circumstances it has been possible to reference the 2022 Provisional data, and in others, the Summary data has been referenced. It is the LAGs intention to review the Area Profile once the full 2022 data set is published.

The LDS covers all of Co. Tipperary. The CSO Census 2016 records the population of Co. Tipperary as 159,553 persons. The summary Census of Population 2022 confirms that the population of Co. Tipperary was 167,895, representing an increase of 5.2 per cent over the intercensal period. By comparison, the State returned a population increase of 7.6 per cent over the same period.

In 2016, the Key Regional Towns in Co. Tipperary by population were Clonmel (17,140), Nenagh (8,917) and Thurles (7,940). These function as drivers of growth and balanced regional development.

2.1 Headlines

- Co. Tipperary has a total population of 167,895 (Census of Population 2022). It is the eleventh-most populous local authority in the State. The county's population grew by 5.2 per cent between 2016 and 2022, which is 2.4 percentage points lower than the rate for the State.
- The county is the 6th largest in Ireland, with a land mass of 4,303 km². The county's population density in 2022 was 39 persons per km², compared to the State at 71.47 persons per km².
- The five Municipal Districts in the county by population in 2016 were as follows: Nenagh (38,412), Clonmel (36,790), Thurles (35,292), Tipperary-Cahir-Cashel (27,382), and Carrick-on-Suir (21,677).
- In 2016, the Key Towns by population were Clonmel (17,140), Nenagh (8,917) and Thurles (7,940). The District Towns were Carrick-on-Suir (5,771), Roscrea (5,446), Tipperary Town (4,979), Cashel (4,422), Cahir (3,593), and Templemore (1,939).
- Population growth between 2016 and 2022 has generally occurred around existing population centres. The highest rate of change (20.25 per cent) occurred in Terryglass, north of Nenagh town.
- Population decline between 2016 and 2022 was at its highest in Templederry (-20.57 per cent), between Nenagh and Thurles.
- Many parts of Co. Tipperary continue to have traditional economic bases. The socio-economic groups of employers and managers, higher and lower professionals, were all less well represented in the county than in the State. In 2016, there were 4.85 per cent more farmers in the county than in the State. In Bourney West, more than 36 per cent of the population were farmers.
- In 2016, Co. Tipperary lagged behind the State by 7.2 percentage points in terms of the population that had attained an ordinary bachelor degree, national diploma or higher level of education.
- An analysis of the CSO Travel to Work database from Census 2016 (POWSCAR) reveals that 89,603 commuter journeys were being undertaken to places of work, school, or college in Co. Tipperary. Of this total, 66 (0.07 per cent) were to locations overseas, and 58,770 (65.59 per cent) were within the county.

- IDA Ireland reports that the county has a strong profile in the life sciences sector and a developing portfolio of financial services companies, with Fiserv in Nenagh and Waystone in Cashel.
- Farming in conjunction with other gainful activities and seasonal employment are significant in many parts of rural Co. Tipperary.
- As elsewhere, tourism is a significant driver for the development of rural Co. Tipperary. *Tipperary Transforming – the Tourism Product Development Plan 2020-2030* foresees an increase by 50 per cent of the people employed in tourism to service a 100 per cent growth in bednights and a 75 per cent growth in international visitors. Achieving these targets will require an investment of €150 million in the sector.
- Co. Tipperary has a very significant stock of natural assets that are of national and European significance, and the county has an extensive network of Natura 2000 sites, including twenty-one Special Areas of Conservation, eleven Natural Heritage Areas, and four Special Protection Areas.

2.2 Demographic Indicators

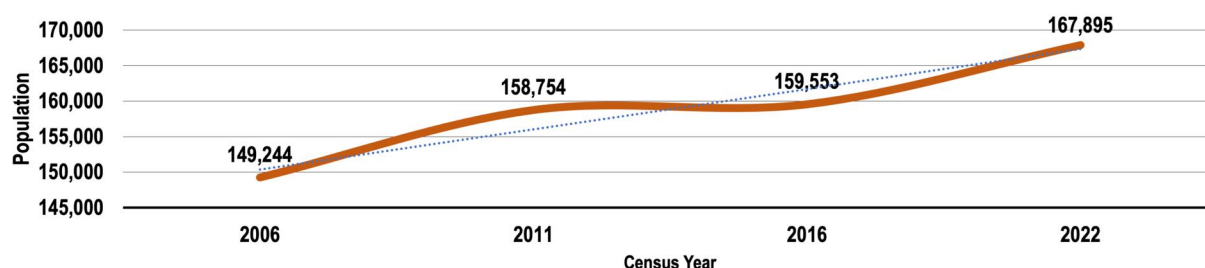
The Co. Tipperary LDS area encompasses the entire county. Co. Tipperary is the eleventh-most populous county in the State. The 2022 Census of Population (Summary Results) confirms that the county has a total population of 167,895, corresponding to 3.2 per cent of the State's total population.

Of the five Municipal Districts in the county by population in 2016, Nenagh represented 24.07 per cent of the county population, Clonmel represented 23.06, Thurles represented 22.12, Tipperary-Cahir-Cashel represented 17.16, and Carrick-on-Suir represented 13.59 per cent.

2.2.1 Population Change

According to the 2022 Census, over the six years to 2022, Co. Tipperary experienced a population growth of 5.2 per cent. Thus, the county's population grew less quickly than the State's (7.6 per cent). Co. Tipperary experienced the third-lowest level of population growth.

Figure 6 - Population Trend 2006-2022



When population change (2016-2022 provisional) is mapped at ED-level, it is evident that 48.57 per cent of the 175 EDs experienced growth of over 5.2 per cent. Some areas emerge as having significantly higher levels of growth (over 13 per cent), and these include Ardmayle (13.49) and Ballykisteen (14.49) in South Tipperary, and Mertonhall (13.13), Borrisokane (13.76), Borrisnoe (13.77), and Terryglass (16.84) in North Tipperary.

According to the 2022 Preliminary Census data, the population of North Tipperary increased by 4,165 (5.84 per cent) in the inter-censal period from 2016, whilst South Tipperary increased by 3,943 (4.47 per cent).

Six EDs returned a population decline exceeding six per cent in the inter-censal period 2016-22. In absolute terms, the EDs that returned the greatest loss of population during the inter-censal

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

period were Mortlestown, dropping from 1,777 in 2016 to 1,707 in 2022 (provisional), and Littleton, which dropped from 1,102 to 1,038 (provisional) over the period.

Table 1 – EDs with Population Decline >10% 2016-22

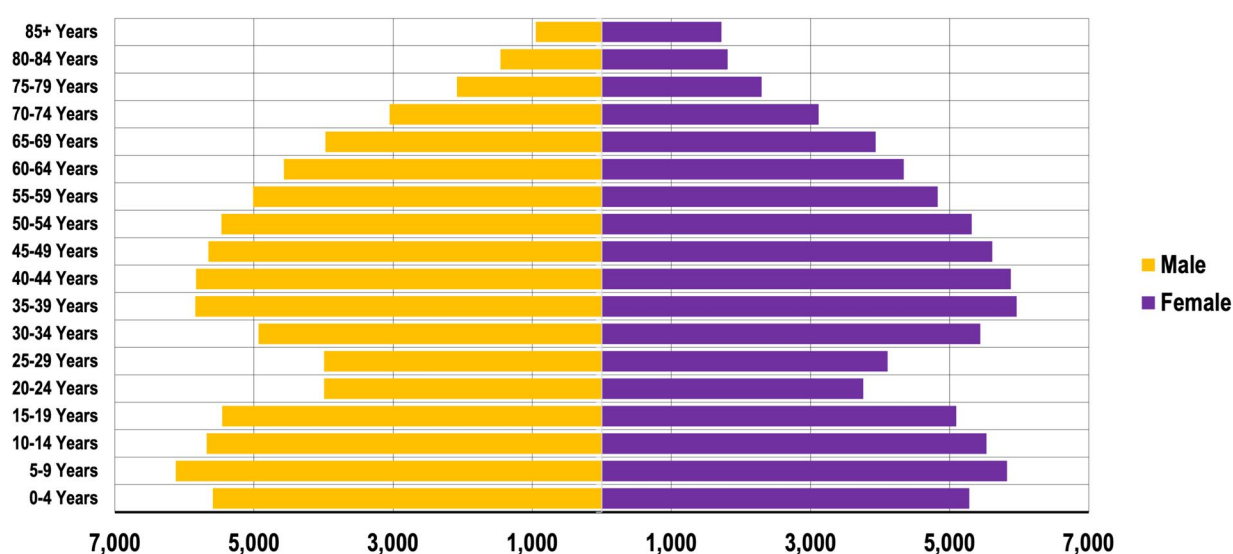
ED Name	Population 2016	Provisional Population 2022	Population Change	% Change 2016-2022
Templeberry	123	112	-11	-9.82
Ballymurreen	271	248	-23	-9.27
Ballyphilip	448	415	-33	-7.95
Thomastown	403	378	-25	-6.61
Twomileborris	877	826	-51	-6.17
Littleton	1,102	1,038	-64	-6.17

ESRI projections (as produced for DHLGH Housing Need and Demand Assessments) indicate that Co. Tipperary will experience population growth of 23,100 between 2016 and 2040 (using the Baseline scenario). As nationally, Co. Tipperary's population is projected to age over the coming twenty years and beyond. The proportion of the population aged 50+ is projected to increase significantly. At the same time, there is expected to be a decline, in both absolute and relative terms, in the population aged 24 to 40, over the next ten years, although this is expected to recover in the 2030s.

2.2.2 Age Profile

There are notable sub-county level patterns in respect of the distribution of the population, by age, across Co. Tipperary. The age profile is youngest in urban and peri-urban settings, while more peripheral parts of the county tend to have an older age profile. In 2016, the population age profile exhibited a reduction in young people aged 20-29. This is primarily accounted for by migration away from rural areas to attend third-level educational institutions.

Figure 7 – Population Age Profile 2016



The CSO defines dependents as people outside the normal working age of 15-64. Dependency ratios are used to give a useful indication of the age structure of a population, with young (0-14) and old (65+) shown as a percentage of the working-age population (15-64).

In 2016, 21.33 per cent (34,035) of the population of Co. Tipperary was under the age of fifteen. This was equivalent to 21.14 per cent in the State. In 2016, 15.29 per cent (24,398) of the population was sixty-five years old and older. This is compared to 13.39 per cent in the State.

The young dependency ratio is the number of young people aged 0-14 as a percentage of the working-age population. In 2016, the young dependency ratio for the Co. Tipperary was 33.7. The old-age dependency ratio for Co. Tipperary in 2016 was 24.1. The comparative young dependency ratio for the State in 2016 was 32.28, and the old age dependency ratio was 20.45.

In 2016, Co. Tipperary had a relatively older population than that of the State.

2.3 Social Indicators

2.3.1 Headlines

- Just over ten per cent of Co. Tipperary's resident population has a nationality other than Irish, compared to just under thirteen per cent in the State.
- In 2016, there were over 1,200 Irish Travellers resident in the county.
- Socio-economic deprivation is most prevalent in certain local authority housing estates in the larger settlements and peripheral rural communities.

2.3.2 Ethnicity

Co. Tipperary's population has become increasingly diverse in nationality, ethnicity, and language over recent decades; however, the county lags behind the State.

The 2016 Census of Population returns indicate that 10.02 per cent of residents in Co. Tipperary, had a nationality other than Irish compared to 12.95 per cent in the State. In proportional terms, fifteen per cent of EDs exceeded ten per cent of their nationality being other than Irish. The EDs with the highest proportions included Carrick-on-Suir Urban (13.92), Tipperary East Urban (14.52), Tipperary West Urban (14.89), Roscrea (16.25), Clonmel East Urban (18.57), Cashel Urban (19.28), Nenagh West Urban (20.38), and Nenagh East Urban (21.41). Mortlestown ED returned the highest proportion of the non-Irish population at 29.92 per cent.

The Tipperary LCDC publication *'Diverse Tipperary: An Integration Strategy - Embracing Cultures and Differences 2023-2025'* (2023) notes that the migrant population is particularly high in some towns. Cahir has a migrant population of 29.81 per cent, and Nenagh and Cashel have over 20 per cent of the population coming from non-Irish communities. In contrast, Fethard, Newport and Templemore all have migrant populations of less than 10 per cent.

Traveller Community

In 2016, there were 1,228 Irish Travellers resident in the county. This was just under four per cent of the national population of the Irish Traveller community. The proportion of Irish Travellers in the county was 0.78 per cent of the total population, compared to 0.66 per cent in the State. The Traveller population is concentrated in specific settlements rather than being dispersed across the county. Fifty-eight per cent of EDs reported no members of the Irish Traveller community in their population in 2016. Among the settlements with the highest proportions of Travellers in their resident population were New Birmingham (3.5), Knockgraffon (3.61), Cashel Rural (4.47), Greystown (6.84) and Littleton (7.38). It is noted that membership of the Traveller community is generally underreported in census returns.

Ukrainian Community

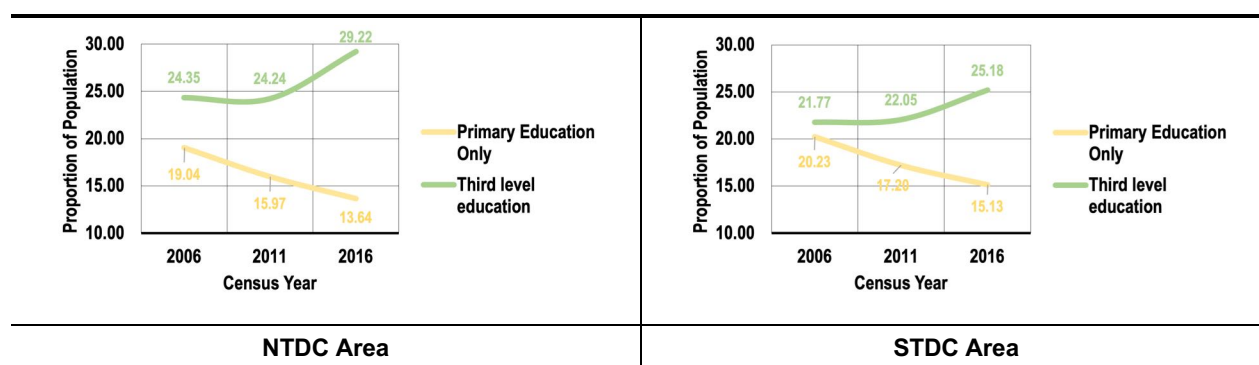
The CSO reports that on 13th February 2023, the Ukrainian refugees in Co. Tipperary stood at 1,513 (2.13 per cent of those in the State). Almost thirty per cent of those arriving from Ukraine reside in the Cashel-Tipperary Local Electoral Area, with the next highest proportions being in the Clonmel and Carrick-on-Suir Local Electoral Areas. These figures are liable to change as geopolitical events unfold.

2.3.3 Education

- In 2016, 34.8 per cent of Co. Tipperary's resident population had a third-level qualification.
- High levels of educational attainment correlate with proximity to established settlements, while low levels are more prevalent in peripheral parts of the county.

Low levels of educational attainment are associated with an older age profile, rurality, socio-economic deprivation, gender (males) and membership of the Travelling community. The lack of educational attainment is closely linked to the issue of poverty.

Figure 8 – Educational Attainment 2006-2016



In 2016, 11.72 per cent of the population of Co. Tipperary aged 15 yrs or over did not progress beyond lower-secondary-level education compared to 10.79 per cent in the State. Just under fifty per cent of EDs returned more than 11.72 per cent of their population that did not progress beyond primary-level education. Of these, just under 53 per cent were in South Tipperary. The EDs with the highest proportions of people who did not progress beyond primary-level education were in Clonmel West Urban (19.52), Borrisnoe (19.74), Tipperary East Urban (20.02), Rathnaveoge (20.63), Farranrory (22.06), and Templederry (22.22). It should be noted that figures may be skewed due to the locations of nursing homes and other long-stay institutional facilities.

In 2016, the proportion of the NTDC area population with only primary education was 13.64, and in the STDC area was 15.31.

The proportion of the population in the NTDC area with third-level education in 2016 was 29.22; in the STDC area, it was 25.18. The proportion of the population living in the NTDC area in 2016 that had attained third-level education was four percentage points higher than in the STDC area. The EDs where attainment was above 40 were Nenagh Rural (40.14), Greenhall/Lackagh (42.02), Monsea (43.15), Derrycastle (44.77), Killoscully (46.53) and Ballina (49.82).

Co. Tipperary had proportionately more people with an advanced certificate and had completed an apprenticeship (6.9 per cent) than was the case in 2016 in Ireland as a whole (5.89 per cent).

Targeting Educational Disadvantage

Of the 160 primary schools in Co. Tipperary, forty-five (28.1 per cent) have *Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools* (DEIS) status. DEIS is a support programme funded by the Department of Education that offers school-based opportunities for those young people in communities at risk of disadvantage and social exclusion.

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

Of the DEIS Primary Schools, twenty-five (55 per cent) are designated rural. Additionally, there are thirty-one Post-Primary Schools in Co. Tipperary, ten (32.2 per cent) of which have DEIS designation.

Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

The Tipperary Education and Training Board report '*Exploring the Needs of Young People in Co. Tipperary who are Not in Education, Employment or Training*' (May 2021) notes that young people aged 16 to 24yrs made up 10 per cent (16,010) of the total population. Of these, almost half (47.7 per cent) lived in just twenty-three (13.1 per cent) of the 175 EDs that make up the county. The report projects that the largest increase in the population of 16 to 24yr olds is indicated for the west of the county in the Ballina, Newport, and Castletown EDs, showing a potential increase of 347 (+52 per cent) young people aged 16-24yrs in that area. The report concludes that this will likely affect general youth service provision.

The report uses several data sources to estimate the scale of the NEETs population in the county based on 2019-2020 enrolments: -

- 9.1 per cent of young people in Co. Tipperary do not complete to Leaving Certificate (1,254)
- 1.8 per cent of young people in Co. Tipperary do not complete to Junior Certificate Level (248)
- 2.3 per cent (317) of young people in Co. Tipperary enrolled in 2010/11 did not continue at State-funded second level education the following year. Of these, 6.6 per cent could be classified as NEETs (21)
- 8.4 per cent of all Leaving Certificate sits in 2010/11 in Co. Tipperary progressed to being classified as NEET (170)
- 2.74 per cent of 15 to 19yr olds achieved a level of 2016 education Junior Certificate or lower (290)
- 6.1 per cent of 20 to 24yr olds achieved a level of education Junior Certificate or lower (763).
- Twenty per cent of students who sat the Leaving Certificate in Co. Tipperary in 2019 did not progress to 3rd Level University or Institutes of Technology (399)
- 3.2 per cent of 15 to 19yr olds were categorised as unemployed in 2016 (358)
- 18.2 per cent of 20 to 24yr olds were categorised in 2016 as unemployed (1,974)
- 2.8 per cent of 15 to 24yr olds were additionally not engaged in education, training, or employment due to personal circumstances (609)
- In December 2020, approximately 5.8 per cent of all 18 to 24yr olds (projected 14,928) were on the Live Register (868)

The report concludes that concerning 16 to 18 yr olds: -

1. More young people are likely to leave school early from DEIS schools. Progressions from DEIS schools to third-level institutions and ITs are likely to be lower than those from non-DEIS schools; therefore, future initiatives must proactively link with these DEIS schools and identify other schools with low progressions rates.
2. NEET supports need to be considered for areas where DEIS schools are located. Outcomes for young people from more disadvantaged areas are poorer than those in more affluent areas. Initiatives must carefully examine deprivation scores for small areas to pinpoint potential locations for services.

2.3.4 Pobal HP Deprivation Index

The Pobal HP Index of Affluence and Deprivation computes data in respect of several socio-economic variables in a single scale. Thus, it provides a clear and useful assessment that can be applied at all geographical tiers from the small area (SA) upwards. The area is scored based on a national average of zero and ranges from approximately -35 (being the most disadvantaged) to +35 (being the most affluent).

Table 2 – HP Deprivation Labels

Relative Index Score	Label
Over 30	Extremely Affluent
20 to 30	Very Affluent
10 to 20	Affluent
0 to 10	Marginally Above Average
0 to -10	Marginally Below Average
-10 to -20	Disadvantaged
-20 to -30	Very Disadvantaged
Below -30	Extremely Disadvantaged

Disadvantaged Areas

In 2016, Co. Tipperary returned an HP Deprivation Score of -3.39 with a '*Marginally Below Average*' classification. Eleven EDs with a total population of 19,543 were classified as '*Disadvantaged*'. Of these, Tipperary East Urban (-18.26), Carrick-on-Suir Urban (-14.28), and Clonmel West Urban (-14.02) returned an HP Deprivation Score exceeding -14.0.

Ninety-nine EDs (56 per cent) showed a disimprovement in their Deprivation Scores between 2011 and 2016. The greatest disimprovement was recorded in Templederry (4.83), Rathnaveoge (4.68), and Ballylusky (4.07).

Disadvantaged and Very Disadvantaged Areas

Pockets of disadvantage revealed across Co. Tipperary are concealed at the ED level. These pockets are mapped in Appendix Map 7 at the CSO Small Area Population Statistics level.

In 2016, there were twenty-one SAPS areas categorised as *Very Disadvantaged*. These accounted for a population of 12,160 and were located within the EDs of Tipperary West Urban Clonmel West Urban, Kilcommon, Carrick-on-Suir Urban, Thurles Urban, and Roscrea. The former RAPID (Revitalising Areas through Planning, Investment and Development) Programme designation applied to parts of Clonmel (three distinct neighbourhoods - Wilderness Grove/Carrigeen, Elm Park and Heywood Close/Cooleens Close), Carrick-on-Suir, and Tipperary Town.

Table 3 – *Very Disadvantaged* SAPS 2016

Small Area ID	With ED	Total Population 2016	Deprivation Score 2016
217041018	Carrick-on-Suir Urban	191	-25.08
217041001		126	-23.54
217041008		291	-22.22
217041013		360	-21.43
217041004		183	-20.35
217045005	Cashel Rural	172	-25.35
217056008	Clonmel West Urban	223	-25.48
217056006		230	-23.58
217121004	Littleton	279	-28.50

/continued

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

/continued

Small Area ID	With ED	Total Population 2016	Deprivation Score 2016
217136019	Nenagh West Urban	195	-25.00
217152019	Roscrea	218	-23.14
217152010		211	-23.05
217152015		247	-22.36
217152018		275	-21.08
217162017	Thurles Urban	320	-20.91
217164008	Tipperary East Urban	267	-26.39
217164006		285	-23.96
217164004		160	-23.95
217164007		306	-22.74
217164011		155	-21.18
217164005		187	-20.52
Total Population		4.881	

A further 24,764 people lived in forty-three SAPS areas categorised as *Disadvantaged*.

2.3.5 Urban Rural Classification

The CSO report '*Urban and Rural Life in Ireland 2019*' uses a six-way urban/rural classification to examine the social and economic characteristics of life in Ireland. Themes such as income, housing, health, education, and commuting patterns are explored.

According to the Index, approximately half of Co. Tipperary's resident population lives in '*rural areas with moderate urban influence*'. This category includes persons who reside in areas of open countryside and settlements with under 1,500 persons. Approximately twenty per cent of the population live in '*highly rural and remote areas*'.

2.3.6 Health and Disability

Headlines

- Relative to Ireland, Co. Tipperary had proportionately more persons with a disability; however, it also had fewer people whose self-declared health status was either bad or very bad.
- In 2022, 83 per cent of the population of Co. Tipperary stated that their health was good or very good compared with 87 per cent in 2016. This is a similar trend to the national figures, which also showed a four per cent decrease in the good/very good categories, from 87 per cent to 83 per cent.
- Within the county, the proportion of persons with a disability is highest in areas with an older age profile, most notably in rural locations.
- Poor health outcomes are also associated with age, as well as with socio-economic deprivation.

Disability

Just under fifteen per cent (14.79 per cent) of Co. Tipperary's population has a self-declared disability. This proportion is above the State equivalent (13.51 per cent). This variable correlates strongly with age; having a disability is associated with ageing. Thus, across Co. Tipperary, the highest proportions of persons with a disability are in locations with older age profiles. Six EDs returned self-declared disability at greater than 20 per cent: Rathnaveoge (20.23), Fethard (21.53), Tipperary East Urban (21.67), Cashel Urban (21.81), Clonmel West Urban (24.66) and Templederry (25.20). Four of these EDs are in South Tipperary. Local values can be elevated due to the location of care facilities (e.g., nursing homes and community hospitals). In contrast,

the lowest values in the county are in North Tipperary: Kilbarron (8.94), Carrig (8.470), Riverstown (7.57), and Borrisnoe (7.56). The data reveal an overall inter-censal increase, in absolute and relative terms, in the number of persons with a disability. As the county's population ages, there is likely to be an associated increase in the number of persons with a disability.

Poor Health

Like disability, poor health is associated with an older age profile. It is, however, also associated with socio-economic deprivation. People in poor households and disadvantaged neighbourhoods are likelier to have poor health than the rest of the population. Across Co. Tipperary in 2016, 2,825 persons (2.33 per cent) declared their health either bad or very bad. This compares to 3.33 per cent in the State.

Living Healthily

Healthy Ireland - A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025 seeks to: -

1. Increase the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life
2. Reduce health inequalities
3. Protect the public from threats to health and wellbeing
4. Create an environment where every individual and sector of society can play their part in achieving a healthy Ireland

2.3.7 Housing

Headlines

- Housing occupancy and vacancy rates in Co. Tipperary are like those that pertain across the State as a whole.
- Housing vacancy is most prevalent in rural parts of the county, but vacancy is frequently associated with a range of familial and personal and ownership variables rather than with property speculation.
- In rural areas, housing is overwhelmingly detached, is generally older, and is more likely to be owned outright than in urban centres.
- Residential property inflation has been evident consistently over the past eight years, and the highest property prices are generally in areas within short- and medium-commuting distances of employment centres.
- Over recent years, there has been a predominantly upward trend in respect of the proportion of rental properties that are covered by the Housing Assistance Payment.

Housing Stock

In 2022 Co. Tipperary had a total housing stock of over 71,003 units, up from 69,106 in 2016. This represented an increase of 2.74 per cent, one of the lowest in the State.

At a State level, the Census vacancy rate has fallen to less than eight per cent in 2022, down from over nine per cent in 2016 and 12 per cent in 2011. In Co. Tipperary, it was nine per cent.

According to the CSO Census 2022, there are 6,390 vacant properties in Co. Tipperary (8.99 per cent of housing stock). The most common cause of housing vacancy in Co. Tipperary is that the vacant dwelling is a rental property (18.72 per cent). 18.15 per cent of vacancies were caused by the owner being deceased. Just under fifteen per cent (14.46) are undergoing renovation. Other reasons for housing vacancy include the house being an abandoned farmhouse (9.5), the owner being in a nursing home/hospital, or temporarily living with relatives (7.43). One in ten vacant properties is on the market, and this proportion is broadly in line with the picture across the State.

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

111 EDs (63 per cent) exceeded the national vacancy rate in the county in 2022. The EDs with a dwelling vacancy rate exceeding 20 per cent were Templederry (23.5), Cullen (22.0), Dolla (21.4) and Emly (20.6).

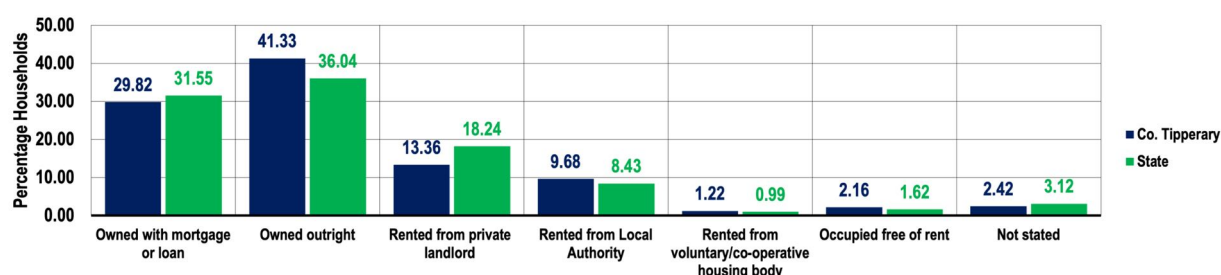
Housing Stock Age

In 2016, 68.24 per cent of the 59,071 households in Co. Tipperary lived in houses constructed before 2000, compared to 65.88 per cent in the State. 11.91 per cent of households lived in properties constructed before 1919, compared to 8.32 per cent in the State.

Housing Tenure

In 2016, 41.33 per cent of all households in the county lived in a property owned outright, compared to 36.04 per cent in the State. This indicates a relatively high proportion of mature households.

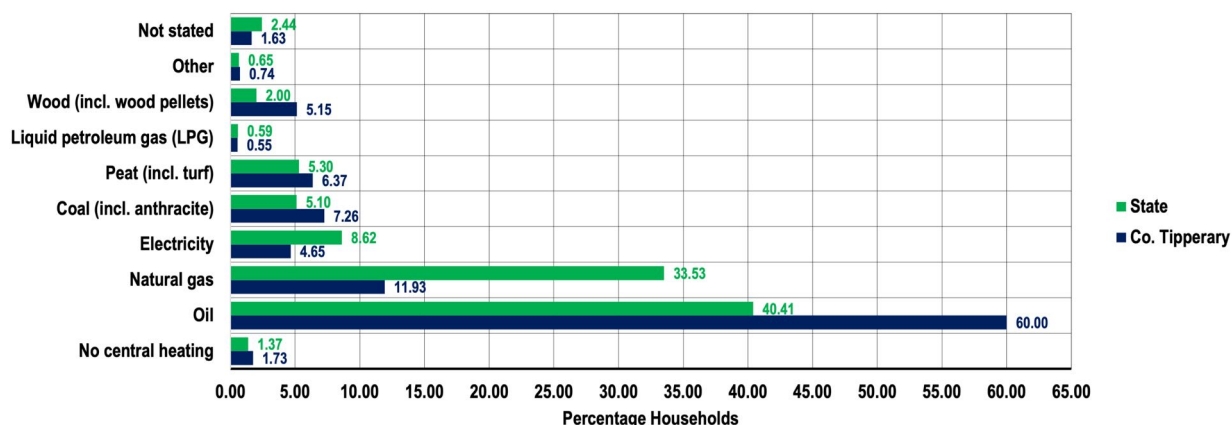
Figure 9 – Type of Tenure 2016



Home Heating Fuel

In 2016 60 per cent of households lived in homes heated by oil-fired central heating systems in the LDS area, compared to 40.4 per cent in the State. A further 7.26 per cent of households were heated by coal, and 6.37 per cent were heated by peat, compared to 5.1 per cent and 5.3 per cent, respectively, in the State. This indicates the maturity of the housing stock in 2016.

Figure 10 – Home Heating Fuel 2016



Housing Affordability

The CSO National Residential Property Price Index noted that in March 2023, the Property Price Index had increased by 3.9 per cent in the twelve months to March 2023. This was down from 5.1 per cent in the year to February 2023 and from the high values of 15.1 per cent in the twelve months to February and March 2022. In March 2023, the Mid-West (Clare, Limerick, Tipperary) saw a 2.8 per cent rise in the Property Price Index.

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

In Co. Tipperary, the National Residential Property Price Index reported that the median price for a residential property in March 2023 was €192,000. This price was considerably lower than in any of the surrounding counties.

1,121 households were recorded on the Co. Tipperary housing list in 2021, having been approved for social housing support. In 2016, the housing waiting list stood at 1,858, and the waiting list has fallen year on year since this date. Despite the positive change, nearly 218 households were reported as homeless as of April 2022.

At the end of Q1, 2022, there were 1,784 active Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) supported tenancies in Co. Tipperary. The county had an average HAP monthly landlord payment of €509.10.

