Kildare Local Sports and Physical Activity Plan

2026 - 2031










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Foreword:

It is with great pride that we present the Kildare Sports Plan 2026–2031. This plan marks a significant milestone in our shared commitment to building a healthier, more active, and more inclusive County Kildare. Rooted in national policy and tailored to the unique strengths and challenges of our county, it sets out a clear vision: that every person in Kildare has the opportunity to be more active, more often.

Sport and physical activity are central to the wellbeing of our communities. Beyond the obvious health benefits, they foster social connection, strengthen resilience, and contribute to environmental and economic sustainability. This plan embraces a whole-of-council approach, ensuring collaboration across departments and with key partners to maximise impact and deliver lasting change.

Three strategic themes will guide our efforts:

- **Active People and Communities** – empowering individuals and groups to participate and thrive.
- **Active Spaces and Places** – enhancing facilities, infrastructure, and environments that support activity.
- **Active Communications and Partnerships** – building strong networks and clear messaging to inspire engagement.

Each theme is supported by targeted priorities and headline actions designed to remove barriers, expand opportunities, and make best use of resources. Central to this strategy is the leadership of Kildare Sports Partnership, whose dedication and innovation—supported by Sport Ireland—continue to drive accessibility, inclusivity, and participation across the county.

We extend our sincere thanks to all stakeholders who contributed to the development of this plan. Your insights and commitment have shaped a strategy that is ambitious yet achievable. Together, we will ensure that sport and physical activity become integral to daily life in Kildare, supported by strong infrastructure, inclusive programmes, and effective collaboration.

This plan is both a roadmap and a call to action. Let us embrace it fully and work together to build a healthier, happier, and more active Kildare.



Sonya Kavanagh
Chief Executive



Carmel Kelly
Cathaoirleach

Introduction

This document sets out a Local Sport and Physical Activity Plan for County Kildare 2026-2031. In developing and launching this plan, Kildare County Council is fulfilling its commitments under Action 8 of the National Sports Policy by adopting a whole-of-council approach to promoting and facilitating increased physical activity across the county. We recognise the cross-cutting benefits of sport and physical activity, from improved physical and mental health, stronger social connectedness, to contributions made to the local economy, climate action and community regeneration. These are in line with our overall council objectives set out in our Corporate Plan.

This plan sets out our local approach and commitment to increasing regular participation in sport and physical activity, aiming to move towards the national target of 60% of adults (from a 2024 baseline of 49%) and to increase the proportion of children meeting the national physical activity guidelines (currently 23% in primary school and 12% post-primary schools, 2022[1]). Recognising that participation means different things to different people, this plan embraces all forms of physical activity, from walking, cycling and dancing, to gardening, gym exercise, and competitive sport.

Guided by the overarching vision ***"To ensure more people from County Kildare are physically active more of the time"***, the plan builds on our existing investments, facilities, natural assets, and dedicated staff. It aims to foster a more collaborative, joined-up approach to sport and physical activity across the county. Our commitment to supporting active lifestyles across the county spans across many areas including the planning, provision and management of public open spaces and sport facilities, the delivery of grant funding support, and strong partnerships with key stakeholders. This document should therefore be considered alongside the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 and relevant cross-cutting Kildare County Council polices, including those set out in Appendix 2. While this Plan addresses certain aspects of infrastructure and facility provision, it does so only in the context of increasing participation in sport and physical activity. Its delivery remains entirely dependent on available funding and subject to budgetary constraints. The Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 remains the primary source of reference for physical infrastructure and facility provision across the county. Our aspirations for sport and physical activity are expressed in six overarching commitments, to be delivered through 43 strategic actions, forming an ambitious but achievable plan for Kildare.

[1] Most recent statistic available: Children's Sport Participation and Physical Activity Study 2022. There is a general target to increase *the proportion of children and young people meeting the national physical activity guidelines* rather than a fixed numeric target for children and young people.

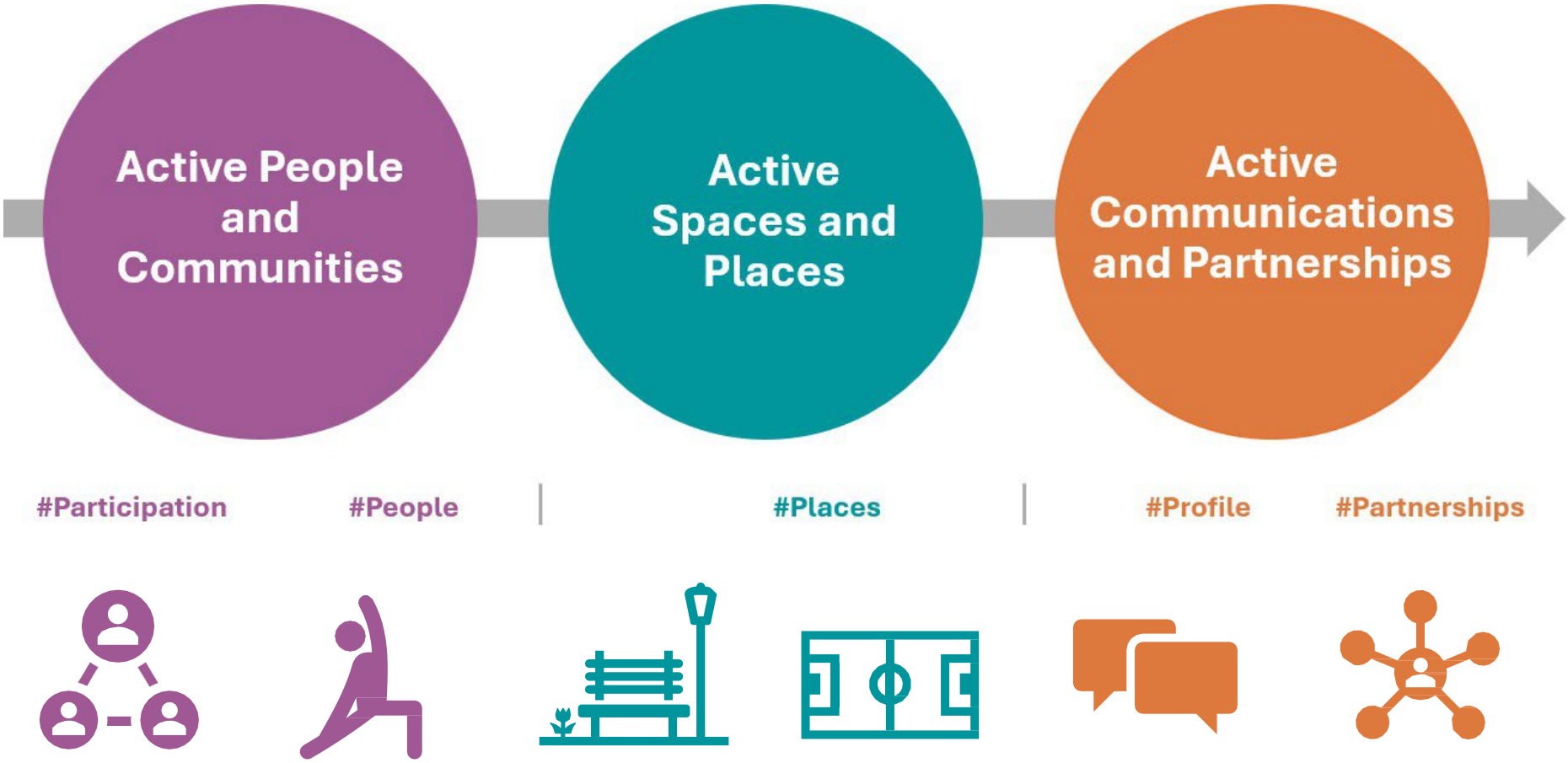
Our Vision

To ensure more People from County Kildare are physically active more of the time

Our 6 Commitments



Kildare Local Sports Plan Strategic Themes



Setting the Plan in context

The positive impact of regular sport and physical activity participation is far reaching and cross cutting. It has been prioritised across government and national policies as summarised below:



Governmental Policy Alignment

Programme for Government: Securing Ireland's Future: The Programme sets out the national policy direction for sport and physical activity. It recognises the central role of physical activity in achieving better health, stronger communities and environmental sustainability. The Programme includes a commitment to supporting the sporting ecosystem so that more people can participate, reap the benefits of sport, and fulfil their potential – from grassroots right up to high performance level.

Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework and the **National Development Plan 2021-2030**: Project Ireland 2040 is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of Ireland until 2040. Our Sport and Physical Activity Plan for Kildare

aligns with Project Ireland 2040's commitments to *enhance sports facilities in Ireland* and to *improve air quality and create a clean environment for a healthy society*; the growth of active travel opportunities in Kildare will support progress towards this objective.

National Development Plan 2021-2030: The National Development Plan sets enhancing sports facilities throughout Ireland as a strategic investment priority and outlines specific environmental goals focused on the improvement of air quality and a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. The Local Sport and Physical Activity Plan 2026-2031 aligns with these goals by promoting sustainable progress.

Climate Action Plan 2024 (CAP2024): The growth in active travel opportunities in Kildare supported through the delivery of this strategy will further the achievement of the Climate Action Plan's goals for a 50% increase in daily active travel journeys and a 25% reduction in daily car journeys by 2030.

National Sustainable Mobility Policy: By increasing opportunities for active travel, the Kildare Local Sport and Physical Activity Plan 2026-2031 is closely aligned with the objective of the National Sustainable Mobility Policy, which targets at least 500,000 additional daily active travel and public transport journeys and a 10% reduction in kilometres driven by fossil fueled cars by 2030.

NTA Active Travel Programme: The work of the NTA's Active Travel Programme is underpinned by the aims and objectives set out in the Government's Climate Action Plan 2023, with a goal to increase the level of walking, cycling and public transport so that these methods of transport will account for 50% of all journeys made by 2030. Projects funded under this Programme are delivered by Local Authorities, evidencing cross-organisational and cross-sectoral synergy with the Kildare County Council Local Sport and Physical Activity Plan 2026-2031.

National Sports Policy Alignment

National Sports Policy 2018-2027: The National Sports Policy is foundational for our Sport and Physical Activity Plan. The National Sports Policy asks Local Authorities to develop 'local sports plans' which review needs and sets out actions to increase participation locally. Our Sport and Physical Activity Plan for Kildare serves as a direct mechanism to implement these priorities.

Sport Ireland Participation Plan 2021-2024: The Plan has a clear focus on those who have traditionally had fewer opportunities to take part in sport and physical activity. It reinforces the importance of developing active places and adopting whole system and community approaches to promoting and developing sport and physical activity. These concepts are integral to our new Sport and Physical Activity Plan for Kildare.

Get Ireland Active! National Physical Activity Plan: The overarching target of the Plan is to increase the proportion of the population undertaking regular physical activity by 1% per annum, with the aim being that people will better understand physical activity's health benefits and learn how to be more active in their daily lives. Our Local Sports and Physical Activity Plan is closely aligned with this and will play an active role in achieving the National Plan's goals.

