

# KILDARE LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LCDC)

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024



**Comhairle Contae Chill Dara**  
Kildare County Council



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Further information is available on the Kildare County Council website at:

**Kildare LCDC - Kildare County Council**



## Glossary

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<b>AIRO</b>	All-Island Research Observatory
<b>CAP</b>	Common Agricultural Policy
<b>CE</b>	Chief Executive
<b>CKLP</b>	County Kildare LEADER Partnership
<b>CYPSC</b>	Children and Young People's Services Committee
<b>DSP</b>	Department of Social Protection
<b>DEIS</b>	Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools
<b>DRCD</b>	Department of Rural and Community Development
<b>EMRA</b>	Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly
<b>FRC</b>	Family Resource Centre
<b>HI</b>	Healthy Ireland
<b>HP</b>	Haase and Pratschke - Pobal Deprivation Index
<b>HSE</b>	Health Service Executive
<b>IEC</b>	Independent Evaluation Committee (LEADER Programme)
<b>IFA</b>	Irish Farmers Association
<b>IP</b>	Implementing Partner
<b>IRIS</b>	Integrated Reporting and Information System
<b>KCC</b>	Kildare County Council
<b>KCCC</b>	Kildare County Childcare Committee
<b>Kildare</b>	Kildare is used to refer to the County of, or Local Authority area of, Kildare throughout this plan
<b>KPI</b>	Key Performance Indicator
<b>KWETB</b>	Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board
<b>LA</b>	Local Authority
<b>LAG</b>	Local Action Group (LEADER Programme)
<b>LCDC</b>	Local Community Development Committee
<b>LDS</b>	Local Development Strategy
<b>LEADER</b>	Liaisons Entre Actions de Development de l' Economie Rurale
<b>LECP</b>	Local Economic and Community Plan
<b>LEO</b>	Local Enterprise Office
<b>LEP</b>	Local Enhancement Programme
<b>MD</b>	Municipal District
<b>PPN</b>	Public Participation Network
<b>SCHC</b>	Sláintecare Healthy Communities
<b>SICAP</b>	Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme
<b>TFI</b>	Transport for Ireland



# 1. Introduction

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Kildare Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) continued to be very active in 2024. This Annual Report is intended to provide a short overview of the work and role of Kildare LCDC last year. Over €3.5 million was overseen by Kildare LCDC in 2024.

Some key highlights, presented in the following sections are:

- The completion of the second **Kildare Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2024-2029** and LECP Implementation Plan 2024-2026.
- Updating the **Census Profiles 2022** by the All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO), Maynooth University, as part of the development of the LECP.
- Overseeing implementation of the current social inclusion programme **SICAP 2024-2028**. This was the first year of the new programme which exceeded the targets set in working with the most disadvantaged communities and people in the county.
- Completing the **LEADER 2014-2022** administration and finalising twenty-three project claims while in parallel commencing oversight of **LEADER 2023-2027**. Three projects were approved for grant aid in 2024.
- Continued focus on implementing the **Slaintecare Healthy Communities Programme 2021-2024 in Athy**. This programme was extended until 2029. 378 individuals participated in programmes directly funded through the LCDC Slaintecare seed funding in 2024.
- Continuation of the **Healthy Ireland Programme 2023-2025** across Kildare to promote positive health and wellbeing based on an agreed plan.
- **Grant aiding €198,071** to 68 successful community groups/organisations and Women's Sheds through the Local Enhancement Programme to support small scale capital and equipment.
- **Securing additional resources** through national application processes, to build on work commenced through or supported by other LCDC programmes, particularly the Slaintecare Healthy Communities Programme
  - a) Kildare was one of four national successful applicants to the **Child Poverty Programme**. €100,000 was secured over two years to build on work with neuro diverse children and families. This application was submitted by Kildare Children and Young Peoples Services Committee (CYPSC), supported by the LCDC.
  - b) Kildare was one of five national successful applicants to the **Dormant Accounts Traveller fund**. €142,000 was secured over two years to support Traveller men's engagement and educational supports for children/young people. This application was submitted by Slaintecare Healthy Communities and will be led by Kildare Traveller Action (KTA).



## 2. Role of Kildare LCDC

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Kildare LCDC is a statutory committee established as part of the Local Government Act 2014. This Act gives legislative effect to 'Putting People First' and included the establishment of LCDCs in all local authority administrative areas. The role, structure and membership of the LCDC is defined with detailed circulars and guidelines underpinning the ongoing development of the LCDC.