2.4 Economic Indicators

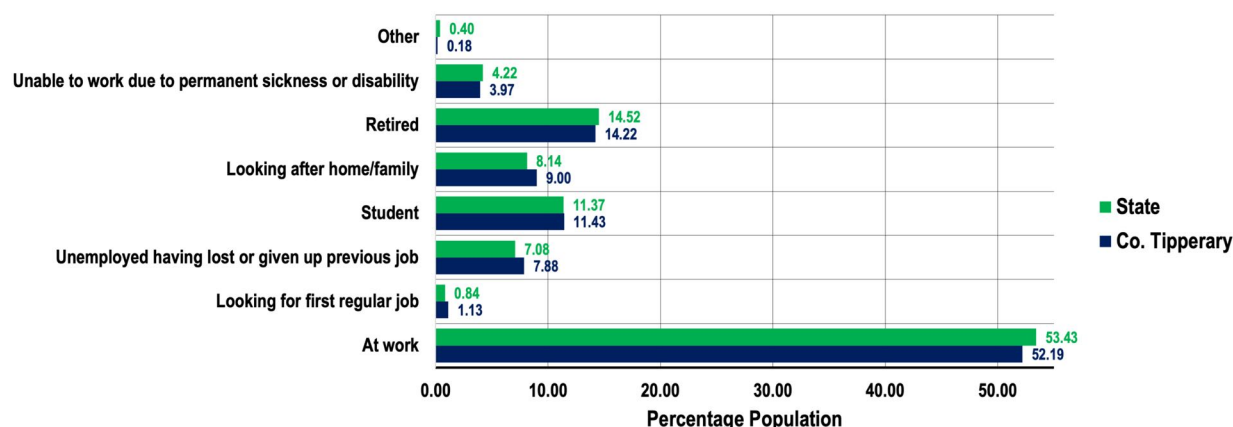
2.4.1 Headlines

- The CSO Business Demography Survey reports that Co. Tipperary had approximately 7,900 enterprises in its private business economy in 2020. This was an increase of 3.67 per cent from 7,620 in 2019.
- Some 93 per cent of the county's businesses employed fewer than ten people, slightly exceeding the state average of 92 per cent. Only nine enterprises employed more than 250 people.
- Businesses employing more than fifty people in Co. Tipperary totalled fifty-one in 2020. This represents an increase of 21 per cent since 2014.
- Over a quarter of the county's businesses (26 per cent) operated in the construction sector, which is proportionately larger than the State average (22 per cent).
- Over a fifth of businesses (22 per cent) are in the wholesale and retail sector, which is likewise larger than it is nationally (17 per cent).
- One-seventh of the county's businesses (13 per cent) involve professional, scientific, or technical activities, falling short of the State average (17 per cent) but notably growing by more than a sixth (16 per cent) since 2014.
- Other service and accommodation and food service activities account for eight per cent of the county's businesses. No other sector accounts for more than eight per cent of the county's private business.
- 6,740 people were employed in the county's agriculture, forestry, and fishing sector as of the 2016 census, falling by two per cent since 2011. Recent decades have seen growth in the number of large farms of more than fifty hectares and a reduction in the number of small farms. Forests account for twelve per cent of the county's useable land.
- The county attracted 470,000 visitors in 2019 (the last complete year unaffected by Covid-19), with a relatively even split between domestic and international tourists, albeit with the former slightly more prevalent, accounting for 59 per cent of this total.
- Co. Tipperary has a strong tourism industry supporting over 3,000 jobs across the county pre Covid-19. The focus since 2020 has been on sustaining the sector and supporting tourism providers to retain staff and address the challenges of rising operational costs.
- A pipeline of tourism product development projects is coming through, as referenced in the Tipperary Transforming Tourism Product Development Plan 2020 – 2030, which will help grow tourism across the county over the next decade.
- The county has a lower rate of PC access than the State as a whole (64.8 per cent compared to 70.8 per cent) as of the 2016 census. Co. Tipperary households also had a lower internet access rate than households in the State overall (74 per cent compared to 81 per cent).

2.4.2 Labour Force

In 2022 the CSO reported that, at the national level, there was a 3.4 per cent growth in the labour force compared to 2021. The employment rate for people aged between 15 and 64 was 73.2 per cent, compared to 72.2 per cent in 2021. The most significant increase in national employment was reported among 45 to 54 yr olds, with 29,200 people in that age bracket added to that workforce in 2022. However, there were 8,600 fewer people aged between 15 and 24 in employment than in 2021, leading to a youth unemployment rate of 12 per cent, down marginally from the 2021 figure of 12.1 per cent.

Figure 11 – Co. Tipperary by Principal Economic Status 2016



The figure above shows the population of Co. Tipperary aged 15 years and over by principal economic status in 2016 compared with that of the State. 1.24 per cent fewer in Co. Tipperary were at work than in the State.

The CSO Labour Force Survey Quarter 4 2022 records the Mid-East Region's largest percentage increase in employment at 5.7 per cent.

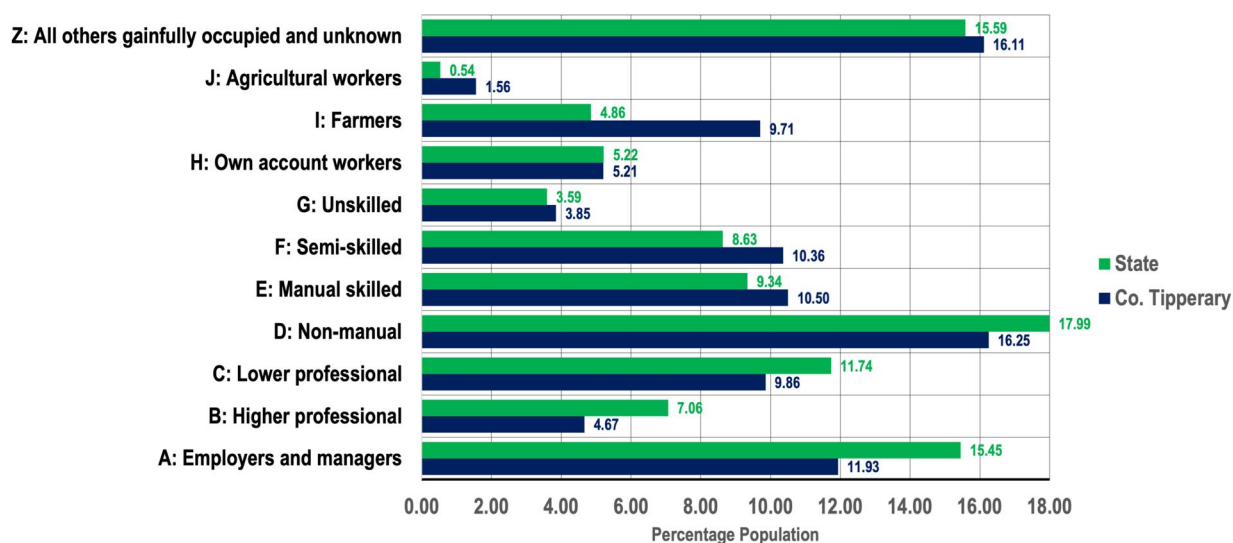
In 2016 there were 101,120 people aged between 15 and 64. These represented 63.37 per cent of the county's total population, and compares with 65.47 per cent in the State.

2.4.3 Socio-Economic Group

The CSO Census of Population 2016 classifies the population into one of ten socio-economic groups based on the level of skill and educational attainment of the occupation (of those at work, unemployed or retired), while all other persons are classified into the socio-economic group of the person in the family on whom they are deemed to be dependent.

In 2016 in Co. Tipperary, Socio-Economic Group I: Farmers represented 4.85 per cent more of the county population than in the State. Similarly, Socio-Economic Group J: Agricultural Workers represented 1.02 per cent more of the county population than in the State. Both figures reinforce the continuing significance of agriculture to the county's economy.

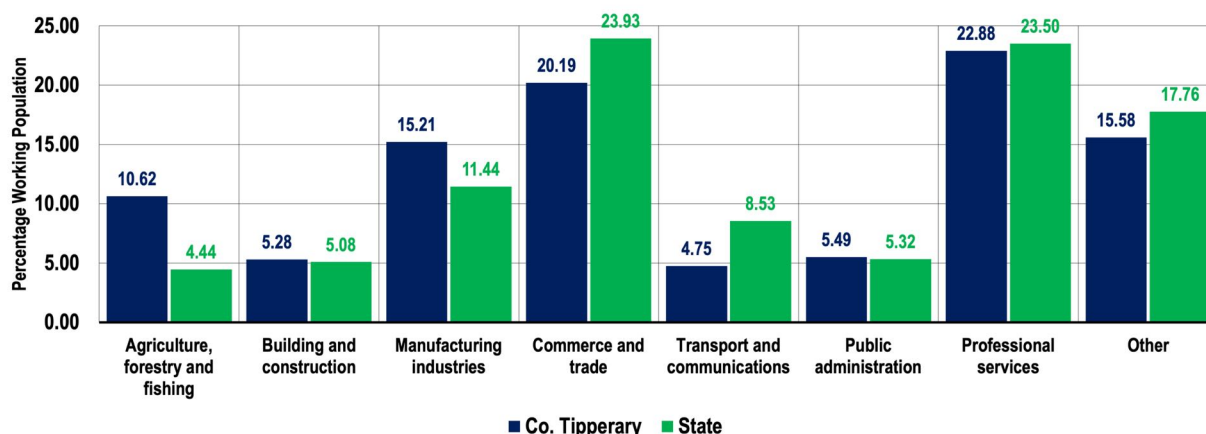
Figure 12 – Socio-Economic Group 2016



2.4.4 Persons at Work by Industry

The 2016 Census provides a profile of the population at work by industry.

Figure 13 - Persons at Work by Industry 2016



Consistent with the Socio-Economic Group profile for the county, Census 2016 recorded 10.62 per cent of the working population employed in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector. This was 6.18 per cent higher than was found in the State.

2.4.5 Economic Activity

The CSO Business Demography profile for Co. Tipperary 2020 records 7,900 enterprises in the county. Of these, 9.7 per cent (766) were in the tourism sector. 33,382 persons were engaged in all enterprises in 2020 in Co. Tipperary.

In 2019, two-thirds of all employment in Co Tipperary was in micro or small enterprises (all firms with fewer than 50 persons engaged). This was a larger share than the national average (46 per cent) and the average across the Mid-West region. Conversely, the percentage of persons engaged in Co Tipperary who worked in medium or large enterprises was smaller than the national average.

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

Key industrial sectors in the county include agri-food, bioeconomy industries, renewable energy, equine economy, pharmaceuticals, and tourism.

Table 4 – CSO Business Demography Co. Tipperary 2020

Co. Tipperary Business Activity	Active Enterprises	Employees
Business economy excluding activities of holding companies	7,900	28,430
Mining and quarrying	16	112
Manufacturing	612	8,360
Electricity, gas, steam, and air conditioning supply	22	27
Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	40	297
Construction	2,066	3,401
Wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	1,739	7,098
Transportation and storage	451	1,409
Accommodation and food service activities	650	2,641
Information and communication	216	449
Financial and insurance activities excluding activities of holding companies	102	397
Real estate activities	335	504
Professional, scientific, and technical activities	1,074	1,776
Administrative and support service activities	577	1,959
Education	499	2,296
ICT	184	377
Human Health and Social Work Activities	615	3,997
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	302	499
Other Service Activities	785	1,035

Agriculture Sector

The Teagasc Tipperary Advisory Region Strategic Plan 2015-2020 notes that the county is a renowned agricultural region with a large population involved in agricultural-related industries, significantly contributing to the national output. Dairying, drystock and tillage are the leading enterprises with significant activity in sheep, pigs, forestry, and alternative enterprises.

In the Advisory Region, the total number involved in farming as a percentage of the population was nineteen per cent (2015). Co. Tipperary is hugely dependent on agriculture, contributing approximately ten per cent of the national agricultural output. There were over 7,000 farmers in the region, with twenty-three per cent of farms involved in dairy production, seventy per cent in cattle production, and four per cent in tillage production. However, land available for developing tillage production is constrained by the level of dairying.

Regarding land type and soil fertility, Teagasc reports that the county is mainly good-quality limestone land interspersed with mountain ranges and rivers.

The Teagasc Tipperary Advisory Region Strategic Plan 2015-2020 notes that the average farm size was 41 hectares. This was higher than the national average of 32.7 hectares. Research confirms that for every hectare of land farmed in the Tipperary Coop catchment area, there was 0.6 hectare farmed away from the home farm. This indicates that there was plenty of room for collaboration between farmers to ensure greater access to land.

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

The CSO Census of Agriculture 2020 confirms that Co. Tipperary had a total herd of 192,100 dairy cows. The median standard value of farm output in 2020 in the county was €26,701, the fourth highest in the State.

The north of Co. Tipperary is in the Mid-West Region, and the south is in the South-East Region. In 2020 there were 18,669 farm holders in the Mid-West Region and 11,628 in the South-East Region. 48.5 per cent of the farms in the Mid-West Region had a succession plan in place in 2020, compared to 49.5 per cent in the South-East Region.

Tourism Sector

Fáilte Ireland's *Tourism Barometer Strategic Research and Insight May 2022* reports that visitor volumes have not reached pre-Covid-19 levels: '31 per cent of accommodation operators have more advance domestic bookings to date this year than normal, 30 per cent have the same level, and 39 per cent have fewer. Overseas tourism is slow to return: 60 per cent of accommodation operators are down on overseas bookings for this summer. Eighty-seven per cent of tourism businesses are finding it difficult to recruit staff. To address this situation, 71 per cent of those recruiting are increasing pay, 69 per cent are offering more flexible work patterns, and 64 per cent are offering more predictable work schedules'.

Fáilte Ireland reported that Irish Resident Nights in Co. Tipperary in 2019 was 557,000. In 2021 this declined by 59 per cent to 226,000. This rate of decline was the third largest (behind Co. Meath and Kilkenny) in the Southern and Eastern Region. The length of stay of Irish Resident Nights in Co. Tipperary in 2021 was 2.2 nights, the second lowest in the region behind Co. Meath at 1.5 nights.

Irish Resident Trips in Co. Tipperary in 2019 were reported by Fáilte Ireland as 276,000, dropping to 104,000 in 2021. In 2021 the Irish Resident Trips generated a spend of €16 million in Co. Tipperary, identical to Co. Kilkenny. This outcome was 60 per cent less than in 2019.

In 2017, Co. Tipperary attracted 192,000 international visitors, generating €88 million.

The county attracted 470,000 visitors in 2019 (the last complete year unaffected by Covid-19), with domestic visitors accounting for 59 per cent of the total.

Tipperary Transforming Tourism Product Development Plan 2020-2030 notes that the sector supported over 3,000 jobs across the county pre Covid-19. The focus since 2020 has been on sustaining the industry and supporting tourism providers to retain staff and address the challenges of rising operational costs. A pipeline of tourism product development projects is coming through, which will help grow tourism across the county over the next decade.

Equine Sector

Co. Tipperary is an established horse breeding, training, and racing centre. The county has numerous stud farms and equestrian facilities, housing some of the finest bloodlines and pedigrees in the world. The commitment to quality horse breeding has produced top-class racehorses, show jumpers, eventing horses, and other equine athletes.

The sector generates substantial employment opportunities and contributes significantly to the local economy. The industry supports a range of professions, including trainers, jockeys, grooms, veterinarians, farriers, and equine therapists, among others. The demand for equine-related services creates related employment, such as feed suppliers, tack shops, transport companies, and veterinary clinics. The county has renowned racetracks, including Thurles, Clonmel, and Tipperary. These tracks host regular race meetings, attracting national and international participants and contributing to the local economy through tourism, hospitality, and betting revenues. Beyond horse racing, the county hosts numerous Showjumping competitions, dressage championships, and equestrian festivals. Additionally, the county's extensive network of bridleways and trails attract equestrian tourists, generating revenue for rural businesses.

The scope of the sector extends to education and training. The county is home to reputable equestrian colleges and training centres offering a wide range of equine studies, horse care, riding instruction, and stable management courses. These facilities contribute to the industry's overall development by fostering a culture of innovation, research, and best practices.

Social Enterprise

The National Social Enterprise Policy for Ireland 2019-2022 defines a social enterprise as: -

- An enterprise whose objective is to achieve a social, societal, or environmental impact, rather than maximising profit for its owners or shareholders
- It pursues its objectives by trading on an ongoing basis through providing goods or services and reinvesting surpluses into achieving social goals
- It is governed in a fully accountable and transparent manner and is independent of the public sector. If dissolved, it should transfer its assets to another organisation with a similar mission

The DRCD report '*Social Enterprises in Ireland - A Baseline Data Collection Exercise*' (2023), identifies 160 social enterprises in Co. Tipperary. When considering the population of each county, Co. Leitrim was found to have the highest ratio with 26.2 social enterprises per 10,000 inhabitants. Co. Tipperary has 9.5 social enterprises per 10,000 inhabitants, placing it fifteenth of all counties in the State. This placing suggests that there is the potential to generate further social enterprises in Co. Tipperary. It is noted that the Implementing Partners have supported social enterprises across multiple iterations of the LEADER Programme.

2.4.6 State-Assisted Employment Creation

Powering The Regions, the Enterprise Ireland Regional Plan places Co. Tipperary in the Mid-West Region, along with Co. Kerry, Limerick and Clare. In 2021 there were 24,312 jobs supported by Enterprise Ireland in the Mid-West Region. This represented a five per cent increase from the previous year. In the year to July 2021, Enterprise Ireland provided a total of €10,009,199 to support its client companies in Co. Tipperary. Tipperary Local Enterprise Office provided non-pay and capital supports of €2,507,599 in 2021, supporting 268 clients and creating 236 jobs with an overall employment figure of 1,345.

IDA Ireland

In 2021, IDA Ireland supported 18,894 jobs in the Mid-West Region. IDA Ireland supports fifteen client companies in Co. Tipperary, employing 4,568 staff. These companies indirectly support an additional 3,654 jobs. There is a strong presence of IDA Ireland supported businesses in the life sciences sector and there is a developing portfolio of financial services companies, with Fiserv in Nenagh and Waystone in Cashel.

2.4.7 Employment

Between 2016 and March 2020 (advent of the Covid-19 pandemic), there had been a progressive decline in the unemployment rate in Ireland. Unemployment then began to increase, and it peaked in Q1 of 2021. Since then, as public health restrictions have been gradually lifted, the unemployment rate has decreased, although it began to climb again in 2022.

In May 2023, the seasonally adjusted national unemployment rate was down to 4.1 per cent for males from a revised rate of 4.2 per cent in April 2023 and May 2022. It was down to 3.4 per cent for females from a revised rate of 3.5 per cent in April 2023 and a rate of 4.2 per cent in May 2022.

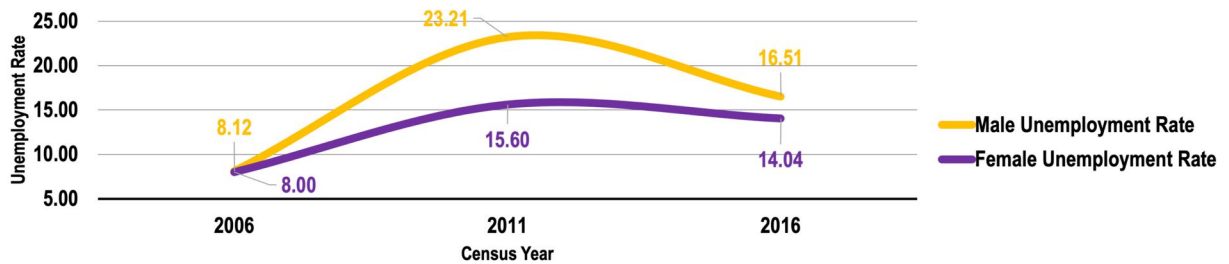
Youth unemployment has been stubbornly resistant to change over many years. In May 2023, it stood at 6.9 per cent for persons aged 15-24 years (youth unemployment rate), from a revised rate of 7.7 per cent in April 2023.

Persons at Work

In the report *County Incomes and Regional GDP 2020*, the CSO note that counties in the Midland and Border regions had the lowest percentage of employed people in the State due to low populations and lack of industry in those regions. Co. Tipperary had a density of 2.84 per cent of persons at work, compared to 11.85 per cent in Cork City and County and 34.5 per cent in Dublin.

Unemployment Rate

Figure 14 – Co. Tipperary Unemployment Rate 2006-16



THE CSO reports that the national seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for February 2023 (for all persons aged 15-74 years) was down to 4.3 per cent from 4.4 per cent in January 2023. The rate was lower than the pre-pandemic 4.8 per cent recorded in February 2020. In February 2023, the unemployment rate for males was 4.0 per cent and for females was 4.7 per cent.

In 2016 the EDs with the highest male unemployment rate were Farranrory (39.71), Clonmel West Urban (32.78), New Birmingham (38.21), Fethard (32.62), Carrick-On-Suir Urban (44.03), and Tipperary East Urban (47.48). The highest female unemployment rate was recorded in Finnoe (21.21), Roscrea (21.50), Clonmel West Urban (23.11), Farranrory (24.31), Carrick-On-Suir Urban (24.35), and Tipperary East Urban (26.42).

Live Register

The Live Register provides a monthly series of the numbers of people (with some exceptions) registering for Jobseekers Benefit (JB) or Jobseekers Allowance (JA) or for various other statutory entitlements at local offices of the DSP.

Figure 15 – Co. Tipperary Live Register Male 2023

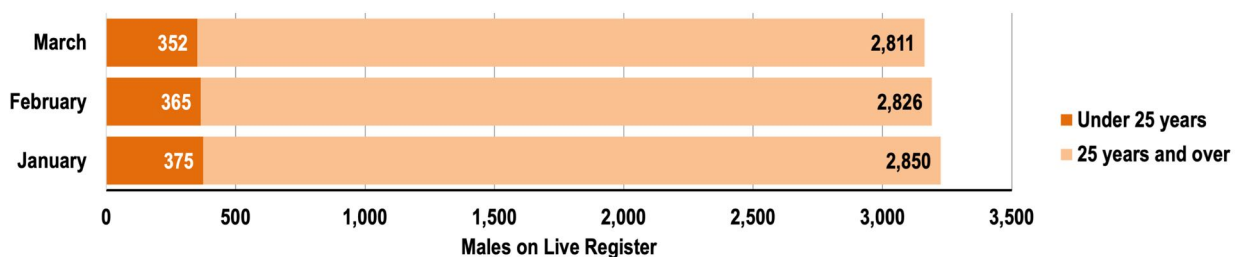
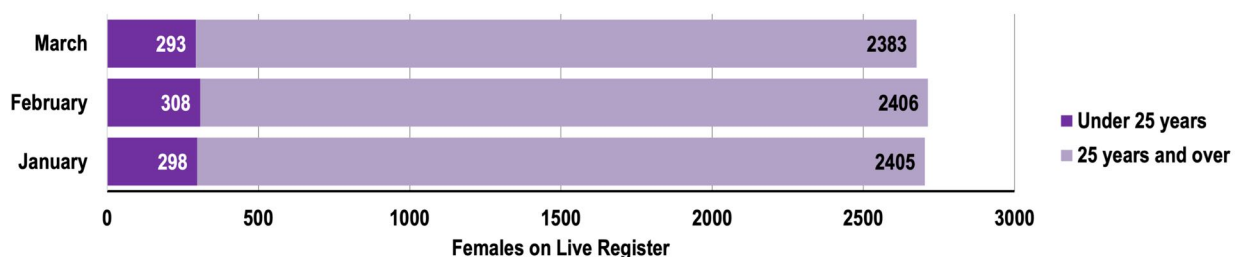


Figure 16 – Co. Tipperary Live Register Female 2023



The Live Register does not measure unemployment since it includes part-time workers (those who work up to three days per week) and seasonal and casual workers entitled to JB and JA.

2.4.8 Household Incomes

The median nominal household disposable income was €46,999 per person in the State in 2022. The Southern Region's median nominal household disposable income was €42,690 per person.

2.5 Environmental Indicators

2.5.1 Headlines

- Tipperary is a strongly rural county, with sixty per cent of the population living in rural areas, together with 120 settlements of small villages and towns located within five Municipal Districts. It is the sixth-largest county by area.
- Co. Tipperary is located at the heart of Ireland's '*Golden Vale*' and the centre of the Southern Region.
- The county is well connected, with strategic transport links to Limerick, Waterford, Cork, Dublin, and international airports and major ports.
- The county has access to a network of national universities and colleges, with nine leading third-level colleges and universities within a two-hour commute.
- The primary closure objective at Lisheen Mine (former lead-zinc-silver mine) has been to restore the mine site, with a vision to attract replacement industry to provide replacement jobs and sustainable growth.
- Tipperary Energy Agency operates as a social enterprise with goal of delivering the energy transition at scale and delivering on Ireland's Climate Action Plan.
- The natural amenities of the county include Lough Derg to the northwest, River Suir to the south, and the Rock of Cashel. Co. Tipperary offers an excellent quality of life within a natural environment of diversity and character.
- Co. Tipperary has a very significant stock of natural assets that are of national and European significance, and the county has an extensive network of Natura 2000 sites, including twenty-one Special Areas of Conservation, eleven Natural Heritage Areas, and four Special Protection Areas.

2.5.2 Topography

Co. Tipperary can be classified into five distinct zones, each aligned on a northeast-southwest axis: -

1. To the east of Lough Derg is a lowland, with Nenagh as its main town. An extension of the central Irish lowland, it has many medium-sized farms (20 hectares) that concentrate on raising stock for sale and some crops, mainly oats and potatoes. At the lower end of Lough Derg, the Arra Mountains rise to 462 metres
2. A mass of hills, extending from the Co. Limerick border and including Keeper Hill (694 metres) and Silvermines Mountain (490 metres) and running north-eastward to the Devilsbit (481 metres) and the Roscrea gap. This belt of hills is approximately 30 km wide in the south. Some small villages are located in farmed valleys, the agriculture of which is like the surrounding lowlands
3. East of the uplands is a corridor 25 km wide through which runs the main railway between Dublin and Cork. There is a covering of glacial drift, and peat bogs appear between Cashel and Thurles in the *Golden Vale* and the upper River Suir Valley. Cattle production dominates the local economies, with dairying prominent surrounding Tipperary town
4. The Slieveardagh ridge comprises several hills around Fethard and Cashel and extends northward to the Nore Valley. The area, which has some coal seams, is farmed extensively

5. The extreme south of the county consists mainly of the middle River Suir lowlands and those of its tributaries, the Rivers Tar and Anner. All lowland is extensively farmed, with medium-sized and large farms having dairying as the main resource. Surrounding the lowland are four ranges of mountains, the Galtees, the Knockmealdown, the Comeragh, and Slievenamon

2.5.3 Natural Environment

The National Parks and Wildlife Service list 40 protected sites in Co. Tipperary.

Table 5 - Protected Sites

Special Area of Conservation	Natural Heritage Area	Special Protection Area
Anglesey Road	Arragh More Bog	Lough Derg Shannon
Arragh More Derrybreen Bog	Ballymacegan Bog	Middle Shannon Callows
Ballyduff/Clonfinane Bog	Bleanbeg Bog	River Little Brosna Callows
Blackwater River	Cangort Bog	Slievefelim to Silvermines
Cork/Waterford	Killeen Bog	Mountains
Bolingbrook Hill	Lorrha Bog	
Clare Glen	Mauherslieve Bog	Nature Reserve
Galtee Mountains	Monaincha/Ballaghmore Bog	Redwood Bog Nature Reserve
Keeper Hill	Nore Valley Bogs	
Kilcarren-Firville Bog	River Little Brosna Callows	
Devils Bit Mountain	Scohaboy Bog	
Liskeenan Fen	Scohaboy Sapwell	
Lough Derg, North-east Shore	Slievenamon Bog	
Lower River Shannon		
Lower River Suir		
Moanour Mountain		
Philipston Marsh		
Redwood Bog		
River Barrow and River Nore		
River Shannon Callows		
Sharavogue Bog		
Silvermine Mountains		
Silvermines Mountains West		

Notable examples of designated areas include: -

- Glen of Aherlow Special Area of Conservation is located between the Galtee Mountains and the Slievenamuck Ridge. It is designated under the Natura 2000 network due to its diverse habitats, including limestone grasslands, wet heathlands, and oak woodlands. The Glen of Aherlow SAC is home to various plant and animal species, such as otters, badgers, peregrine falcons, and rare orchids
- Devil's Bit Special Area of Conservation is near Templemore. The Devil's Bit is a distinctive mountain formation with a rich natural heritage, designated due to its limestone grasslands, which support a range of plant species, including rare orchids, wild thyme, and mountain avens. The area is also important for its diverse birdlife, with species such as peregrine falcons, ravens, and kestrels found in the area

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

- Keeper Hill Special Area of Conservation, also known as Slievekimalta, is the highest mountain in the Slieve Felim Range and is located near Newport. It has upland habitats, including heathlands, blanket bogs, and montane grasslands
- Littleton Fen, located near the village of Littleton, is an exceptional wetland habitat and is designated as a Special Area of Conservation. It consists of alkaline fen and base-rich swamp habitats, which are rare and threatened across Europe
- The Silvermine Mountains Complex, situated near the village of Silvermines, is a range of hills and mountains renowned for their geological and ecological significance. The area is designated a Special Area of Conservation due to its diverse habitats, including upland grasslands, heathlands, and blanket bogs
- The Upper River Suir, flowing through the county is designated a Special Area of Conservation due to its importance for various aquatic and semi-aquatic habitats. The river and its associated wetlands support diverse plant species, including water crowfoot, water starwort, and yellow flag iris. It is also home to numerous fish species, such as brown trout, salmon, and lamprey, as well as otters and kingfishers.

2.5.4 Built Environment

Co. Tipperary offers diverse structures that reflect its historical, cultural, and social evolution. The National Monuments Service Archaeological Survey of Ireland provides the Record of Monuments and Places and lists 48 monuments distributed around the county. The built environment is crucial in attracting cultural tourists and contributes to the sense of place.

Table 6 – Publicly Accessible Monuments and Places

Ahenny High Crosses	Derryvella	Monaincha Church
Ardcroney Burial Mound	Donaghmore Church	Moor Abbey
Ashleypark Burial Mound	Grallagh Castle	Nenagh Castle
Athassel Abbey	Holy Cross Abbey	Portland Church
Ballingarry Warhouse	Hore Abbey	Rathanadav
Ballycomisk Ringforts	Kilcash Castle	Rock of Cashel
Ballynahow Castle	Kilcash Church	Roscrea Castle
Ballynoran Church	Kilcooly Abbey	Roscrea Church
Burncourt Castle	Knockgraffon	Roscrea Friary
Cahir Abbey	Lackeen Castle	Shrough Passage Tomb
Cahir Castle	Liathmore Churches	St. Berriher's Kyle
Cahir Castle Cottage	Lismacrory Mounds	St. Dominic's Abbey
Carrick-on-Suir Castle	Longstone Rath	Swiss Cottage
Carron fort	Lorrha Church	Terryglass Castle
Clonmel Main Guard	Lorrha Friary	Timoney Hills Standing Stones
Derrynaflan Church	Lorrha Priory	Toureen Peakaun

The county has several ancient and prehistoric structures, including the Rock of Cashel, comprising medieval buildings on a limestone outcrop. The medieval period is evidenced by numerous castles, fortifications, and monastic ruins throughout the county. Cahir Castle is one of Ireland's largest and best-preserved castles, showcasing classic medieval architecture with its imposing towers, battlements, and massive keep. The Georgian and Victorian eras saw the construction of elegant townhouses, churches, and public buildings. Clonmel features Georgian townhouses with distinctive symmetrical facades, sash windows, and doorways adorned with fanlights. The Main Guard in Clonmel, a notable Georgian structure, served as a courthouse and military barracks during the 18th century. The county's rural areas feature traditional Irish

farmhouses and agricultural buildings, reflecting the importance of farming in Co. Tipperary's economy.

2.5.5 Climate Change

The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) is responsible for assessing the energy efficiency of domestic and commercial buildings, and the SEAI provides a range of supports to enable home and business owners to maximise insulation and thereby conserve energy. The Building Energy Rating (BER) classifies buildings on a scale from A (most efficient) to H (least efficient), and of the domestic housing stock that the SEAI has surveyed in Co. Tipperary 2009-2022, 7.92 per cent of homes achieved a BER rating of B2 or higher.

Appendix 2 - Renewable Energy Strategy, Tipperary County Development Plan 2022-2028, reports that: -

- The average dwelling in Tipperary uses 19,400 kWh per annum, which equates to an average spend in 2014 of approximately €2,000. This amounts to €119 million to heat and light Co. Tipperary homes
- The use of coal and peat to heat homes has declined from 35 per cent in 1990 to 17 per cent in 2014. This positive trend will continue as carbon taxes, air quality standards, and availability of increased efficiency stoves continue to incentivise reducing the use of these fuels
- The use of heating oil dominates the residential sector in Tipperary. The improvement in the energy efficiency of the residential sector and the replacement of oil-based home heating systems with systems based on heat pumps will result in significant energy cost savings and a substantial reduction in energy-related CO₂ emissions

2.6 Community Indicators

2.6.1 Community and Voluntary Sector Organisations

The Co. Tipperary Public Participation Network (PPN) is a collective of all the community, voluntary, social inclusion, and environmental groups in the county. It was established in 2014. The PPN has 1,547 registered members, with 1,308 (84.5 per cent) of these being in the Community pillar, 189 (12.2 per cent) comprising the Social Inclusion pillar, and 49 (3.1 per cent) representing the Environmental pillar.