Every Move Counts (Healthy Ireland 2024): The Plan sets out the national physical activity and sedentary behaviour guidelines for Ireland. The plans recommendations are informed by evidence drawn from a wide range of groups within the general population. It highlights some key messages for stakeholder groups including Local Authority practitioners from across the council spectrum which have relevance to Kildare's Local Sports and Physical Activity Plan. These include a body of evidence supporting the correlation between physical activity and health; how physical activity can be supported through designing and providing accessible access; and how the provision of green open spaces and/or compact urban design can support physical activity.

National Health Policy Alignment

Healthy Ireland, A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013 – 2025: Healthy Ireland takes a "whole of government" and "whole of society" approach to tackling the issues which lead to negative health outcomes. The Framework offers six priority areas of work, two of which offer clear synergy with our Sport and Physical Activity Plan for Kildare: 1) physical activity; and 2) spaces and places for health and wellbeing.

Sharing the Vision: A Mental Health Policy for Everyone: The Policy aims to create positive mental health and wellbeing amongst the Irish population. Our Sport and Physical Activity Plan for Kildare will contribute to this Policy's objectives as the links between mental health and physical activity are well established. The provision of a range of physical activity opportunities will promote mental resilience.

International Policy Alignment

Global Action Plan on Physical Activity (GAPPA) Framework 2018-2030: Worldwide, 1 in 4 adults, and 3 in 4 adolescents (aged 11-17 years), do not currently meet the global recommendations for physical activity set by the World Health Organisation (WHO)[2]. Following requests by countries for updated guidance on effective policy actions to increase physical activity at all levels, WHO developed the Global Action Plan on Physical Activity (GAPPA) Framework 2018-2030. The GAPPA Framework emphasises that effective national action to reverse current trends and reduce disparities in physical activity requires a "systems-based" approach. This should include a strategic combination of "upstream" policy actions aimed at

[2] http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/272722/9789241514187-eng.pdf

improving the social, cultural, economic and environmental factors that support physical activity, combined with “downstream”, individually focused (educational and informational) approaches. The framework sets out four strategic objectives; Create Active Systems, Create Active Societies, Create Active Environments and Create Active People. These four objectives are supported by 20 policy actions that are universally applicable to all countries. Together, these objectives capture the whole-of-system approach required to create a society that intrinsically values and prioritises policy investment in physical activity as a regular part of everyday life.

United Nations: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: The Agenda is made up of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and aims to deliver a more sustainable, prosperous and peaceful future for all and sets out a framework for how to achieve this by 2030. The agenda recognises sport as an important enabler of sustainable development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect; the empowerment of women, young people, individuals and communities; and impact on health, education and social inclusion.



Case Study
Back to Basics – Understanding Physical Literacy

The *Back to Basics* programme gives parents, volunteers and coaches the tools to help young children develop essential movement skills – agility, balance, coordination and speed. What began as a county-wide seminar has grown into regular workshops training over 100 adults each year, reaching hundreds of children in clubs, schools, and community settings. By taking part in the Back to Basics programme, Kildare’s children and young people experience more active and enjoyable play, supporting confidence building and lifelong movement habits.

“I needed to understand the basics so I could be confident I was helping the children in my group. Now I can’t wait to use what I’ve learned!” — Participant

Our County Development Plan 2023-2029

The Kildare County Development Plan 2023–2029 builds on the county's strengths to enhance quality of life for all residents. The Plan seeks to enable sustainable job creation, high-quality housing development supported by community infrastructure, accessible and sustainable transport, healthy placemaking, climate resilience, inclusivity, and the protection and enhancement of Kildare's natural and built environment for future generations. The Plan underlines a number of core principles: Quality of Life, Sustainability, Climate Actions, Resilience and Inclusivity. Within it, 177 objectives and 32 actions support sport, recreation and physical activity[3]. These include:



Local Economic and Community Plan 2024-2029

The LECP sets out the framework, objectives and actions to promote Kildare's economic and community development over the six- year lifespan of the plan. The plan includes four high level goals, with the first – making County Kildare a place with resilient communities where all people live full, healthy and inclusive lives- directly relating to the development of a Local Sports and Physical Activity Plan. The LECP highlights the need for universally accessible, multi-use and inclusive social infrastructure, including sports facilities. Both plans aim to enhance access to recreational facilities and opportunities, with the Local Sports and Physical Activity Plan specifically focusing on promoting sport and active lifestyles, improving health and quality of life across the county.



HER Outdoors Week



Wheelchair Basketball

[3] A number of objectives cross reference multiple activities

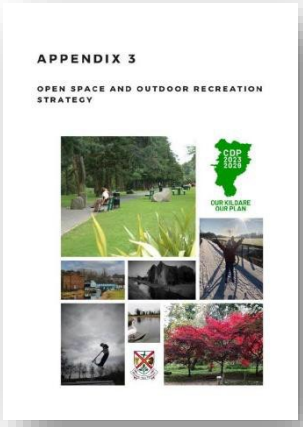
Key Kildare Strategies

In keeping with a whole system approach, this Local Sport and Physical Activity Plan will connect with and complement a range of existing Kildare County Council strategies and policies. These include for example:



The **Kildare Play Strategy** focuses on developing inclusive play and recreation spaces for children and young people over a ten-year period. It aims to increase participation in physical activity and play, recognising the wide-ranging physical, mental and social wellbeing benefits for children. While the Play Strategy targets a younger age group, this Sports and Physical Activity Plan builds on that foundation, promoting lifelong engagement in sport and physical activity. Together, these strategies can contribute to a healthier, more active County Kildare.

The **Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Strategy** seeks to advance a network of accessible, inclusive and safe open spaces to meet the recreational, environmental, health and wellbeing needs of the community, now and into the future. Its mission is to maintain, upgrade, and facilitate the delivery of high-quality public open spaces in a sustainable manner across the county. Collaboration around regional and local parks, public playgrounds and environmental open space will form a key part of this Sport and Physical Activity Plan.





Our vision for a **Healthy Kildare** is one where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society, and recognised as everyone's responsibility. The focus of the plan includes enhancing mental health and wellbeing, increasing physical activity, supporting healthy eating, reducing alcohol and tobacco use, and fostering healthier communities across the county. Recognising the clear link between health and regular participation in sport and physical activity, this Sport and Physical Activity Plan will be implemented alongside the Healthy Kildare initiative to deliver collaborative programmes and actions that support the health of local communities.

We will work to incorporate a strong sport and physical activity perspective within the development of future strategies and policies, ensuring alignment across all areas of council planning.

About Kildare County Council Area

About Kildare

- Kildare County is located in the province of Leinster, in the East of Ireland and lies within the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly area.
- County Kildare is bordered by Meath to the north, Dublin to the northeast, Wicklow to the east, Carlow to the south, Laois to the southwest and Offaly to the West.
- Kildare spans an area of 1695km^2 and comprises 8 electoral areas: Athy; Celbridge; Leixlip; Clane; Maynooth; Kildare; Newbridge; and Naas.



The People

247,774
population of Kildare (2022)

4.8%
of the Population of Ireland live in Kildare

265,500+
estimated Population of Kildare in 2031

67.8%
population of Kildare living in urban areas

32.2%
population of Kildare living in rural areas

49.7%/ 50.3%
Male & female population respectively

Key Insights

Kildare has a relatively young population



With an average age of 36.9 years, Kildare has the second youngest average age of all local authority areas in Ireland, matched by Meath, and second only to Fingal. Almost 35% of Kildare's population is aged 0-24 years, representing the third highest proportion of children and young people in the state. The county's demographic profile is strongly characterised by high numbers of children, young people and young families.

Deprivation levels are clustered in pockets in Kildare



While Kildare ranks as the fourth most affluent local authority area in Ireland, with an overall Pobal HP Deprivation Index score of +3.1, nearly a third of its total population and 1 in 4 children live in disadvantaged areas. A total of 78 out of Kildare's 807 Small Areas are classified as disadvantaged, very disadvantaged or extremely disadvantaged. Families in disadvantaged areas can often encounter compounded difficulties accessing facilities, programmes, and opportunities, which can limit participation and contribute to health and social inequalities.

Kildare's labour force participation rate remains very high



Almost 93% (92.7%) of the county's labour force is in employment, an increase of 19.7% (+18,882 people) since 2016. This represents record levels of employment, exceeding both the national averages and most other local authorities in the Eastern and Midland Region. Employment levels indicate a strong and active working population across the county.

Kildare continues to have a very well-educated population



The county has one of the highest levels of educational attainment amongst adults in Ireland, ranking sixth national for the proportion of residents with a third-level qualification. Kildare also has the third lowest rate of people whose education did not progress beyond primary school. This strong education profile may be linked to Kildare's relatively young population, reflecting national trends of rising attainment levels in recent decades.

Kildare is a diverse and multicultural county



Around 11.4% of Kildare's residents hold a nationality other than Irish, with the largest groups originating from Poland, the United Kingdom, Romania, India and Lithuania. In total, the county is home to people from more than 25 countries, contributing to a vibrant and varied community across Kildare.

Kildare has a significant and growing population base within the State



With a total population of 247,774, Kildare is the fifth most populated local authority area in Ireland, accounting for 4.8% of the national population (5.1m). Over the past thirty years, Kildare's population has doubled, rising from 124,321 in 1991 to 247,774, an increase comparable to the current population of Waterford City and County. Between 2016 and 2022 alone, the county's population grew by 11.4% (+25,270 people), equivalent to the population of Newbridge, and well above the national growth rate of 8.1%.

Why our Sport and Physical Activity Plan is Important?

The Cross Cutting Impact of Sport and Physical Activity

Research demonstrates that participation in sport, physical activity and recreation brings significant positive impacts to people, communities, the environment and the economy[4][5][6][7].

SOCIAL INTERACTION: Physical activity reduces isolation; helps build community networks; and builds social cohesion

MENTAL HEALTH: Physical activity helps manage stress; boost energy levels; improve moods; reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression; and increases self-esteem and cognitive function



ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY: Active travel reduces fossil fuel consumption; creates a healthier environment; and contributes to less congested and safer roads

PHYSICAL HEALTH: Physical activity helps to prevent and treat long-term health conditions and helps to control weight and manage diseases such as obesity

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Physical activity reduces longer-term healthcare costs in society; reduces sickness absence and enhances productivity at work; and increases tourism

EQUALITY & INCLUSION: Increases access and opportunities to physical activity for all groups, eliminating inequality and fostering integration and inclusiveness with those groups underrepresented in society

[4] *Mental Health - https://paahjournal.com/articles/10.5334/paah.127/*
[5] *Social Interaction - https://assets.gov.ie/7563/23f51643fd1d4ad7abf529e58c8d8041.pdf*
[6] *Equality & Inclusion - https://www.sportireland.ie/sites/default/files/2019-11/wis_policy.pdf*
[7] *Environmental Sustainability - 9789241514187-eng.pdf (who.int)*

The Economic Impact of Sport and Physical Activity

In 2021, Sport Ireland commissioned the Sport Industry Research Centre (SIRC) at Sheffield Hallam University to assess the value of Sport in Ireland.[8] The study examined both the economic impact of sport, including the value of sport volunteering, and the health impact of participation in sport and physical activity nationwide. The findings demonstrate that regular participation in sport and physical activity delivers measurable and substantial benefits for physical and mental health, particularly amongst those achieving the recommended levels set out in the National Physical Activity Guidelines (150+ minutes per week). The report also highlights the significant contribution of sport and physical activity to the Irish economy through job creation, income generation, and overall economic output.