### Purpose of Kildare LCDC<sup>1</sup>

*Develop, co-ordinate and implement a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development*

### Role of Kildare LCDC:

**Have primary responsibility for coordinating, planning and overseeing local and community development funding for the county**

**Bring a more joined up approach to the implementation of local and community development programmes and interventions, pursuing an integrated approach to local community-based services across providers and delivery structures**

**Drive meaningful citizen and community engagement in the scoping, planning and evaluation of local and community development programmes**

**Pursue a more cost-efficient administration of local and community development programmes and delivery structures, the matching of resources to priorities and better value-for money in the management and delivery of programmes**

**Focus on learning and feedback, enhancing the links between service delivery and policy development**

**Pursue opportunities for additional funding for the county, whether exchequer, EU, private or other sources.**

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<sup>1</sup> As outlined in the Local Government Act 2014



### 3. Membership & Meetings in 2024

Kildare LCDC is a nineteen-member committee with representatives from statutory and non- statutory bodies. Legislation outlines that non-statutory representatives hold the majority of seats on the committee (see table below). Kildare LCDC is supported to carry out its role by the LCDC Chief Officer, Marian Higgins KCC Director of Service alongside designated KCC support staff.

Kildare LCDC is a committee of KCC however, unlike the Corporate Policy Group (CPG) and Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs), the LCDC is independent from the local authority in the performance of its functions. Local and national elections in 2024 in addition to changes in personnel resulted in some changes to the membership of Kildare LCDC in 2024. The table below outlines Kildare LCDC membership, which includes two vacant non-statutory seats, at its last meeting of 2024 held on November 27th.

#### Membership Replacement:

Name	Membership Replacement 2024
*Liz Denieffe	Replaced Bob Quinn, PPN Environment
*Michael Kenny	Replaced Pat Balfe, PPN Community Development
*Cllr Carmel Kelly	Replaced Cllr Suzanne Doyle former Chairperson
Francis Doherty	CEO McVerry Trust stepped down
Lisa Baggott	Co-ordinator, South Western Regional Drugs & Alcohol Task Force-stepped down November 2024



## LCDC Membership November 2024

Name	Organisation
<b>STATUTORY REPRESENTATION – 9 MEMBERS</b>	
Cllr. Tracey O'Dwyer	Kildare County Council – Elected Representative, Chairperson from October 2024
*Cllr Carmel Kelly	Kildare County Council - Elected Representative from July 2024
Cllr. Aidan Farrelly	Kildare County Council – Elected Representative
Sonya Kavanagh	Chief Executive, Kildare County Council
Jacqui McNabb	Head of Enterprise, Kildare County Council
Margaret McQuillan	Head of Health & Wellbeing, CH07, HSE
Audrey Warren	Service Director, Dublin Mid-Leinster, Tusla
Ruth Langan	Area Manager Kildare, Dept. of Social Protection
Ken Seery	Director of Adult Education & Training, KWETB
<b>NON-STATUTORY REPRESENTATION – 10 MEMBERS</b>	
Tom Malone	Irish Farmers Association
Mary O'Connor	Board Member, County Kildare LEADER Partnership
Sinead Ronan	CEO, County Kildare Chamber of Commerce
Evonne Boland	PPN, Community Development
Alan Kerry	PPN, Social Inclusion
*Michael Kenny	PPN, Community Development – Vice-Chairperson from October 2024
Jide Sadiq	PPN, Social Inclusion
*Liz Deniffe	PPN, Environment

Kildare LCDC is also the Local Action Group (LAG) to oversee the LEADER Programme in Kildare. There were seven LCDC and six LAG meetings held in 2024.

Date of LCDC/LAG Meeting	Online/In-person/Blended
31st January 2024	Blended
22nd February 2024 (LCDC only)	Blended
27th March 2024	Blended
22nd May 2024	In-Person
3rd July 2024	Blended
2nd October 2024	Blended
27th November 2024	In-Person





## 4. Work and Progress 2024

Since the establishment of Kildare LCDC in 2014 significant progress has occurred. The work and role of the LCDC has increased substantially in this time. The following presents a snapshot of the work that took place in 2024.