For every 10,000 population in Co. Tipperary in 2022 there were seventy-eight Community pillar organisations, eleven Social Inclusion pillar organisations, and three Environmental pillar organisations. This outcome suggests that there might be potential to encourage new community and voluntary sector organisations with an interest in environmental matters in the county.

2.6.2 Broadband Access

According to Census 2016, a total of 35,813 households in Co. Tipperary had access to broadband. This figure is 60.63 per cent of all households in the county. The rate was ten percentage points lower than that of the State, which was 70.69 per cent. The lowest rates of broadband access were found in the North Tipperary EDs Ballymackey (31.61 per cent), Latteragh (31.06 per cent), and Templederry (18.87 per cent).

The National Broadband Plan (NBP) is the government's initiative to deliver high-speed, quality, affordable broadband services to all premises in Ireland. The NBP identifies 85,224 premises in Co. Tipperary. Of these, 30,490 (36 per cent) are designated as being in the *Amber Area* (target area for State intervention). 54,788 (64 per cent) of premises in the county are designated within the *Blue Area* (where commercial operators are delivering or have indicated plans to deliver high speed broadband services).

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

The Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) has identified the following premises in the Amber Area in Co. Tipperary that require access to high-speed Fibre broadband: -

- 21 Broadband Connection Points (BCPs)
- 35 rural BCPs – National Schools
- 19,960 homes
- 3,965 farms
- 5,334 residential/commercial businesses
- 1,210 commercial premises

The Broadband Connection Points are located at: -

- Aglish Community Hall, Aglish, Roscrea
- Ballinahinch Community Centre, Rossfinch, Ballinahinch, Birdhill
- Ballylooby Castlegrace GAA Club, Kilroe, Ballylooby
- Boher Parish Hall, Boher, Ballina
- Curreeney Community Hall, Curreeney, Kilcommon, Thurles
- Donaskeagh Community Centre, Donaskeagh (Gigabit Fibre)
- Drom Community Hall, Drom, Borrisoleigh, Thurles
- Fanure Community Hall, Fanure, Roscrea
- Gurtagarry Community Hall, Gurtagarry, Toomevara, Nenagh
- Kilcoleman Community And Recreational Centre, Burgess GAA Club, Newtown, Nenagh
- Killea Community Centre, Killea, Templemore
- Killoscully Community Centre, Killoscully, Newport
- Killurney Community Centre, Killurney, Ballypatrick, Clonmel
- Latteragh Community Centre, Sallypark, Latteragh, Nenagh
- Lismackin Community Hall, Lismackin, Roscrea
- Moyglass Community Hall, Moyglass, Fethard
- North Tipperary Food Works, Main Street, Rearcross, Newport
- Rossmore Community Hall, Rossmore, Cashel
- Terryglass Community Hall, Terryglass, Nenagh
- The Apple Camping and Caravan Park, Moorstown, Cahir
- The Pavilion, Ballinderry Sports Field, Ballinderry, Nenagh

2.6.3 LGBTQIA+ Community

Discrimination against LGBTQIA+ people remains a significant issue in Ireland according to a 2020 EU survey. 59 per cent of respondents avoided holding hands with a same sex partner in Ireland, 18 per cent felt discriminated against in the workforce, and 37 per cent had experienced harassment in the previous year. Within the consultation process, the need for safe spaces for LGBTQIA+ adults and young people to meet was identified.

It is not possible to determine the number of LGBTQIA+ people living in Co. Tipperary, however, there are PRIDE groups in Clonmel, Thurles and Nenagh, and both youth work organisations operate support and networking groups for young people. Tipperary Children and Young People's Services Committee (CYPSC) report that the following services provide for younger members of the LGBTQIA+ Community: -

- Carrick-on-Suir Neighbourhood Youth and Family Project (Foróige)
- ChillOUT South Tipp, Clonmel (WSTCYS)
- GOSHH (Gender Orientation Sexual Health HIV), Limerick
- Nenagh Youth Project, Nenagh (Foróige)

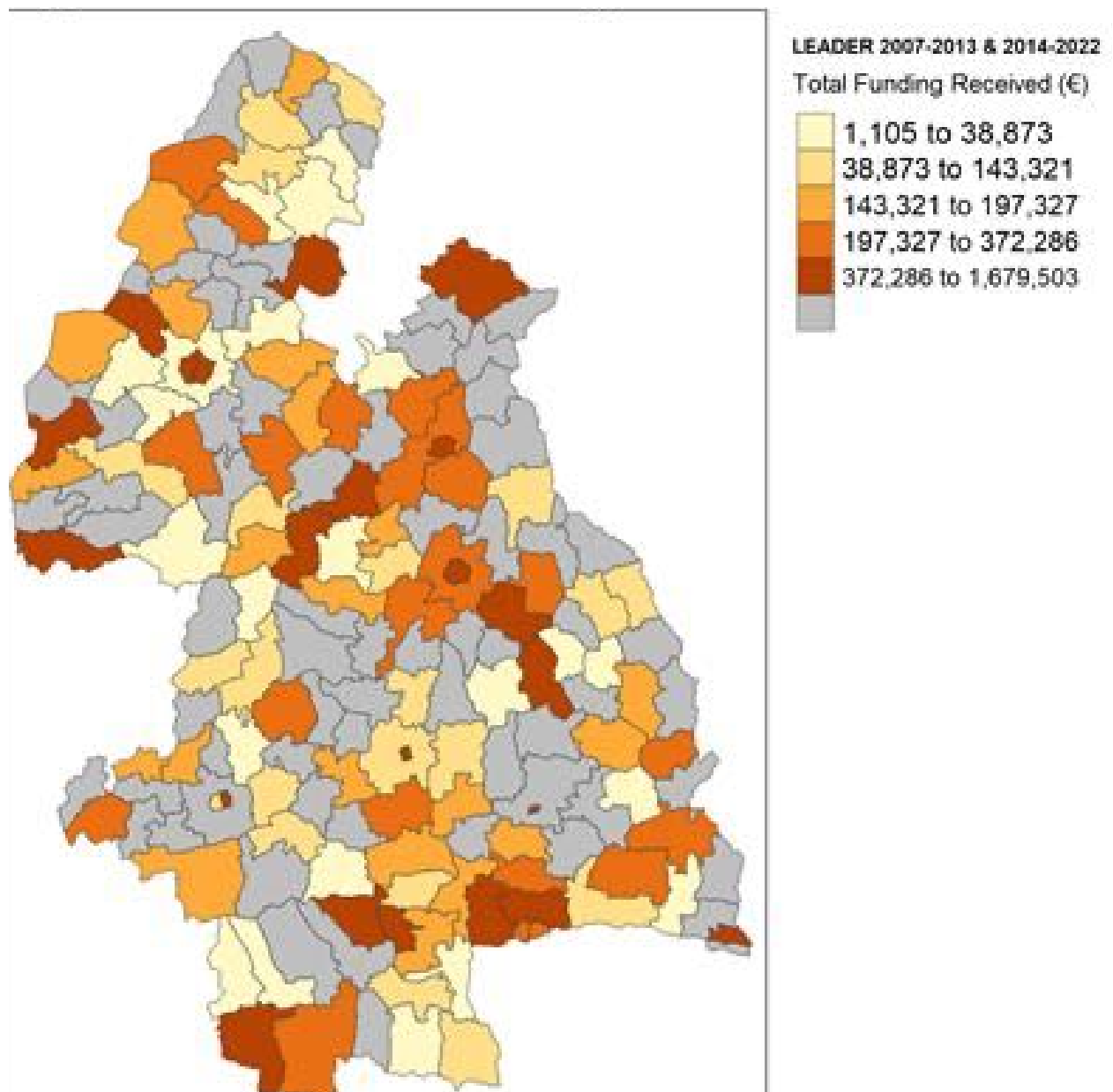
- OUTstanding Youthwork Ireland Tipperary, Thurles
- Purple Hearts, Roscrea (NTDC)
- TENI (Transgender Equality Network Ireland), Dublin

2.6.4 LEADER Programme Performance

The LEADER Programme generally operates as a co-funding mechanism. It encourages rural development by supporting interventions that enable project promoters to proceed in situations that otherwise might not be possible. The delivery of the Programme requires that projects do not create local displacement, do not represent deadweight (where the initiative would have proceeded without the intervention), and where sustainability can be clearly demonstrated.

The LAG commissioned the report entitled '*Analysis of the Distribution and Social Inclusion Focus of LEADER Funding in Co. Tipperary 2007-2022: Evidence from Project-Level Data*'.

Figure 17 – Distribution of LEADER Funding 2007-2022



Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

The key findings from analysis shown above and below, is that there was a ‘relatively broad spread of LEADER funding across Co. Tipperary, and there was evidence of a slight eastwards shift in areas that obtain higher amounts of funding. Secondly, there was significant change in the composition of which ED’s obtained funding despite an overall expansion in the number of areas that benefitted during 2014-2022.’

The analysis notes that ‘when other non-LEADER rural development interventions are factored in, it is possible to see some complementarity between schemes. This is particularly apparent in the Borrisokane, Terryglass, and Kilbarron area of North Tipperary, which benefitted from Town and Village Renewal Programme funding during 2016-2021. This is also true for the Newcastle and Clogheen ED’s in the south, which received relatively little LEADER funding but higher amounts of Town and Village Renewal support. The Rural Regeneration and Development Fund was primarily concentrated in the major towns, especially those in the north of the county.’

It is noted that the figure above and table below is not intended as a distributive summary. There may be very minor amounts of LEADER funding in areas that appear as none or very little.

Table 7 –EDs Benefitting Least from LEADER Funding 2007-2022

ED ID	ED	ED ID	ED
217114	Kilvemnon	217019	Ballylusky
217054	Cloneen	217167	Tubbrid
217043	Carrig	217025	Ballysheehan
217017	Ballygriffin	217160	Thomastown
217083	Graigue	217153	Shronell
217022	Ballynaclogh	217165	Tipperary Rural
217169	Tullaghorton	217128	Modeshil
217157	Templeneiry	217036	Burgesbeg
217122	Longfordpass	217033	Bourney West
217014	Ballycarron	217058	Clonoulty West
217071	Drumwood	217151	Rodus
217143	Peppardstown	217140	Newtown
217074	Fennor	217057	Clonoulty East
217008	Ardsallagh	217084	Graigue
217075	Finnoe	217097	Kilkeary
217113	Kiltinan	217095	Kilcoran
217144	Poyntstown	217100	Killavinoge
217119	Lattin	217149	Redwood
217104	Killoscully	217163	Timoney
217154	Solloghodbeg	217067	Dolla
217034	Bruis	217077	Gaile
217147	Rathlynin	217080	Glenkeen
217062	Crohane	217111	Kilrush
217040	Carrick-On-Suir Rural	217029	Borrisnoe
217051	Cloghprior	217174	Youghalarra
217158	Templetouhy	217044	Carrigatogher
217148	Rathnaveoge	217106	Kilmucklin
217073	Farranrory	217037	Burncourt
217109	Kilnarath	217085	Graystown
217142	Oughterleague	217173	Uskane
217007	Ardmayle	217137	New Birmingham
217005	Ardcrony	217016	Ballygibbon

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ED ID	ED	ED ID	ED
217061	Cooleagh	217052	Clohaskin
217049	Clogher	217004	Anner
217079	Glengar	217064	Curraheen
217145	Rahelty	217001	Abington
217132	Moycarky	217082	Gortkelly
217032	Bourney East	217135	Nenagh Rural
217127	Mertonhall	217168	Tullaghmelan
217028	Borrisnafarney	217155	Templederry
217021	Ballymurreen	217098	Killadrieffe
217092	Kilcomenty	217012	Ballybacon
217042	Carrickbeg Urban	217107	Kilmurry
217124	Lorrha West	217060	Coolagarranroe
217065	Derrycastle	217023	Ballyphilip

The table above lists the EDs benefitting least (none or lowest quintile) from LEADER Funding 2007-2022.

Some of these EDs identified above are of dispersed population or do not have a significant settlement within them or primarily benefit from services in adjacent EDs. However, they represent the areas which statistically have received the lowest amount of LEADER funding over the past two Programme iterations and will be prioritised under the 2023-2027 Programme.

Analysis

The report notes that the outgoing LEADER Programme delivered in Co. Tipperary reflects the changes at national level, with a decline in the number of projects and total funding. However, there remains a relatively good spread of funding across the county area with no area in particular benefitting disproportionately. There are several changes during the 2014-2022 period in the composition of the beneficiary areas. This is most apparent in the eastwards shift in funding from the environs of Tipperary Town to the Cahir-Cashel-Clonmel area in the south, and from the Toomevara, Upperchurch, and Kilcommon areas to those to the east of Thurles. These shifts are mediated somewhat by the distribution of internal projects that supported many areas that did not enjoy a sizeable LEADER investment; however, the value of these internal projects remains relatively limited. There is also evidence of a level of complementarity between LEADER and other development programmes and interventions.

2.7 Summary

As the sixth largest county, the rural nature of Tipperary is best illustrated in terms of population density (39 persons/ km²) in comparison with the State (71/km²). This is reflected in demographic indicators relating to lower levels of third-level attainment (7% below State average) and higher levels of employment (6% higher than State average) in agriculture, forestry and fishing, and a deprivation score (-3.39) that is marginally below average.

The LEADER Programme has been to the forefront in facilitating service provision to a population that has become increasingly diverse in nationality, ethnicity, and language over recent decades. Agriculture remains a significant contributor to Tipperary's economy but, importantly, the county has strengthened its industry profile in life sciences and renewables.

Tourism remains a significant driver of both employment and economic activity with a focus on recovering domestic and international visitor level to pre-Covid-19 levels. Recreational and activity tourism and low-cost accommodation ties in with current trends in the industry.

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

Emerging sectors include renewable energy, climate mitigation and biodiversity. Many of these can help address youth unemployment, and the under-representation of young people, women and new communities as entrepreneurs.

The Implementing Partners have supported social enterprises across multiple iterations of the LEADER Programme; Co. Tipperary is well placed in this emerging sector with exemplar projects in the renewable energy sector. This experience will be invaluable to support communities and businesses to transition to sustainable energy sources.

3 CLLD and Participative Planning

The partnership recognises the need for extensive local consultation. Establishing evidence-based needs is essential to underpin the LDS. It forms one of the three pillars upon which the objectives and their actions stand (the other two being the policy framework and the socio-economic profile of the area).

At a time when public engagement levels are still recovering from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the LAG was pleased that over three hundred people engaged in the community consultation events (41 per cent), online thematic workshops (34 per cent), and the online survey (25 per cent).

3.1 Community-Led Local Development

Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) is one of the original ‘specificities’ of the LEADER approach to rural development. CLLD values the bottom-up approach to policy development. It encourages the community to take ownership of the planning process by contributing meaningfully to local development. Based on many years of experience in successful delivery to the community of Co. Tipperary, a participative planning process was devised and implemented over four months, commencing in January 2023.

3.1.1 Community Consultation Stage

The community consultation stage for the Co. Tipperary LDS employed four key methodologies to deliver participative planning: -

1. A series of five in-person consultation meetings planned for different settlement types and each targeting the respective Municipal District, as follows: -
 - Killenaule (Carrick on Suir Municipal District): a disadvantaged rural community with relatively low engagement levels with previous LEADER Programme iterations
 - Tipperary Town (Tipperary/Cashel/Cahir Municipal District): a small town designated disadvantaged with a hinterland that has not significantly accessed LEADER funding previously
 - Clonmel (Clonmel Borough District): largest town in the county with diverse communities and a wide hinterland
 - Templemore (Thurles Municipal District): small, centrally located district
 - Nenagh (Nenagh Municipal District): large town serving a vast hinterland in the north of the county.

Appendix 6 Map 7 provides the spatial distribution of community consultation meetings.

2. A series of three online meetings focused on each of the three LEADER themes. Like the in-person meetings, break-out spaces were used to allow smaller groups of participants to engage.
3. A series of stakeholder interviews with key agencies, activists and workers that were identified for their technical knowledge, personal experience, and professional roles concerning the LEADER Programme themes.
4. An online survey accessible from the relevant websites, advertised in the media, and made available to all members of the public for those unable to engage in one of the organised events.

The key engagement principles adopted in the consultation meetings conformed to the requirements of CLLD, ensuring that the process was participant-driven.

The online and in-person meetings were designed to be informal and inclusive; the informal engagement ethos allowed diverse groups into the process and facilitated collective, creative

thinking around issues and ownership of results. Participants were facilitated to examine each of the three themes by exploring and agreeing: -

1. Strengths and assets of the area per theme.
2. How these could be built on with the forthcoming LEADER Programme.
3. Gaps and needs with respect to each LEADER theme.
4. How these could be addressed through the forthcoming LEADER Programme.

Each group presented the key findings from their discussion.

Both at the in-person meetings and in the online survey, participants were strongly encouraged to highlight their potential LEADER projects.

The key informant interviews, focus groups, public meetings and online survey were generally documented as meeting notes and summarised in the context of the areas and themes for this strategy. Each group presented the key findings from their discussion.

3.1.2 Engagement with Hard-to-Reach Groups

To engage with the hard-to-reach and more distant groups and individuals in rural areas, the following intervention tools were employed: -

1. The LAG and Implementing Partners have regular contact with voluntary organisations within their area and have a comprehensive overview of the needs of these organisations. This knowledge was used in developing the LDS.
2. The LAG and Implementing Partners included engagement with Tús participants, including members of sports clubs and recreation groups, age action groups, Meals-on-Wheels, disability groups, social economy groups, and housing providers. The LAG and Implementing Partners interaction with the members and participants of these organisations informed the LDS process.
3. The Implementing Partners also consulted with the Intreo/LAES Office, and elements of the employment focus have been developed from this source, taking full cognisance of all the Social Inclusion Initiatives in place throughout the area.

Publicity: As part of the consultation, the events and surveys were advertised social media, local papers and radio, including radio interviews, direct emails to over 1,000 community and voluntary groups via the PPN and to enterprises via the IPs databases and through the LEO database. Within the IP's, the SICAP teams engaged directly with local hard to reach community groups and beneficiaries: -

- SICAP
- Domestic Violence
- Traveller Health Project
- Migrant Support (Syrian/Ukrainian/Direct Provision)
- Men's Shed
- Women's Groups
- LGBTQIA+
- Roscrea Youth Service
- Tús/RSS participants
- LAES personnel
- Early stage BTWEA/Entrepreneurs

Each discussed the LEADER programme with their participant groups and this information has informed the consultation process.

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

Submissions were received from Cuan Saor Domestic Violence, Organic Farmers Association, Clonmel Pride, Tipperary ETB Youth Section, Social Enterprise Experts, Tipperary PPN, Men's Development Group.

There were specific one-to-one meetings with: -

- Tipperary Green Business Network
- Tipperary LEO (with specific reference to their Women in Business Network and Crafts)
- Tipperary Food Producers Network
- Tipperary Tourism Company
- Munster Vales Tourism
- Destination Lough Derg Tourism
- Tipperary Environmental Network
- Cabragh Wetlands Development Trust
- SuirCan Environmental Network
- Tipperary ETB
- YWI Tipperary
- IFA
- ICMSA

LAG membership was extensively consulted via a strategy workshop, the members represented were as follows: -

- Department of Social Protection
- Tipperary County Council
- Tipperary ETB
- IFA
- ICMSA
- Teagasc
- HSE
- Tipperary Chamber of Commerce
- Community Energy Sector
- Family Resource Centre Sector
- Cloughjordan Eco-Village/Cultivate/Sustainable Projects Ireland
- PPN Environmental Network
- Community Development Associations

The outcome of this process was that it was evident that existing strategies were providing successful results and that it was important not to dilute or detract from their focus and actions. It was also apparent that many community and voluntary sector organisations received significant investment in labour support from DSP through Tús, Community Employment, Community Services Programme, and internships.

The impact of the development of the LDS Strategy is to focus more on the needs of the areas and actions that are not receiving direct intervention from the State. This Strategy seeks to ensure that the LDS complements activities of the State and the community and voluntary sector whilst avoiding duplication or overlap with either.

A consolidated list of all consultees is provided in Appendix A7.

3.1.3 Engagement with Young People

To engage with Youth Organisations and Young Individuals, the following intervention tools were employed: -

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

- The LAG and Implementing Partners analysed the experiences and viewpoint of young people that were identified across consultative processes including the 'Newport Youth Needs Analysis' (Tipperary ETB), 'Exploring the Needs of Young People in Co. Tipperary who are Not in Education, Employment or Training' (Tipperary ETB), and 'How are Things in Tipperary' Youth Survey (Comhairle na nOg).
- The implementing partners linked with young people through their 'in-house' youth programmes for their such as *UBU-Your Space Your Place* and the Youth Union Roscrea.
- Findings from the Tipperary Children and Young Person Committee were reviewed and considered as part of the consultation process.
- Whilst the specific ages of attendees were not recorded at the public meetings, it is estimated from observation that some 20% (60 attendees) were under 40 years of age.
- Feedback from YouthWork Ireland Tipperary and Comhairle na nÓg was gathered through the formal consultative process and ancillary conversations.

The broad outcomes of the engagement with young people are reflected in the SWOT analysis and action plan, where consideration was given by consultees to the linkage between social exclusion and rural youth. It was reported that rural children and young people can feel disconnected from local society if they are not naturally inclined towards traditional team sports.

The engagement with young people suggested that there was a latent unmet need to consider the provision of art/digital supports for young people, including music, drama, video, and animation. It was generally recognised that addressing these needs in a rural setting is challenging given that this will require the identification of appropriately equipped spaces given the dispersed nature of the rural population and the relative difficulties of access given that not all are able to drive or easily obtain lifts from peers or family members. In this context there may be a role for enhanced Local Link services, although these will be required to operate in a demand-deficient service mode.

The engagement with young people brought a recognition that there may be opportunity to review the role of Macra na Feirme as an established network that might form an element of a progression pathway for young people in a rural setting.

3.2 Consultation Outcomes

3.2.1 Economic Development and Job Creation

Job creation, training and business development are important to the people of Co. Tipperary. The main issues that flowed out of the consultations are outlined in the tables below. Within the in-person meetings there was a focus on recreation tourism and artisan opportunities. In the on-line consultations, there was greater representation from businesses and discussion focused on a wide range of sectoral opportunities and the need for further support for innovation and expansion.

Table 8 - Economic Development Issues (1)

Social Enterprise	Agricultural Diversification	Enterprise Development
Corporate Governance Training.	Craft Network.	Connective marketing.
Rising costs challenge sustainability.	Social Farming – Local Produce / Education.	Linked up funding streams using a coordinated approach.
Emerging local food, recreation, and visitor facilities.	Lack of allotments.	Lack of skilled occupations for skilled workforce.
	Producing energy from slurry, solar farms,	Cost and availability of insurance.

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

Skills development training opportunities for target groups and new communities.	Training at farm level to understand scope of alternative activity potential.	Resource library of previous LEADER projects and applications for reference.
Mentoring.	Local food, agri-tourism potential for farm families.	Women in Business Network
Start-up supports.		
Wellbeing of community volunteers.		
Work hub development.		

An outcome of the specific meeting with LEO was the importance of supports for female entrepreneurship including the Women in Business Network as their members are interested in engaging with LEADER.

There were many calls for information, training and supports into each of the three themes to create new markets and address lack of services and isolation in rural towns and villages. The experience of people in Covid times and the positive response of community and neighbours was to the forefront for participants in addressing local service deficits. Capital and facility support was brought up in many discussions in this regard.

The test-bed capacity of community enterprises was discussed, as a way to address the loss of public and commercial services. There were calls for supporting social enterprises that connect local networks and work hubs. Similarly, the work of community business is seen as a fit in terms of community energy projects.

There was strong recognition among consultees of the benefits of farm diversification in terms of sustainable livelihoods and the green economy. Many recommended ongoing work on educating and supporting farmers particularly in terms of marketing.

Green economy opportunities are seen to provide landholders with well-developed energy land-use (forestry, natural habitats) alternatives. Similarly, previous LEADER support directed at social farming and farm-building holiday accommodation remain viable sustainability options. Not surprisingly, consultees generally connected diversification activities with alternate energy, rural food, and rural tourism activities.

Table 9 - Economic Development Issues (2)

Rural Tourism	Rural Food	Green Economy
Lack of tourist accommodation.	Artisan/local food and beverage production	
Working collaboratively and cross-selling.	Food Networks	Insulation Grants – one-stop-shop.
Activity tourism development (e.g. Equine Walks, heritage trails)	Local markets and community shops.	Renewable development.
Area Networks.	Awareness and information – branding, marketing and promotion	Capital Supports (converting to solar).
Signage.	Community cafés selling local produce.	Information resource on funding and supports across agencies and authorities.
Music culture and heritage.		
Enhancement of current marketing supports.	Opportunity for new community inputs.	

The position of Co. Tipperary as a tourism destination can be enhanced by connecting the recreational tourism potential throughout the county, digitally, through cross-selling packages and where possible by linking sites by safe active transport links (bog roads, disused rail routes, minor roads). Awareness and promotion remains an issue in many of the less visited areas of the County

and given the potential of these areas in terms of recreational tourism a specific campaign and appropriate signage is worth considering,

Camping, glamping, and caravan facilities are in limited supply; there is also a lack of hotel and restaurant facilities. This creates a danger that tourists overlook the county as a viable touring option despite, for example the recreation and heritage tourism assets. A common issue throughout the county is the poor quality of signage and signposting on- and off-road.

Within the consultations there was a focus toward local artisan food production in addition to community level grow your own opportunities. Co. Tipperary can count many food producers among the assets the county has to offer. Artisan food has emerged as a key local, domestic, and international market opportunity (e.g. Tipperary Food Producers Network).

The trend for young people to engage in active tourism, rural food and green energy is positive. New communities can also access a 'united' food community with cultural and fusion food and beverage options. Community enterprise is recognised as a means to test-bed demand in terms of community cafés and shops, which can then evolve as a commercial retail or food business opportunity. Similarly, local food and farmer's markets are noted as positive additions in terms of local food and community engagement.

Outcome

The LEADER Programme has a strong track record in supporting farm diversification and rural enterprise and there are many activities and businesses that have benefitted, particularly green economy, food, tourism and recreation sectors. There is continued need to support innovation across all these sectors. This round of funding adds social enterprise as a priority with potential to progress service delivery in rural areas that have suffered service closures in the recent past. This ties in with the community connecting value of addressing social isolation and bringing people together in this regard.

There are many opportunities to enhance the heritage and outdoor recreation space for tourist and resident alike. Opportunities for Greenways, bog and forest walk development and enhancement were noted in each municipality. Similarly, blueways represent a niche opportunity for kayakers etc to enjoy the rivers and lakes in the county. Facilities such as equipment hire, community cafes and pontoons can create local opportunities in terms of community businesses. Private and community tourism operators and networks require on-going support to realise Tipperary's potential.

Artisan and local food production interlock with rural tourism and recreation in creating viable rural markets. Local markets can serve enterprise and social inclusion goals in opening out 'new' public spaces for community engagement.

There is a need for a range of supports to further develop the Tipperary food and beverage sector, especially in terms of scaling and collaborative marketing. Businesses displayed an interest in improving energy efficiency and reducing waste but noted that lack of knowledge and capital costs were prohibitive at this point. A number of attendees had green business proposals but required further development. Across all of these sub-themes there is an identified need to support new entrepreneurs from non-traditional backgrounds i.e. female, Travellers, new migrants.

3.2.2 Rural Infrastructure and Social Inclusion

The issue of connecting: connected thinking, connected supports and connecting activities was a big part of the discussion at the public meetings. The need for more engagement and the lack of volunteering within communities and with community councils was also noted.

Facilities, access, and outdoor spaces are among the needs expressed and there was also a wider discussion regarding accessibility and safety in the public realm and facilities.

Table 10 - Community Development & Connectivity Issues (1)

Rural Infrastructure	Accessible Services	Digital Connectivity
Community Facilities (Hall, car parks, walkways, cycle tracks, allotments, playgrounds). Working collaboratively. Disused, derelict buildings. Facility upgrades and rent costs. Area networks. Safe spaces. Integration of new communities. Men's and Women's Sheds.	Public transport and Local Link. Access to facilities, public toilets, shops, and services for people of all abilities. Parking, charging points, footpaths. Job opportunities for people with disabilities. Training on disability services. Purpose built safe accommodation for vulnerable groups.	Digital Literacy – Training for vulnerable groups. Broadband/ Fibreoptic rollout. Community Hubs/ Public WiFi (work hubs). Online safety, commercial fraud. Replacement of in-person services.

A coordinated approach is needed to ensure that transport links are maximised. The current focus is on towns and there is a need for local links services to encompass rural villages as well.

Lack of local services is a common reference point in each of the municipalities with a concern for rural isolation at one level but also on local businesses and job potential. The underuse of community facilities is also noted, and rental costs can be an issue in this regard. Gaps in arts and culture facilities and varying provision in terms of men's and women's sheds should be addressed.

The importance of infrastructure (and digital connectivity) in facilitating local livelihoods and remote working is noted in several responses. The new issues that came up, perhaps relating again to the positive response of many communities to Covid-19 were for walking and cycling paths; the focus on electric cars has highlighted the need for charging points.

The concept of addressing local housing need through derelict house renovations was suggested as having the added benefit of providing local employment opportunities.

Discussion represented in the participant feedback shows ongoing issues around what might now be considered relatively standard issues for rural areas: accessibility, rural transport, lack of services (retail and tourist facilities). Similarly, the issue of transport links and poor connectivity are noted as issues. Public Transport aligns more to social activities and there is a need for north to south services to transport people during working hours.

Outcome

The SMART Village concept embraces many of the issues raised under this theme in the consultation process e.g., initiatives to enhance towns and village as places to live, work, visit and do business. Social Inclusion is a linking theme that has potential points of intersection with each of the other themes and sub-themes. LEADER can play a lead role in facilitating innovative approaches to disadvantage in respect of the 'new' rural realities resulting from ongoing pressure on services and facilities and changing population dynamics.

Volunteer recruitment and retention has been an issue in many communities post-Covid and recognition of new communities increases the potential base in addition to providing integration and language acquisition opportunities. There is much evidence among tidy towns and sports groups for example of new community engagement. Investment is required to improve the accessibility to and of community infrastructure across the county.

There has been considerable investment in public WiFi hotspots throughout the County; an information campaign should highlight availability, particularly in areas where quality has been an issue. Digital literacy services and training are noted and the provision of work hubs aligns with a policy set out in the national strategy: Our Rural Future (2021-2025). This training is a key to further rollout the SMART Village concept.

3.2.3 Rural Youth

The workshop discussions around rural youth focused on the issue of loss of population through migration and the lack of facilities, services, and employment opportunities for young people. Cutbacks in youth worker hours often means that there are shortages of both paid workers and volunteers. In one community the youth organisation closed and in others, service levels are such that it would be beneficial if they were to open for longer periods.

Table 11 - Community Development: Rural Youth Issues (2)

Youth Activities	Youth Spaces	Jobs and Education
Arts activities (music, video, animation).		Develop STEM skills.
Need for non-traditional sports activities including for young people with disabilities.	Upgrade existing facilities (playground, parish field, river swimming, youth spaces).	Life skills (cooking classes, apprenticeships, job search).
Afterschool services.	Development of new facilities (digital space, youth hangout spaces).	Tutors for youth-oriented courses.
Care services (Drug Rehab, Buddy System, Access, Afterschool).	Insurance.	Investment in volunteer services – pilot training programmes.
Access to nature and outdoors.	Youth space.	Music Education opportunities.
Volunteers and buy-in from young people.	Late opening coffee shops for young people.	Intergenerational learning opportunities.

Sports activity is generally well catered for through the GAA, soccer, and rugby clubs. There is a need for services for those with no interest in sports. Arts and music education services would help address the need.

Local work- and job-related education is needed if young people are going to stay in the county. Volunteering, particularly in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic has become an issue.

Safe and appropriate youth space is an issue that emerged in several areas for providing youth-led services. It is mainly a town and city service and there is a need for it to be applied to rural areas.

Addiction services for young people reflect a wider demand for social and mental health services. For younger age groups there is a need for playground or playground upgrades at selected sites.

Many submissions relate to 'new' activity areas (green economy, active transport and recreation, artisan food, green energy, and biodiversity) with the interests, capacity, skills and future vision of young people.

Outcome

With respect to Rural Youth, LEADER can facilitate the increased use of existing facilities and services and the development of new opportunities including youth clubs, digital spaces, and community arts into rural communities. Rural non-mainstream sporting young people can benefit from further integration through increasing opportunities for volunteerism, music, gaming, and multi-generational activities within this cohort.

3.2.4 Rural Environment and Climate Action

The most common discussions concerned information and awareness, educating the public in general and young people about how to diversify energy sources and reduce dependence on fossil fuels, waste reduction, and promoting biodiversity and carbon sinks. Having it accepted as an immediate priority action area for individuals, families and communities is perhaps the greatest challenge. Participant feedback in consultations referred to the legitimacy of the Just Transition measure where change is uneconomical.