- **Participation in sport and physical activity prevents nearly 100,000 cases of disease annually, generating savings to the Government of nearly €0.4bn**
- **Sport-related jobs accounted for 2.8% of all Irish employment in 2018**
- **Sport volunteering in Ireland is valued at €1.5bn**
- **Consumers spent €3.3bn on sports related goods and services in 2018**

Sport, Physical Activity & Sustainable Development



In September 2015, all 193 Member States of the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a global framework aimed at creating a more sustainable, prosperous and peaceful future for all. The framework sets out 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) addressing the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Investing in a more active society, by promoting walking, cycling, sport, active recreation and play, can make a direct contribution to many of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals[9]. Kildare County Council is fully committed to the principles of the Sustainable Development Goals. Through this Local Sport and Physical Activity Plan, we aim to inspire active lifestyles for all in Kildare, and make a meaningful, practical contribution to their achievement at a local level.

[8] https://www.sportireland.ie/news/benefits-of-sport-on-irish-society-and-economy-confirmed-by-new-study
[9] https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/272722/9789241514187-eng.pdf

Sport and Physical Activity Participation in Ireland

According to the Irish Sports Monitor Report (2024) and the most recent CSPPA (Children's Sport Participation and Physical Activity) Study (2022):

40% of Irish adults classified as 'Highly Active' (considered to be meeting the National Physical Activity Guidelines)

21% of Irish adults classified as 'Inactive' (did not participate in any activity during the past 7 days). This figure is falling and is at its lowest since 2021

49% of Irish adults are regularly playing sport - a key aim of the National Sports Policy in Ireland is that 50% of adults are regularly playing sport by 2027

23% of primary aged children met the National Physical Activity Guidelines of at least 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity every day (2022)

12% of post primary aged children met the National Physical Activity Guidelines of at least 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity every day (2022)

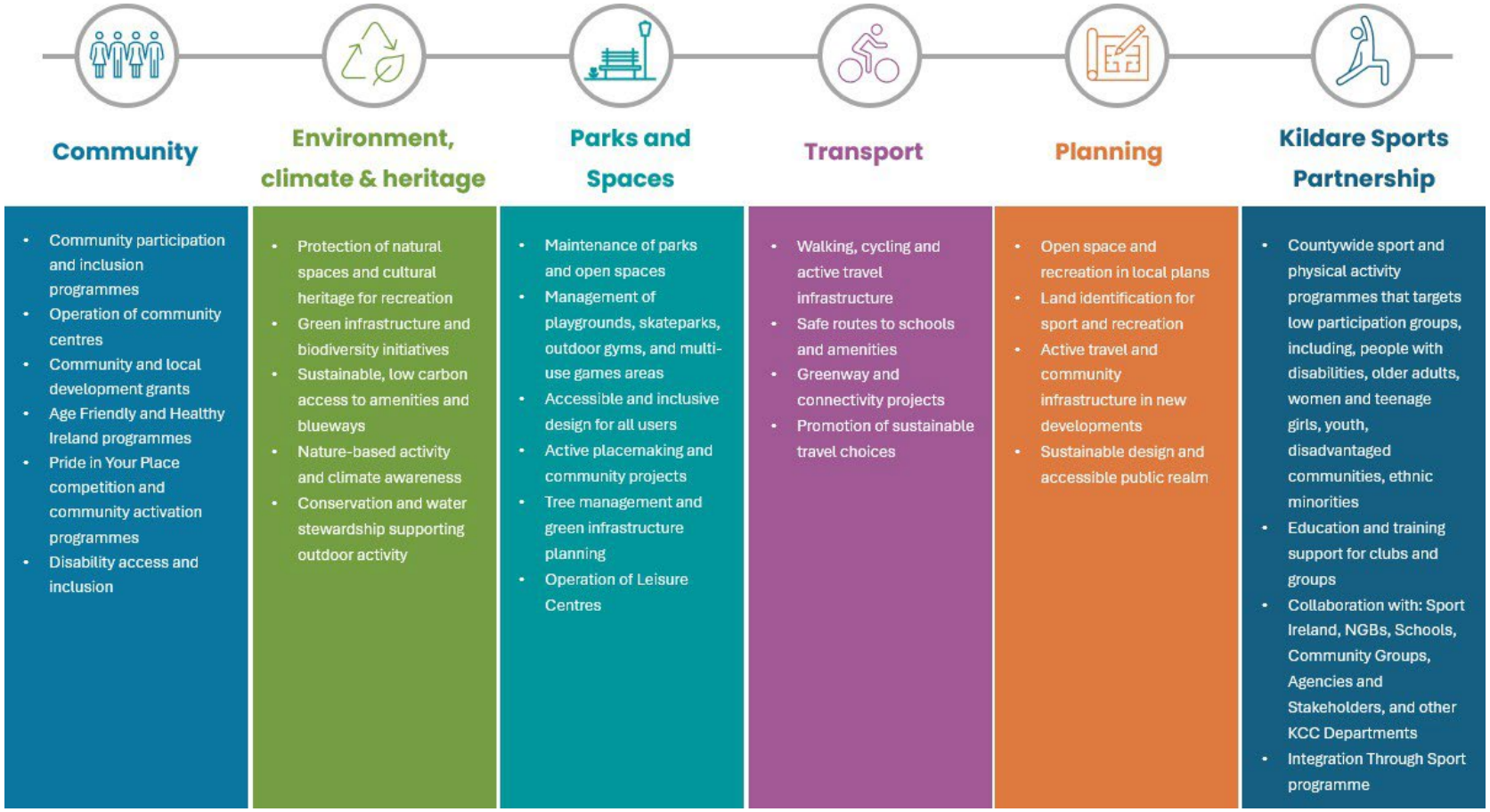


LGFA

Sport and Physical Activity in Kildare

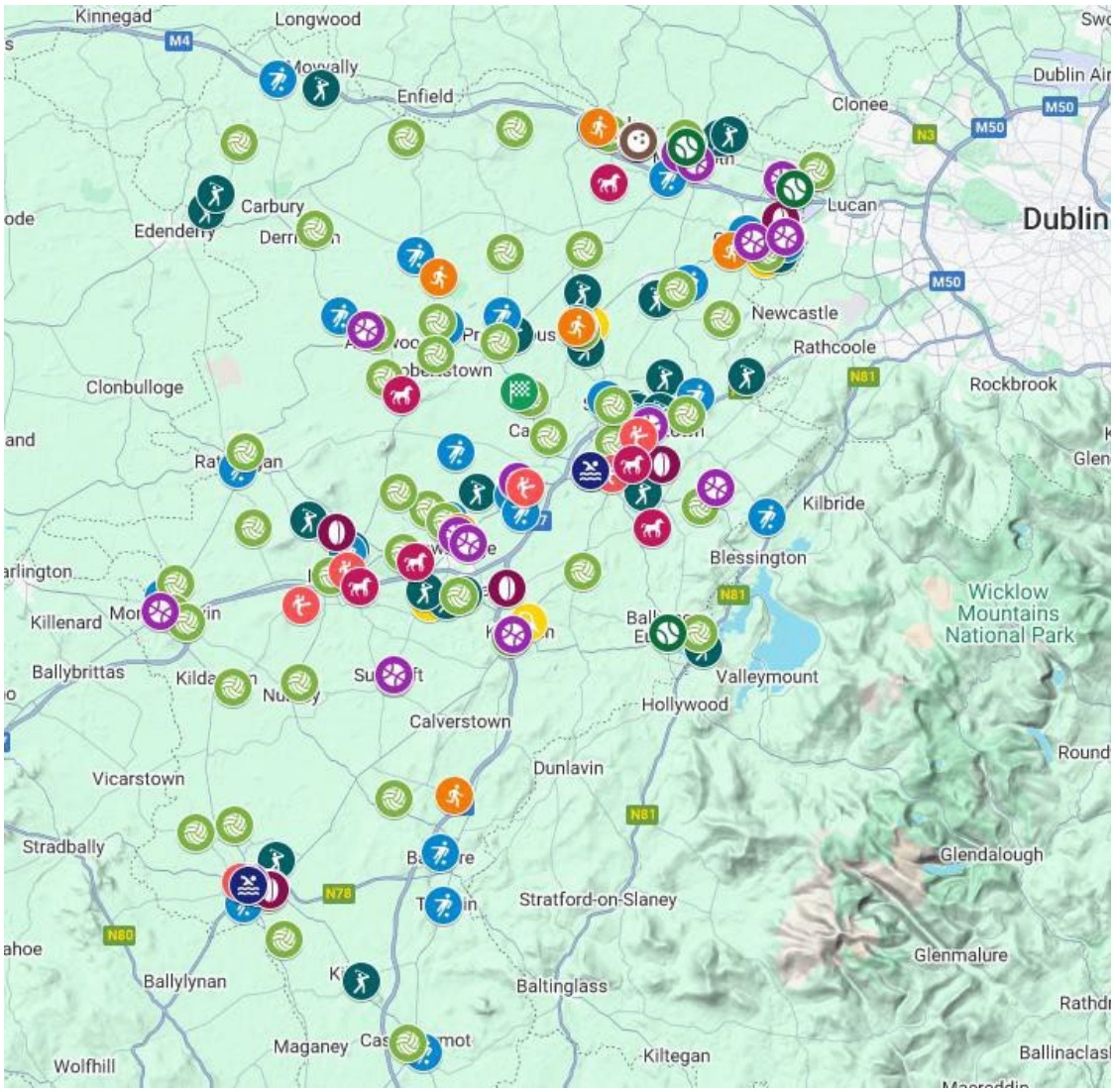
This plan reflects a whole-council approach to supporting sport, outdoor recreation and physical activity participation, where all relevant Kildare County Council service areas play a proactive and collaborative role reducing barriers and enhancing opportunities for people across the county to lead more active lifestyles. This joined-up approach ensures that sport, outdoor recreation and active living are embedded across all Kildare County Council functions, creating a healthier, more inclusive and sustainable county for everyone.

A Whole Council Approach to Sport and Physical Activity



Our Facilities and Spaces

Analysis shows there are a wide range of facilities and spaces for sport and physical activity across County Kildare, as illustrated in the graphic below. The map highlights the regional distribution of physical infrastructure for sport and active recreation in Kildare. Together these assets provide a substantial baseline from which to further develop and deliver the aims of the Kildare Local Sport and Physical Activity Plan.