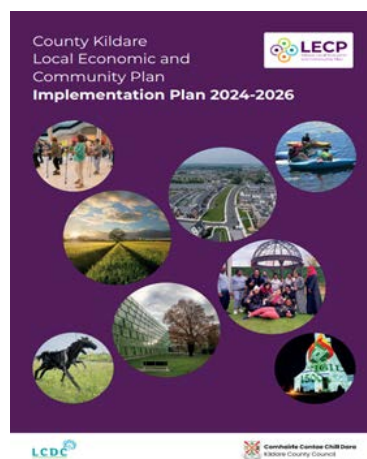
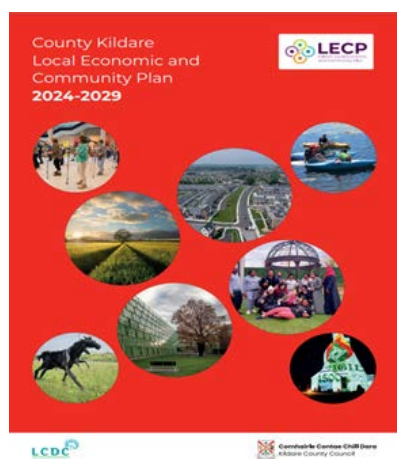
### 4.1 Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP)

Completing Kildare's second Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2024-2029 was a key priority in 2024. The LECP is a statutory requirement of the Local Government Act which provides for an integrated Local Economic and Community Plan with specific community and economic elements.

The purpose of the LECP is to set out the objectives and actions to promote Kildare's economic and local/community development for a six-year period. The LECP must follow a nationally agreed process through six key stages.

The first two stages to prepare and consult with stakeholders to agree the high-level goals took place in 2023. The first six months of 2024 focussed on finalising the LECP while developing clear targeted actions as part of the LECP Implementation Plan 2024-2026.

The Community Objectives were agreed by the LCDC at a special meeting in February 2024 with the Economic Development Objectives agreed by the Economic Development Enterprise and Planning SPC at their February meeting. Following submission to the Eastern Midlands Regional Assembly, AA/SEA screening, and presentation to the elected members in the five Municipal Districts, Kildare LECP 2024-2029 was adopted by Kildare County Council at their meeting in April 2024.





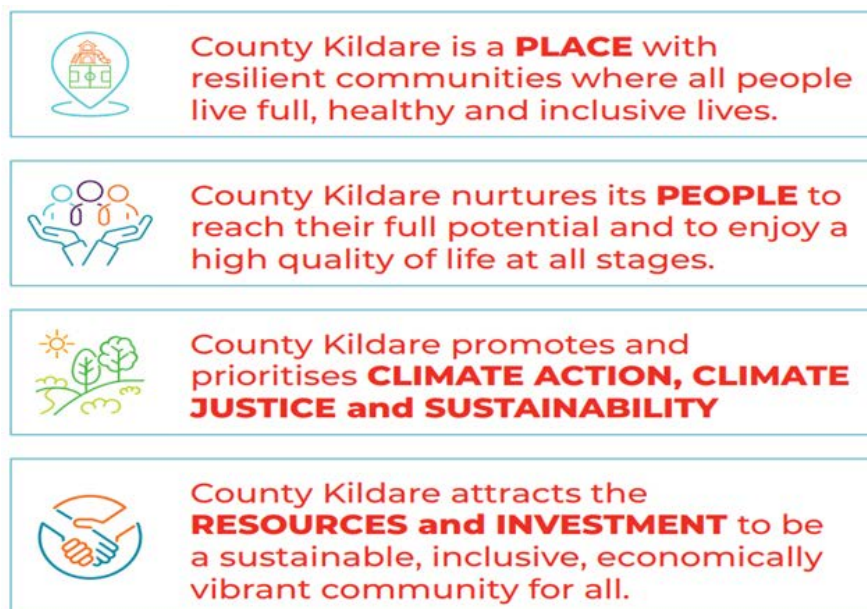


## Vision: Kildare LECP 2024-2029

County Kildare; working together as a sustainable, inclusive, economically vibrant, healthy community for all

## High Level Goals: Kildare LECP 2024-2029

The LECP vision is underpinned by four high level goals. These goals have aligned community and economic development objectives and actions to inform the work of KCC and partner organisations until 2029.



### Launch of Kildare LECP 2024-2029 by Cathaoirleach Cllr. Darragh Fitzpatrick with the LECP Advisory

#### Steering Group:

##### Back Row L-R:

Alan Dunne KCC DOS,  
Paula O'Brien KCC SEO,  
Susan Bookle, LCDC Co-ordinator,  
Sonya Kavanagh KCC CE,  
Marian Higgins KCC DOS and LCDC Chief Officer,  
Karl Duffy CKLP Rural Development Manager,  
Sinead Ronan Co Kildare Chamber of Commerce CEO

##### Front Row L-R:

Cllr. Suzanne Doyle - Chairperson LCDC,  
Cathaoirleach Cllr. Darragh Fitzpatrick and  
Cllr. Rob Power Chairperson Economic Development  
and Enterprise SPC

##### Absent:

Jacqui McNabb - SEO Kildare Enterprise/LEO  
and Alan Kerry CEO TFI Local Link Kildare South Dublin



## Census 2022

As part of the LECP process, the All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO) in Maynooth University, updated datasets when Census 2022 results became available. This information helped ensure that the baseline data to inform the LECP was up to date.