Biodiversity awareness and training could be rolled out in communities and in schools, building on existing work that has been done by activists in the county.

Table 12 - Rural Environment & Climate Action Issues (2)

Rural Environment	Climate Change – Capacity Building	Climate Change – Mitigation and Adaption
Biodiversity – Local environment (clean-ups). Rivers and lakes as a community, recreation, and tourism space. Water quality. Safe active travel options. Sensory Gardens.	Related Biodiversity information and awareness facilitation. Sustainable energy. Lack of knowledge and prioritisation. Energy conservation workshop.	Increase availability of local sustainable housing. Community Energy Projects. Anaerobic Digesters. Car charging points. Community composting. Rainwater harvesting. Enterprise: Plastics Recycling (Littleton).

The sub-theme relating to biodiversity was subject to much discussion in the public meetings with positive affirmation of local environments: lakes, bogs, hedgerows. There is potential for a range of low-cost community-based initiatives that could impact biodiversity goals and those of several linking themes (Rural tourism and recreation, rural food). Within the county, networking bodies should be supported to protect and promote diverse ecosystems in the context of tourism recreation development. Projects that encourage and support landowners to create areas of biodiversity that can then be used for public good and sustainable tourism were noted in discussions. LEADER has supported farm diversification, including green energy activities that also constitute climate action measures.

Outcome

The strongest need from the consultation was to address the knowledge deficit as to practical actions in climate and biodiversity at personal and community level. A Climate Action Leadership Programme could be rolled out in communities and in schools. Finding several niche areas for cost-effective input will be important and collaboration with existing energy, biodiversity and water schemes will optimise the potential for effective climate change mitigation programmes. Consultation feedback noted the need for immediate promotion of the Climate Action agenda and increased LEADER activity in the climate action space.

Co. Tipperary already hosts several different renewable energy projects and suggestions including solar panels, anaerobic digestion, hydro power, and wind energy add to the mix of community and/or private enterprise led models. The potential to create alternative energy 'hubs' around the county opens up possibilities of creating a Co. Tipperary brand in terms of alternative energy.

3.3 SWOT Analysis

The SWOT¹ analysis reflects the outcomes of the community consultation, focus group meetings, the statutory agency inputs, critical assessment of the previous LEADER Programme, the policy environment, and the demographic and socio-economic baselines.

3.3.1 Economic Development and Job Creation SWOT

The need to support the development of the rural economy has been identified as a focus for rural development in the 'Guidance on the LEADER Local Development Strategy' (February 2023).

Internal Strengths

- The CSO Labour Force Survey Quarter 1 2023 notes that at the State level, *'the Employment rate for persons aged 15-64 years in Quarter 1 2023 was 73.6 per cent, the highest recorded since the series began in 1998'*.
- The job market growth has created employment opportunities in several sectors, including retail, hospitality, health, distribution, warehousing, online delivery, and the services sectors. However, some are traditionally defined by low pay, employment insecurity, or seasonality.
- Co. Tipperary has established enterprise-orientated networks for Women in Business, Tipperary Tourism, Food Producers and Green Business development.
- The county has a favourable location, with connections to the mid-west (M7) and southwest (M8) for Cork, Limerick, Waterford, and Dublin. The location provides access to the main international (via airports and ports) and national markets.
- The county has a developed reputation in community-led, emerging green industries (supported by Tipperary Energy Agency) and National Bioeconomy Campus at Lisheen (Irish Bioeconomy Foundation). This reputation and technical experience can be leveraged to support the further development of rural food offerings, biodiversity initiatives, and recreational tourism and wellness offerings.
- Agriculture remains very important to the economy of rural areas. In 2016, there were 4.85 per cent more farmers in the county than in the State.
- The county is strongly represented in the life sciences sector and has a developing portfolio of financial services companies, with Fiserv in Nenagh and Waystone in Cashel. The consultation process confirmed a recognition that the county has a solid and extended industrial base, including pharma, agri-food, and light engineering.
- The strength of the agricultural sector has led to a tradition of artisan food production supported by the Tipperary Food Producers Network.
- There is an opportunity for the tourism sector to improve its performance in terms of bednights and revenue, thereby creating additional employment in rural areas. The nature of the employment offered by the sector is known to be attractive to certain members of disadvantaged communities.
- The Equine sector in the county is of economic significance. The sector embraces horse breeding, racing, sales, training, equestrian tourism, and ancillary services.
- The lifestyle change imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in new opportunities for the retail and services sectors.
- Broadband connectivity is provided within communities across the county. Twenty-one Broadband Connection Points under the National Broadband Plan offer 150 MB/s connectivity to support remote working.

¹ SWOT: (Internal) Strengths, (Internal) Weaknesses, (External) Opportunities and (External) Threats

Internal Weaknesses

- The CSO Labour Force Survey Quarter 1 2023 confirmed a national Unemployment Rate of 4.1 per cent. However, the Youth Unemployment Rate (15 to 24 yr olds) was 8.6 per cent in Q1 2023, up from 7.5 per cent twelve months earlier.
- The CSO Labour Force Survey Quarter 1 2023 noted, *'The lowest employment rate (71.0 per cent) was in the South-East region, an increase from the rate of 68.9 per cent observed in Q1 2022'*.
- The county's population growth rate between 2016 and 2022 was lower than the comparable rate for the State. This will impact on the depth of the labour market in the county.
- In 2016, Co. Tipperary lagged behind the State regarding the population that had attained a higher level of education.
- The lifestyle change imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in considerable economic disturbance. One indicator of the change has been the acceptance of online shopping.
- In 2016, many parts of Co. Tipperary continued to have traditional economic bases, with employers and managers, higher and lower professionals, less well represented in the county than in the State.
- *'Social Enterprises in Ireland - A Baseline Data Collection Exercise'* (2023) identifies 9.5 social enterprises per 10,000 inhabitants in Co. Tipperary, placing it fifteenth of all counties in the State. There is an opportunity to increase the number of social enterprises in the county. Social enterprises have a proven capacity to engage female entrepreneurs readily.
- Despite good connectivity, the tourism sector's performance was sub-optimal, with Fáilte Ireland reporting that the length of stay of domestic bednights in the county in 2021 was the second lowest in the region.
- Labour force supply has not kept pace with job opportunities in several sectors, including retail, hospitality, health, distribution, warehousing, online delivery, and other services sectors of the economy.
- The consultation process confirmed that on-street retail and food services in Co. Tipperary are closing as the nature of the rural economy pivots to accommodate working hubs, the growth of the green economy and working from home.
- There is a need to use targeted marketing to improve awareness of products, activities and services for tourists and communities alike.
- Unchecked population movement away from identified rural communities has the potential to negatively impact the nature and quality of local service provision leading to a cycle of decline.

External Opportunities

- A growing recognition in the community of climate change mitigation in the context of the potential for developing a green and circular economy optimising the county's rural character will be further driven by future policy imperatives.
- Linked to the above, there is increasing general recognition of the importance of protecting biodiversity. The challenge will be to translate this at a local level into innovative and meaningful job creation opportunities.
- There is an increasing understanding of the importance of an active lifestyle in promoting health and well-being. Existing examples that might be further leveraged around the county include the green and blue provision associated with the River Suir, the Lough Derg Blueway and the Co. Tipperary Cycle Network.
- The implementation of both *Ireland's Hidden Heartlands* and *Ireland's Ancient East* tourism marketing strategies (Fáilte Ireland) in the respective areas of the county creates an opportunity for an improved sectoral presence.

External Threats

- Whilst the economy is effectively at full employment, the CSO Labour Force Survey Quarter 1 2023 reports that at the State level, *‘21.5 per cent of those in employment worked part-time, and around 1 in 5 of those in part-time employment were classified as underemployed (i.e., they would like to work more hours for more pay)’*.
- Co. Tipperary is well situated and connected; however, there will be continuing logistic competition in all enterprise sectors from the cities of Limerick, Cork, and Dublin.
- The development of the green economy will be highly influenced by a more proactive regulatory framework that might otherwise constrain the realisation of community energy production, farm diversification, rural food, biodiversity, and recreation tourism.
- The legacy of the North and South Tipperary Ridings geographical split remains in confusing regional definitions used by various State agencies. This complexity can lead to reduced coherence of approach across the county.
- As elsewhere, macro-economic influences, unforeseeable geopolitical disturbances and public health issues can negatively impact the county’s economy.

Key Findings

From the above, the following key findings emerge: -

- Population growth is lower than that of the State
- The economy has effectively reached full employment
- Twenty per cent of part-time employees would like to work more hours for more pay
- There are continuing issues of quality of employment and pay rates for those in part-time and seasonal employment
- The county has established a reputation for addressing climate change (through the Tipperary Energy Agency), practical application of circular economy aspects (through leading-edge concepts adopted a Cloughjordan Eco-Village), and support for active lifestyles. This presents a further opportunity for capitalisation and job creation
- The tourism sector appears to have the capacity to improve its performance relative to the region.

Focus Areas

- The economy is changing, and the shift to a net zero carbon economy will create the need for significant changes in all sectors and types of employment.
- Aspects of the transition to the green economy are challenging for both employers and new and existing employees.
- Agriculture is a significant component of the county’s economy. Modern-day agriculture practices must diversify to meet the sectors’ climate change mitigation targets. New circular business economies will have to be developed to achieve these targets.
- In certain circumstances, farm families will have to redirect the use of the farm assets into new non-agricultural facilities. This new direction will likely expand the established menu for change to include carbon reduction elements in niche accommodation, rural food, and social farming enterprises.
- To realise the vision of developing and promoting Co. Tipperary as an inland tourism hotspot, significant co-investment will be required to develop international-standard product offerings. This will involve adding value to various attractions, activities, and experiences. New approaches will involve developing eco-tourism and improved marketing and promotions. The objectives will be to increase visitor numbers, improve visitor dwell time, increase spend and improve customer satisfaction across the county. The focus will be placed on blueways, greenways, cycleways, and equestrian trails.
- Employment growth will be supported by capital, training, analysis, and marketing support to encourage rural entrepreneurs to develop and grow businesses in Co. Tipperary through

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

support for micro and SME indigenous enterprises, both start-up and existing. The approach will focus on active tourism, artisan food, and community energy, for which take-up among females, new communities, the Traveller Community, and young people are already evident.

- To complement rural tourism and agricultural diversification activities, support will be provided to existing enterprises, start-ups, and innovation to enhance food production. It is anticipated that this will be attractive to members of new communities and new food areas.

Themes

The outcome of the Economic Development and Job Creation SWOT will require the development of a suite of actions that address the six sub-themes of the LEADER Programme. The objective of economic growth and job creation in Co. Tipperary must include the following: -

- Reinforcement of the green economy as a vehicle for economic development and new job creation in Co. Tipperary
- The continuation of support to enable farm families and family businesses to benefit from agricultural diversification initiatives in Co. Tipperary
- The development and promotion of Co. Tipperary as an inland tourism and recreation destination beyond the existing honeypots
- The provision of support underpins an integrated and targeted approach to sustainable, innovative enterprise development and employment creation in Co. Tipperary
- The development, expansion, and promotion of rural food production as a driver of rural economic growth and job creation
- The development and promotion of social, community and cooperative enterprises in Co. Tipperary

3.3.2 Rural Infrastructure and Social Inclusion SWOT

The provision of support for the development of the rural economy has been identified as a focus for rural development in the *'Guidance on the LEADER Local Development Strategy'* (February 2023).

Internal Strengths

- Some fifty per cent of Co. Tipperary's resident population lives in *'rural areas with moderate urban influence'*.
- Approximately twenty per cent of the population live in *'highly rural and remote areas'*.
- The Key Regional Towns by population in 2016 were Clonmel (17,140), Nenagh (8,917) and Thurles (7,940).
- In 2016, Co. Tipperary had proportionately fewer people whose self-declared health status was either bad or very bad.
- The Record of Monuments and Places lists 48 monuments distributed around the county. The built environment is crucial in attracting cultural tourists and contributes to the sense of place.
- The PPN has 1,547 registered members, with 1,308 (84.5 per cent) of these being in the Community pillar, 189 (12.2 per cent) comprising the Social Inclusion pillar, and 49 (3.1 per cent) representing the Environmental pillar.
- Co. Tipperary has twenty-one Special Areas of Conservation, eleven Natural Heritage Areas, and four Special Protection Areas. All these areas form an important part of the local rural infrastructure.
- In rural areas, housing is overwhelmingly detached, is generally older, and is more likely to be owned outright than in urban centres.
- Consultees recognised that the LEADER Programme had been instrumental in supporting the development of the built environment within settlements and the natural environment.
- The consultation process identified an opportunity to address the varying provisions for Men's and Women's Sheds by supporting local provision.

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

- Whilst there has been considerable investment in community facilities, the consultation process identified an opportunity for improving community provision, particularly where this would underpin a social inclusion mandate.

Internal Weaknesses

- In 2016, Co. Tipperary had proportionately more persons with a disability.
- Within the county, the proportion of persons with a disability is highest in areas with an older age profile, most notably in rural locations. Poor health outcomes are associated with age, as well as with socio-economic deprivation.
- In each MD, the consultation process confirmed an unmet need for additional retail, café, accommodation provision, and public houses.
- Housing vacancy is most prevalent in rural parts of the county. Vacancy is frequently associated with familial, personal, and ownership variables rather than property speculation.
- The highest property prices are generally in areas within short- and medium-commuting distances of employment centres.
- Over recent years, there has been a predominantly upward trend in respect of the proportion of rental properties that are covered by the Housing Assistance Payment.
- According to the CSO Census 2022, there are 6,390 vacant properties in Co. Tipperary (8.99 per cent of housing stock).
- In 2016, 68.24 per cent of the 59,071 households in Co. Tipperary lived in houses constructed before 2000, compared to 65.88 per cent in the State.
- In 2016, 11.91 per cent of households lived in properties constructed before 1919, compared to 8.32 per cent in the State.
- In 2016 60 per cent of households lived in homes heated by oil-fired central heating systems in the LDS area, compared to 40.4 per cent in the State.
- 1,121 households were recorded on the Co. Tipperary housing list in 2021, having been approved for social housing support. In 2016, the housing waiting list stood at 1,858, and the waiting list has fallen year on year since this date. Despite the positive change, nearly 218 households were reported as homeless as of April 2022.
- In 2016, eleven EDs with a total population of 19,543 were classified as '*Disadvantaged*'.
- In 2016, twenty-one SAPS areas were categorised as '*Very Disadvantaged*'. These accounted for a population of 12,160.
- The consultation outcomes revealed that disused and derelict buildings within settlements were problematic.
- The consultation process identified the need to utilise public transport options better.
- The underuse of community facilities was identified as an issue in some areas, and there were gaps in arts and culture facilities for younger people.
- The lack of accessibility, rural transport, and services (retail and tourist facilities) in many rural communities represents a current weakness.
- The consultation process identified that rural youth were impacted by population loss through migration and the lack of facilities, services, and employment opportunities for young people.
- The consultation outcomes noted that whilst there was significant provision for traditional team sports and activities, for those with interest in the arts, there was little provision.
- The outcomes of the consultation process suggest a lack of intercultural awareness within the community.

External Opportunities

- Several initiatives have been developed over recent years to address the decline in the built environment of towns and villages. These include the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund and the Town and Village Renewal Scheme.

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

- For every 10,000 population in Co. Tipperary in 2022, there were seventy-eight Community pillar organisations, eleven Social Inclusion pillar organisations, and three Environmental pillar organisations. This outcome suggests there might be potential to encourage new community and voluntary sector organisations interested in environmental matters in the county.
- A growing understanding of the link between a quality living environment and well-being may lead to the development of further support in this arena.
- LEADER provides an opportunity to partner with other organisations and agencies, such as the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme, to support the most difficult-to-engage communities.

External Threats

- The co-financing model of the LEADER Programme makes it challenging to engage with disadvantaged communities to support many social inclusion activities. The LEADER model of rural development was originally conceived as a mechanism to provide links between actions supporting the rural economy.
- As elsewhere, macro-economic influences, unforeseeable geopolitical disturbances and public health issues can negatively impact the resourcing of actions to support rural infrastructural development and social inclusion initiatives.
- The nature of rural disadvantage is changing. Fuel poverty, unintentional negative consequences of transitioning to mitigate climate change, high inflation levels and the continuing consolidation of service provision disproportionately impact those least able to respond to economic change in Co. Tipperary.
- At a national level, there are signs of a rise in xenophobia and intolerance of diversity and other cultures. This is driven by the increase in the migrant community and the national housing crisis. The situation could fuel social exclusion and disharmony in the future.

Key Findings

The following key findings emerge from the SWOT above: -

- The rural infrastructure of Co. Tipperary includes the built and natural amenities, as it relates to those in *urban settings*, *rural areas with moderate urban influence*, and *highly rural and remote areas*
- The requirements of these settings are distinct, but all will benefit from living in an environment that is valued and cared for. Whilst many communities are served by exemplary voluntary *Tidy Towns* activity, the problem of abandoned, derelict, and vacant buildings remains a scourge in some settlements. Derelict buildings destroy the visual amenity of their surroundings
- The county has a wealth of monuments and has substantial areas under environmental protection. With sensitive and careful management, much of this can be interpreted and presented for the enjoyment of locals and visitors. This will encourage more people to live and work in the locality
- Declining population numbers result in diminished service levels for the local community. Diminished service levels will place those least able to support themselves at an ever greater social and economic disadvantage
- Improved public transport access is one tool that can be used to address inadequate service levels, yet services require reinforcement in some areas to serve individuals' needs. Improved public transport provisions are one of the tools for improving climate change mitigation at a local level
- At the SAPS level, Co. Tipperary has identifiable communities that live in *Disadvantaged* or *Very Disadvantaged* areas. Numerous social and economic factors may contribute to the populations in these areas, which are dispersed around the county in pockets

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

- Rural Youth face challenges in rural areas, particularly if their interests lie away from traditional team sports. Social and Arts provision is required to broaden the appeal of rural areas for some young people
- The lack of intercultural awareness within the community should be addressed through initiatives to increase knowledge and understanding, especially regarding new communities, asylum seekers and refugees

Focus Areas

- Eleven EDs with a total population of 19,543 were classified as '*Disadvantaged*'. Of these, Tipperary East Urban (-18.26), Carrick-on-Suir Urban (-14.28), and Clonmel West Urban (-14.02) returned an HP Deprivation Score exceeding -14.0.
- The twenty-one SAPS areas categorised as '*Very Disadvantaged*' were in the EDs of Tipperary West Urban (1,599), Clonmel West Urban (3,452), Kilcommon (1,281), Carrick-on-Suir Urban (1,951), Thurles Urban (2,686), and Roscrea (1,191).
- Areas with heightened levels of vacant or abandoned properties offer the opportunity to regenerate the rural infrastructure.
- Provision of aid for the community through social and economic support to stabilise declining population numbers in settlements under threat. The objective will be to retain or improve service levels for the local community.
- Improvement of access to public transport to address inadequate service levels. This will also help to improve climate change mitigation at a local level.
- Support rural youth by improving the diversity of activities and facilities in parallel with increasing employment and self-employment opportunities for young rural dwellers.

Themes

The outcome of the Rural Infrastructure and Social Inclusion SWOT will require the development of a suite of actions that address three of the four sub-themes of the LEADER Programme. The objective of rural infrastructure and social inclusion in Co. Tipperary must include the following: -

- Supporting the sustainable regeneration of Co. Tipperary's towns and villages. This will focus on providing inclusive community infrastructure that can improve the quality of life for rural dwellers. Particular attention will be paid to the identified communities in *disadvantaged* and *very disadvantaged* areas
- Developing accessible services for all in Co. Tipperary has been identified as key to retaining communities in areas of population decline or stress. A focus should be placed on places that have not previously received significant LEADER funding
- In 2021, Tipperary Education and Training Board noted that *disadvantaged* or *very disadvantaged* areas accounted for 17.5 per cent of the 16-24 population. There was an increased likelihood of young people from these areas disengaging and featuring among the 18 per cent of young people categorised as unemployed. Supporting Co. Tipperary's youth (aged 15-40) is essential for the LEADER Programme into the future

3.3.3 Rural Environment, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation SWOT

The theme of the sustainable development of the rural environment, coupled with climate change mitigation and adaptation, is seen as a focus for future rural developments in Co. Tipperary.

Internal Strengths

- The consultation process reveals that many communities have a legacy of positive participation in the annual *Tidy Towns* competition. This speaks to understanding the importance of the natural and built environment, often employing greening initiatives that biodiversity focussed actions can underpin.

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

- Tipperary Green Business Network was established in 2011 and aims to make businesses more efficient and effective by optimising their resources. The network activities will support mitigating climate change, increasing adaptation, and building awareness in the community generally.
- In addition to the Green Business Network, there are established environmental networks, including Sustainable Tipperary (an interagency body) and the Tipperary PPN Environmental Network (comprising community and voluntary groups).
- There are established environmental centres of excellence in the county. These include Cabragh Wetlands Ecology Centre and the long-established Cloughjordan Eco Village.
- The county has developed an understanding of the role of the rural environment in addressing climate change through mitigation and adaptation. This is evidenced by the work of the Tipperary Energy Agency and the establishment of the National Bioeconomy Campus at Lisheen. This consultation process outcome suggest that this technical knowledge can be used to support biodiversity initiatives and encourage climate change mitigation measures.
- There is an established track record of innovative leadership combining aspects of the circular and social economies. The *Cottage Shop and Tearooms* was established in 2012 to combat the lack of services and rural isolation in the community of Loughmore (population of 800). The initiative was set up for the benefit of the community on a not-for-profit basis, with all profits going back into the community. SuirCan Community Forum is a Clonmel-based environmental group formed in 2007 whose founding aim was to ensure the health of the River Suir in and around the town for the mutual benefit of the river and the people of the area.
- The existing green economy base and rural character form the foundation for future activities to promote community energy, farm diversification, rural food, biodiversity, rural recreation, and responsible eco-tourism.
- The scope of community facilities across the county creates an opportunity to update and repurpose the infrastructure to improve energy efficiency, encourage remote working and outdoor recreation. This will have the added impact of increasing accessibility and aiding social inclusion.

Internal Weaknesses

- Only three per cent of the PPN members are community and voluntary organisations with a stated focus on environmental activism.
- The consultation process reports that there has been a reduction in the number of volunteers becoming involved in community activity following the Covid-19 pandemic. This might make efforts to create more environmental pillar groups difficult.
- The consultation process outcomes suggest a relatively low diversification rate from traditional farming into green enterprise initiatives. Commercial agriculture is necessarily focused on economic sustainability, making climate change mitigation payback marginal.
- Difficulties have been consistently expressed concerning the overly complex regulatory framework surrounding environmental initiatives.
- Access to reliable and appropriate advice, expertise and knowledge concerning biodiversity, climate action and environmental initiatives are cited as problematic in both the community and voluntary sector and the business community.
- There is a disconnection between the understanding of climate interventions and the community's perception of their measurable impact.

External Opportunities

- Climate change mitigation and adaptation will create opportunities for initiatives in energy generation and efficiency, modal changes in transport, adaptation in agriculture, investment in buildings, and waste management. These opportunities offer the potential to create new employment opportunities, some of which are in the realm of social enterprise to support communities of place or interest.

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

- There is a political imperative to achieve the National Climate Action Plan 2023 mandatory target of achieving a 51 per cent reduction in emissions by 2030 across all sectors of society. A new raft of initiatives and interventions may be rolled out in Ireland in the coming years with the objective of realising the ambitions of the EU Green Deal. Such initiatives are likely to focus on cutting greenhouse gas emissions, investing in research and innovation, and preserving Europe's environment. This will have the impact of increasing public awareness of issues relating to the development of the rural environment, coupled with climate change mitigation and adaptation.

External Threats

- Effectively addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation will require initiatives in energy generation and efficiency, modal changes in transport, adaptation in agriculture, investment in buildings, and waste management. These require the development of coordinated policy interventions, technological advancements, and behavioural changes.
- Over the foreseeable future, the macroeconomic environment is likely to remain problematic due to geopolitical instability, particularly with the EU. This may have a dampening effect on the implementation of innovative solutions to climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Fuel poverty, unintentional negative consequences of transitioning to mitigate climate change, and high inflation levels will disproportionately impact those least able to respond to a change in Co. Tipperary. In this circumstance, it will be challenging to engage disadvantaged community members on low pay rates or distanced from the labour market in any activity that will further diminish their disposable income levels.

Key Findings

The following key findings emerge from the SWOT above: -

- There is considerable activity within certain communities in Co. Tipperary that values the rural environment, supports measures to mitigate the impact of climate change and implements actions to adapt to the changing situation
- There are exemplary projects in the county that can be used to demonstrate community responses to aspects of climate change
- There is an opportunity to enhance energy efficiencies by encouraging the installation of renewable energy solutions in business operations and community facilities
- There is a general recognition of the need to safeguard the sensitive rural environment for locals and visitors
- There is a willingness amongst communities to play their part in climate change mitigation and adaptation; however, there is a knowledge and expertise deficiency in achieving this effectively.
- Climate apathy related to the perception of the size of the global climate crisis and how it impacts Co. Tipperary and what actions can be taken locally needs to be addressed in a practical way that can engage with communities
- There is a need to develop practical skills in the green economy and support workers to transition from jobs threatened by climate change

Focus Areas

- The knowledge and expertise deficiency in improving the rural environment and effectively addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation at the community level will require awareness-building and skilling initiatives.
- The design and implementation of a capacity-building programme focusing on communities in Co. Tipperary to enhance their knowledge, understanding and confidence and unlock their collective power and potential to confront the economic and social challenges of transitioning to a biodiverse carbon-neutral and resilient society must be initiated urgently.

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

- There is a need to develop practical skills in the green economy and support workers to transition from jobs threatened by climate change.

Themes

The outcome of the Rural Environment, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation SWOT will require the development of a suite of actions that address the three sub-themes of the LEADER Programme. The objective of measures to support the rural environment, climate change mitigation and adaptation in Co. Tipperary must include: -

- Actions to underpin the sustainable development of Co. Tipperary's built and natural environment will provide opportunities for increased social inclusion by stimulating the local economy
- Building the capacity of both the community and voluntary sector and the business sector to meet the challenge of climate change and biodiversity loss. Awareness-building and practical demonstrators will be required to realise this opportunity
- Supporting the community and voluntary sector and small and medium-sized enterprises to mitigate and adapt to the consequences of climate change will encourage new solutions, employment opportunities and an improvement in a general sense of wellness

3.4 Agreement of Priorities and Objectives

In implementing the principles of Community-Led Local Development, the following process for agreeing the priorities and objectives that underpin the Tipperary LDS was adopted.

Priorities and their attendant objectives were identified and selected through an analysis process of the needs emerging from the socio-economic profile and area needs analysis, feedback generated from the LDS consultation process, consideration of relevant policies at local, regional, national and EU levels (including a review of the strategies and plans of other local stakeholders and agencies being delivered over the period 2023-2027), and the many decades of experience of the implementing partners.

Figure 18 – Priorities and Objectives Development Model



The process was overseen by the LDS Advisory Group, and the outcomes were presented in draft form to the LCDC (for review and comment) at a Local Development Strategy Workshop held on 29th May 2023.

The adopted process was designed to ensure that the priorities and needs were evidence-based, aligned with the strategic vision of all key agencies. They also reflected the local knowledge of the Implementing Partners.

From the Local Development Strategy Workshop, the agreed priorities and objectives served as the foundation for identifying their corresponding strategic actions as detailed in Section 5. Once established, the draft local objectives and strategic actions were

recommended to the LAG for consideration. A final review was conducted by the LAG where the local objectives and strategic actions were agreed and approved in full.

3.5 Summary

It augurs well for the new programme that the Implementing Partners have a track record of animation, capacity building and training which have been highlighted as necessary to fully

engage, particularly in emerging areas relating directly (e.g., biodiversity, green economy, and renewable energy), and indirectly (e.g., recreational and activity tourism, artisan food production, and diversification) to climate action. This and other feedback emerged over a four-month consultation process, a positive indicator in a different context of close working relations among the governance partners.

Connecting was a key theme relating to community engagement; digital capacity; local services; emerging sectors; rural employment in the form of local centres, networks and work hubs. These emerging sectors also facilitate connecting with harder-to-reach groups (younger, new communities and Traveller entrepreneurs).

The consultation highlighted the age transition required in the voluntary sector with older contributors looking to exit and the need to recruit younger cohorts from varied backgrounds. Positive affirmation of the potential for social enterprise to address local service deficits ties in with national policy.

4 Strategic Integration

The Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy will enable key European, national, regional, and local policies to be delivered. Specific Objective 8 - Article 6(h) of CAP Strategic Plan Regulation 2021/2115 requires that the Programme specifically *'promotes employment, growth, gender equality, including the participation of women in farming, social inclusion and local development in rural areas, including the circular bioeconomy and sustainable forestry.'* It is noted that forestry is listed as an ineligible activity for LEADER support in the CAP Strategic Plan as agreed with the EU Commission.

All the actions of the Theme 1 LDS Actions are designed to promote employment in rural areas by stimulating targeted sectors. The targeted sectors have been identified through the outcomes of the consultation process and the socio-economic profiling of the county. They also accord with key policy statements and align with the sub-themes of the LEADER Framework.

Many of the actions under Theme 3 will also have the impact of improving employment opportunities in rural areas. For example, it is anticipated that providing support for communities and enterprises to adapt to the consequences of climate change will result in more sustainable local economies offering new employment opportunities.

All actions are designed to encourage local growth, either through capital improvements or through increasing the local knowledge base through upskilling and awareness-building. The latter has been identified as a need for certain cohorts of the community in relation to better understanding new concepts of climate change mitigation and the circular bioeconomy. It is also a vehicle for engaging with communities that are otherwise more difficult to reach.

Social Enterprise has been identified as a sector which is under-represented in Co. Tipperary. In line with the National Social Enterprise Strategy, the LAG will encourage the formation of new Social Enterprises. *Social Enterprises in Ireland - A Baseline Data Collection Exercise 2023* confirms that *'social enterprise employment is especially relevant for women as they represent 68.8 per cent of the sector workforce. Most sectors of social enterprise activity that participated in the survey are predominantly composed of women (more than 50 per cent of their workforce). This high proportion of women is especially noted in fields of activity such as Childcare (nine out of ten employees are women); and Health, Youth Services and Social Care (seven out of ten employees are women).'* As in other sectors, the LDS will promote gender equality in enterprise and social activity and will use the example of social enterprise in this regard.

4.1 Networking

Co. Tipperary LAG and the Implementing Partners have long recognised the importance of networking in the success of the LEADER Programme, as it facilitates collaboration, knowledge exchange, and the sharing of resources among stakeholders.

The partnership between the LAG and the Implementing Partners will continue to bring together the various stakeholders, including the local authority, community and voluntary groups, and businesses. By establishing connections and fostering relationships, it has been demonstrated that networking enhances collaboration and cooperation among these stakeholders. It allows the identification of common goals, the alignment of effort, and the achievement of shared objectives.

Subject to the detailed rules of the LEADER Programme, the LAG and Implementing Partners will seek to encourage networks that support those challenged by disadvantage, or who require expertise to address issues. One such likely area for network activity is in mitigating climate change and developing the circular economy.

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

Networking activity will be supported where it can generate synergies between project promoters, supporting agencies, and sectoral experts. In this scenario, promoters can pool their resources, expertise, and knowledge to address complex challenges in rural areas.

The LAG recognises that networking provides a platform for knowledge exchange and learning in the LEADER Programme. It allows participants to share best practices, lessons learned, and innovative ideas. By connecting with peers and experts, promoters can gain valuable insights and information that can inform their projects and strategies. Networking events, conferences, and workshops have been used by the LAG and Implementing Partners previously to foster rural development, capacity building, and the acquisition of new skills. Networking also encourages the transfer of tacit knowledge, which is often difficult to capture in formal documentation but is crucial for rural development initiatives.

Networking will continue to play a role in facilitating access to resources and funding for the LEADER Programme. By establishing connections with potential funders, investors, and sponsors, promoters can increase their chances of securing financial support for their projects. Networking events can provide opportunities for stakeholders to pitch their ideas and proposals, attracting the attention of potential donors.

It has been shown that in Co. Tipperary networking fosters the development of trust and social capital among the stakeholders involved in the LEADER Programme. Here, networking will contribute to the accumulation of social capital. Communities with strong social capital are better equipped to overcome obstacles, implement projects, and create sustainable change. Furthermore, networking empowers promoters by providing them with a platform to showcase their achievements, disseminate their success stories, and inspire others. This will strengthen the impact of the LEADER Programme.