Tennis & Racket Courts
GAA Pitches
Handball Courts
Multi-Use Sport Facilities
Golf Facilities
Rugby Pitches
Bowling Green
Combat Sport Facilities
Soccer Pitches
Athletics Tracks
Horse Sport Provision
Swimming Pools
Motorsport Facilities

There are 166 sports facilities across County Kildare[10/11], ranging from local community pitches and sports halls to larger regional centres and specialist venues. A detailed breakdown is illustrated in the graphic below.



As part of the Local Sports and Physical Activity Plan community and stakeholder consultation, an assessment was undertaken which considered the:

- amount;
- variety;
- accessibility;
- affordability;
- upkeep / maintenance of provision;
- environmental sustainability of opportunities; and
- knowledge / awareness of local sports opportunities.

A summary of this assessment is included under key insights on page 31.

Participation Opportunities

Kildare offers an array of sport and physical activity participation opportunities, with numerous initiatives aimed at promoting and expanding access to physical activity. Many participation opportunities are community led and spearheaded by local volunteers and voluntary organisations. In addition to those listed overleaf, a multitude of informal and ad hoc initiatives are organised by communities throughout Kildare every year. While the existing provision offers extensive opportunities to engage in sport and physical activity, there is scope to further develop and enhance the range, access and connectivity of the offering across the county.

[10] Data compiled using the National Digital Database of Sport and Recreation Activities and desktop research
[11] Facilities which are only available to closed communities e.g. School Student population are not included



Go for Life Scheme – a programme offering grants to local groups to provide increased opportunities for older people to participate in sport and physical activity.



Buggy Buddies – a programme for expectant and new mothers involving gentle exercise enabling participants to enjoy getting back into exercise while also having their baby with them. It also gives participants a chance to socialise with other new mothers while exercising.



The Daily Mile – a programme which supports primary school children to engage in walking/jogging for 15 minutes everyday.



Activator Walking – a programme that explores how activator poles can promote aerobic fitness, mobility, strength, and balance for people with different abilities and fitness levels and is also a great opportunity to maintain good mental health and socialise with your peers.



Multi-Sport Programmes - Kildare Sports Partnership provide and support multi-sport groups, club and camp programmes across the county for children and adults of all abilities.



Inclusive Fitness - Kildare Sports Partnership work in collaboration with a variety of organisations to provide inclusive physical activity and fitness sessions for children and adults with disabilities in Kildare.



Community Run Programme - Kildare Sports Partnership's Community Run Programme supports the rollout of community and club organised walking and running events throughout the county by providing equipment, promotion and event advice to help ensure that well-organised events take place in a safe and controlled environment.



Community Cycle Programme - Kildare Sports Partnership's Community Cycle Programme supports the rollout of community and club organised cycling events throughout the county. In addition, they provide equipment, promotion and event advice to help ensure that well-organised events take place in a safe and controlled environment.



Bike Week – this programme sees county wide cycling initiatives take place across Bikeweek every year.



Teen Connect - aims to bring together a community of young women (aged between 12-17) in paddle sports to create a supportive environment to allow them to grow within the sport and share their experiences. Kildare Sports Partnership has hosted Teen Connect Programmes in Athy Sports Hub, where participants had the opportunity to try out paddleboarding, canoeing & kayaking.



Parkrun – a free, community event where everyone is welcome to come along, whether you can walk, jog, run, volunteer or spectate. It is a positive, welcoming and inclusive experience where there is no time limit, and no one finishes last. Kildare Local Sports Partnership supports and encourages people to attend their local parkruns



Be Active Night – takes place during European Week of Sport in September. It aims to promote sport and physical activity in countries across Europe to everyone regardless of age, background or fitness level. On 'Be Active Night', Kildare Sports Partnership organises an inclusive event with communities around the county. The initiative has been hugely successful, gathering over 300 participants of various ages, backgrounds, and fitness levels.



Women's Get into Golf Programme – The Women's Get into Golf programme is a positive way for women to learn how to play the sport in a supported environment. The GIG programme includes lessons with a PGA Professional and on course activities that enable participants to learn new skills, meet people of a similar ability and get to know current members too.



Integration Through Sport – an inclusive sport and healthy lifestyle programme designed for teens and adolescents from all ethnic minority communities. The programme offers a mixture of health and fitness classes and fun based non-contact boxercise sessions. It also includes interactive workshops offering advice in areas such as nutrition, health and wellbeing, life skills and cultural identity. The programme's aim is to help young people to develop physically and mentally, integrating into the community while encouraging them to engage and fully immerse in sports and physical activity through boxing



Girls CreActive Space – a programme for teenage girls where participants are encouraged to try new things. The overarching idea of the programme is to redefine the meaning of sport by moving away from traditional sports and introducing them to non-mainstream physical activities alongside a creative activity. GAS is divided into four spaces: Water, Adventure, Outdoor and Indoor



Learn to cycle – programme of Learn to Cycle classes for children and teens with additional needs



GAA for All – an all-inclusive GAA programme for people of all abilities



Tennis for All – an all-inclusive Tennis programme offered in Kildare for people of all abilities



Kildare Sports Ability Day – an annual event which showcases inclusive sporting opportunities for people of all abilities across Kildare



Football for All – an all-inclusive Football programme for people of all abilities



Inclusive Cycling Hub – an all-inclusive Cycling programme to encourage participation from people of all abilities on the Barrow Blueway.



Inclusive Cricket – an all- inclusive Cricket programme suitable for people of all abilities.



Back to Basics Physical Literacy – a programme designed to support the Physical Literacy development of young children.



Inclusive Rugby – an all- inclusive Rugby programme suitable for people of all abilities.



Inclusive Water Sports – an all- inclusive watersports programme suitable for people of all abilities.



Lilywhite Wheelers IWA Club – a physical activity and sports club tailored for children with physical disabilities.



Swimmin Women – Swimming programmes designed for adult females from across Kildare.



Pickleball Programme – a programme to encourage participation from people of all abilities in Pickleball.



European Week of Sport– this programme sees county wide sport, wellbeing, and physical activity programmes take place during the European Week of Sport every year.



Fitsticks for Farmers – a programme offered to support physical activity in rural populations using Fitsticks for people with different abilities and fitness levels



Somatic Dance – a programme offered to support movement through dance activities.



Wellness Walks & Exercise – a programme offered to support wellness exercise and walking groups in Kildare.



Perimenopause Groups – a programme offered to support perimenopausal exercise and physical activity groups in the county.



Heads up for Mental Health – a physical activity initiative designed to support men with mental health challenges.



Aqua Aerobics – a programme offered to support physical activity through aqua aerobic programmes.



ESF+ Programmes – a suite of European Social Fund programmes targeted at increasing physical activity participation amongst hard-to-reach target groups.



Get Kildare Walking Programme – a programme offered to support walking for fitness and recreation amongst hard-to-reach target groups in Kildare.



Waterbased Programmes – a suite of water-based activities organised as part of the Community Sports Hub initiative.

Case Study: GAA For All Programme

The GAA All-Stars initiative gives children with disabilities the chance to take part in fun, inclusive GAA sessions within their local club. Supported by Kildare Sports Partnership, volunteers receive training in safeguarding and disability inclusion. Today, over 20 clubs across the county deliver weekly GAA for All sessions, with three Inclusive Cúl Camps held annually. The programme has strengthened community connections and created more opportunities for children of all abilities to enjoy sports together and stands as a strong example of inclusive sport in action across Kildare.

"Seeing the smiles each week makes it all worthwhile. It's about belonging, not just sport." — Volunteer Coach



Developing the plan

In developing its Local Sports Plan, the Kildare Local Sports and Physical Activity Plan Steering Group has been keen to ensure meaningful engagement with communities and grass roots organisations across Kildare as well as key stakeholders able to offer useful opinions and perspectives based on their expertise. A mixed method approach was deployed within the consultation process, in order to maximise and broaden participation. The consultation process opened on 30th April 2025 and closed on 30th June 2025. The mixed method approach combined one-to-one semi-structured interviews, focus group meetings with key groups of stakeholders and an online survey. A walk-in consultation session was conducted, and written submissions were welcomed. In total, 1,624 participants engaged with the Local Sports Plan consultation over the course of that period including 124 individuals who engaged in person, 1431 individuals who engaged online and 69 children who engaged through an online in-school survey.

Key Consultation Findings

Key insights into the current usage and need for sport and physical activity opportunities in County Kildare are presented below. The findings have been derived from an extensive consultation which secured active participation from communities across Kildare and engaged with 1,624 participants. The Kildare online Community Sport and Recreation Survey gathered a total of 1431 responses and 52% of respondents (n.740) selected 'Sport Provision and opportunities' as their primary area of interest.

Residents surveyed (740 respondents)

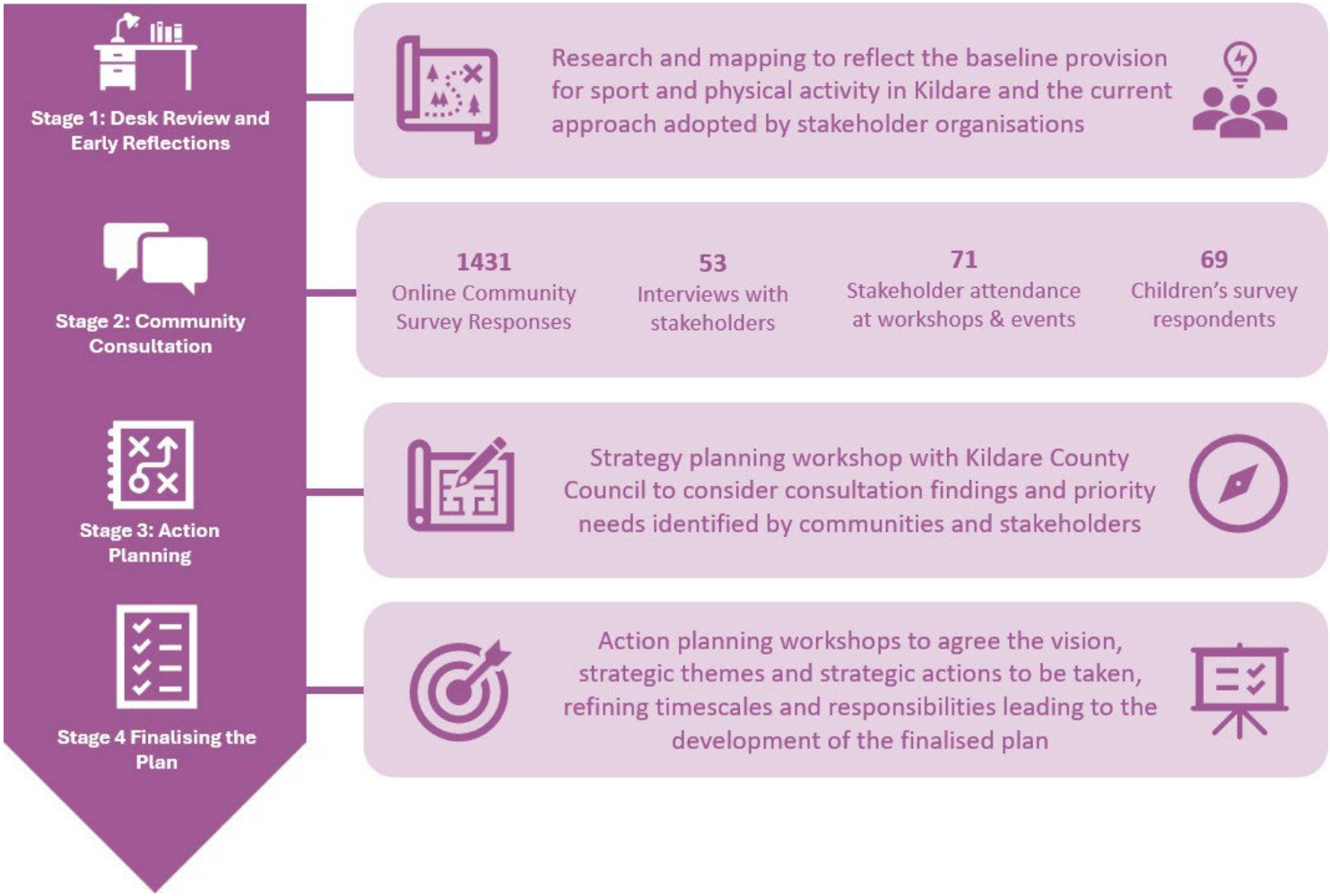
- The most popular age demographic of survey responses came from those between the ages of 30-59 years old (73%)
- 54% of respondents were female and 45% were male
- 93% of respondents did not have a disability, 5% did and 3% preferred not to say
- The demographic range of respondents to the survey was wide, the highest response rates came from adults aged 45-49 and the lowest response rates came from those 16-29