## Next Steps

Work commenced in late 2024 to set up an online system to monitor implementation of the LECP. This will help to ensure that progress is tracked which will inform priorities in the future.

Work also started to explore the development of an online datahub to regularly update data to supplement the Census 2022 information.

While Kildare LCDC, in conjunction with the Enterprise section of KCC, played a key role in developing the LECP, it is a plan for the county. Multiple stakeholders will be involved in implementing the actions agreed as their priority for the county.

A multi sectoral LECP implementation and monitoring group led by KCC will oversee implementation of the LECP.

### Local Economic and Community Plan - Kildare County Council



4.2 Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP)

SICAP is the national programme that aims to reduce poverty, promote social inclusion and equality. It targets the most disadvantaged communities and individuals nationally. SICAP is co-funded by the European Social Fund and managed by LCDCs in all local authorities. Pobal are contracted by the Department of Rural and Community Development to oversee the programme at national level. There are two goals with agreed targets i) supporting disadvantaged communities and ii) supporting disadvantaged individuals.

County Kildare LEADER Partnership CLG (CKLP), are contracted to implement the SICAP 2024-2028 programme in Kildare. The goals and targets agreed for Kildare SICAP are:

Goal	Focus	Target 2024	Target reached 2024
One	Supporting Disadvantaged Communities	72 groups	75 groups
Two	Supporting Disadvantaged Individuals	859 individuals	913 individuals

SICAP in Kildare in 2024 was very successful in implementing the agreed plan on time, on budget and exceeding the targets set.

Kildare’s SICAP total budget allocation for 2024 was €1,693,183. This was fully spent with the exception of €50,300.90 received in late 2024, as additional funding to support new arrivals. This funding is carried over into the 2025 budget.

There were thirteen actions in the SICAP 2024 plan:

Goal 1: Communities	Goal 2: Individuals
Community Engagement	Education Supports
Supporting Local Community Groups and Networks	Lifelong Learning
Supporting Social Enterprises	Employment and Opportunities
Collaborations	Supporting Self Employment
New Arrivals Community Supports	Life Skills, Mental Health and Wellbeing
Traveller and Roma Inclusion	Supporting New Arrivals
	Supporting Heads of One Parent Families



While CKLP were responsible for ensuring that the work progressed, a highly collaborative approach was taken. CKLP work with state agencies e.g. KCC, HSE, ETB, Department of Social Protection, local schools and voluntary/community organisations e.g. In Sync, Family Resource Centres, Kildare Traveller Action, community centres, sports groups to progress the actions in both goals and to inform future planning.

#### Some highlights from SICAP in 2024 included:

- Working with KCC Community staff to provide information and courses to people living in disadvantaged areas
- Healthy Food Made Easy programmes were conducted for older people's groups particularly those experiencing social isolation
- An LGBTQI+ worker was engaged through SICAP to lead initiatives aimed at addressing the discrimination faced by the LGBTQI+ community
- SICAP Community Support Workers conducted needs analyses in a number of disadvantaged areas
- Supports were provided for Children and Families through the Schools Completion Programme and Dads Fest events
- English language supports, referrals, translation, Tús and CE programme, Integration through Socialising supports were provided for New Arrivals in 2024
- Sessions for potential university students and pre-employment courses and supports were also provided for New Arrivals.
- A collaborative relationship between Tús Supervisors and SICAP staff proved to be a significant advantage in addressing the needs of long-term unemployed participants
- 33% of individuals who were supported in exploring the possibility of starting their own business successfully transitioned into self-employment
- SICAP launched a comprehensive job preparation programme tailored for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year students
- Social Enterprise workshops, feasibility studies, and the re-establishment of a Social Enterprise Network took place in 2024





Mary Byrne  
SICAP Individual Support  
worker in  
Anne Street Prosperous –  
Coffee Morning



SICAP at KARE Social Inclusion  
Crafts Fair – Grace Clarke  
Kildare PPN, Mary Hennessy  
Integration & Community  
Support Officer SICAP,  
Anne Crowe KARE/Social  
Inclusion Week Chairperson,  
Sabrina Whelan Community  
Engagement Worker SICAP.



Breda Mitchell SICAP Individual  
Support Worker Athy – with  
National Learning Network  
Participants who completed  
Manual Handling Training



*Participants at the Know Your Community Event in 2024*

In line with requirements, the SICAP programme 2023 was audited by Kildare County Council's Audit Team and no high-risk findings were identified.