The LAG and Implementing Partners will continue to participate in all the appropriate Programme networks established in Ireland. Participation will also continue in respect of the EU CAP Networks in Ireland, and the National Rural Network.

The Partnership and wider LAG membership have a strong networking presence with membership, participation and leading in various networks. These networks include at a county level Tipperary PPN, Sustainable Tipperary Network, Green Business Network, Tipperary Food Producers, Tipperary Energy Agency, Tipperary Tourism. and Munster Vales, Lough Derg Marketing Group, RAPID Forums in Carrick on Suir, Tipperary Town and Clonmel and Community Action Plan networks in Roscrea and Littleton, Tipperary Economic Forum, Climate Action, Children and Young Peoples Services Committee, Rural Transport and Local Link, Tipperary Volunteer Centre, Tipperary Age Friendly, Healthy Tipperary, Sláintecare Healthy Community Clonmel, Ukraine Response Forum, River Catchment Plans, and Traveller Programmes

Regional and National fora would include the Chief Officers Network, Mid-West Regional Enterprise Implementation Committee, Bio Economy and National Bio Economy Foundation, Irish Local Development Network and the partners would have previously delivered and partnered on EU Funding Programmes including INTERREG, Erasmus, LIFE, Interface, and Horizon 2020.

All the partners delivering the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 are ambitious for Co. Tipperary and seek to maximise opportunities for the county in both social and economic outputs.

4.2 Cooperation

It is understood that the criteria for selection inter-territorial and transnational cooperation projects will be detailed in the LEADER Programme Operating Rules. The LAG and Implementing Partners will continue to support the development of inter-territorial and transnational cooperation projects that add value to rural development activity in the county. To be of relevance to Co. Tipperary, the cooperation projects will align with the Action Plan objectives and actions.

Subject to the requirements of the Operating Rules, it is anticipated that inter-territorial and transnational cooperation projects will focus on the following indicative activities: -

- Assisting promoters in targeting new markets, improving the quality of products manufactured by co-operating in relation to processing techniques, and joint marketing and short supply chain activities
- Introducing new approaches in areas such as SMART Villages, town and village renewal, rural tourism, or environmental management by building on the experience of LAGs in other areas
- Providing economies of scale or critical mass to enable a project which would not have been possible within the Co. Tipperary LDS area alone

4.3 Policy Context

The scope of the Tipperary LDS will flank a range of strategies and interventions targeted at local and rural development. In the interests of efficiency and effectiveness, the LDS must provide for an integrated and coordinated approach to local development. To achieve this, it is necessary to achieve alignment between the LEADER themes and sub-themes and the overarching policy framework at all levels.

4.3.1 International Policy Alignment

United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Contains seventeen goals for sustainable development. Those which are of direct relevance to the LDS include: -

- End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- Achieve food security and promote sustainable agriculture
- Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all
- Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation
- Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable energy
- Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work
- Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation
- Make settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable
- Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
- Take urgent action to combat climate change
- Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

4.3.2 EU Policy Alignment

Common Agricultural Policy 2023-2027

The Common Agricultural Policy 2023-2027 (CAP) will ensure a sustainable future for European farmers, provide more targeted support to smaller farms, and allow greater flexibility for EU countries to adapt measures to local conditions. Agriculture and rural areas are seen to be central to the European Green Deal, and the CAP 2023-2027 will be a key tool in reaching the ambitions of the Farm-to-Fork and biodiversity strategies.

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

The objectives of CAP 2023-2027 are to: -

- Ensure a fair income for farmers
- Increase competitiveness
- Improve the position of farmers in the food chain
- Facilitate climate change action
- Encourage environmental care
- Preserve landscapes and biodiversity
- Support generational renewal
- Support vibrant rural areas
- Protect food and health quality
- Foster knowledge and innovation

EU Rural Pact and EU Rural Action Plan

The eight goals outlined in the EU Rural Action Plan are: -

1. Supporting attractive spaces unlocking their specific potential, making them places of opportunity, and providing local solutions to help tackle the local effects of global challenges
2. Engagement in multi-level and place-based governance, developing integrated strategies using collaborative and participatory approaches
3. Provision of food security, economic opportunities, goods and services such as bio-based materials and energy but also local, community-based high-quality products, renewable energy, retaining a fair share of the value generated
4. Supporting dynamic communities focusing on wellbeing, including livelihoods, fairness, prosperity, and quality of life
5. Supporting inclusive communities of inter-generational solidarity, fairness and renewal, open to newcomers and fostering equal opportunities for all
6. Creation of flourishing sources of nature, enhanced by and contributing to the objectives of the Green Deal, including climate neutrality
7. Fully benefiting from digital innovation with equal access to emerging technologies
8. Supporting entrepreneurial, innovative, and skilled people co-creating technological, ecological, and social progress

European Green Deal

The European Green Deal aims to transform the Union into a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy where: -

- There will be no net emissions of greenhouse gases by 2050
- Economic growth is decoupled from resource use
- No person and no place are left behind

The European Green Deal is the Commission's plan to make the EU's economy sustainable. This will be achieved by turning climate and environmental challenges into opportunities and making the transition just and inclusive for all.

It follows that the LDS should incorporate measures to reduce carbon emissions, enhance local biodiversity and, where appropriate, positively consider opportunities to support sustainability through the circular economy and local community resilience.

A Long-Term Vision for the EU's Rural Areas - *Towards stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous rural areas by 2040*

The European Commission's long-term vision for EU rural areas to 2040 identifies action to ensure stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous rural areas and communities. The action themes are: -

1. Stronger: -
 - Empowered communities
 - Access to services
 - Social innovation
2. Connected: -
 - Digital connectivity
 - Transport links and new mobilities
3. Prosperous: -
 - Diversification of economic activities
 - Sustainable food production
4. Resilient: -
 - Resilience to climate change
 - Environmental resilience
 - Social resilience

EU Charter for Fundamental Rights

The Charter brings together the EU's fundamental civil, political, economic, and social rights. It was introduced to bring consistency and clarity across EU Member States. The Charter is based on the following: -

- The fundamental rights and freedoms recognised by the European Convention on Human Rights
- The constitutional traditions of the EU Member States
- The Council of Europe's Social Charter
- The Community Charter of Fundamental Social Rights of Workers
- Other international conventions

4.3.3 State Policy Alignment

Project Ireland 2040

Project Ireland 2040 is Ireland's overarching strategy to deliver improved physical infrastructure and support businesses and communities to realise their potential. Project 2040 comprises the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the National Development Plan (NDP).

National Planning Framework

The NPF shapes future public and private investment while promoting opportunities for all people and all environments. The NPF sets out a range of Strategic Outcomes.

National Development Plan 2021-2030

The National Development Plan is the country's detailed public investment plan for the period to 2027. It was updated in 2021. The NDP Provides for: -

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

- €165bn investment plan focusing on solutions to strengthen housing, climate ambitions, transport, healthcare, and jobs growth in every region
- The NDP establishes the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) and Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF). The RRDF provides investment to projects in towns and villages of less than 10,000 population

Climate Action Plan 2023

The National Climate Action Plan 2023 sets out actions across all sectors to achieve a 51 per cent reduction in emissions by 2030 across all sectors of society. This is consistent with the ambitions outlined in the EU Green Deal, with measures to cut greenhouse gas emissions, invest in research and innovation, and preserve Europe's environment.

Under the Climate Action Plan, each local authority must adopt a new Climate Action Plan setting out proposals to attain the national objectives and targets.

Programme for Government - *Our Shared Future*

The Programme for Government sets clear objectives and initiatives for developing indigenous enterprises, entrepreneurship and high-risk, innovative start-ups, scaling enterprises, regional job creation, enterprise sustainability and diversity, and generating more exporting companies.

Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021-2025

Our Rural Future provides the vision for a thriving rural Ireland and is integral to national economic, social, cultural and environmental wellbeing and development. That vision is built on rural communities' talent, skills and creativity, the importance of vibrant and lived-in rural places, and the potential to create quality jobs in rural areas and sustain our shared environment. Key deliverables under *Our Rural Future*, which align with the LDS, include remote working, revitalising rural towns and villages, jobs for rural Ireland, rural living, rural Ireland's unique tourism, culture and heritage, and transitioning to a carbon-neutral economy.

Town Centres First: A Policy Approach for Irish Towns

Our Rural Future outlined a vision to support the regeneration and development of rural towns and villages to contribute to local and national economic recovery and to enable people to live and work in a vibrant environment. The Town Centre First Policy is central to this vision.

The Town Centre First Policy aims to create town centres that function as viable, vibrant and attractive locations for people to live, work and visit while also functioning as the service, social, cultural and recreational hub for the local community.

Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020- 2025

The Roadmap aims to reduce the number of people in consistent poverty in Ireland to 2 per cent or less and to position Ireland within the top five countries in the EU under several leading social inclusion measures. The Roadmap will achieve this through seven high-level goals: -

1. Extend employment opportunities to all who can work.
2. Ensure work pays through fair pay and fair conditions for workers.
3. Provide income security for older people.
4. Support families and reduce child poverty.
5. Reduce poverty among people with disabilities – help them to maximise their ability.
6. Build inclusive communities – encourage active citizenship.
7. Ensure that all people have access to quality services.

Sustainable, Inclusive, and Empowered Communities

Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities is a five-year strategy to support Ireland's community and voluntary sector 2019-2024.

The strategy is designed to: -

- Involve communities in decision-making
- Support people and organisations working with communities
- Develop partnership and collaborative approaches to policy and programme development
- Support local government to work with communities

Embracing Ireland's Outdoors - National Outdoor Recreation Strategy 2023-2027

Embracing Ireland's Outdoors provides a strategic, collaborative framework to facilitate the consolidation and sustainable growth of the outdoor recreation sector.

The Strategy notes that *'at county level, the ambition is to achieve a more planned and coordinated approach between the many stakeholders, with the introduction of a County Outdoor Recreation Committee and the development of an Outdoor Recreation Plan for each county. This will ensure that county needs are prioritised, as well as being aligned with the national strategy. This new structure will be best placed to ensure that value for money is achieved from the significant levels of public investment in outdoor recreation. In addition, it is an ambition to ensure that available funding and resources are better aligned with national and county priorities.'*

It is anticipated that the partnership will be involved in and link closely to this new strategy as it aligns with the LDS.

4.3.4 Regional Policy Alignment

Southern Regional Assembly: Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy

The Southern Regional Assembly has prepared a Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Regional area, which sets out the economic and spatial strategy. The primary aim of the RSES is to implement Project Ireland 2040, the National Planning Framework, and to support NPF policy for achieving balanced regional development.

The RSES acknowledges the transformation imperatives: low carbon and digital. The RSES vision is to: -

- Nurture all places to realise their full potential
- Protect and enhance our environment
- Successfully combat climate change
- Achieve economic prosperity and improved quality of life for all
- Accommodate expanded growth and development in suitable locations
- Make the Southern Region one of Europe's most creative, innovative, greenest, and liveable regions

Mid-West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2024

Mid-West Regional Enterprise Plan has five strategic objectives: -

1. Digitalisation and innovation, including themes such as advanced manufacturing, future mobility, film, sports tech, and healthcare
2. Sustainability, including themes such as bioeconomy, renewable energy and sustainability in the built environment

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

3. Enterprise in regional towns and rural areas, including themes such as developing a network of high-quality eHubs, development of food hubs, a skills heat mapping exercise, and digitalisation of the tourism sector
4. Supporting SMEs, start-ups and microbusinesses, including themes such as industry cluster development, promotion of apprenticeships and traineeships, management and financial training, and efforts to develop/accelerate HPSUs
5. Social enterprise and tackling areas of high unemployment, including actions such as the growth of social enterprise to achieve sustainable progress towards employment equality

Ireland's Ancient East Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027

Fáilte Ireland's Strategy to 2023: From Survival to Recovery seeks to guide the industry back to recovery following the Covid-19 pandemic. It sets out a course of action based on the following strategic pillars: -

1. Sustaining tourism businesses in the short term so they can thrive over the long term
2. Supporting the industry to attract and retain talent to support sustainable growth
3. Achieving a sustained step change in Irish staycations
4. Transforming Ireland's outdoor tourism experience
5. Transforming Irish tourism's online presence and e-commerce capability
6. Enhancing the destination experience and support the industry in building a pipeline of future international business
7. Reducing the carbon footprint of the tourism sector and make it much more sustainable
8. Ensuring the area is best in class

Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027

Ireland's Hidden Heartlands Regional Tourism Development Strategy has five objectives: -

1. Raise awareness and recognition of the region and brand among domestic and international visitors and increase the duration of visitor stays, particularly within the domestic market.
2. Enhance the range and quality of our visitor experiences to underpin the Hidden Heartlands brand proposition, leveraging the natural and cultural assets of the region in a sustainable way with a focus on eco-tourism.
3. Grow the economic impact of tourism and create jobs in local tourism by supporting the tourism industry (private, public and community sectors) to develop its capacity and capability while reducing its carbon footprint.
4. Establish the region as one of the leading regenerative tourism destinations in Europe in which tourism results in net positive outcomes for communities and nature.
5. Build a committed industry and stakeholder coalition to guide and co-ordinate the sustainable development of destinations across the region.

4.3.5 County Policy Alignment

Tipperary County Development Plan 2022-2028

The core strategy of the County Development Plan (CDP) recognises that preparation is required for a climate-resilient, sustainable, and low-carbon county. The core ambitions necessary to achieve this outcome include the following: -

- A healthy natural environment, working landscapes and supporting infrastructure
- Vibrant living towns driving the regional and local economies
- Valued built and cultural heritage

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

- Strong rural economy with diverse, connected communities

The CDP notes that the NPF Implementation Road Map projects a strong population growth of approximately fifteen per cent for the county by 2031. This will require the growth and revitalisation of towns and villages, ensuring they are vibrant centres and communities capable of supporting growth.

Healthy Tipperary Strategy 2018-2020

The three-year Strategy aimed to deliver a healthier Tipperary. The local authority worked in conjunction with the HSE and several health-related agencies.

Tipperary Age-Friendly Strategy

The objectives of the Tipperary Age-Friendly Strategy are to: -

- Ensure older people feel connected with their community
- Identify opportunities for older people to engage
- Ensure greater accessibility
- Promote positive health and wellbeing
- Support older people to live independently at home
- Promote a positive attitude to ageing
- Build awareness of the needs of older people
- Build the capacity of older people to engage effectively
- Plan for the needs of the ageing population
- Utilise RAPID, CLÁR, Town and Village Renewal, and Community Enhancement Programme Schemes to support Age-Friendly Projects

Sláintecare Healthy Communities

The Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme supports communities' health and wellbeing needs. This will be achieved through the close connection between communities and community development, housing, social supports, public space, and the built environment.

Tipperary Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2016-2022

The Tipperary Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2016-2022 is structured on five pillars: -

1. Participation in sports and physical activity.
2. Provision of sustainable infrastructure to address clear needs and is multi-use and accessible.
3. Supporting the training and education needs of the volunteer coaches and administrators.
4. Using information and communications to create an information hub for sports and physical activity for Tipperary.
5. Supporting structures and administration to develop and strengthen sports and physical activity in the county.

Draft Tipperary Local Economic and Community Plan

Community Development High-Level Goal: -

- Enhancing the participation, leadership, resilience, and safety of rural communities
- Improving access to services within the community and supporting community infrastructure development

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

- Prioritise geographical areas and communities with high levels of deprivation, social exclusion and marginalisation
- Assist communities in the improvement of health and wellbeing
- Assist communities in maximising opportunities for young people and children
- Support communities to develop in an age-friendly way

Economic Development High-Level Goal: -

- Supporting a diverse, innovative, and environmentally aware economy in which employment opportunities are available, and education and training opportunities are accessible
- Grow the economy by developing infrastructure attracting industry, entrepreneurs and innovators
- Collaborate with agencies and partners to promote Co. Tipperary as an investment location with good connectivity
- Develop Co. Tipperary as having a high-quality, sustainable, and climate-resilient environment
- Facilitate the development of a diverse and skilled workforce
- Support micro and small business sectors
- Facilitate the marketing of Co. Tipperary as an attractive place to invest and establish an enterprise
- Sustainably improve visitor experience: increase visitor revenue, visitor numbers, capacity, dwell time and bed nights
- Identify economic sectors within the county most vulnerable to current challenges

Climate Action and Biodiversity: -

Enable Tipperary to contribute to national targets for reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, that its households, communities, and businesses would be active in adapting to climate change and that environmental impact considerations would inform all decisions in the county: -

- Increase the awareness and understanding of the impacts and opportunities associated with climate change
- Promote and support the growth of renewable energy and the circular economy
- Protect biodiversity, seek to reverse habitat and species loss where possible, protect natural habitats and safeguard water quality
- Develop Tipperary as an environmentally aware county by helping businesses and communities to be energy efficient, mitigate their climate impact, and be ready to adapt to the effects of climate change
- Protect and restore water quality in 'at risk' waterbodies. Help to ensure Tipperary's compliance with the Water Framework Directive

Economic Development: -

- Support a diverse, innovative, and environmentally aware economy in which employment opportunities are available, and education and training opportunities are accessible.
- Grow the economy by developing infrastructure attracting industry, entrepreneurs, and innovators.
- Collaborate with agencies and partners to promote Co. Tipperary as an investment location with good connectivity.
- Develop Co. Tipperary as having a high-quality, sustainable, and climate-resilient environment.
- Facilitate the development of a diverse and skilled workforce.
- Support micro and small business sectors.

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

- Facilitate the marketing of Co. Tipperary as an attractive place to invest and establish an enterprise.
- Sustainably improve visitor experience: increase visitor revenue, visitor numbers, capacity, dwell time and bed nights.
- Identify economic sectors within the county most vulnerable to current challenges.

Tipperary Transforming: Tourism Product Development Plan 2020-2030

Interpretive Framework: -

- Heritage: built heritage and culture
- Landscape: mountains, hills, and landscapes
- Water: Lough Derg and the River Suir. The waterscape, surrounding hinterland, towns and villages

Concepts: -

- *Hero Projects*: new and existing significant tourism projects capable of attracting over 100,000 visitors annually.
- *Creating Clusters*: combinations of attractions and activities where several projects delivered and bundled together can attract and hold visitors. This may include one additional new product or several additional new products from this plan.
- *Enhancement Projects*: where existing products are in place and the proposal is an extension or enhancement of the current situation to improve a visitor's experience when in the destination but is not a primary reason to visit a destination.

Cross-cutting themes: -

- Environment
- Capacity
- Business support
- Infrastructure

Co. Tipperary Digital Strategy 2018-2023

The five-year Digital Strategy for Co. Tipperary is designed to enhance the digital economy in the county. The Strategy prioritises four key themes: -

- Infrastructure: The Strategy notes that progress has been made on implementing the National Broadband Plan, and at the end of Q1 2018 a total of premises 48 per cent of premises had been '*passed by fibre*' with a further 13,422 to be passed by the end of 2018.
- Enterprise: The Strategy reports that many businesses in Co. Tipperary are trading successfully online but many more could benefit from introducing an online dimension to their sales activities. A lack of digital skills was cited as a major challenge for businesses.
- Citizens: The Strategy notes the need to train people in the use of digital technologies.
- Training and Education: The Strategy notes that whilst much progress has been made to improve access to high-speed broadband for schools and colleges, the primary school sector still had patchy provision.

Tipperary Public Participation Network Strategic Plan 2017-2018

Co. Tipperary Public Participation Network PPN strategic objectives are guided by three overarching goals which aim to: -

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

1. Facilitate the participation and representation of communities fairly, equitably and transparently through the environmental, social inclusion and community and voluntary sectors on decision-making bodies.
2. Strengthen the capacity of communities and of the environmental, social inclusion and voluntary groups to contribute positively to the community in which they reside or participate.
3. Provide information relevant to the environment, social inclusion, community, and voluntary groups and acts as a hub around which information is distributed and received.

PPN Community Wellbeing

Co. Tipperary PPN's Community Wellbeing vision is built on six pillars: -

1. Environment and sustainability
2. Health (physical and mental)
3. Work, economy, and resources
4. Social and community development
5. Participation, democracy, and good governance
6. Values, culture and meaning

The vision is that 'Co. Tipperary is an attractive, inclusive, and welcoming county with community-minded people, diverse cultures, and rich heritage, where we respect and value one another. It is a positive and safe place to live. Our thriving and progressive economy is dynamic and enhanced by our strong local democracy and active community participation.'

Everyone enjoys a great quality of life with excellent local infrastructure, supports and services. We live sustainably and work together to protect, enhance and enjoy our beautiful environment.'

4.5 Summary

The implementation of the LDS and its Strategic Actions underpins the focus of EU, National, Regional and Local policy. There is a recognition that a cross-cutting, integrated approach will be needed if the challenges of rural areas are to be effectively addressed. Having successfully operated previous LEADER Programme iterations, the partners demonstrate the competence and capacity to deliver the enterprise, social and environmental goals of the incoming Programme. Moreover, the actions will focus on maximising the complementarity between existing and proposed programmes and schemes and other non-LEADER rural development interventions.

The Tipperary LDS 2023-2027 will play a key role in facilitating innovative approaches to disadvantage in respect of the 'new' rural realities resulting from ongoing pressure on services and facilities and changing population dynamics. The aim will be to support new entrepreneurs from non-traditional backgrounds, including (but not limited to) females, Travellers, new migrants, and young people.

The opportunities to facilitate climate action directly or indirectly has been identified. Networking and cooperation are enduring themes of the LEADER model of rural development. The partnership will ensure that the LEADER programme in County Tipperary will contribute to these overarching aims in the delivery of the programme.

5 LDS Action Plan

The LEADER Programme envisions improved quality of living and working in Co. Tipperary underpinned by sustainable environmental, social, economic, cultural and climate action development. The County Tipperary LDS has been informed by relevant EU, National, Regional, and local sectoral strategies, and key priorities of the Draft Tipperary Local Economic and Community Plan (Section 2.3) have particular relevance. In addition to policy alignment, this Strategy reflects the considered views of the people and communities of County Tipperary as individuals or as representatives of businesses and organisations through structured consultation processes (Section 3).

The Strategy concentrates on the identified high-level priorities to ensure the optimum distribution of limited resources. This process was managed, and priorities were set through an inclusive, iterative process involving all the key stakeholders and having regard to the findings of the area profile, the outcomes of the consultation process, the overarching policy environment within which the Programme will be delivered, and the many decades of experience in delivering the LEADER Programme in the county by the partnership.

Within the constraints of the matched funding delivery model of the LEADER Programme, the LDS seeks to address disadvantaged areas and communities and those which have not benefitted significantly from previous LEADER funding. The *'Analysis of the Distribution and Social Inclusion Focus of LEADER Funding in Co. Tipperary 2007-2022: Evidence from Project-Level Data'* identifies those areas that did not significantly benefit from LEADER funding in the outgoing Programme. Although the reasons for this are multifaceted, the LAG will encourage promoters from these areas to come forward under the forthcoming Programme.

Promoter and project identification will be initiated through targeted animation and capacity-building activities. This will be multifaceted and build on relationships that the IPs already have in those communities via LEADER and other programmes such as SICAP (Local Community Groups and individuals interested in setting up enterprises), Traveller and Migrant Support Services, Tús, RSS etc. The IPs can thus support those communities to access LEADER funding, where appropriate, in a holistic and effective manner. Methodologies will include a traditional media and online communications strategy, in person and online information sessions, one-to-one meetings with Project Officers for bespoke project development support etc.

The delivery of the LDS will adhere to the following guiding principles: -

- The Programme will conform to the LEADER Operating Rules 2023 to 2027 (*yet to be published*).
- The LDS will foster a cooperative and collaborative approach with other agencies and grant-giving bodies. The objective will be to maximise opportunities for co-funding with other programmes.
- Projects will align with and support the Tipperary County Development Plan (2022-2028) objectives and other relevant international, national, regional, county, and local strategic policies, notably the Local Economic and Community Plan.
- Projects should be sustainable, inclusive and have an innovation element.
- Promoters should demonstrate a clear need for the funding of the project.
- Promoters should demonstrate the necessary capacity and experience to deliver projects.
- The Programme will look for opportunities for national and international cooperation projects where the budget permits and there is clear potential for added value for Co. Tipperary to achieve the aims of the Strategy.

A rigorous social inclusion and environmental proofing process will ensure that all projects' actions are consistent with the vision of the LDS and adhere to the CAP Strategic Plan cross-cutting

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

objectives. Social inclusion and environmental impacts will also each be designated ten per cent of marks attributed to projects at the evaluation stage, subject to the Operating Rules.

The accompanying Financial Plan details the total distribution of the Co. Tipperary LDS 2023-2027 budget allocation (€5,850,000) among the Programme's themes and sub-themes.

Sub-Theme 2c: Optimising Digital Connectivity

The Co. Tipperary Digital Strategy 2018-2023 reported that considerable work needed to be undertaken in the county at the commencement of the period to address infrastructure and training issues relating to the optimisation of digital connectivity. Supporting initiatives to address the issues were undertaken by the Implementing Partners under the outgoing LEADER Programme and by other actors. The extent to which considerable progress has been made on the digital connectivity infrastructure provision is detailed in section 2.6.2, Broadband Access.

It was agreed to implement actions on all Local Objectives apart from '*Optimising Digital Connectivity*'. The LAG considers that the digital arena is cross-cutting, and a digital approach will be incorporated across the action plan, including SMART Villages, Accessible Services, Enterprise, Tourism etc. Thus, they consider that any projects in this area which may arise can be supported under other themes of the Programme, and does not warrant a stand-alone action. The rationale for this decision is based on the following: -

- The 2016 Census of Population recorded that only 60.63 per cent of all households in the county had a broadband connection, compared to 70.69 per cent in the State. However, the situation is likely to have changed significantly over the intervening period with the rollout of the National Broadband Plan and the establishment of the network of twenty-one Broadband Connection Points. These Points provide 150 MB/s high-speed broadband access to the local community. This will enable people living in the area to go to the selected location and access broadband for various uses, including remote working, general access and keeping in touch with family and friends. In this circumstance, it is considered that the imperative for LEADER to support digital connectivity is substantially diminished. This view is reinforced by the publication of the Census 2022 Summary Results, which confirm that the permanent private households with broadband internet connection as a percentage of the county had reached 73.4 per cent, compared to 79.3 per cent in the State.

5.1 LDS Local Objective 1: Green Economy

Local Objective 1: Developing and Promoting the Green Economy as a Driver of Rural Economic Development and Job Creation in Co. Tipperary.	
Financial Allocation (€)	€377,325.00
No. of Strategic Actions for this Local Objective	1
Rationale for the Local Objective (max 250 words)	<p>The shift to a net zero carbon economy (Ireland has a target to reduce carbon emissions by 51 per cent) creates the need for significant changes in all sectors and many jobs. Demand for new talent, skills and capabilities will open enterprise and employment opportunities across all sectors to align with EU, national and local policy on climate change and the green economy.</p> <p>The need to promote an inclusive, sustainable, and targeted approach to addressing the county's strategic green economy and enterprise development can build on its strengths (light engineering, agriculture, agri-industries) and opportunities (skilled workforce, graduates, circular economy etc.) and ensure a genuine prospect of green economy opportunities in the county. In addition, this can significantly enhance competitiveness.</p> <p>The local consultation process identified the need for support and capacity building across all sectors for green entrepreneurs and those wishing to green their businesses.</p>
Alignment with LEADER subtheme	Subtheme 1a: The Green Economy.

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

5.1.1 Strategic Action 1.1

Title of Strategic Action 1.1:	Developing Tipperary's Green Economy.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words):	<p>This action seeks to support animation, capacity building, and feasibility analysis to address immediate green economy knowledge gaps, training needs and policy priorities.</p> <p>Support will be directed to existing businesses exploring the feasibility of or seeking independent technical assistance that promotes decarbonisation, circular economy, and sustainable production.</p> <p>Support for external expertise to assist with developing and implementing companywide measures that address green economy objectives.</p> <p>Support to gain awareness and develop action plans to strategically integrate green procurement, production, and skill development throughout Tipperary.</p> <p>Capital, training, analysis, and development (feasibility) and marketing support to encourage green entrepreneurs to adopt a green approach to improve production processes and procurement in their business to develop and grow businesses in Co. Tipperary.</p>
Primary Target Groups for this Strategic Action:	Entrepreneurs in Co. Tipperary, including female and young entrepreneurs wanting to develop green enterprises or improve the environmental footprint of their existing businesses, including those involved with the circular and bioeconomy, and the Tipperary Bioeconomy Park, Lisheen.
Geographic Area:	<p>Co. Tipperary.</p> <p>As this is a new sector, it is targeted to the whole county. Geographic targeting would be counterproductive and might serve to exclude expertise and entrepreneurial initiative.</p>
Organisations delivering the Action:	NTDC and STDC.
Collaborating Organisations:	Tipperary LEO, Tipperary County Council, TUS, Local and National Sectoral Networks, farming organisations, Tipperary Energy Agency, ECTC, and Tipperary Green Business Network.
Timeframe for Delivery:	Q.1 2024 - Q.4 2027. Rolling projects will be supported throughout the Programme life as the Green Economy grows and strengthens in line with EU/National policies and supports and to adapt to any changes over the lifetime of the Programme.
Anticipated Outputs/Indicators	<p>11 x Enterprises supported:</p> <p>6 x Green Capital projects supported</p> <p>5 x Analysis and development projects.</p> <p>2 x Training programmes provided.</p> <p>25 x FTEs created and sustained.</p>

5.2 LDS Local Objective 2: Agricultural Diversification

Local Objective 2: Supporting Agricultural Diversification in Co. Tipperary.	
Financial Allocation (€)	€251,550.00
No. of Strategic Actions for this Local Objective	1
Rationale for the Local Objective (max 250 words)	<p>Traditional farming needs to adapt and diversify due to new information on climate mitigation and emerging labour-reducing technology. A vibrant agricultural sector is essential in sustaining rural areas. The local consultation process identified a need to encourage diversification opportunities for Co. Tipperary farm families to address their economic survival by developing and using farm assets for non-agricultural enterprise generation.</p> <p>Building on Co. Tipperary's national and international reputation in its agriculture, horticulture, and bloodstock industry, the County Development Plan notes that <i>'rural areas provide opportunities for development in expanding economic sectors, such as rural tourism, the bioenergy and renewable energy sectors'</i>.</p> <p>In terms of renewable energy and bioeconomy, the Plan advocates support for <i>'diversification of agriculture and land-use, to develop sustainable and circular business models for lower carbon farming, and production of bio-based products and bioenergy in line with the 'Common Agricultural Policy' and the National Policy Statement on the Bioeconomy (Government of Ireland, 2018).'</i></p> <p>The LDS will work closely with Teagasc to assist farmers in identifying potential areas for diversification and implementation. The objective will encourage diversification opportunities for Co. Tipperary farm families to address their economic survival by developing and using farm assets for non-agricultural enterprise generation.</p>
Alignment with LEADER subtheme	1b: Agricultural Diversification.

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

5.2.1 Strategic Action 1.2

Title of Strategic Action 1.2:	Supporting Agricultural Diversification.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words):	<p>The Strategic Action will support farmers and farm family members in establishing on-farm businesses to improve farm income and add value to their farming enterprise or existing agricultural diversification business.</p> <p>Support will be in the form of feasibility studies, training, capital, and marketing support.</p>
Primary Target Groups for this Strategic Action:	Farmers and farm families wishing to diversify. In line with previous LEADER Programmes, young and female farmers will be a continuing focus of support.
Geographic Area:	Co. Tipperary.
Organisations delivering the Action:	NTDC and STDC
Collaborating Organisations:	Teagasc, farming organisations, Bord Bia, Tipperary Food Producers Network and Tipperary LEO, National Bioeconomy Campus, and Coillte.
Timeframe for Delivery:	Q.1 2024 - Q.4 2027 (rolling projects throughout the Programme life as the CAP/EU Green Deal rollout).
Anticipated Outputs/Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 x Enterprises Supported: • 5 x On-Farm Capital Projects. • 3 x Analysis and Development Projects. • 2 x Marketing Projects. • 2 x Training Programmes. • 10 x FTEs created and sustained.