Children surveyed (69 respondents)

- The highest response rates from primary school children came from those in 5th Class (42%) while the highest response rates from post primary school children came from those in transition year (30%).

Our approach

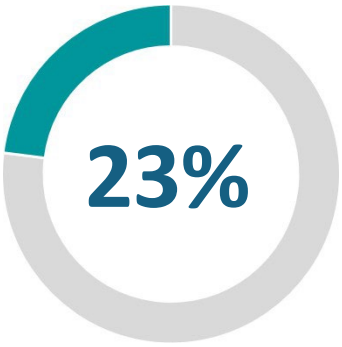
The strategic planning process involved significant engagement with residents and stakeholders over a focused 2-month consultative period. The input provided by participants has directly shaped and informed the development of the Kildare Local Sports and Physical Activity Plan. The following section provides a high-level summary of the key insights from the consultation process.



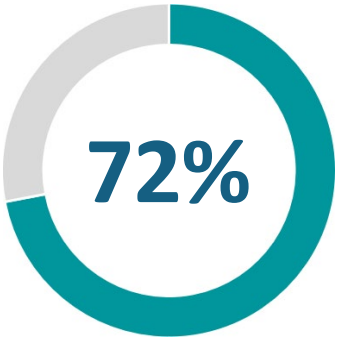
Key Insights

Participation in Sport and Physical Activity

Residents



meeting the National Physical Activity Guidelines

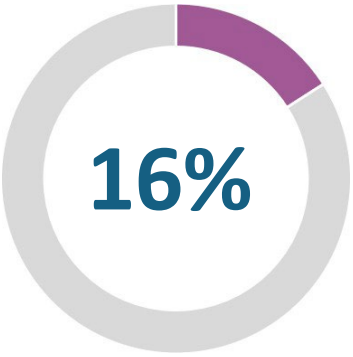


part of physical activity club or group

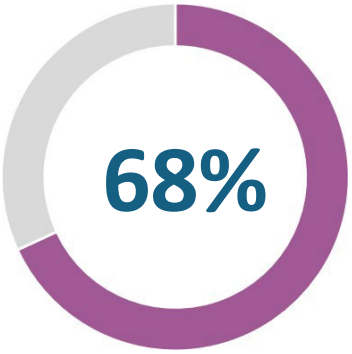


average rating of opportunities to participation in sport, physical activity and recreation in Kildare

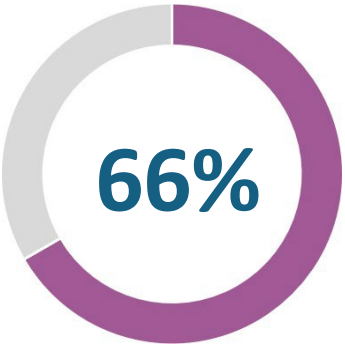
Children and Young People



meeting the National Physical Activity Guidelines



part of physical activity club or group



stated that physical activity is very important or important to them

Motivation for Sport and Physical Activity

The top 3 reasons why survey respondents participate in sport and physical activity are to:



- **Key Insight:** Of those surveyed, only 1% reported not usually participating in sport or physical activity for at least 30 minutes on any day in a typical week (classed as sedentary).
- **Key Insight:** Interestingly, for many of those surveyed, sport is a social activity. Around a quarter of respondents (24%) reported that they usually participate in sport/physical activity with friends, while 22% reported that they usually participate on their own. A similar proportion of respondents (21%) mainly engaged in sport and physical activity as part of organised groups.

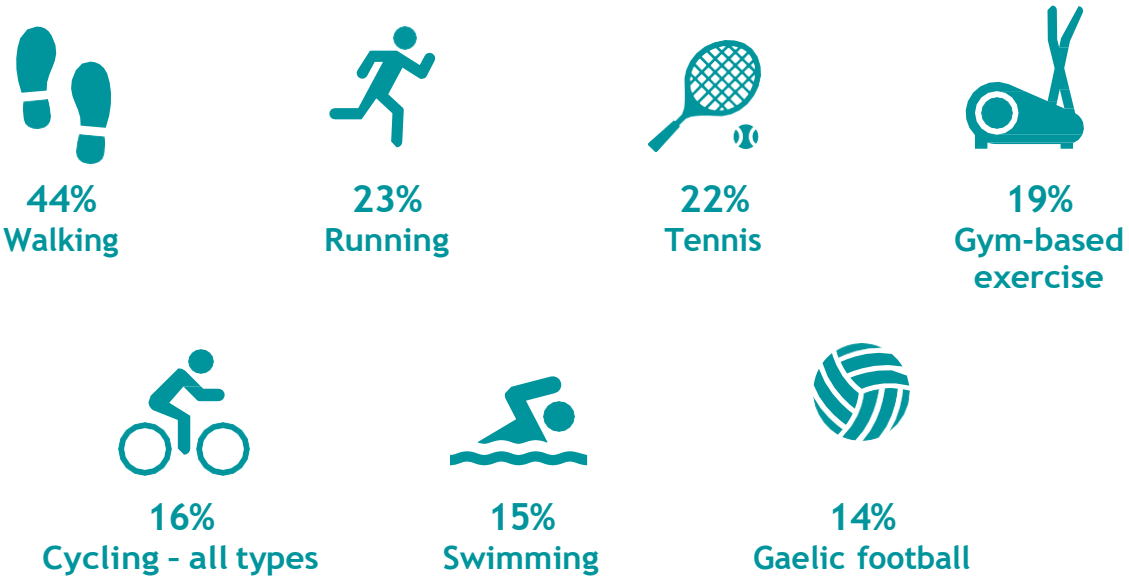
Popular Places for Sport and Physical Activity



- **Key Insight:** The results indicated that walkways, cycleways and green spaces can be accessed relatively easily by most respondents compared to indoor halls and swimming pools. Results show that 58.3% of community respondents find it difficult or very difficult to access a swimming pool while just under half struggle to access indoor halls.

Popular Sport and Physical Activities

The most popular sport and physical activities in Kildare according to respondents are:



- **Key Insight**: These results are broadly in keeping with findings from the National Irish Sports Monitor, although rates of swimming, and weightlifting were lower than national survey results and participation in tennis was higher.

The most popular sports and physical activities in Kildare according to children and young people are:



- **Key Insight**: When asked about their favourite ways to play, children and young people most often chose to 'hang out' with friends (30%), followed by 'getting techno' which included activities such as gaming, watching TV, YouTube and playing on phone (15%) and 'being active' (13%).

Barriers to Sport and Physical Activity

To promote active lifestyles and increase participation in sport and physical activities across the county, it is important that we minimise barriers to participation for all citizens. The top three barriers to participation which emerged from our consultation process are presented below.





Facilities in Kildare



Future of Sport and Physical Activity

The 3 most popular factors which respondents felt could improve participation in sport and physical activity in Kildare over the next 5 years were:





- **Key Insight**: The impact of clubs, groups and communities competing for the same resources is evident in the survey responses. Actions which bring clubs and communities together are needed to increase shared understanding and build relationships.
- **Key Insight**: Respondents shared a strong sense of ambition for Kildare and highlighted the county's untapped potential. They believe that with a more strategic approach and greater access to major national investment, Kildare can fully realise its vision for the future
- **Key Insight**: The opportunity for clubs and groups to align with the Local Sports and Physical Activity Plan in order to lever much needed funding and resources was recognised by some respondents.
- **Key Insight**: Children and young people suggested that more accessible, well-promoted, and varied leisure opportunities would encourage participation. Common themes included better spaces for activities, more suitable timing slots, greater school involvement and leadership support, and a wider range of clubs and facilities.

SWOT Assessment

The primary strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) assessment presented below reflects the views of communities and stakeholders gathered through the consultation process in summary form.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Kildare is a place with huge and diverse interests in sport	Existing facilities are insufficient to meet the needs of the growing population
Many clubs and NGBs report the size of club memberships are relatively larger in Kildare	Clubs without a 'home' base are hugely disadvantaged in Kildare due to excess demand for facilities- there are many clubs in this position
Quality of Kerdiffstown facilities and other key infrastructure projects	More all-weather facilities are needed
Nationally significant facilities and achievements in terms of Golf, GAA, Horse Racing and Horse sport in general	There is a clear need for additional facilities, with a significant shortage of pitches in urban areas
Variety of canals, Barrow Blueway, canal harbours and connectivity between land and canal-based offerings	Clubs operating within multi-use hubs may face challenges in funding application assessments compared to single-use facilities
Social element and community infrastructure in many Kildare clubs, not just for 'athletes'	Kildare has a time-poor commuter population which curtails participation and volunteerism
Passion and commitment of volunteers	Many clubs have been oversubscribed for so long they are effectively closed to new members
A young and well populated county with a large catchment area and rapidly growing club memberships	Currently, volunteers must complete a separate vetting process for each individual club they work with, as safeguarding certificates are not transferable between organisations
Strong active retirement groups in Kildare such as Men's and Hen's Sheds with large memberships	Some sports have more capacity than others, emerging sports need more support to develop
Good participation and take up rates for initiatives such as Fitsticks programme	Price of lessons, equipment and memberships can be a barrier to getting involved
New Swim Activator for Kildare	There is no outdoor recreation officer for Kildare
High levels of sports participation from females reported by some clubs and NGB's e.g. 600 members with equal levels of membership for males and females in Celbridge Lawn Tennis Club	Some sports facilities are not open for use by local communities, schools and academic sites were often cited as examples
The PPN is well established and provides extensive support to a wide range of community organisations, including guidance and signposting to potential funding sources	Poor communication and awareness of sport and physical activity opportunities and events across the county
Some NGBs are working hard to support clubs through a variety of means including capacity building, toolkits, training etc	Underrepresented groups are not reflected proportionally in club membership or in leadership roles
Work being done by NGBs and KSP to increase inclusion e.g. Gaelic for mothers & others	More outreach is needed for key groups such as younger people and those with disabilities