5.3 LDS Local Objective 3: Tourism and Recreation Destination

Local Objective 3: Developing and Promoting Co. Tipperary as Ireland's Leading Inland Tourism and Recreation Destination.	
Financial Allocation (€)	€628,875.00
No. of Strategic Actions for this Local Objective	1
Rationale for the Local Objective (max 250 words)	<p>Tipperary is covered by Bord Fáilte's <i>Ireland's Ancient East</i> and <i>Hidden Heartlands</i> Destination Plans. In addition, the Lough Derg and Munster Vales Tourism offerings cover part of the county. The <i>Tipperary Transforming Tourism Product Development Plan 2020-2030</i> highlights projects that link to wider national networks, e.g., the Lough Derg Blueway and the Beara Breifne Way and other walking and cycling trails, Thoroughbred Country Destination Experience etc.</p> <p>Consultation with tourism providers, agencies, and networks, identified a need to develop and promote the sustainability and growth of an integrated collaborative tourism sector in Co. Tipperary, along with a requirement to continually develop and market the Tipperary brand.</p> <p>This will require the enhancement and development of the product offering, adding value to a range of attractions, activities, and experiences, fostering activity, cultural, heritage, night time and eco-tourism, encouraging engagement with all relevant stakeholders, and improving marketing and promotions leading to increased visitor numbers, dwell time, spend and satisfaction in the area, thus leveraging the benefits of international 'honeypot' destinations such as the Rock of Cashel.</p> <p>There is potential for niche tourism accommodation, i.e. Glamping in response to growing market interest, where facilities are compatible with adjoining amenities and protection of the environment.</p> <p>The local objective will develop and promote the sustainability and growth of an integrated collaborative tourism sector in Co. Tipperary.</p>
Alignment with LEADER subtheme	1c: Rural Tourism and Recreation.

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

5.3.1 Strategic Action 1.3

Title of Strategic Action 1.3:	Promoting Rural Tourism and Recreation.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words):	<p>Development of amenities and activities based on Co. Tipperary's natural resources, such as lakes, rivers, mountains, and unspoilt rural countryside, e.g., walks, hikes, water-based activities, cycling hubs, equestrian trails etc.</p> <p>The action will also support development and marketing of heritage, food, cultural and eco-tourism products and the night-time economy.</p> <p>The LDS will work with collaborating bodies to foster the development and add value to trails, greenways and blueways and related outdoor activities that offer a <i>'tourism product with significant potential to attract overseas visitors'</i>.</p> <p>Linked to activity tourism, support for the provision of niche accommodation, e.g., Glamping, camping or hostel accommodation will add to the tourist offering, with priority given to projects that support the aims and objectives of the <i>Tipperary Transforming Tourism Product Development Plan 2020-2030</i>.</p> <p>To promote, market and develop the tourism experiences in Tipperary with a cooperative and collaborative approach</p>
Primary Target Groups for this Strategic Action:	Recognised tourism groups and private promoters in prioritised tourism areas (geographic or thematic).
Geographic Area:	High potential areas in Co. Tipperary, e.g., Lough Derg, Munster Vales, Lingaun Valley, St Declan's Way, and walled and heritage towns and projects falling under Ireland's Ancient East and Hidden Heartlands propositions in Co. Tipperary, including the Thoroughbred Experience, Blueways and Greenways.
Organisations delivering the Action:	NTDC and STDC.
Collaborating Organisations:	Fáilte Ireland, Tipperary County Council, Tipperary Tourism Company, LEO and other local and regional tourism marketing groups, Sport Ireland, and Tipperary Sports Partnership.
Timeframe for Delivery:	2023-2027. Rolling projects throughout the Programme as per demand
Anticipated Outputs/Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 x Tourism Enterprises supported: • 8 x Tourism Capital Projects Supported • 6 x Analysis and Development Projects • 4 x Major tourism marketing initiatives will be supported. • 20 x FTEs created and sustained.

5.4 LDS Local Objective 4: Enterprise Development & Job Creation

Local Objective 4: Developing and Promoting an Integrated and Targeted Approach to Sustainable Enterprise Development and Job Creation in Co. Tipperary	
Financial Allocation (€)	€754,650.00
No. of Strategic Actions for this Local Objective	1
Rationale for the Local Objective (max 250 words)	<p>Enterprise in Co. Tipperary must expand to meet new challenges and further develop its full potential across all sectors and areas, as evidenced by the LDS public consultations and specific stakeholder meetings.</p> <p>In line with ‘<i>Our Rural Future</i>’, the strategy will boost employment growth in Co. Tipperary by creating an environment that supports entrepreneurship and enterprise growth in rural areas. Local employment adds hugely to the prosperity of rural areas and communities and fosters a positive cycle of growth which can arrest population decline.</p> <p>The objectives are to promote an integrated, innovative, sustainable, and targeted approach to addressing the county’s strategic economic and enterprise development needs, to build on its strengths and opportunities, and ensure a genuine prospect of economic opportunities and increased job creation for all in the county.</p> <p>Working closely with the LEO, the LDS will support start-ups, microenterprises, and SMEs with strategic funding to support their growth and development.</p> <p>The importance of business networking was highlighted during the consultations, and where relevant, the LDS will foster a collective approach within specific sectors, e.g., craft, women entrepreneurs, start-ups etc.</p>
Alignment with LEADER subtheme	1d: Enterprise Development

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

5.4.1 Strategic Action 1.4

Title of Strategic Action 1.4:	Promoting Enterprise Development.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words):	<p>Capital, training, marketing, and analysis and development (feasibility) support to encourage rural entrepreneurs to develop and grow businesses in Co. Tipperary through support for micro and SME indigenous enterprises, both start-up and existing.</p> <p>This action seeks to support animation, capacity building, and feasibility analysis to address immediate enterprise development knowledge gaps, training needs and policy priorities.</p> <p>There will be a continuing focus on developing entrepreneurship in non-traditional sectors and others for which take-up among females, new communities, the Traveller community, and young people will be supported.</p> <p>Support will be directed to new and existing businesses that foster innovation and promote sustainable production and employment.</p>
Primary Target Groups for this Strategic Action:	Micro and SME indigenous enterprises, both start-up and existing, with a particular focus on female entrepreneurs and those from non-traditional communities.
Geographic Area:	Co. Tipperary.
Organisations delivering the Action:	NTDC and STDC
Collaborating Organisations:	Tipperary LEO, Tipperary Women in Business Network, Tipperary Green Business Network, Tipperary County Council, Enterprise Ireland, local and national Sectoral Networks (e.g., Tipperary Rural Traveller Group, Diverse Tipperary Group), SICAP and Tipperary ETB.
Timeframe for Delivery:	Q4 2023 to Q4 2027
Anticipated Outputs/Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 Enterprises Supported: • 10 x capital projects. • 6 x Analysis and Development projects • 4 x Marketing Projects • 2 x Training Projects • 2 x business networks supported. • 150 x FTEs created or sustained.

5.5 LDS Local Objective 5: Rural Food Production

Local Objective 5: Promoting and Developing Rural Food Production as a Driver of Rural Economic Development and Job Creation in Co. Tipperary.	
Financial Allocation (€)	€251,550.00
No. of Strategic Actions for this Local Objective	1
Rationale for the Local Objective (max 250 words)	<p>Co. Tipperary has a strong tradition of artisan and local food production, providing the potential for further development. A vibrant rural food sector, particularly community / locally based and focused, is essential in sustaining rural areas. Given the recent renewed focus on the production and consumption of local foodstuffs, the LDS supports the development of Tipperary's food and beverage sector.</p> <p>The County Development Plan is committed to working with local food producers to consider innovative ways to market, support and showcase local products nationally and internationally. The LDS public consultations and the <i>Tipperary Food Producers Network Strategy and Brand Development 2022-26</i> highlight the need to adapt and diversify due to climate mitigation requirements and emerging trends and technology.</p> <p>This action will complement rural tourism and agricultural diversification activities. It will be undertaken in a way that builds on its strengths and opportunities and supports existing enterprises, start-ups, and innovation.</p> <p>There will be support for individuals from new communities and for new food areas.</p> <p>The objective will promote an integrated, sustainable, and targeted approach to addressing the development of the Rural Food Production sector of the county.</p>
Alignment with LEADER subtheme	1e: Rural Food Production

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

5.5.1 Strategic Action 1.5

Title of Strategic Action 1.5:	Developing and Enhancing Rural Food Production in Co. Tipperary.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words):	<p>The Strategic Action will support Co. Tipperary's small, medium and artisan food and beverage producers, both new and existing. It will support animation, capacity building, and feasibility analysis to address immediate enterprise development knowledge gaps, training needs and policy priorities.</p> <p>Support will be provided in collaboration with groups such as the Tipperary Food Producers and local food distribution networks.</p> <p>Action will be taken to foster and support existing Tipperary small, medium and artisan food and beverage producers and to support business development in this sector.</p> <p>The LDS will support collaborative action to market Co. Tipperary as a food brand and home of good food. Similarly, actions will seek to place artisan food at the core of niche and active tourism sectors.</p>
Primary Target Groups for this Strategic Action:	Tipperary Food Producers Network and its members, Food and beverage producers and entrepreneurs in Co. Tipperary. There will be a focus on encouraging female and new community entrants into food production.
Geographic Area:	Co. Tipperary.
Organisations delivering the Action:	NTDC and STDC.
Collaborating Organisations:	Tipperary LEO, Tipperary County Council, Enterprise Ireland, Local, and National Sectoral Networks. Tipperary ETB, Tipperary Food Producers, and Teagasc.
Timeframe for Delivery:	Q1/2024 to Q2/2027
Anticipated Outputs/Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 x Rural Food Producers supported. • 8 x Capital Projects Food Producers supported. • 4 x Analysis and Development Projects supported. • 3 x Business Network / Distribution / Marketing initiatives supported. • 20 x FTEs created and sustained.

5.6 Local Objective 6: Social, Community, Cooperative Enterprises

Local Objective 6: Developing and Promoting Social, Community and Cooperative Enterprises in Co. Tipperary.	
Financial Allocation (€)	€251,550.00
No. of Strategic Actions for this Local Objective	1
Rationale for the Local Objective (max 250 words)	<p>Social, community, and cooperative enterprises are a developing sector in Ireland, and it is necessary to maximise their potential within Co. Tipperary for social, societal, and environmental impact. Co. Tipperary has 9.5 social enterprises per 10,000 inhabitants, placing it fifteenth of all counties in the State, thus underpinning the need for development.</p> <p>The movement of rural commercial activity and services into urban centres has prompted the development of local responses. LDS public consultations and social enterprise training projects in Co. Tipperary identified a need to promote a focussed approach to developing the county's social, community and cooperative enterprise sectors. Along with capital support, there was a strong need expressed for support for voluntary boards in terms of governance, strategy, recruitment, and retention of volunteers.</p> <p>This will combine support for existing and new enterprises, including capital, feasibility, marketing, training, and networking. <i>In addition, innovation in meeting needs will be encouraged.</i></p> <p>A specific target will be hard-to-reach communities and those not previously reached by LEADER.</p>
Alignment with LEADER subtheme	1f: Social, Community and Cooperative Enterprises

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

5.6.1 Strategic Action 1.6

Title of Strategic Action 1.6:	Developing and Supporting Social, Community and Cooperative Enterprises in Co. Tipperary.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words):	<p>This action will combine support for existing and new social, community and cooperative enterprises, including capital, feasibility, marketing, training, governance and volunteer board support, and networking.</p> <p>To strengthen the sustainability (human, financial, business and market focus) and the social impact of new and existing social enterprises. This will further enhance their contribution to economic regeneration, the social fabric, tackling social inclusion issues, improving the citizen wellbeing, and environmental development of their areas. In addition, innovation in meeting needs will be encouraged.</p> <p>Training and capacity building for Board members, volunteers and staff covering key governance and strategic issues.</p>
Primary Target Groups for this Strategic Action:	Communities and social entrepreneurs in Co. Tipperary. A specific target will be hard-to-reach communities e.g. youth, children, people with a disability, elderly, women, small farmers, unemployed, people living in disadvantaged areas, Men's Sheds, Travellers, new communities, LGBTQ+, people disengaged from the labour market (economically inactive).
Geographic Area:	Co. Tipperary. Priority will be given to those areas identified as having benefitted least from previous LEADER Programme interventions.
Organisations delivering the Action:	NTDC and STDC
Collaborating Organisations:	Social Finance organisations, SERI, Tipperary LEO, Tipperary County Council, Enterprise Ireland, Local and National Sectoral Networks, Tipperary ETB, TUS, SICAP, and Men's Sheds.
Timeframe for Delivery:	Q4/2023 to Q4/2027
Anticipated Outputs/Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 x Social, community and cooperative enterprises supported. • 10 x Capital Projects in Social Enterprises. • 6 x Technical Assistance/Feasibility Studies completed. • 2 x Training Programmes delivered. • 10 x FTEs created and sustained.

5.7 Local Objective 7: Town and Village Regeneration

Local Objective 7: Supporting the Sustainable Regeneration of Co. Tipperary's Towns and Villages.	
Financial Allocation (€)	€750,262.50
No. of Strategic Actions for this Local Objective	1
Rationale for the Local Objective (max 250 words)	<p>Appropriate, inclusive community infrastructure can improve the quality of life for rural dwellers in the county by providing access to essential services and amenities that enhance communities' physical, mental, and social wellbeing. Such development can help to sustain populations in rural areas, offer employment opportunities, and small hubs to connect communities and businesses, promote local tourism and create a sense of place that can attract entrepreneurs and investors. Remote working offers opportunities for people to stay in and return to Co. Tipperary</p> <p>Connectedness and social cohesion were features of the consultations, with an identified need to build strong community networks, thus reducing social isolation. Community-managed and owned facilities are responsive to local needs, and this action seeks to support them.</p> <p>There are parts of Co. Tipperary where deprivation is high, and families are struggling; these include parts of Clonmel, Carrick on Suir and Tipperary (former RAPID areas), Roscrea, Slieve Felim, and Slieve Ardagh, Templemore, and Borrisokane prioritised in the LECP as needing interagency focus, including LEADER support.</p> <p>The '<i>Analysis of the Distribution and Social Inclusion Focus of LEADER Funding in Co. Tipperary 2007-2022: Evidence from Project-Level Data</i>' identifies geographic areas for future Programme targeting.</p> <p>Several village areas have lost essential community services, which has reduced the attractiveness of those areas for investment and living. There is a need to address this. The SMART Village approach offers an opportunity for integrated and sustainable planning and will be a key element of this action.</p>
Alignment with LEADER subtheme	2a: Rural Infrastructure

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

5.7.1 Strategic Action 2.1

Title of Strategic Action 2.1:	Developing Sustainable Rural Infrastructure.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words):	<p>Support initiatives to improve communities as places to live, work, and do business by improving the physical appearance, infrastructure and amenities of the towns and villages in Co. Tipperary.</p> <p>A Sustainable SMART Village approach will be fostered through training and technical support. This concept will ensure innovative integrated development, including benefiting from digital opportunities.</p> <p>The actions will seek to work with community leaders in communities that have not previously received LEADER funding to identify projects showing a strong demonstrated need.</p> <p>The strategic action will use capital investment, feasibility studies, research and development projects to maintain and develop the built and natural environment for the benefit of all.</p>
Primary Target Groups for this Strategic Action:	Local community groups and organisations in towns and villages in Co. Tipperary where there is a social need and a clear requirement for development and support. Priority will also be given to those villages and towns designated disadvantaged areas and requiring enhancement. Priority will also be given to places that have not previously received substantial LEADER Programme funding.
Geographic Area:	Areas of high deprivation are targeted as per analysis, e.g., Slieve Felim, Slieve Ardagh, Tipperary Town, Carrick-on-Suir, Roscrea, Templemore, Borrisokane, CLAR and former RAPID areas in Co. Tipperary.
Organisations delivering the Action:	NTDC and STDC
Collaborating Organisations:	Tipperary County Council, local community groups and residents associations, social finance organisations, PPN, Tidy Towns groups and other local stakeholders.
Timeframe for Delivery:	Q1/2024 – Q3/2027
Anticipated Outputs/Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 x Communities supported. • 15 x capital projects aimed at developing, restoring, or upgrading rural infrastructure. • 20 x village/area development groups supported to develop SMART Village integrated and focused plans to enhance the quality of life for the area's inhabitants.

5.8 Local Objective 8: Accessible Services

Local Objective 8: Developing Accessible Services for All in Co. Tipperary.	
Financial Allocation (€)	€666,900.00
No. of Strategic Actions for this Local Objective	1
Rationale for the Local Objective (max 250 words)	<p>The LDS consultation process and area needs analysis identified a need for increased accessibility and affordability of local services and amenities.</p> <p>Previous investment benefits in community infrastructure must be maximised as accessible service delivery hubs. These will help to mitigate social exclusion and to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of communities. This will be achieved by supporting prioritised community infrastructural developments, relevant support services, awareness, and training.</p> <p>The action will focus mainly on places and communities that have not previously received LEADER funding and those with a strong demonstrated need.</p> <p>Regarding access, LEADER supports the principle of '<i>Universal Design</i>' to improve the quality of life equally for the able-bodied and people with disabilities concerning public transport access, housing, social, cultural, and recreational facilities and the public realm. In all new development, this is a crucial issue for older people and those with mobility impairments.</p> <p>Physical and digital connectivity are key areas where a plan-led approach can improve social inclusion.</p>
Alignment with LEADER subtheme	2b: Accessible Services

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

5.8.1 Strategic Action 2.2

Title of Strategic Action 2.2:	Developing Accessible Services for All in Co. Tipperary.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words):	Capital, training, and development support to combat discrimination and strengthen inclusive community development, e.g., rural isolation, intercultural awareness programmes, inclusive access to services, safe spaces for vulnerable people etc. Recreational and multifunctional infrastructure is provided or enhanced to respond to identified needs within communities.
Primary Target Groups for this Strategic Action:	Hard-to-reach rural communities and areas, e.g., youth, children, people with a disability, elderly, women, small farmers, unemployed, people living in disadvantaged areas, people living in remote and less accessible areas, Men's Sheds, Travellers, new communities, LGBTQ+, people disengaged from the labour market (economically inactive), and groups as selected by the LAG.
Geographic Area:	The following disadvantaged areas are targeted as per analysis, e.g., Slieve Felim, Slieve Ardagh, Tipperary Town, Carrick-on-Suir, Roscrea, Templemore, Borrisokane, CLAR and former RAPID areas in Co. Tipperary. Priority will also be given to those areas identified as having benefitted least from previous LEADER Programme interventions.
Organisations delivering the Action:	NTDC and STDC
Collaborating Organisations:	Tipperary County Council, Tipperary PPN, Tusla, Residents and Development Associations, Local and National Service Providers, Social Enterprises, Tipperary Local Link, Tipperary ETB, Active Retired, FRCs, HSE, Service/Expertise Providers, Other Social Inclusion Programmes delivered by the Implementing Partners, e.g., SICAP, TUS, RSS, LAES, Traveller Project, Domestic Violence support groups, ALONE etc.
Timeframe for Delivery:	Q4/2023 to Q4/2027
Anticipated Outputs/Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 x Communities supported. • 15 x capital multifunctional community facility upgrades and enhancements that will facilitate accessible services to promote inclusion and wellbeing. • 4 x Development plans for specific groups or sectors • 4 x social inclusion-based capacity-building initiatives, e.g., intercultural awareness, diversity etc. • 4 x volunteer support and organisational development programmes implemented across the county.

5.9 Local Objective 9: Youth Support

Local Objective 9: Supporting Youth (aged 15-40) in Co. Tipperary.	
Financial Allocation (€)	€250,087.50
No. of Strategic Actions for this Local Objective	1
Rationale for the Local Objective (max 250 words)	<p>In 2021 Tipperary Education and Training Board noted that areas classified as <i>disadvantaged</i> or <i>very disadvantaged</i> accounted for 17.5 per cent of the 16-24 population. There is a greater likelihood of young people disengaging from employment and education in these areas.</p> <p>The LDS consultation process highlighted that accessing services and support for young people in rural, isolated areas is problematic. In addition, there are concentrated areas of high youth unemployment, disengagement, and addiction around the county, e.g., former RAPID areas, major urban centres, and some larger villages. Amongst these areas, some have a demonstrated need for youth interventions.</p> <p>There are specific challenges faced by minority young people, e.g., LGBTQIA+, those from new communities, refugees, and asylum seekers, which can be addressed by targeted and appropriate support.</p> <p>There are limited services for young people not wishing to engage in sporting activities. The consultations noted that interventions are required to maximise life opportunities for young people and to support creativity, self-development, and wellbeing, thus enabling them to integrate positively in their community.</p>
Alignment with LEADER subtheme	2d: Rural Youth

5.9.1 Strategic Action 2.3

Title of Strategic Action 2.3:	Developing and Sustaining Facilities and Services for Youth.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words):	<p>The strategic action supports the increased use of existing facilities and enhanced programme support for rural youth in areas having gaps in provision, e.g., youth spaces, clubs, and cafés. There will be support for volunteers, communities, and clubs to engage with youth, especially those at risk of being marginalised through differing abilities, interests, sexual orientation, unemployment, ethnicity etc.</p> <p>The development of youth programmes to empower the diversity of rural youth, e.g., music, arts, ICT and digital media, non-mainstream sport, entrepreneurship, volunteer opportunities etc., will be facilitated.</p> <p>Training should complement existing programmes and supports.</p>
Primary Target Groups for this Strategic Action:	Rural disadvantaged youth and unemployed youth, including SICAP target groups, Travellers, LGBTQIA+, and new communities etc.
Geographic Area:	<p>Co. Tipperary.</p> <p>The target group is dispersed, so geographic targeting could be counterproductive, although the areas currently showing low levels of youth service provision will be prioritised.</p>
Organisations delivering the Action:	NTDC and STDC
Collaborating Organisations:	Tipperary County Council, Tipperary PPN, Tusla, DSP, ETB, Comhairle na nOg, CYPSC, Macra na Feirme, youth service providers, SICAP implements, social enterprises, JPC, Local and National Youth Service Providers, Youth Work Ireland Tipperary, RYS, and Waterford and South Tipperary Community Youth Service.
Timeframe for Delivery:	Q3/2024 to Q4/2027
Anticipated Outputs/Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 x Youth Projects / Activities Supported • 6 x Youth Projects developed or enhanced. • 10 x non-sporting / support initiatives for rural youth. • 4 x training and development developments.

5.10 Local Objective 10: Sustainable Environmental Development

Local Objective 10: Supporting the Sustainable Development of Co. Tipperary's Environment.	
Financial Allocation (€)	€916,987.50
No. of Strategic Actions for this Local Objective	1
Rationale for the Local Objective (max 250 words)	<p>Climate action and sustainable environment feature strongly in the current County Development Plan, with objectives to encourage local communities and enterprises to develop sustainable energy initiatives and biodiversity and water-focused conservation plans and actions.</p> <p>As part of its national carbon reduction commitments, the Council has designated '<i>Decarbonisation Zones</i>' with many of the broader benefits of improved air quality, health, biodiversity, embodied carbon, agricultural practices, sustainable land management, water, and the circular economy.</p> <p>The LDS consultation feedback focused strongly on safeguarding the rural environment, which is essential for the sustainable development of Tipperary for both locals and visitors.</p> <p>Water resources are under increasing pressure from industry, agriculture, and domestic demand. The Suir and the Nore catchments show the third and fourth worst decline in quality in the country (EPA 2022).</p> <p>85% of protected habitats in Ireland are in an unfavourable condition, leading to a loss of species vital to the ecosystem. An informed community and Citizen Science approaches are successful in monitoring and addressing these issues in innovative ways. Supports are required to develop this further, and also for initiatives such as community gardens and allotments.</p> <p>To meet national and EU climate targets, implementing renewable energy technologies is essential to transition to a low-carbon future. Renewable energy technologies can promote economic development and job creation in rural areas and will play a key role in supporting national and EU environmental targets.</p> <p>Sustainable Energy Communities are well established in Co. Tipperary, and their inclusion as collaborating partners provides a template for community engagement in this area. The LDS consultation feedback highlighted a desire for community-based/collective initiatives, and the intention is to support these under this strategy.</p>
Alignment with LEADER subtheme	3a: Sustainable Development of the Rural Environment

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

5.10.1 Strategic Action 3.1

Title of Strategic Action 3.1:	Enhancing Co. Tipperary's Environment.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words):	<p>Support will be provided for feasibility and technical studies, planning and implementation support for water conservation and quality on lakes and river catchments.</p> <p>Support for projects that develop community environmental, habitat restoration and improvement projects. This will include Community Gardens, Allotments / <i>Grow-it-Yourself</i> initiatives operating on high nature value principles, with priority given to disadvantaged areas.</p> <p>Support for feasibility and technical studies relating to green technologies for communities and enterprises.</p> <p>Support for priority business and community-based renewable energy production models, e.g., solar, biomass, AD, community wind and hydro generation and community-based district energy schemes, and support for local supply chain development, particularly for biomass and forestry residue.</p> <p>Supports for energy efficiency and carbon reduction measures in community facilities, including electric charging points and bike racks and storage etc., to facilitate active travel.</p>
Primary Target Groups for this Strategic Action:	Rural Communities, Environmental Groups and sectoral interests, Green entrepreneurs, social enterprises etc.
Geographic Area:	According to an analysis by CARO, the whole Midlands and Eastern Region, including Co. Tipperary, is deemed to have a similar vulnerability to Climate Change. The <i>Draft County Tipperary Climate Action Plan</i> incorporates a <i>Decarbonisation Zone</i> designated as Mid Tipperary.
Organisations delivering the Action:	NTDC and STDC
Collaborating Organisations:	Tipperary County Council, Tipperary PPN, LAWPRO, EPA, Irish Water, Inland Fisheries, An Taisce, Teagasc, SEAI, TEA, EI, Tipperary LEO, TGBN, sectoral interest groups and networks, TUS, Tidy Towns groups, and other institutions.
Timeframe for Delivery:	Q1/2024 to Q4/2027
Anticipated Outputs/Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 x Enterprises supported. • 25 x Communities supported. • 6 x Water quality and conservation projects. • 10 x Community biodiversity and habitat projects. • 10 x Energy infrastructural projects. • 6 x Feasibility, technical studies and conservation plans supported.

5.11 Local Objective 11: Climate Change and Biodiversity

Local Objective 11: Building Co. Tipperary's Capacity to Meet the Challenge of Climate Change and Biodiversity Loss.	
Financial Allocation (€)	€250,087.50
No. of Strategic Actions for this Local Objective	1
Rationale for the Local Objective (max 250 words)	<p>Climate change and biodiversity emergencies are critical threats to sustainable development. The County Development Plan anticipates a range of interrelated climate mitigation, adaptation, and biodiversity measures. Actions will be identified to address local low-carbon energy, greenhouse gas emissions and climate needs to contribute to national climate action targets.</p> <p>83 per cent of Tipperary people are concerned about Climate Change, according to an EPA 2022 survey, with 68 per cent recognising it will impact on them. However, there is a high perception that a greater effort needs to be made by citizens (90 per cent) and Businesses (88 per cent). This is supported by the LDS consultation feedback, which identified a willingness amongst communities and enterprises to play their part; however, there is a serious knowledge and expertise deficiency in achieving this effectively.</p> <p>There is, therefore, an identified need to provide training and capacity building for businesses and communities to enable them to meet the challenges in this sphere. This will help overcome climate apathy related to the perception of the size of the global climate crisis, how it impacts Co. Tipperary, and what actions can be taken locally. The LDS is well placed to support community-led sustainable energy initiatives, biodiversity, and water-focused amenity plans and actions in collaboration with other actors.</p>
Alignment with LEADER subtheme	3b: Climate change capacity building

5.11.1 Strategic Action 3.2

Title of Strategic Action 3.2:	Training and Development in Climate Change, Biodiversity Maintenance and Restoration.
<p>Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words):</p>	<p>Implement a capacity-building programme focusing on communities and enterprises in Co. Tipperary to enhance their knowledge, understanding and confidence and unlock their collective power and potential to confront the economic and social challenges of transitioning to a biodiverse carbon neutral and resilient society.</p> <p>This is an opportunity to support and encourage pilot schemes which promote innovative ways to incorporate energy efficiency awareness-raising, understanding and actions on water quality and biodiversity. Where relevant, the approach will be to work with collaborating partners (LAWPRO, TEA etc., in particular)</p> <p>Training on renewable energy production and conservation.</p> <p>Support animation, capacity building, and feasibility analysis to address knowledge gaps, training needs and local priorities.</p> <p>The development of Integrated community, habitat and sectoral plans related to the above will form an element of the strategic action.</p>
<p>Primary Target Groups for this Strategic Action:</p>	<p>Rural communities, green entrepreneurs, social enterprises, Tidy Towns groups and individuals etc.</p>
<p>Geographic Area:</p>	<p>According to an analysis by CARO, the whole Midlands and Eastern Region, including Co. Tipperary, is deemed to have a similar vulnerability to Climate Change. The <i>Draft County Tipperary Climate Action Plan</i> incorporates a <i>Decarbonisation Zone</i> designated as Mid Tipperary.</p>
<p>Organisations delivering the Action:</p>	<p>NTDC and STDC</p>
<p>Collaborating Organisations:</p>	<p>Tipperary County Council, Tipperary PPN, LAWPRO, EPA, Irish Water, Inland Fisheries, An Taisce, Teagasc, SEAI, TEA, EI, TETB, Tipperary LEO, TGBN, residents' associations, Tidy Towns groups, sectoral interest groups and networks, and TUS, with the support of the Tipperary Energy Agency, including for example, the <i>'Energy Communities Tipperary Cooperative'</i> and <i>'Community Power'</i>.</p>
<p>Timeframe for Delivery:</p>	<p>Q4/2023 to Q4/2025</p>
<p>Anticipated Outputs/Indicators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 x Enterprises supported. • 25 x Communities supported. • 10 x training and capacity building programmes delivered. • 20 x energy, water, biodiversity, habitat, and sectoral plans developed.

5.12 Local Objective 12: Adapting to Climate Change

Local Objective 12: Supporting Co. Tipperary Communities and Enterprises to Adapt to the Consequences of Climate Change.	
Financial Allocation (€)	€500,175.00
No. of Strategic Actions for this Local Objective	1
Rationale for the Local Objective (max 250 words)	<p>The National Climate Action Plan 2023 and the EU Green Deal outline the need to transition into a modern, resource-efficient, competitive Co. Tipperary that moves towards net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.</p> <p>Co. Tipperary and the rest of the island are set to experience significant climate change over the following decades. Projections for the county suggest an increase in extremes of heatwaves and drought in the summer, coupled with increased rain and winds in other seasons. Therefore, it is important that the LDS is future-facing and will support innovation in climate mitigation and adaptation.</p> <p>The changing climate brings challenges and opportunities to Co. Tipperary communities and businesses. The LDS consultation feedback demonstrated an evident willingness at the community level for change, albeit with some uncertainty about achieving it, and some entrepreneurs with innovative ideas requiring early-stage financial support.</p> <p>Communities and enterprises faced with high energy bills and inefficient facilities require support to upgrade their infrastructure to reduce carbon. Waste and litter are significant issues across all communities.</p> <p>In the past, LEADER funding has supported significant innovation in this sector, e.g., the first community-owned wind farm in Ireland at Templederry, supporting the county as the island's 4th largest producer of electricity from wind, the National Bioeconomy Campus (Thurles), the proposed Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Energy (Nenagh). This track record will be continued in this strategy.</p> <p>The Technological University of Shannon (TUS), Thurles and Clonmel Campuses have significant EU and National expertise and can support the LDS to develop community-led actions focusing on sustainable development.</p>
Alignment with LEADER subtheme	3c: Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

5.12.1 Strategic Action 3.3

Title of Strategic Action 3.3:	Supporting Co. Tipperary Communities and Enterprises to Adapt to the Consequences of Climate Change.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words):	<p>The need for adaptation signals an imperative to develop Co. Tipperary's response incorporating reducing carbon emissions and creating cooperative business and community models for bioeconomy, bio circularity and the green economy.</p> <p>There is a need to develop practical skills in the green economy and support workers to transition from jobs threatened by climate change.</p> <p>The action will seek to support nature-based solutions and innovation across this area linked with the <i>Just Transition</i> framework. Innovative training, technical assistance, and capital projects can help a <i>Just Transition</i> to a low-carbon economy in Co. Tipperary, address the direct consequences of climate change, and contribute to the national climate action targets.</p>
Primary Target Groups for this Strategic Action:	<p>Areas, communities, and enterprises particularly impacted by climate change. Rural communities, green entrepreneurs, social enterprises, Tidy Towns groups and individuals etc.</p> <p>Those seeking to develop innovative solutions and programmes to meet these challenges.</p>
Geographic Area:	<p>According to an analysis by CARO, the whole Midlands and Eastern Region, including Co. Tipperary, is deemed to have a similar vulnerability to Climate Change. The <i>Draft County Tipperary Climate Action Plan</i> incorporates a <i>Decarbonisation Zone</i> designated as Mid Tipperary.</p>
Organisations delivering the Action:	NTDC and STDC.
Collaborating Organisations:	<p>Tipperary County Council, Tipperary PPN, LAWPRO, EPA, Irish Water, Inland Fisheries, An Taisce, Teagasc, SEAI, TEA, EI, Tipperary LEO, TGBN, sectoral interest groups and networks, and TUS.</p>
Timeframe for Delivery:	Q2/2024 to Q4/2027
Anticipated Outputs/Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 x Enterprises supported. • 15 x Communities supported. • 10 x Capital projects supported. • 10 x Analysis and Development studies completed. • 5 x Training Programmes delivered.

5.13 Anticipated Outcomes

The overall estimated outcomes of this strategy will: -

- Increase **economic sustainability** by supporting 101 rural businesses and creating or sustaining 255 jobs, enabling more people to live, prosper and contribute to their local areas. This will encompass diverse, innovative enterprises across the Green/Bio-Economy, Tourism, Agricultural Diversification, Food, Social, Circular, and traditional economies.
- Increase **social sustainability and inclusion** by supporting 25 rural communities to develop and implement SMART plans for their local area. In addition, 25 communities will have enhanced accessible services and infrastructure, contributing to the quality and attractiveness of rural life. The potential of rural youth can be supported via 20 initiatives targeted at areas of need. This will promote social inclusion and build resilience to meet future challenges.
- Increase the **environmental sustainability** by supporting ten enterprises and 40 communities and organisations to develop plans and implement meaningful actions for a low carbon, low waste, high biodiversity future. Climate change mitigation and adaptation capacity can be built across the county via ten training programmes.

Appendices

A1 LAG Membership

A1.1 Representation

Nine seats (47 per cent) on the LAG are held by the statutory sector and ten (53 per cent) by non-statutory organisations.

Table 13 – LAG Membership

Sector	Representative	Representing
Statutory Sector	Stephanie O'Callaghan	Tusla: Tipperary Children and Young People's Services Committee (CYPSC) Co-ordinator with particular focus on inter-agency co-operation and collaboration to improve the lives of children, young people and their families at local and community level. Former Youth Work Ireland Tipperary with extensive experience of migrant resettlement and community development issues.
	Elaine Cullinan	Economic Development Officer, Tipperary County Council: Economic development professional with a focus on the Bioeconomy, working directly on EU projects with the Irish Bioeconomy Foundation team in Lisheen. Collaborative working across agencies and supporting enterprise development in the County.
	Cllr. Declan Burgess	Elected Member, Tipperary County Council: Community based activist from Cashel, Co. Tipperary. Passionate about the Irish Tourism and Hospitality Sector, Youth Work and Community Development. Board member of Youth Work Ireland Tipperary and volunteers with Comhairle na nÓg. Represents the LEADER category Age 15-40.
	Cllr. John Carroll	Elected Member, Tipperary County Council: Experienced Councillor with interest in promoting community development across a range of themes including environmental sustainability and planning and development. Active member of Regional Health Forum West. Member of both Planning and Emergency Services and Environment and Climate Action Strategic Policy Committees.
	Cllr. Joe Hannigan	Elected Member, Tipperary County Council: Experienced independent Councillor with passion for community activism, health, agriculture, local sport, the environment and rural regeneration among his priorities. Member of North Tipperary Genealogy and Heritage Services, and both Economic Development and Enterprise and Infrastructure (to include Roads, Transportation and Water Services) Strategic Policy Committees.

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

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Sector	Representative	Representing
Statutory Sector	Colin Cummins	Tipperary Education and Training Board: Extensive experience in adult education and training, youth work and community education and extensive knowledge of working in partnership with other agencies.
	Derval Howley	HSE: Extensive experience working with hard-to-reach groups such as lone parents, people with disabilities, non-Irish nationals, travellers, and older people.
	Joe MacGrath	CE, Tipperary County Council: Local Government and strategic development of the county; extensive experience in leading and managing an organisation and managing the implementation of various programmes and projects.
	Katie Frazer	Teagasc: Experienced agricultural professional with both education and advisory background. Knowledge of Equine industry and factors impacting Tipperary's equine and agricultural businesses.
Non-Statutory Sector	John O'Shaughnessy	Business: Extensive experience at the Chief Financial Officer level of the business sector and the needs of the towns and villages of the county.
	Derry O'Donnell	PPN: Environmental Pillar - Experience and knowledge in environmental issues such as waste, energy and biodiversity. Coordinator of Zero Waste Cashel. Experience and knowledge in social enterprise, community development, small business, farm diversification and rural tourism.
	Julie O'Halloran	PPN: Social Inclusion Pillar - Manager of Millennium Family Resource Centre in Glengoole with extensive social inclusion, family support and community development experience.
	Micheal Geary	PPN: Community Development Pillar - Has led innovative community development projects in his local area for over fifteen years. He is also a beekeeper and biodiversity enthusiast. He lectures in Applied Science in TUS
	Mike Edwards	PPN: Social Inclusion Pillar - Over 30 years of community activism, Community First Responder, passionate about Social Inclusion and Participation.
	Gearoid O'Foighil	PPN: Environmental Pillar - Community co-ordinator for Scohaboy Bog SAC and Knockanree Woodland in Tipperary, a member of the Community Wetlands Forum, Cloughjordan Community Development Committee and involved in outdoor recreation.

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

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Sector	Representative	Representing
Non-Statutory Sector	Eoin Wolahan	Chairperson: Community Development - Wide community involvement in areas such as financial, childcare and community empowerment. Commitment to promoting social inclusion and community health, fitness and wellbeing through hillwalking and outdoor activities.
	Pat Carroll	Farming: Extensive experience in the farming sector and rural development. Knowledge and interest in farm diversification and the issues facing the farming sector in the county.
	Isabel Cambie	CEO of Implementing Partner South Tipperary Development CLG for 8 years. Extensive experience of LEADER from a delivery and management perspective. (25 years). In-depth knowledge of Social Inclusion issues in South Tipperary through delivery of programmes e.g. SICAP, Traveller Health Care Programme, Ukrainian Supports, Early Learning Services. Member of groups that address social and economic issues such as Tipperary Town Revitalisation Task Force, Local Link, CYPSC, Tipperary Volunteer Centre; Tipperary Economic Forum; Tipperary Energy Agency. Board member of ILDN and Member of ILDN at regional level.
	Michael Murray	CEO of Implementing Partner North Tipperary Development Company CLG for 15 years. Comprehensive experience of LEADER with over 27 years managing teams delivering the programme. Vast knowledge of economic and Social Inclusion issues in North Tipperary through delivery of programmes such as SICAP, Traveller Health Care Programme and Ukrainian Supports. Active member of groups that address social and economic issues such as the Tipperary Tourism Company, Tipperary CYPSC, Tipperary Volunteer Centre, Munster Vales, Lough Derg Marketing, Tipperary Economic Forum, Tipperary Local Link, Tipperary LECP Advisory, County Ukrainian Forum, Tipperary Energy Agency.
LCDC Chief Officer	Brian Beck	Acting Director of Service - The Chief Officer has a robust strategic and operational background and is experienced in leading on large funding streams meeting diverse needs of the population across a range of themes.

A1.2 Gender Balance, Ethnic Diversity and Age

Currently, of the nineteen filled membership positions on the LAG, six (thirty-two per cent) are female. It is noted that over the lifetime of the LAG, gender balance, ethnic diversity, and age representation has varied. It is anticipated that following the local elections (May or June 2024) there will be further commitment to gender balance and diversity in selection of new council representation on the LAG.

The LAG fully subscribes to the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies and the Annex on Gender Balance, Diversity, and Inclusion issued in 2020. In practical terms, the LAG has achieved an average gender balance over its lifetime of two-thirds (male)-one-third (female). The LAG fully supports the current county initiative with respect to a Women's Caucus to bring gender balance to politics and will be informed by its recommendations as it works towards achieving gender equity.

As per the Standing Orders, the Chief Officer, in consultation with the CPG and the Chairperson, will review the membership of the LCDC at least once every three years to ensure the membership is relevant and representative of the work of the LCDC, its aims and objectives (Regulation 29 of S.I. 234 of 2014). The Chief Officer will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for the rotation, every three years of representatives reflecting: -

- Community and voluntary interests
- Social inclusion interests
- Environmental interests
- Other local community and social partner interests

Such arrangements will ensure that new members are nominated to the LCDC, while also trying to retain an appropriate continuity of membership. The nomination and selection of new members will allow the LCDC to evolve and adopt new perspectives and viewpoints on a regular basis. In any event, no member nominated to represent the above interests may serve more than two consecutive three-year terms.

New nominations to the LAG are required to take account of gender, ethnic diversity, and age.

A1.3 Independent Evaluation Committee

Subject to the publication of the Operating Rules, Independent Evaluation Committee(s) will be established by the LAG to evaluate project proposals and make recommendations for funding or otherwise to the LAG. This will be supported and serviced by the implementation partners. All evaluation processes will be carried out in accordance with the Programme Operating Rules.

The protocol to address conflict of interest will be updated by the implementing partners and signed off by the TLCDC prior to projects being evaluated and will apply to the committee members of the Independent Evaluation Committee(s) and the LDC staff members.

"In-house" projects (i.e., LAG or Implementation Partner led) will be subject to the same rigorous evaluation process and scrutiny as outside promoters. Segregation of duties in relation to the staff involved in the project application/delivery as well as the project evaluation/administration will be made clear.

Process for Appointment of Independent Evaluation Committee Members

- The process for appointment to the Independent Evaluation Committee(s) will be as follows and will be subject to overall compliance with the operational rules of the programme.
- Criteria and necessary expertise for IEC members to be identified by LAG with input from the Implementation Partner Boards

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

- The process for establishing the IECs will be decided by the LAG with nominations from the Implementation Partners with consideration to gender and diversity balance and subject matter expertise required
- The LAG will make the final decision on who will be the IEC members.
- Robust IEC guidelines established for the programme must be followed to ensure sufficient expertise is in place, quorums exist members to declare conflict of interest and leave the meeting where required

Project Assessment

Following examination of the project, the IEC will make a recommendation to the LAG as to whether the project should be grant aided or not. A detailed rationale for the recommendation will be included. If funding is recommended, the committee will advise on the rate of aid, grant ceiling and any particular conditions attaching to the project.

The evaluation score and recommendation provided by the IEC for each project application cannot be revised, amended, approved or rejected by any other group/body before they are submitted to the LAG for decision.

Where the application is being recommended for rejection by the IEC, the rationale for same shall be provided and any ameliorative steps to be taken should be outlined.

The IPs will submit applications assessed by the IECs to the LAG for decision. The criteria for evaluation/assessment of the project will be considered and agreed by the LAG (TLCDC) in advance of the opening for applications and will reflect the objectives and actions outlined in the LDS and the requirements of the Operating Rules for the Programme. This will be consistent with the Result Indicators in Appendix 3 – LEADER Monitoring Framework of the LDS Guidance Document.

A2 LAG Auditors Report

The Annual Financial Statement (2021) of Tipperary County Council can be accessed here:

<https://www.tipperarycoco.ie/sites/default/files/2022-12/Audited%20AFS%202021.pdf>

A3 LAG Governing Documents

The Tipperary LCDC Standing Orders can be accessed here:

<https://www.tipperarycoco.ie/sites/default/files/2023-06/Final%20TLCDC%20standing%20orders..pdf>

A4 Operational Procedures

The LEADER Policy and Operations Unit of DCRD are currently developing the Operating Rules for the LEADER 2023-2027 Programme. The LCDC Standing Orders contain a number of operational procedures, and these will be reviewed and updated to reflect the new Operating Rules when released. The new Tipperary LCDC procedures will then be presented to the LCDC for feedback and ratification.

A5 Job Descriptions: LEADER Staff Members

Table 14 – STDC LEADER Staffing

Description	Indicator
Proposed number of FTE in STDC	1.6 FTE (direct) 0.46 FTE (indirect) (Senior management and administration support in processing project claims).
Proposed Salary for Each Staff Member	Direct Staff – Project Development EO7, EO8 and HEO2 (Pobal Partnership Project Worker Salary Scale). The salary of Project Development Workers is based on professional qualifications and the number of years of experience. Staff have over 50 years of combined experience.
Proposed Salary for Each Staff Member	Indirect Staff – CEO, Financial Controller and Administration Senior Management AP 2 nd LSI and AP1 (Pobal Partnership Managers Scale). Salary is based on professional qualifications and the number of years of experience. Administration / Project Claims Support EO8 (Pobal Partnership Administration Salary Scale). Salary Experienced Accounts Executive with 30+ years' experience in finance and the LEADER Programme.
Job Descriptions Direct Staff	Animation and Capacity Building to ensure the implementation of the LDS per Operating Guidelines and LAG policies. Relationship Building with prospective project promoters and supporting them from enquiry to final claim/project completion stage. Project Management: Checking the compatibility of projects, preparation of projects for evaluation, management/co-ordination of project evaluation process, presentation to IEC and LAG (if required), processing of claims, supporting inspectorate and LAG queries, monitoring Programme budgets and reporting to CEO, STDC board, LAG, and DRCD. Networking: Cooperation, collaboration and building synergies with relevant stakeholders.
Professional Qualifications Direct Staff	BA Natural Science, Grad Cert Marketing, MA Social Justice and Public Policy, Grad Cert Innovation and Entrepreneurship, BSc Earth Science UCC, and MSc (Agr) Environmental Resource Management UCD.
Job Description Indirect Staff	The CEO will be responsible for implementing the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 per the Operating Rules and the Partnership Agreement with the LAG. Checking/ Signing-Off on projects at the development and claim stage. Preparation of Reports as required by the LCDC / LAG, Managing Authority or other recognised body. The Financial Controller will have financial oversight of the LEADER Programme with responsibility for the day-to-day management of financial aspects of the Programme; Co-operate with all audits by LAG / Inspectorate or other relevant bodies.

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Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

/continued

Description	Indicator
Job Description Indirect Staff	Prepare Financial Reports as required by the LAG and other relevant bodies. Ensuring that the Implementing Partners adopt Good Governance practices in the delivery of the Programme. The Administrator supports the Project Development Team, CEO, and Financial Controller.
Professional Qualifications Indirect Staff	BCom; Certificate in PR, Bachelor of Business Studies (Hons) from MTU, Diploma in Risk Management, Internal Audit and Compliance from Chartered Accountants Ireland, and Fellow Chartered Accountant with Chartered Accountants Ireland.
Qualifications regarding climate action, biodiversity, and environment	Staff have supported numerous project promoters in the development of environmental projects and the incorporation of environmental elements into mainstream projects and have developed and managed successful in-house LEADER-funded projects in the areas of: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMART Sustainable Village Planning • Biodiversity Training • Water Quality on the River Suir • Community Energy Auditing • Environmental training for Tidy Towns Groups • Community Climate Coaching Training Programme Staff are members of: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tipperary Green Business Network • Tipperary PPN Environmental Network
Knowledge of State Aid, EU and National Programmes	Staff working on LEADER have 100 years combined experience working on the LEADER programme. Three staff have been involved with LEADER since the 1990s. All staff have worked on LEADER 2016-2020 and the recent Transitional Programme.
Contribution to the administration of LEADER	As detailed above, the job descriptions outline the contribution that each staff person will bring to the delivery of the LEADER Programme.

Table 15 – NTDC LEADER Staffing

Description	Indicator
Proposed number of FTE in NTDC	1.4 FTE (direct) .2725 (indirect)
Proposed Salary for Each Staff Member	Direct Staff – Project Development Pobal linked Project Worker Salary Scale
Proposed Salary for Each Staff Member	Indirect Staff – CEO, Finance Manager and Administration CEO PO1 and Finance Manager AP1. Salary is based on professional qualifications and the number of years of experience.

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Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

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Description	Indicator
Job Descriptions Direct Staff	<p>Animation and Capacity Building to ensure the implementation of the LDS per Operating Guidelines and LAG policies.</p> <p>Relationship Building with prospective project promoters and supporting them from enquiry to final claim/project completion stage.</p> <p>Project Management: Checking the compatibility of projects, preparation of projects for evaluation, management/co-ordination of project evaluation process, presentation to IEC and LAG (if required), processing of claims, supporting inspectorate and LAG queries, monitoring Programme budgets and reporting to CEO, NTDC board, LAG, and DRCD.</p> <p>Networking: Cooperation, collaboration and building synergies with relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>Claims: Supporting Claims work.</p>
Professional Qualifications Direct Staff	Level 9 and Level 6
Job Description Indirect Staff	<p>The CEO will be responsible for implementing the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 per the Operating Rules and the Partnership Agreement with the LAG.</p> <p>Checking/ Signing-Off on projects at the development and claim stage.</p> <p>Preparation of Reports as required by the LCDC / LAG, Managing Authority or other recognised body.</p> <p>The Finance Manager will have financial oversight of the LEADER Programme with responsibility for the day-to-day management of financial aspects of the Programme;</p> <p>Co-operate with all audits by LAG / Inspectorate or other relevant bodies.</p>
Job Description Indirect Staff	<p>Prepare Financial Reports as required by the LAG and other relevant bodies.</p> <p>Ensuring that the Implementing Partners adopts Good Governance practices in the delivery of the Programme.</p>
Professional Qualifications Indirect Staff	CEO – MBA, Finance Manager – Chartered Accountant .
Qualifications regarding climate action, biodiversity, and environment	<p>Staff have supported numerous project promoters in the development of environmental projects and the incorporation of environmental elements into mainstream projects and have developed and managed successful in-house LEADER-funded projects in the areas of: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMART Sustainable Village Planning • Biodiversity Training • Water Quality for Communities with Cabragh Wetlands Trust • Community Energy Auditing • Environmental training for Tidy Towns Groups <p>Staff are members of: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tipperary Green Business Network <p>Tipperary Tourism Eco Trails Committee and Destination Lough Derg VEDP Environmental Tourism Initiatives.</p>

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Description	Indicator
Knowledge of State Aid, EU and National Programmes	Staff working on LEADER have 35 years combined experience working on the LEADER programme. Three staff have been involved with LEADER since the 2000s. All staff have worked on LEADER 2007-2013, RDP 2016-2020 and the recent Transitional Programme.
Contribution to the administration of LEADER	As detailed above, the job descriptions outline the contribution that each staff person will bring to the delivery of the LEADER Programme.

A5.1 Job Description: LEADER Rural Development Officer

Key Responsibilities to include: -

- Pro-actively generating projects and activities that fit into the Tipperary Local Development Strategy (LDS) and the LEADER Programme 2023-2027.
- Advising and guiding individuals, enterprises, and communities on the LEADER Programme and on the grant application process.
- Work with promoters on their projects from concept to completion which includes: -
 - animation and capacity building
 - managing the grant application process
 - responsibility for project files in compliance with the LEADER Operating Rules including management of files on the CRM
 - preparing and presenting projects to the Independent Evaluation Committee and LAG
 - preparing project payments
 - reporting and evaluation to the LAG, Pobal and relevant Government Departments
- Assisting with PR/communication activities re the LEADER Programme. This may include organising in person and online events, using social and traditional media, making presentations, identifying opportunities for collaboration.
- Representing the company on various committees as requested by the CEO.
- Work with other agencies and stakeholders locally and nationally to support the work of the RDP.
- Working as part of the overall company staff team and contributing as required.

The ideal candidate will: -

- Have previous experience in working with individuals, enterprises, and communities in developing projects that fit under the themes of Enterprise Development, Rural Environment and Social Inclusion. A knowledge and understanding of climate change issues and/or SMART Town/Village planning as relevant to community/local enterprise would be an advantage.
- Have knowledge of national policy in Rural/Enterprise/Community Development.
- Have excellent organizational, administration, planning, IT skills and Group facilitation skills.
- Have knowledge and experience of budgeting, financial management and national procurement procedures.
- Have excellent communication and presentation skills- A skill set in digital media would be an advantage.
- Be self-starting and proactive, but also a good team player.
- Have a relevant third level qualification.

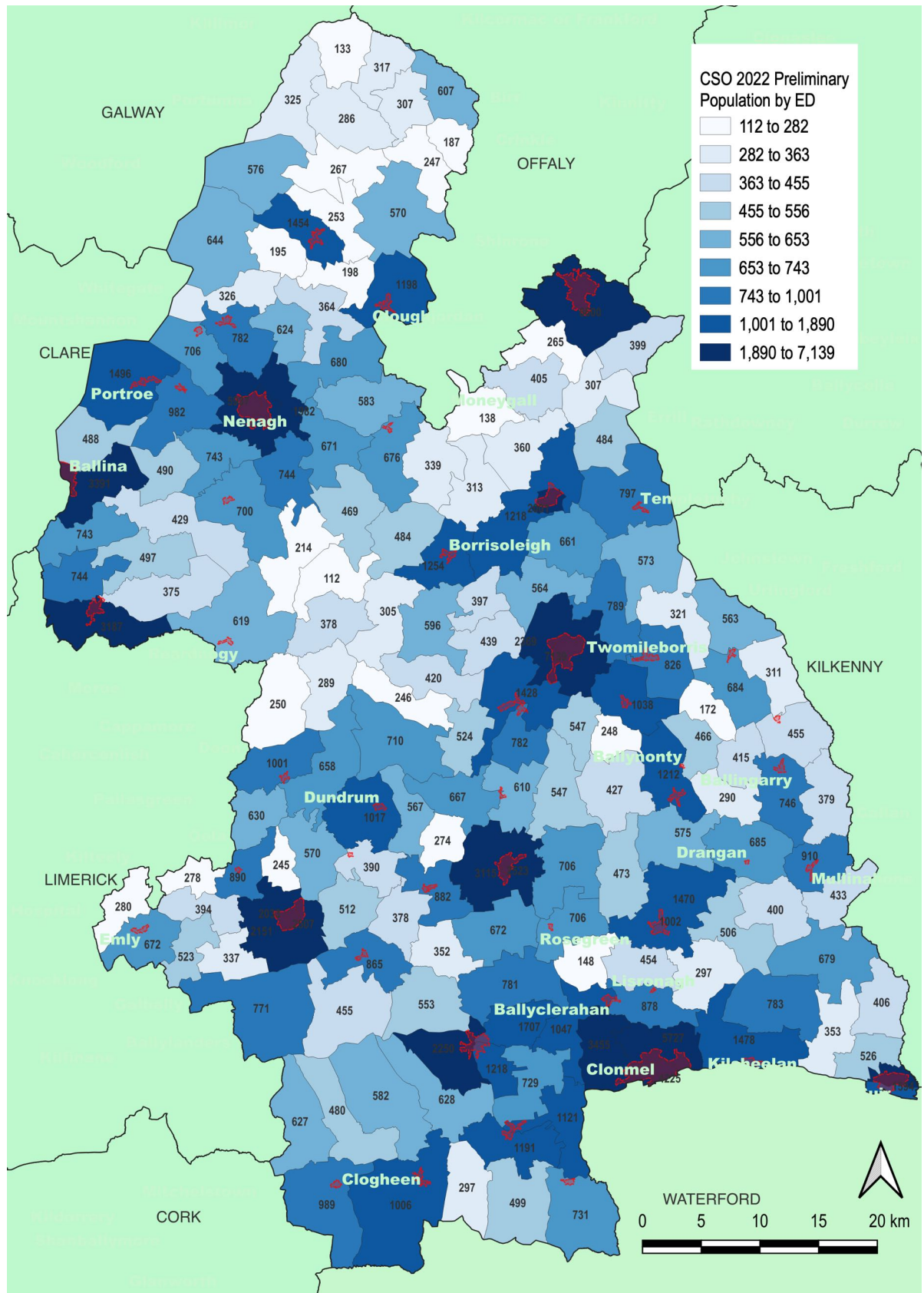
A6 Co. Tipperary LDS Area Mapping

Map 1 – Co. Tipperary LDS Area by ED

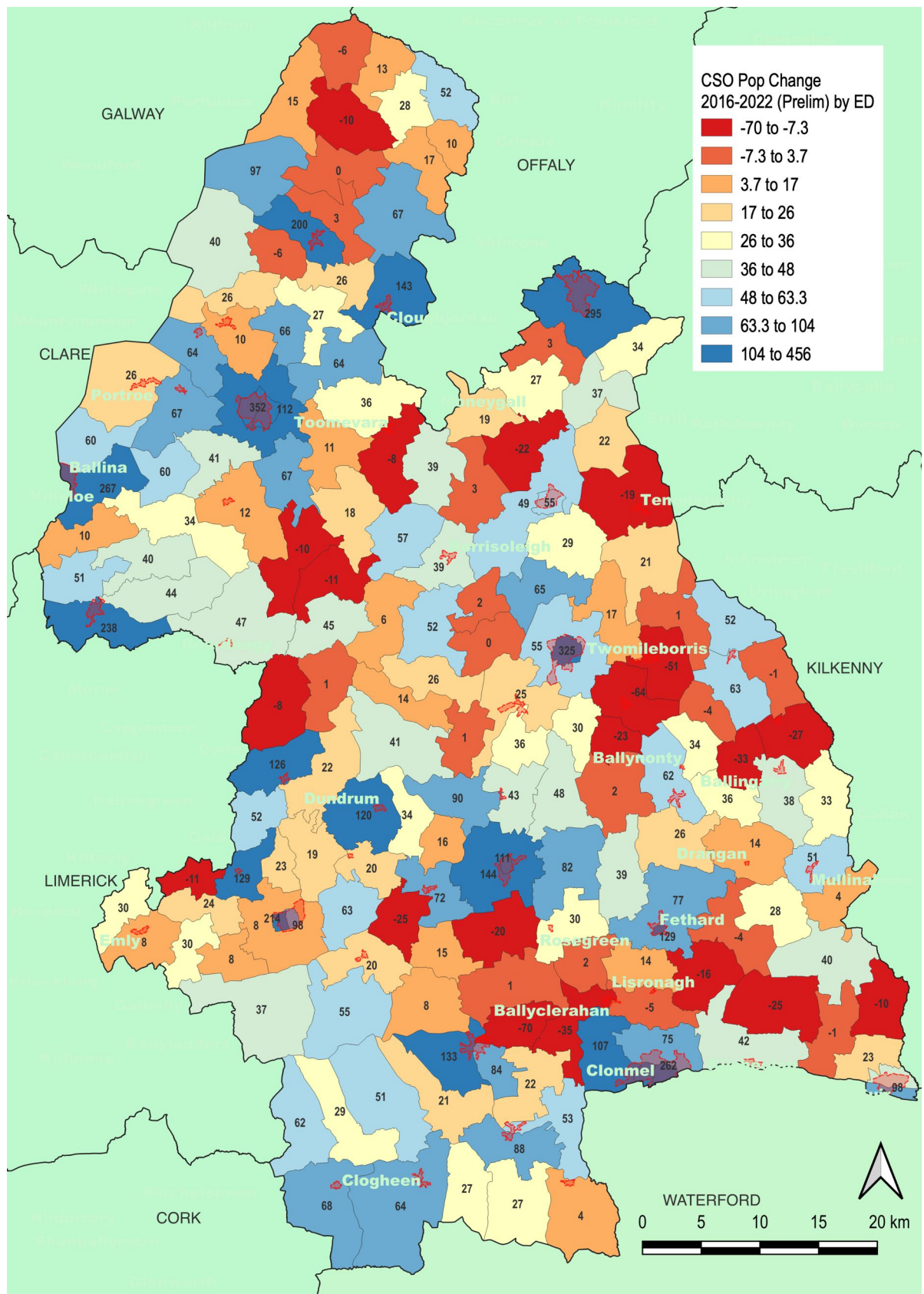


Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

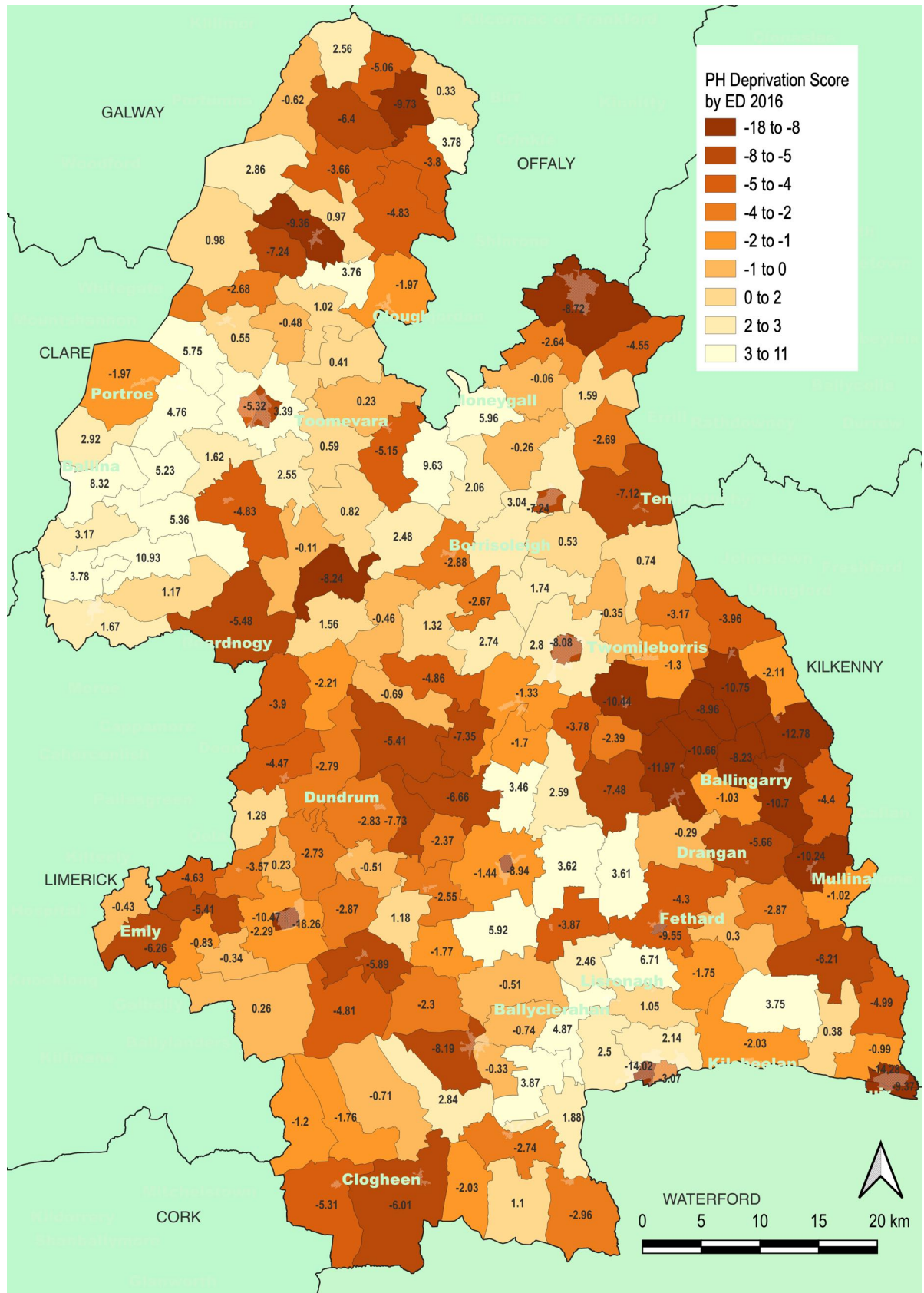
Map 2 – Co. Tipperary Population by ED 2022 (Prelim)



Map 3 – Co. Tipperary Pop Change by ED 2016-22 (Prelim)

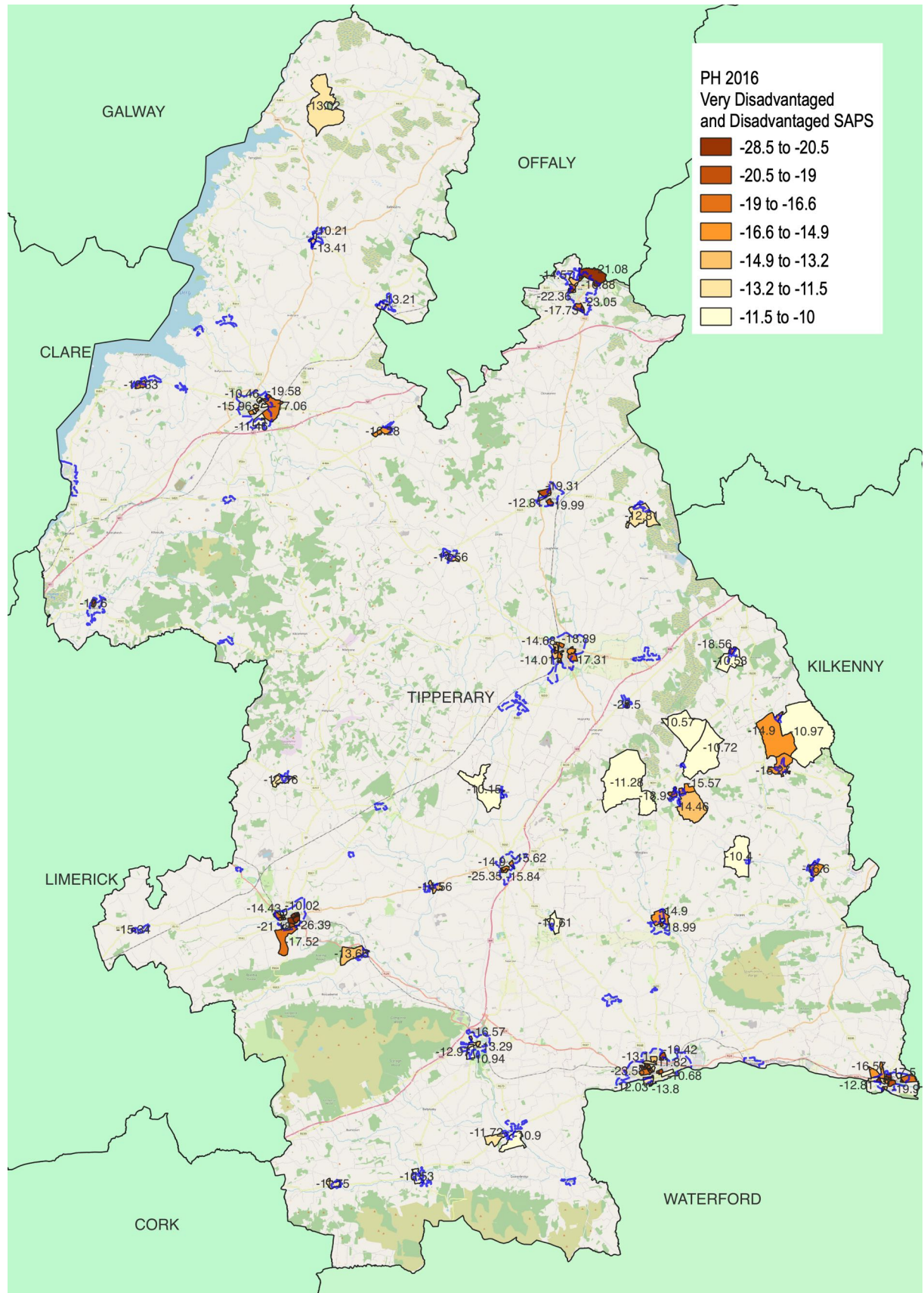


Map 4 – Co. Tipperary Deprivation Score by ED 2016



Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

Map 5 – Co. Tipperary Most Disadvantaged SAPS 2016



Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

Map 6 – Spatial Distribution of Community Consultation Meetings



A7 Consultation Feedback

A7.1 Theme 1.1: Economic Development and Job Creation

Economic Development and job creation discussions were both thematic and geographical. The main themes are outlined below, with a rural focus on recreation tourism and artisan opportunities. Co. Tipperary, not least through the song, is noted as having an iconic name in terms of branding.