Opportunities	Threats
Creation of new facilities particularly swimming pools, athletics track, tennis courts, basketball courts, cycling and pump tracks, badminton courts, ball walls, bridleways or equestrian trails	Pollution impacting canal water quality and ecosystems, also threats from invasive species and algae-blooms
Opportunities to develop more multisport and municipal facilities which can meet diverse needs	Expenditure on venue hire equates to 60% of spending for some Kildare clubs
Opening school and university sports facilities for community use is a vital opportunity and has proved successful in some areas	Personal safety and security while exercising is seen as an issue
The potential of Kildare to host international scale events	Decline in formal volunteering levels particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic
Widening the offer- there is an opportunity to diversify the range of activities on offer	The rising costs associated with running clubs, the cost of maintaining pitches was often cited
Learning to swim can be lifesaving for children and young people	The cost of replacing astro-turf pitches at the end of their useful lifespan
Wherever possible provision should be designed to enable participation by all	Poverty- families struggling for essentials don't have resources to participate in organised sports
Securing a Rural Recreation Officer to coordinate and oversee the enhancement of walking infrastructure for the county	Parking issues prevent some large events coming to Kildare clubs. On a day-to-day level, parking issues impact on participation for some sports using canals
Similar access requirements set by the department are an opportunity to give women and girls a more equal voice in the running of clubs and to increase female participation to the benefit of all	Overreliance on the voluntary sector to drive forward new developments, lead funding applications and managing any resulting facilities or service provision to the public
Taster days and 'come and try it' events to encourage participation from people who have yet to find a sport or activity which engages them	Competition for times, slots and resources within oversubscribed clubs
Promote cycling and walking as sustainable forms of transport especially for short journeys	Lack of role modelling for some young people if no one in their community or family engages in sport
Enhancing safe cycling infrastructure, bike rental options, social enterprises upcycling bikes and bike repair hubs	Residents must travel outside the county to engage in some sports and physical activities
Programmes to support community access to golf, a highly replicable programme took place in Castlewarden previously, offering taster sessions	Lack of coordinated planning and collaboration among local stakeholders in the face of shared challenges
Incentives for volunteering e.g. accredited training or tax relief for volunteers, 'local heroes' type Volunteers week	Liability concerns particularly among landowners who can be wary of allowing public access as a result
Opportunities for effective collaboration and joined up actions between organisations involved in sport and physical activity	Lack of recurrent funding has limited the longevity of some very impactful programmes
More and improved communication with clubs and stakeholders	High cost and low availability of land in Kildare preventing clubs and facilities from expanding

Our Vision

To ensure more People from County Kildare are physically active more of the time

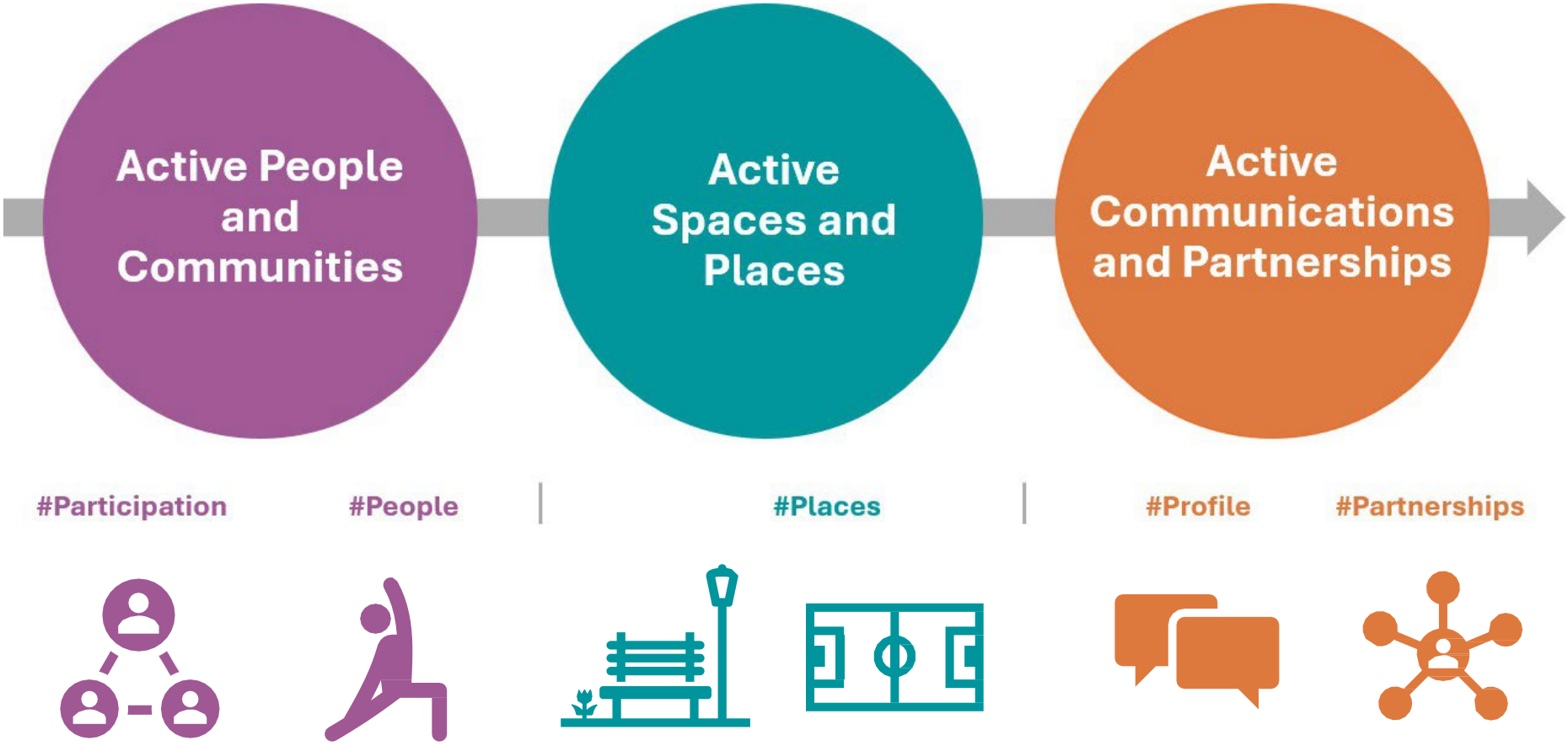
Our 6 Commitments



Our Principles and Values

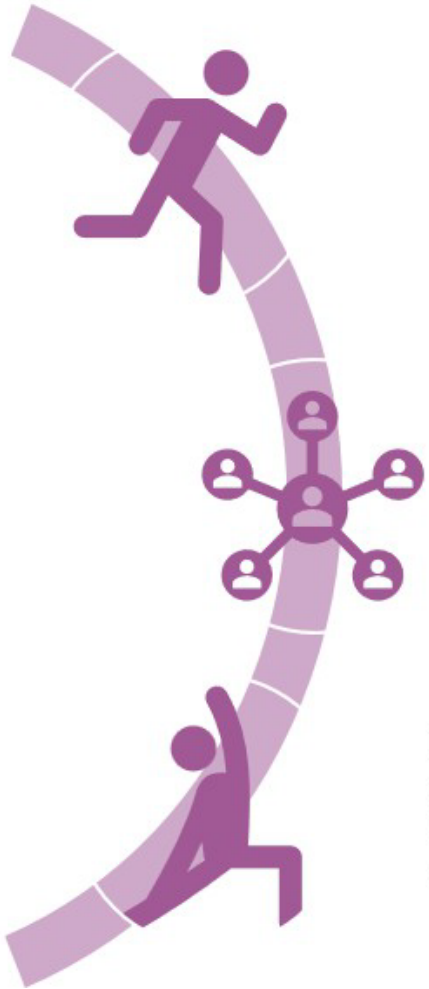


Kildare Local Sports Plan Strategic Themes



Strategic Theme

Active People and Communities



Strategic Priorities

Increase sport and physical participation in disadvantaged areas and amongst priority target groups

Empower and build capacity of people, clubs and organisations to provide sustainable sport & physical activity opportunities

Build active communities, using sport and physical activity to improve the health and wellbeing of people across County Kildare

Strategic Priority 1: Increase sport and physical participation in disadvantaged areas and amongst priority target groups	
Key success measures:	• Total number of participants engaged in our programmes (broken down by target group) increases year on year. • Number of events and programmes supported with a focus on priority target groups. • Qualitative evaluation of how target groups experience our programmes, incorporating insights from a broad range of diverse communities.
Action 1: Encourage and support clubs to offer inclusive participation opportunities and development opportunities for underrepresented groups (e.g. youth membership)	
Description:	Provide funding, educational training, and resources to clubs to support increased participation among underrepresented groups. Share information on available funding opportunities and strengthen club governance through support from the Active Disability and Inclusion Teams. Address barriers such as access to facilities (e.g. block bookings) and capacity challenges within club structures to promote sustained and inclusive participation.
Action 2: Continue to deliver an annual calendar of programmes and events with a focus on priority target groups	
Description:	Deliver an annual calendar of inclusive programmes and events focused on priority target groups, including women, people with disabilities, older adults, young people, disadvantaged communities, and ethnic minorities. Ensure activities are accessible, affordable, and tailored to local needs to encourage sustained participation and community engagement.
Action 3: Encourage and support the development of community sport and physical activity hubs	
Description:	Support the development of community sport and physical activity hubs through the provision of training and funding resources. Share information on available funding opportunities and, where possible, facilitate access through training supports to enable sustainable participation.
Action 4: Optimise funding opportunities to support the development of new initiatives and enhance existing programmes	
Description:	Maximise and promote funding opportunities, including Sport Ireland and Dormant Accounts funding, to develop new initiatives and strengthen existing programmes. Support clubs and community groups to

	identify and access local, national and regional funding streams as they become available, ensuring resources are effectively used to enhance participation and impact.
Action 5: Encourage intergenerational and universal design, in provision and operation of new and existing sport and recreation facilities in Kildare	
Description:	Promote intergenerational and universal design in the development and operation of all new and existing sports and recreation facilities. Ensure facilities are accessible and usable for all, with features such as graded trails, adaptive bikes, accessible toilets, and family-friendly amenities including baby changing facilities.
Strategic Priority 2: Empower and build capacity of people, clubs and organisations to provide sustainable sport & physical activity opportunities	
Key Success Measures:	• Number of clubs accessing practical support and training increases year on year. • Number of NGB funded sports activation officers working on the ground in Kildare. • Evaluate and analyse the most up-to-date County Kildare, Census, Irish Sports Monitor, and Local Sports Partnership data to inform future programme planning and increase sport and physical activity opportunities for people, clubs, communities, and organisations.
Action 6: Formation of a sports and physical activity stakeholder forum for groups, clubs and NGBs to foster collaboration, networking, mutual understanding and the transfer of skills/ good practice	
Description:	Establish a Sport and Physical Activity Stakeholder Forum consisting of club and physical activity group representatives and NGB Sports Development Officers working in the county. The aim of the Forum will be to strengthen collaboration, networking, and the exchange of knowledge, skills and good practice among clubs, groups and NGB's. The Forum will meet at least once per year.
Action 7: Support and develop all aspects of sports participation in Kildare. Provide opportunities, coaching, volunteerism, training, and event support in the county	
Description:	Strengthen sport participation across Kildare by enhancing local coaching pathways, volunteer development, and community led event supports, including initiatives that encourage engagement through the medium of Irish where possible. Work with partners such as Kildare Volunteering Centre, Civil Defence, KSP, Healthy Ireland, Sláintecare, National Governing Bodies and Kildare County Council to expand opportunities for involvement. Emphasise the value of social participation in building community wellbeing and reducing isolation through inclusive, locally driven programme.

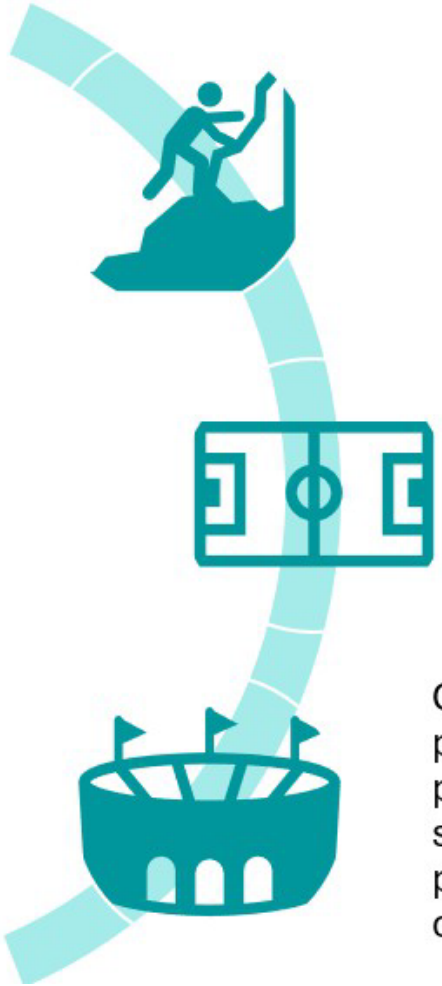
Action 8: Continue to support access to grant funding opportunities for sport and physical activity organisations	
Description:	Continue to assist sport and physical activity organisations in accessing grant funding to strengthen local participation opportunities. Provide guidance on funding applications and maintain baseline data on programmes and participant numbers to monitor impact and inform future investment.
Action 9: Support the maintenance and expansion of the number of NGB funded sports activation officers working on the ground in Kildare	
Description:	Support the maintenance and expansion of NGB-funded Sports Activation Officers working across Kildare to increase participation and strengthen local delivery. Continue to collaborate with partners such as the Outdoor Recreation Officer (ORO) and Swim Activator to coordinate programmes and maximise community reach.
Action 10: Continue to support and encourage community-led programmes and events which bring communities together and encourage physical activity.	
Description:	Facilitate and promote community-led physical activity events through logistical support, training, and partnership working. Collaborate with local organisers of initiatives such as 5km and 10km runs, and Parkrun to strengthen volunteer capacity, increase participation, and build community cohesion through shared active experience.
Strategic Priority 3: Build active communities, using sport and physical activity to improve the health and wellbeing of people across County Kildare	
Key Success Measures:	• Number of initiatives delivered targeting increased participation through fun and recreational activities. • Increase in the number of people using cycling and walking for transport especially for short journeys. • Number of collaborative initiatives between council departments delivered to enhance walking, cycling and active travel.
Action 11: Continue to collaborate with key partners to further increase participation in sports	
Description:	Strengthen collaboration with key partners to increase participation in sport and physical activity across Kildare. Work collectively with organisations such as Sláintecare Healthy Communities, Healthy Ireland, the

	HSE, local clubs, NGBs, KWETB, CYPSC, Kildare Youth Services, Kildare Education Centre, CKLP, KLeisure, the LCDC, the School Completion Programme, and Tusla and other groups to coordinate initiatives that enhance health, wellbeing, and community engagement.
Action 12: Continue to deliver an annual series of initiatives targeting increased participation through fun and recreational activities across all age and ability ranges	
Description:	Use creative, community-based programming to make physical activity enjoyable and accessible for everyone. Work with local partners to deliver inclusive initiatives such as PlayDay, Physical Activity Camps, Activator Pole sessions and the Daily Mile, in order to build confidence, social connection, and lasting health habits across all age groups.
Action 13: Ensure that physical literacy is consistently embedded in development, design and infrastructure	
Description:	Embed physical literacy principles across programme development, facility design, and infrastructure planning. Continue to roll out the Kildare Sports Partnership Physical Literacy Programme to build awareness among coaches, teachers, and community leaders, ensuring that movement skills and confidence are developed from an early age and supported throughout life.
Action 14: Promote sustainable travel	
Description:	Promoting cycling and walking for transport especially for short journeys - new and improved cycle lanes, off- road routes, bicycle repair stations and bike shelters in key locations

Strategic Theme

Strategic Priorities

Active Spaces and Places



Optimise our natural environment to increase participation in sport and physical activity in the outdoors

Address the need for increased access to high quality indoor and outdoor sport and physical activity facilities and spaces in all parts of County Kildare

Optimise our existing spaces and places such as community centres, parks, libraries, leisure centres and schools as places where sport, physical activity and recreation can occur

Strategic Priority 4: Optimise our natural environment to increase participation in sport and physical activity in the outdoors	
Key success measures:	• Increase in the number of trails and walks across Kildare. • Increase in the number of initiatives, collaborations or events that promote awareness of environment and sustainable, responsible participation. • Number of new outdoor recreation initiatives delivered, and number of participants engaged.
Action 15: Promote sustainable and responsible participation which respects the environment, it's custodians and other users	
Description:	Encourage responsible use of Kildare's outdoor environments by promoting awareness of environmental protection, sustainability, and shared principles. Work with partners and user groups to deliver education and communication initiatives that foster respect for wildlife, landowners, and other recreational users, ensuring that outdoor activity growth aligns with conservation and stewardship values.
Action 16: Development and delivery of a tailored Outdoor Recreation Plan for Kildare	
Description:	Develop and implement a dedicated Outdoor Recreation Plan for County Kildare to guide the sustainable development and promotion of outdoor recreation across the county. The Plan will provide a coordinated framework for investment and policy alignment, while also exploring synergies with the Local Sports Plan to maximise participation and community benefit.
Action 17: Through funding from Sport Ireland, seek to obtain a dedicated Outdoor Recreation Officer to deliver the Outdoor Recreation plan and increase participation.	
Description:	Appoint a dedicated Outdoor Recreation Officer to lead implementation of the Outdoor Recreation Plan and drive increased participation in outdoor activities. The role, supported through Sport Ireland funding under the National Outdoor Recreation Strategy, will coordinate stakeholder engagement, oversee delivery of priority actions and strengthen local capacity for sustainable outdoor recreation development.
Action 18: Explore options to increase access to trails and walks including those registered with Sport Ireland and those on National Walks Scheme (in cooperation with the local development company and any future Rural Recreation Officer for Kildare)	

Description:	Work collaboratively with the Local Development Company, Sport Ireland, and the future Rural Recreation Officer to identify and progress opportunities to expand access to trails and walks across Kildare. This will include enhancing connections to existing registered routes and those within the National Walks Scheme.
Strategic Priority 5: Address the need for increased access to high-quality sport and physical activity facilities and spaces in all parts of County Kildare (both indoor and outdoor)	
Key Success Measures:	• Number of indoor and outdoor community sports facilities in Kildare to increase year on year. • Number of clubs and groups implementing capital projects through government funded schemes
Action 19: To support and encourage the development of new infrastructure particularly multi use sports infrastructure.	
Description:	Encourage and support the planning and development of new and enhanced multi-use sports facilities to meet growing demand arising from Kildare's expanding population and increasing participation levels.
Action 20: Pursue opportunities to maximise available funding opportunities where possible	
Description:	Work with clubs, communities and agencies to identify opportunities and secure investment through schemes such as ORIS, LEADER, DTCAGSM, Sport Ireland, Dormant Accounts, URDF, the Sports Capital Programme, and Town and Village Renewal, ensuring provision keeps pace with community needs across the county.
Action 21: Build the capacity of clubs and groups to implement capital projects	
Description:	Support clubs and community groups by providing training and capacity-building resources that enable them to plan, manage, and progress their development objectives, strengthening their ability to enhance local sports and physical activity infrastructure.
Action 22: To support and encourage the development of community sports facilities in Kildare	
Description:	Support and encourage the development of sports facilities across Kildare to promote inclusion and remove financial barriers to participation where possible. This will prioritise opportunities for young people and low-income groups, through initiatives such as Box Up, small-sided courts, outdoor chess boards, basketball hoops, and other open-access amenities that foster information, community-based activity.

Action 23: Conduct exploratory analysis around potential future regional sports hubs in Kildare including needs assessment, development options and opportunities for large-scale national sports capital funding	
Description:	Undertake exploratory analysis to assess the potential for future regional sports hubs in Kildare, including identifying areas of need, reviewing development options, and examining opportunities for large-scale sports investment. This analysis will guide long-term strategic planning and equitable facility provision across the county.
Action 24: Embed the integration of a sport and physical activity lens to the planning stage of housing developments, public community spaces and local development strategies	
Description:	Ensure that sport and physical activity considerations are integrated into the early planning and design of housing developments, community spaces, and local development strategies. Embedding this approach will help create active, connected neighbourhoods where opportunities for movement and recreation are built into everyday environments.
Strategic Priority 6: Optimise our existing spaces and places such as community centres, parks, libraries, leisure centres and schools	
Key Success Measures:	• Commission research to explore opportunities for co-location within existing community facilities • Sports and Physical activity delivered in our existing spaces increases year on year.
Action 25: To support and encourage the development and expansion of existing infrastructure	
Description:	Support and encourage the enhancement of existing sports and recreation infrastructure to improve accessibility, usability, and sustainability. Examples could include the addition of toilets and changing facilities, upgrades to enable multi-sport use, and physical improvements which enhance the quality and inclusiveness of existing spaces and places across Kildare.
Action 26: Improve linkages between schools and sporting bodies to support and encourage increased access to school facilities outside of school hours	

Description:	Strengthen collaboration between schools, clubs, and sporting bodies to increase community access to school sports facilities outside of school hours. This will support greater participation, optimise use of existing infrastructure and foster stronger links between education and local sport development.
Action 27: Where feasible, track visitor data to guide future strategy development, environmental management or investment decisions	
Description:	Where feasible, implement visitor tracking initiatives, to build an evidence base on facility usage and participation trends. The data collected will inform future strategy development, environmental management, and investment decisions, supporting a more targeted and sustainable approach to planning and resource allocation.