Sub-Theme 1: Green Economy

Table 16 – Green Economy - Consultation Feedback

Theme	Sub-Theme	Trending Discussions - Consolidated
Economic Development and Job Creation	Green Economy	Insulation grants – one-stop-shop. Renewable development. Capital supports (converting to solar). Information resource on funding and support across agencies and authorities.

Information and awareness remain significant barriers, for although the ‘green’ term is well established, what it comprises in terms of sector type and activity is less well known. As a major agricultural county, each Municipal District can benefit from green economy initiatives. The sector has had a relatively strong emergence in the county, and there is scope for increased activity that was picked up on in the consultations. The emergence of remote work hubs throughout the county has potential benefits concerning connectivity, reducing carbon emissions, and addressing rural isolation.

Several community and voluntary organisations provided feedback on the role of social and community enterprises in the community energy projects space. This was expressed in terms of community-owned renewable energy generation that could benefit the community sector and give a return to help fund services.

Outcome

Building on significant county exemplars (Lisheen, Energy (ECTC) Cooperative, Tipperary Energy Agency) and third-level skills and awareness development (Gurteen College), the infrastructure exists to expand activity in the green economy (together with Rural Food, Agricultural Diversification and Tourism sub-themes) which can have a significant role in helping to meet Ireland’s carbon reduction targets. Community businesses can play an important role in developing and testing green economy initiatives. LEADER investment should complement the Green for Micro (Tipperary LEO) funding stream and link in with the Tipperary Green Business Network.

Sub Theme 2: Agricultural Diversification

Table 17 - Agricultural Diversification

Theme	Sub-Theme	Trending Discussions
Economic Development and Job Creation	Agricultural Diversification	Craft network. Social Farming – local produce and education. Cloughjordan Community Farm – access issues and replication. Lack of allotments. Producing energy from slurry and solar farms. Farm training to understand the scope of alternative activity potential. Local food, agri-tourism potential for farm families.

There was strong recognition among consultees of the benefits of farm diversification in terms of sustainable livelihoods and the green economy. Many recommended ongoing work to educate and support farmers, particularly in marketing. The emergence of the green economy provides landholders with well-developed alternative energy land use (forestry and natural habitats). Similarly, previous iterations of LEADER support directed at social farming and farm-based holiday accommodation remain viable sustainability options. Many consultees connected diversification activities with alternative energy, rural food, and rural tourism activities.

Outcome

The LEADER Programme and Teagasc support have a strong track record in supporting farm diversification activities. Within this and connecting sub-themes (green economy, food, tourism, and recreation), there is potential to progress the work.

Sub Theme 3: Rural Tourism and Recreation

Table 18 – Rural Tourism Consultation Feedback

Theme	Sub-Theme	Trending Discussions
Economic Development and Job Creation	Rural Tourism and Recreation	Lack of tourist accommodation. Working collaboratively and cross-selling. Equine walks. Glen of Aherlow. Area networks. Signage. Music, culture, and heritage.

The position of Co. Tipperary as a tourism destination can be enhanced by connecting the recreational tourism potential throughout the county digitally, cross-selling packages and, where possible, linking physical sites by safe active transport links (bog roads, disused rail routes, minor roads). Within the county, there is an imbalance with the greatest emphasis and resource dedicated to the 'honeypot' landmarks, such as the Rock of Cashel. Promotion remains an issue in many of the more remote areas of the county, and given the potential of these areas in terms of recreational tourism, a specific campaign and appropriate signage are worth considering.

Co. Tipperary's geographic position gives favourable access to most sites from the national motorway network. In addition, there is a considerable history and heritage site infrastructure, proximity to mountains and an excellent natural landscape.

Outcome

There are many opportunities to enhance the outdoor recreation space for tourists and residents alike. Consultees noted opportunities for greenways, bog and forest walk development and enhancement were pointed out in each Municipal District. Similarly, blueways represent a niche opportunity for kayakers etc., to enjoy the rivers and lakes in the county. In addition, facilities such as equipment hire and pontoons can create local opportunities in terms of community businesses.

A common issue throughout the county is the poor quality of signage and signposting on and off road. Similarly, access to a comprehensive guide and overview of visitor facilities is a challenge. In addition, distributing up-to-date information is labour-intensive, involving maintaining databases and posting offerings.

Camping, glamping, and caravan facilities are limited in most county areas. Given that there is also a lack of hotel and restaurant facilities, the danger exists that tourists overlook the county as a viable touring option despite, for example, the recreation and heritage tourism assets.

There are links between sustainable tourism initiatives and addressing climate change. Experiences based around Greenways or Blueways should utilise green energy or promote reduced emissions and can represent positive actions in this regard.

Sub Theme 4: Enterprise Development

Table 19 - Enterprise Development Feedback

Theme	Sub-Theme	Trending Discussions
Economic Development and Job Creation	Enterprise Development	<p>Connective marketing.</p> <p>Complementary funding streams should be made available using a coordinated approach.</p> <p>Lack of skilled occupations for a skilled workforce</p> <p>Cost and availability of insurance.</p> <p>Resource library of previous LEADER projects and applications for reference.</p>

In each Municipal District, varying degrees of perceived need were expressed in terms of shops, cafes, accommodation, and pubs. In the era of working hubs, a green economy and working from home, on-street retail and food services in Co. Tipperary are closing. There is a need to use targeted marketing to improve awareness of products, activities and services for tourists and communities alike.

At the same time, consultees recognised that the county has a strong industrial (pharma, agriculture, food, and light engineering) base.

The need was expressed for increased awareness and training around establishing social and community businesses to retest the local potential in new ways with a focus on local artisan production through community shops, cafes, accommodation, and activities,

Outcome

Co. Tipperary boasts networks for *Women in Business*, *Tipperary Tourism*, *Food Producers and Green Business networks*. Tipperary LEO has a role in facilitating awareness of these networks throughout the county, ensuring that regular information flows across networks, and providing support for rural community enterprise facilities. Similarly, Enterprise Ireland operates the Community Enterprise Initiative Fund and one strand, fostering an increased collaborative, networked and linked approach to regional and local enterprise development and job creation links very closely to LEADER and networking among community enterprises is one initiative that might benefit from a joint approach.

Sub Theme 5: Rural Food Production

Table 20 - Rural Food Feedback

Theme	Sub-Theme	Trending Discussions
Economic Development and Job Creation	Rural Food Production	<p>Food networks.</p> <p>Community cafés selling local produce.</p> <p>Awareness and information – promotion.</p> <p>Local markets and community shops.</p> <p>Artisan food production.</p> <p>Opportunity for new community inputs.</p>

Within the consultations, there was a focus on local artisanal food production at the community level, including grow-your-own opportunities. Tipperary can count many food producers among the assets the county has to offer. Artisan food has emerged as a key local, domestic, and international market opportunity (Cashel Blue, Inch Pudding); many producers began the production cycle to sell into local and farmer's markets. The trend for young people to engage in this economy is positive. New communities can access a 'united' food community with cultural and fusion food and beverage options. There was considerable feedback that pride in the county should extend to buying local produce and sustaining local businesses. Community enterprise is recognised as a vehicle to test demand for community cafés and shops, which can evolve as a

commercial retail or food business opportunity. Similarly, local food and farmer's markets are noted as positive additions to local food and community engagement.

Outcome

Artisan and local food production interlock with rural tourism and recreation in creating viable rural markets. Local markets can serve enterprise and social inclusion goals in opening out 'new' public spaces for community engagement.

Sub Theme 6: Social, Community Enterprise and Cooperative Development

Table 21 - Social Enterprise Feedback

Theme	Sub Theme	Trending Discussions
Economic Development and Job Creation	Social, Community and Enterprise Development	<p>Business Women's Network.</p> <p>Corporate governance training.</p> <p>Rising costs challenge sustainability.</p> <p>Emerging local food, recreation, and visitor facilities.</p> <p>Skills development training opportunities for target groups and new communities.</p> <p>Mentoring requirements for social businesses (Suil Eile).</p> <p>Start-up supports – Cloughjordan <i>We Create</i>.</p> <p>Wellbeing of community volunteers.</p> <p><i>Flexidesk</i> hub development.</p>

Co. Tipperary is not short of successful examples of social and community enterprise (Energy Agency, ECTC), and there were many calls for information, training and support for this sector to create new markets and address the lack of services and rural isolation in rural towns and villages. Capital and facility support was explicitly referenced in this regard.

The importance of skilled volunteers to the successful development of social enterprises necessitates a strategic approach to recruitment, skills development, recognition, and wellbeing in terms of volunteers, including the resource provided by new communities now establishing in the county.

The test-bed capacity of community enterprises in weak-demand local economies should be supported in a structured process that connects across the sector and with relevant networks and local work hubs. Similarly, community businesses are considered a close fit for community energy projects.

Outcome

The recent publication of a national strategy was a first step in bringing together what had been a fragmented support base for disparate social businesses. National policy advocating synergy with other policy initiatives that support organisations providing services to communities or tackling social, societal, or environmental concerns can be mirrored at the county level with a focus on systematically addressing the continuing pressure on and closure of social, retail and community services in rural areas.

A7.2 Theme 1.2: Rural Infrastructure and Social Inclusion

The issue of connecting, connected thinking, associated supports and connecting activities were comprehensively discussed at the public meetings. There is a need for more engagement within communities and with community councils. Facilities, access, and outdoor spaces are among the needs expressed, and there was also a broader discussion regarding accessibility and safety in the public realm and facilities. Improving the arts and culture infrastructure is seen as a means of

addressing gaps in some areas. Walking trails are advocated to link with other sub-themes along with outdoor gardens.

Sub Theme 1: Rural Infrastructure

Table 22 - Rural Infrastructure Feedback

Theme	Area	Trending Discussions
Rural Infrastructure	Killenaule	Retail services (community or private business). Community facilities (including hall, car parks, walkways, cycle tracks, and allotments). Care and repair of homes for older people. Playgrounds.
	Tipperary Town	Disused and derelict buildings. N24 hinders development. Handball alley renovation.
	Clonmel	Alternative spaces to daycentres. Tourism information signs. Exercise facilities in public areas. Mobile library.
	Templemore	Renovate derelict houses for accommodation. Recreation facilities.
Rural Infrastructure	Nenagh	Capacity: Wastewater treatment Transport (charging points, cycleways, parking) Affordable community facility rental.
	Online Meeting	Rural transport to villages (Local Link and community taxis). Community gardens and allotments. Underuse of community facilities. Safe spaces for women. Integration of new communities and volunteer potential. Inclusion on local and county decision-making bodies for new community representatives. Arts and culture facilities. Men's and Women's Sheds. Activity-based interaction.

A coordinated approach is needed to ensure that transport links are maximised: the current focus is on towns, and there is a need for Local Link services to encompass rural villages as well. Lack of local services is a common reference point in each Municipal District concerning rural isolation, local economies, and job potential. The underuse of community facilities is also noted, and rental costs can be an issue. Gaps in arts and culture facilities, and varying provisions for Men's and Women's Sheds, provide opportunities for supporting local provision.

The importance of infrastructure (and digital connectivity) in facilitating local livelihoods and remote working is noted in several responses. Perhaps the most current view on the infrastructure deficit in rural areas is the connection some consultees make between active transport infrastructure and wellbeing.

Addressing local housing needs through derelict house renovations could provide local employment opportunities. Building playgrounds and walking trails also meets social inclusion needs.

Information and advocacy services for rural residents and older people could be provided as a mobile service, perhaps in line with mobile library services. In addition, ensuring that residents

have access to some of the regional and national bus services that pass through the county would address some of the transport issues.

Outcome

Among the suggestions regarding the Municipal Districts, focused action-oriented town and village development plans were considered. Another relates to developing and refurbishing community facilities, particularly where those facilities provide a significant social inclusion mandate. Volunteer recruitment has been an issue in many communities post-Covid, and recognition of new communities increases the potential base in addition to providing integration and language acquisition opportunities.

There is much evidence among Tidy Towns and sports groups, for example, of new community engagement. More formal representation in local decision-making groups will also help bring communities together.

Sub-Theme 2: Accessible Services

Table 23 - Accessible Services Feedback

Theme	Area	Trending Discussions
Rural Youth	Killenaule	Accessibility to all facilities. Extend Local Link.
	Tipperary Town	Public transport – rail services.
	Clonmel	Accessibility (public toilets and parking spaces).
	Templemore	Accessibility (to retail, footpaths, and facilities). Transport (charging points, cycleways, and parking).
	Nenagh	Transport (charging points, cycleways, and parking). Nenagh to Clonmel – no public transport.
	Online Consultation	Employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Training on disability services. Purpose-built accommodation (women and children).

Discussion represented in the participant feedback shows ongoing issues around what might now be considered relatively standard issues for rural areas: accessibility, rural transport, and lack of services (retail and tourist facilities). Similarly, the issue of transport links and poor connectivity are noted as issues. Public transport aligns more with social activities, and there is a need for north-to-south services to transport people during working hours.

Promoting a green economy and carbon reduction opportunities such as driving electric cars is challenged by the county's lack of public charging points.

Outcome

Social Inclusion is a linking theme with potential points of intersection with the other themes and sub-themes. LEADER can lead in facilitating innovative approaches regarding the 'new' rural realities resulting from ongoing pressure on services and facilities.

Sub-Theme 3: Optimising Digital Connectivity

Table 24 - Optimising Digital Feedback

Theme	Area	Trending Discussions
Broadband	Consolidated	Digital literacy – training for vulnerable groups. Broadband and fibreoptic rollout. Community hubs and public WiFi (work hubs). Online safety and commercial fraud. Replacement of in-person services.

Inequality of access is shown in the volume of concerns and ideas on this topic. Feedback from the meetings indicates that fibre optic provision and broadband quality and supply remain issues in different areas (e.g., Tipperary Town). Digital literacy services and training are noted, and the provision of work hubs aligns with a policy set out in the national strategy: *Our Rural Future* (2021-2025).

Outcome

There has been considerable investment in public WiFi hotspots throughout the county; an information campaign should highlight availability, particularly in areas where quality has been an issue. This is important to visitors and residents alike, and widespread coverage would be required if location-based visitor information services were offered. Banks and other service providers are directing more services online, and rural residents are disadvantaged regarding access and education. Perhaps the most relevant suggestion to the LEADER Programme concerns digital literacy and the need for training for vulnerable groups.

Sub-Theme 4: Rural Youth

The workshop discussions around rural youth focused on the loss of population through migration and the lack of facilities, services, and employment opportunities for young people. Cutbacks in youth worker hours often mean that there are shortages of both paid workers and volunteers. In one community, the youth organisation closed and in others, service levels are such that opening for more extended periods would be beneficial.

Table 25 - Rural Youth Feedback

Theme	Area	Trending Discussions
Rural Youth	Killenaule	Arts activities (music, video, animation). Need for non-traditional sports activities. Develop Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths skills. Upgrade existing facilities (playground, parish field, river swimming, and youth spaces). Care services (including drug rehabilitation, buddy system, access, and afterschool provision).
	Clonmel	Non-traditional sports activities. Afterschool services. Facilities (digital space and youth spaces). Life skills (cooking classes, apprenticeships, job search).
	Templemore	Club volunteers (impact of Covid-19). Drug rehabilitation. Access to nature and outdoors. Intergenerational learning opportunities.
	Nenagh	Music education opportunities. Volunteers and buy-in from young people. Insurance. Youth space. Tutors for youth-oriented courses.
	Online Consultation	Investment in volunteer services – pilot training programmes. Late opening coffee shops for young people.

Sports activity is generally well catered for through the GAA, soccer, and rugby clubs. However, there is a need for services for those with no interest in sports. Arts and music education services would help address the need. Access in rural areas is an ongoing issue.

Local work and job-related education are needed if young people are going to stay in the county. In addition, volunteering in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic has become an issue.

Safe and appropriate youth space is an issue that emerged in several areas for providing youth-led services. However, it is mainly an urban service, and there is a need for it to be applied to rural areas.

Addiction services for young people reflect a broader demand for social and mental health services. In addition, for younger age groups, there is a need for playground or playground upgrades at selected sites.

Many submissions relate 'new' activity areas (green economy, active transport and recreation, artisan food, green energy, and biodiversity) with young people's interests, capacity, skills, and future vision.

Outcome

Concerning Rural Youth, LEADER can facilitate links for town-based arts groups. For example, it can play a role in extending the reach of youth theatre and community music into rural communities. Similarly, it can play a role in ensuring that rural-based young people have quality access to employment skills and other practical employment-oriented resources and supports.

A7.3 Theme 1.3: Sustainable Development of the Rural Environment

Theme 1.3: Sustainable Development of the Rural Environment and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptations

Sub-Theme 1: Sustainable Development of the Rural Environment

Table 26 - Rural Environment Feedback

Sub-Theme	Area	Trending Discussions
Sustainable Development of the Rural Environment	Consolidated	Biodiversity – local environment (clean-ups). Rivers and lakes as a community, recreation, and tourism space. Water quality. Safe active travel options. Sensory gardens. Enterprise: plastics recycling (Littleton).

The sub-theme relating to biodiversity was subject to positive discussion in the public meetings with a positive affirmation of local environments: lakes, bogs, and hedgerows. In several of these discussions, connection with other themes and sub-themes was commented upon, particularly concerning rural food, rural tourism, and recreation. Projects that encourage and support landowners to create areas of biodiversity that can then be used for public good and sustainable tourism were noted in discussions.

The creation and support of new groups in rural areas to incorporate biodiversity into local practice are seen as desirable, particularly with the emergence of blueways and greenways as niche recreation tourism opportunities for which the county is well placed. Education and awareness were discussed as integral to this and the broader climate action agenda.

At a practical level, there was much discussion on littering, dumping, and dog-fouling. At the same time, on the positive side, the efforts in terms of Tidy Towns and community clean-ups were noted as a significant community asset.

Outcome

There is potential for a range of low-cost community-based initiatives that could impact biodiversity goals and those of several linking themes (rural tourism, recreation and rural food). For example,

within the county, networking bodies should be supported to protect and promote diverse ecosystems in the context of tourism recreation development.

Biodiversity awareness and training could be rolled out in communities and schools, building on existing work that activists in the county have done. Regarding water quality, the LEADER Programme has supported Water Framework Directive (EU Directive) activities in local river basin management. There is scope with the new programme to activate measures that complement the existing support infrastructure.

Sub-Theme 2: Climate Change Capacity Building

Table 27 - Climate Change - Capacity Feedback

Sub-Theme	Area	Trending Discussions
Climate Change Capacity Building	Consolidated	Related biodiversity information and awareness facilitation. Sustainable energy. Lack of knowledge and prioritisation. Energy conservation workshop.

Climate action awareness and training are needed to bring the public on board with Climate change, as communities don't know enough about the issues and solutions. Perhaps the most common discussions were about information and awareness, about educating the public in general and young people about the need to diversify energy sources and reduce dependence on fossil fuels. Accepting it as an immediate priority action area for individuals, families and communities is perhaps the most significant challenge. Participant feedback in consultations referred to the legitimacy of the just transition measure where change is uneconomical.

Outcome

Climate Action Leadership Programme could be rolled out in communities and schools. There was some activity in community-led initiatives, with a keen interest in working with community schemes, for which activity in Ireland is in its infancy. Similarly, through previous iterations, LEADER has supported farm diversification activities that constitute climate action measures.

Sub-Theme 3: Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

Table 28 – Mitigation and Adaptation Feedback

Sub-Theme	Area	Trending Discussions
Mitigation and Adaption	Consolidated	Increase the availability of local, sustainable housing. Community energy projects. Anaerobic digesters in communities. EV charging points. Community composting. Rainwater harvesting.

Co. Tipperary already hosts several different renewable energy projects and suggestions, including solar panels, anaerobic digestion, and wind energy add to the mix of community-led models. The potential to create alternate energy 'hubs' around the county opens possibilities of creating a Tipperary brand in terms of alternative energy.

There was a call to create support networks to facilitate models of good practice in climate change mitigation to facilitate a transfer of learning. Similarly, the establishment of demonstration models to pilot and encourage alternative land use and support for farmers who wish to plan for succession and leave behind environmentally sound and secure enterprises was noted. Further, it was noted that the potential exists to tap into rainwater harvesting as a resource. There was a recognition of the central role that Tidy Towns can play in pilot programmes and awareness raising.

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

Outcome

Finding several niche areas for cost-effective input will be necessary, and collaboration with existing schemes will optimise the potential for effective programmes. Consultation feedback noted the need for immediate promotion of the climate action agenda and increased LEADER visibility in the climate action space.

A7.4 Consultees

Table 29 - Summary Table of all LDS Consultees

All-Ireland Business Foundation	HSE	Roscrea Tidy Towns
Age Friendly Roscrea	ICMSA	Roscrea Youth Service
Aherlow Failte Tourism Group	IFA	Roscrea Tennis Club
Aherlow GAA	John Hanly and Co	Rùme
Ailbhe Gerrard Brookfield Farm/ Field Exchange	Kilcoleman Community Development	SEAI - Community Mentor
All-Ireland Business Foundation Alone	Killaloe Ballina Tennis Club	Sean O Farrell, Cloncannon Bio Farm
Ardcroney Development Association	Killenaule	Sean Treacy's GAA
Ardfinnan Community Council	Killenaule Community	SICAP
Arra Historical & Archaeological Society	Killenaule Ladies Group	Silvermines SMART Village Group
Ballina Tidy Towns	Killenaule Playground	Social Farming Ireland
Ballinderry-Ballyfinboy Development Association	Killenaule Rovers	STDC
Ballingarry Community Centre	Killenaule Senior Citizens	St Mary's Hall
Ballynonty Community Field	Killenaule Senior Citizens, Women's Group	STDC SICAP
Ballynonty Tidy Towns	Killoscully Development Association	Stone Park Caravan and Camping
Benny McDonagh	Kilsheelan GAA	SuirCan Environmental Network
Birdhill Tidy Towns	Kilsheelan Tidy Towns	TCC Broadband Team
Boher Community Development Group	Knocklofty	TCC Climate Change Team
Borrisoleigh Development Association	Knockmealdown	TCC Community SPC
Borrisoleigh Town Park	KPLAN Community Centre	TCC Community Team
Burncourt Community Council CLG	LAES personnel	TCC Economic SPC
C-Saw Suicide Prevention	LCDC	TCC Economic Team
Cabragh Wetlands Development Trust	Leader Education	TCC Elected Members
Cahir Development Association CLG	LEADER IEC	TCC Heritage Team
Canon Hayes Recreation Centre	LGBTQIA+	TEA
Canvas Brewery	Limestone studios	Teagasc
Cappawhite Community Alert, and Cappawhite Community Council	Lingaun Valley Tourism	Tearaways Pet Farm and Activity Centre Ltd
Cappawhite Community Council	Lorrha Development Association	Technological University Shannon
Cappawhite GAA	Lough Derg Water Sports	Templemore Community Development Association
		Terryglass SMART Village Group

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Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

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Cappawhite Youth Club	Lougtagalla Community Development Association	Tipperary Mid-West Radio
Clerihan Community Council	Marhill Open Farm	Tipperary Tidy Towns
Clonakenny Walking Group	Maureen Fahey	Tipperary Tourism Co
Concannon Bio Farm	Men's Sheds	Tipperary Town Revitalisation
Clonmel Community Training Centre	Migrant Support (Syrian/Ukrainian/Direct Provision)	Tipperary Tourism
Cloughjordan Arts	MJM Corporate Solutions Ltd	Tipperary Chamber of Commerce
Cloughjordan Development Association	Moneygall GAA	Tipperary County Council
Cloughjordan Eco-Village, Cultivate, and Sustainable Projects Ireland	Moycarkey Coolcree ac	Tipperary Energy Agency
Colm Brophy	Multeen Group	Tipperary Environmental Network
Community Development Associations	Munster Vales Tourism	Tipperary ETB
Community Energy Sector	My Ireland Adventure,	Tipperary Food Producers Network
Community Power	Nenagh Hockey Club	Tipperary Glass Company
Coniaka Ltd	Nenagh LGBTQIA+	Tipperary Golf Club
Count on Us Recruitment	Nenagh Men's Shed	Tipperary Green Business Network
County Tipperary Chamber	New Inn Cashel	Tipperary Heartland
Cultivate - the Sustainable Ireland Coop	New Inn Coco, Villages, Tidy Towns	Tipperary Hills Handball Club
Department of Social Protection	New Inn Community Centre	Tipperary LEO
Destination Lough Derg Tourism	New Inn Community Council	Tipperary Mid-West Radio
Domestic Violence	Newport Community Centre	Tipperary Mountain Trekking Centre
Early Stage BTWEA/Entrepreneurs	Newport Tidy Towns	Tipperary PPN
Energy Communities Tipperary Cooperative	North Tipperary Development Company	Tipperary Pride
Energy Communities Tipperary Cooperative CLG	NTDC	Tipperary Tourism Company
Enterprise Ireland	NTDC SICAP	Tipperary Volunteer Centre
Family Resource Centre Sector	Old Bridge Comm. Assoc.	Tom Kennedy Borrisokane GAA
Fethard	Old Bridge Soccer Club	Traveller Health Project
Flexi Desk	Ormond Way Association	Tullamine Distillery
Fuchsia Lane Cottages	Pat Rohan, 'The Celtic B&B'	Tullamore Distillery
Fuchsia Lane Farm	PPN	TUS
G.R.A.	PPN Environmental Network	Tús/RSS participants
Glen Bower Farm	Premier Sensory Solutions CLG	Upperchurch, Drombane and District Development Association
Glengoole	Puckane Development Association	Upperchurch Drombane GAA
Grange Development Association	Rathcabbin Development Association	Willis Steel Ltd
Hillview Sports Club	Rathcabbin Tidy Towns	Women's Groups
Hogan Environmental Ltd	Raycsports	Youth Work Ireland Tipperary
Holycross-Ballycahill GAA	Rhododendron Walking Festival	
Loughmore Community Shop and Tea Rooms	The Celtic B&B	
Loughmore Tidy Tourism	Thurles Men's Shed	

A8 GDPR Statement

The LAG is cognisant that the LAG and all associated partners are subject to the data protection and privacy laws of Ireland and the EU, in particular the Data Protection Act 2018 and Regulation (EU) 2016/679, known as the EU General Data Protection Regulation (“GDPR”). Information provided to the LAG by an Implementing Partner, or a promoter, may include personal data and sensitive personal data as defined by the Data Protection Acts 1988-2018.

It is the responsibility of the LAG to ensure that all partners are compliant with data protection legislation. LAGs are required to include a copy of their GDPR policy when submitting the key information required under LAG overview and governance model in Section 3. All partners are subject to the GDPR policy of their own organisation as per the links for same. It is intended to create a single GDPR policy for the LAG following the release of the programme Operating Rules and ensuring all members agree to this policy as part of their induction to the LAG and signing of relevant Ethics documentation.

STDC

<https://www.stdc.ie/privacy-policy-general-data-protection-regulations/>

NTDC

https://www.ntdc.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/NTDC.POL_.0018-Data-Protection-Policy.pdf

Tipperary County Council

<https://www.tipperarycoco.ie/governance-and-administration/data-access-request/tipperary-county-council-privacy-statement>

Also note the current LAG promoter application form has a Data Protection Declaration as below and will be updated to the new programme.

Data Protection Declaration

The current LAG promoter application form contains a Data Protection Declaration, and this will also be updated for the new Programme. The applicant must declare acceptance of Data Protection provisions in relation to an application for funding under the LEADER Programme 2014-2020.

All data supplied will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003.

The project applicant gives permission that the information contained in this application form, the accompanying documentation and all subsequent documentation submitted regarding this grant application, may be made available to the IP/LAG Name and those organisations listed below.

- __Insert county__ Local and Community Development Committee
- __Insert city name__ City and County Council
- Evaluation Committee of __LAG Name__
- The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (including publication of grant received on DAFM website)
- The Department of Rural and Community Development
- Pobal
- E.U. Commission and E.U. Court of Auditors
- Comptroller and Auditor General and any other Government Department or Agency

A9 Declaration and Disclaimer

Please read carefully:

By submitting the Local Development Strategy (LDS), the applicant authorises the submission and declares that the information provided in relation to the organisation described in this LDS is true and complete to the best of its knowledge and belief.

The applicant acknowledges that any funds awarded must be used for the purpose stated and not used to replace existing funding. The applicant also understands that information supplied in, or accompanying this application may be made available on request under the Freedom of Information Act 2014.

The applicant accepts, as a condition of the award of a grant, that it involves no commitment to any other grants from the Department of Rural and Community Development or Pobal. The applicant is agreeable to ongoing programme monitoring by the Department of Rural and Community Development and/or its agents and to allowing access to premises and records, as necessary, for that purpose.

The applicant also accepts that Pobal may contact other public funding organisations or Government Departments to discuss this application and previous funding awarded, as part of the appraisal process.

Disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act

The Department of Rural and Community Development and Pobal wish to remind applicants that the information contained in the LDS and supporting documentation may be released, on request, to third parties, in accordance with all obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2014.

You are asked to consider if any of the information supplied in the LDS and supporting documentation, should not be disclosed because of sensitivity. If this is the case, you should, when submitting the LDS, identify same and specify the reasons for its sensitivity.

The Department of Rural and Community Development/ Pobal will consult with you about sensitive information before making a decision on the release of such information. The Department of Rural and Community Development /Pobal will release, on request, information to third parties, without further consultation with you, unless you identify the information as sensitive with supporting reasons.

Co. Tipperary Local Development Strategy 2023-2027

Disclaimer

Please read carefully:

It will be a condition of any application for funding under the terms and conditions of the LEADER element of the 2023-2027 CAP Strategic Plan that the applicant has read, understood and accepted the following:

- The Department of Rural and Community Development /Pobal shall not be liable to the applicant or any other party in respect of any loss, damage or costs of any nature arising directly or indirectly from:
 - The Local Development Strategy or the subject matter of the Local Development Strategy
 - The rejection, for any reason, of any application
- The Department of Rural and Community Development, its servants or agents shall not at any time in any circumstances be held responsible or liable in relation to any matter whatsoever arising in connection with the development, planning, construction, operation, management and/or administration of individual projects.

By submitting this Local Development Strategy application, the applicant acknowledges that it has read, understood and accepted the above points. The Declaration and Disclaimer should be signed by the Chairperson of the applicant group.

Chairperson: Doni Wolden

Date: 23.06.2023