Strategic Theme

Active Communication and Partnerships

Strategic Priorities



Enhance the profile and visibility of sport and physical activity, communicate our impact with evidence

Embed effective, accountable and integrated systems and structures with the right resources to deliver our plan

Proactively engage and collaborate with a wide range of people and partners in the delivery of our sport and physical activity priorities

Strategic Priority 7: Enhance the profile and visibility of sport and physical activity, communicate our impact with evidence	
Key success measures:	• All data requests met within timescale. • Number of collaborative initiatives, campaigns and events promoted to enhance the profile and visibility of sport and physical activity. • Extent of reach and analytics per campaign increases year on year.
Action 28: Continue to promote local, national and international campaigns for sport and physical activity such as European Week of Sport and HerOutdoors in Kildare	
Description:	Continue to actively promote local, national, and international campaigns that encourage participation in sport and physical activity across Kildare. This includes initiatives such as European Week of Sport, HerOutdoors, and other campaigns identified in this plan, helping to raise awareness and encourage active lifestyles.
Action 29: Continue to promote the National Digital Database 'Get Ireland Active' as a central information resource.	
Description:	Actively promote the National Digital Database 'Get Ireland Active' as the central online resource for information on sport and physical activity opportunities in Kildare. Encourage clubs, community groups, and facility providers to maintain accurate listings, supporting residents and visitors to easily find ways to get active locally.
Action 30: Continue to provide quality data in order to support the provision of up-to-date, accessible information on provision, programmes and events	
Description:	Maintain and share high-quality data to ensure up-to-date and accessible information on sports facilities, programmes, and events across Kildare. This will support evidence-based planning, improve communication with stakeholders, and enhance public awareness of opportunities to participate in physical activity.

Action 31: Development and implementation of a consistent sport, physical activity and wellbeing communications strategy across key partners in line with the organisations communication policy	
Description:	Develop and implement a coordinated communications strategy for sport, physical activity, and wellbeing that aligns with organisational communication policies. The strategy will promote consistent messaging across key partners, strengthen awareness of opportunities, and highlight the collective impact of sport and physical activity initiatives in Kildare.
Action 32: Develop an implementation, evaluation and impact measurement plan to track and communicate the impact of the Local Sports Plan	
Description:	Develop a comprehensive implementation, evaluation, and impact measurement plan to monitor progress and demonstrate the outcomes of the Local Sports Plan. This framework will track delivery against objectives, capture evidence of impact, and support transparent communication of achievements to partners, funders, and the wider community.
Strategic Priority 8: Embed effective, accountable and integrated systems and structures with the right resources to deliver our plan	
Key Success Measures:	• Increase in number of funding and staffing resource levels within Local Sports Partnership to meet the needs of expanding population. • Establishment and operation of a whole council interdepartmental steering group for the Local Sports and Physical Activity Plan. • Number of Council departments represented on the Local Sports and Physical Activity Plan Steering Group.
Action 33: Develop and grow funding and staffing resource levels within the LSP to meet the needs of an expanding population thus ensuring the LSP is equipped to fulfil the goals set out in its operational plans	
Description:	Explore opportunities to strengthen the capacity of Kildare Sports Partnership, including potential expansion of funding and staffing resources to reflect the county's rapid population growth (the second fastest of all counties in Ireland, with a 9.5% increase recorded between 2016 and 2022). Additional resourcing, if secured, would support the Partnership in delivering its operational goals, responding to rising community demand, and maintaining high-quality programme delivery across the county.
Action 34: Establishing a 'whole council' interdepartmental steering group for the Local Sports and Physical Activity Plan	

Description:	Establish an interdepartmental steering group within Kildare County Council to oversee delivery of the Local Sports and Physical Activity Plan. This 'whole council' approach will strengthen coordination across departments, align strategic priorities, and ensure that sport and physical activity are embedded across all areas of council delivery.
Action 35: Establishing linkages between the Local Sports Plan steering group and the sports and physical activity stakeholder forum to disseminate information to active communities in Kildare and engage in consultation.	
Description:	Establish clear linkages between the Local Sports Plan Steering Group and the Local Sports and Physical Activity Stakeholder Forum to strengthen communication and collaboration. This connection will ensure that information flows effectively from strategic partners to local communities, while enabling the forum to provide feedback and act as a valuable sounding board to inform implementation.
Action 36: Ensuring the appropriate resources are in place to deliver on the plan in line with responsibilities.	
Description:	Ensure adequate resources and structures are in place to support effective delivery of the Local Sports and Physical Activity Plan in line with defined responsibilities. Explore opportunities to secure funding for a dedicated Local Sports and Physical Activity Plan Activator role to drive implementation, coordination, and partnership engagement across key actions and target groups.
Strategic Priority 9: Proactively engage and collaborate with a wide range of people and partners in the delivery of our sport and physical activity priorities	
Key Success Measure:	• Increase in number of partnerships • Number of sport and physical activity networks and structures with representation from Kildare Local Sports Partnership. • Number of awareness raising Kildare Sports Partnerships initiatives held
Action 37: Alongside key partners including Clubs and NGBs continue to promote and deliver local and National campaigns to increase participation in sport and physical activity	
Description:	Work collaboratively with clubs, NGBs, and key partners to promote and deliver a range of local and national participation campaigns throughout the year. Initiatives such as Weekend of Sport Week, Get Inspired / Test and Try Week, Kildare Recreation Week, Community Games Weekend, and Active Travel Week will be supported to encourage active lifestyles and participation across all ages and abilities.

Action 38: Optimise and build on existing structures such as the PPN, CYPSC, LCDC, CKLP to ensure consultation, engagement and information sharing in the development and delivery of major sport and physical activity initiatives	
Description:	Strengthen collaboration and information sharing by building on existing community and partnership structures such as the PPN, CYPSC, LCDC and CKLP. These networks will be used to support consultation, engagement, and joint delivery of major sport and physical activity initiatives, ensuring alignment with wider community development goals and maximising collective impact.
Action 39: Support and encourage joint capital development projects such as multi-sports facilities, through collaboration of compatible clubs and/ or multi- stakeholder cooperation e.g. NGBs, Schools, State bodies	
Description:	Support and encourage joint capital development projects through collaboration between compatible clubs, schools, NGBs, and state bodies. Promoting shared-use, multi-sport facilities maximises resources and community access to support delivery of sustainable infrastructure that meets the diverse sporting and recreational needs of Kildare's growing population.
Action 40: Continue to contribute to local, regional and national networks and structures in conjunction with Sport Ireland	
Description:	Continue to actively engage with local, regional and national networks and structures, in partnership with Sport Ireland and the wider LSP network. Ongoing engagement will support knowledge sharing, alignment with national policies and collaboration on initiatives that strengthen the delivery and impact of sport and physical activity across Kildare.
Action 41: Develop links between the active travel teams and relevant stakeholders to encourage commuting to school and work by walking and cycling.	
Description:	Strengthen collaboration between Active Travel teams and key stakeholders to promote active commuting to school and work through walking and cycling. Focus will be placed on creating safer, more connected routes to schools, community centres, and recreation hubs, encouraging everyday physical activity through active travel. Prioritising safe walkways and cycleways to and from schools, community centre and recreational hub facilities

Action 42: Build new partnerships with national governing bodies to support the growth of local provision and secure development resources	
Description:	Build new partnerships with NGBs to expand local sport provision and access to expertise, programmes and development resources. Strengthening these relationships will enhance opportunities for participation, coach development, and facility investment in Kildare.
Action 43: Continue to develop and promote strategies for collaboration/ partnerships between schools, community groups and clubs to increase participation	
Description:	Continue to develop and promote collaborative approaches between schools, community groups, and sports club to create inclusive pathways into participation. Strengthening these partnerships will maximise use of local facilities, broaden access to programmes, and work to support lifelong engagement in sport and physical activity.

Appendix 1 Glossary of Terms

Terms and Acronyms	Explanation
Active Lifestyles	An active lifestyle refers to a way of living that involves regular physical activity, exercise, and movement as a fundamental part of daily routines and recreational choices. It encompasses activities that promote overall health, fitness, and wellbeing, often including exercises, sports, outdoor pursuits, and active transportation. The aim is to maintain or improve physical health, mental wellbeing, and quality of life through consistent engagement in movement and physical pursuits.
Active Travel	Active Travel involves travelling with a purpose, using your own energy via sustainable means. It includes walking, wheeling, and cycling or the use of self-powered, non-motorised scooters as part of a purposeful journey. For example, walking to school and cycling to work are both considered forms of Active Travel.
KCC	Kildare County Council
LSP/ KSP	Local Sports Partnership/ Kildare Sports Partnership
NGB	National Governing Body: the controlling organisation of a sport. For example, the GAA or Cycling Ireland.
Physical Activity	Physical activity refers to any bodily movement that results in energy expenditure. It encompasses a wide range of actions, from everyday activities like walking, climbing stairs, and household chores, to planned exercises, sports, and recreational pursuits.
Sport	All forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competition at all levels
Whole-System Approach to Sport and Physical Activity	Where all of Kildare County Council departments and directorates play a proactive and collaborative role to holistically remove barriers and enhance opportunities for people in Kildare to lead more active lifestyles.

Appendix 2 Links to Other Strategies

- Kildare Migrant Integration Strategy 20202026 Kildare Integration Strategy.pdf
- Healthy Kildare Plan Healthy Kildare Plan 2022-2027
- Kildare Play Strategy Kildare Play Strategy 20182028.pdf
- Kildare Local Development Strategy kildarecoco.ie/media/Kildare Local Development Strategy 2023 2027.pdf
- Kildare Economic Development Strategy Kildare Economic Development Strategy 2025.pdf
- Kildare Climate Action Plan Kildare County Council Climate Action Plan 2024 - 2029 - Kildare County Council
- Kildare Road Safety, Cycling and Sustainable Transport Road Safety, Cycling and Sustainable Transport - Kildare County Council
- Kildare Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Strategy 3. Open Space Outdoor Recreation Strategy.pdf
- Kildare Sports Partnership Strategic Plan KSP Strategic Plan 201721 pdf version.pdf
- Kildare Outdoor Recreation Plan (in development)
- County Kildare Skills Strategy Skills.pdf
- Kildare/Healthy Ireland Kildare County Council

COMHPHÁIRTÍOCHT SPÓIRT CHILL DARA
SPÓRT ÉIREANN

KILDARE SPORTS PARTNERSHIP
SPORT IRELAND

Comhairle Contae Chill Dara
Kildare County Council