The SICAP subgroup of the LCDC continued to meet in 2024. This subgroup meets in advance of the scheduled LCDC meeting, to review SICAP implementation progress, to consider opportunities and challenges. It met six times in 2024. The subgroup terms of reference were reviewed and agreed at the November LCDC meeting. A SICAP progress update is scheduled at all LCDC meetings. Final decisions in relation to all aspects of SICAP made by the full LCDC. SICAP is a standing item at all LCDC meetings.

### **The membership of the SICAP subgroup in 2024 was as follows:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Membership 2024</b>
Marian Higgins	Subgroup Chairperson, Chief Officer LCDC, Director of Services, KCC
Evonne Boland	LCDC Member, PPN Representative
Cllr. Aidan Farrelly	LCDC Member, Public Representative
Caroline Sheehan	Tusla (resigned September 2024)
<b>In attendance</b>	
Breda Stewart	SICAP Manager, CKLP. (resigned September 2024)
Violet Balfe	Financial Controller, CKLP
<b>Supported by</b>	Marie Kane, Terrie Devlin, Susan Bookle



### 4.3 LEADER Programme

The Kildare LEADER programme is implemented by CKLP and overseen by Kildare LCDC (as LAG). The first LEADER Local Development Strategy, under LCDC as LAG, was approved in late 2016 for the 2014-2020 programme, extended until 2023. While this LEADER programme closed in 2023, a number of projects were completing their financial claims in 2024. The LCDC supported this final phase through processing payments from DRCD through KCC. In 2024, 23 project claims were made to the value of €909,292.

The 2023-2027 LEADER Programme started in January 2024. The purpose of the LEADER programme is to improve the quality of life and economic activity in rural areas through grant aiding private enterprises and community groups. This is different to SICAP, as LEADER is a grant aiding programme.

The three themes of LEADER are:

1. Economic Development and Job Creation
2. Rural Infrastructure and Social Inclusion and
3. Sustainable Development of the Rural Environment and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation.

The funding available to support grant aiding projects through the LEADER 2023-2027 programme is €4,080,353.

Three projects were approved in 2024, to the value of €256,048, two under Economic Development and Job Creation and one under Rural Infrastructure and Social Inclusion.

An independent evaluation committee was established in line with requirements in August 2024. Training was provided in advance of their first meeting to support them in their role in assessing LEADER grant applications for recommendation to the LAG.

Kildare LAG continued to have a LEADER subgroup in place to support its work. The terms of reference of this subgroup were reviewed and approved at the November LAG meeting. This subgroup met in advance of all LAG meetings to review progress, to ensure that opportunities and challenges were identified and considered. A key function is to consider the projects recommended by the evaluation committee for approval, are discussed and checked prior to presentation for approval. All final decisions in relation to LEADER are made by the LAG.

The LEADER programme has supported a broad range of projects to support community, economic and environmental development across the county. An example of projects that availed of LEADER grant aid through the previous programme are presented below:

#### **Kalbarri Cookery School**

Kalbarri is a family-run cookery school and catering business operating from Kilcullen in Co. Kildare. They provide a range of cookery services including cookery classes, event catering and the opportunity to host a group of family and friends for a dining experience in Kalbarri's Lantern Room.





### **Purpose of LEADER grant aid to Kalbarri Cookery School**

The aim of the project was to expand the building and make it more user friendly for people in wheelchairs, to invest in equipment at wheelchair height (including pizza/bread oven, mixer, tray sealer), and to make the grounds around the cookery school more wheelchair friendly. With the help of LEADER funding Kalbarri offers people with physical challenges somewhere to go and learn independent life skills through the school. Kalbarri has also developed the space surrounding the cookery school to give greater access and independence to people in wheelchairs.



### **Sallins Canal Store – Greenway Bike Hire**

Funding was approved to develop a new Grand Canal Greenway Bike Hire business on the waterfront in Sallins.

### **Purpose of LEADER grant aid to Greenway Bike Hire**

Sallins Canal Stores Greenway Bike Hire includes bike hire, bike repair and reception on the ground floor of the building and a one-bedroom self-catering apartment on the first floor. LEADER funding assisted with the purchase of bicycles and accessories, tools, electrical appliances for the self-catering apartment, software for the business and a promotional website and signage. Users of the bike rental have access to a new 13km track from Sallins to Hazelhatch through the Kildare countryside along the Grand Canal Biodiversity Corridor. The project creates a new hub for tourist activity in Sallins and brings a historic building in Sallins into use as a tourist facility on the Grand Canal Greenway. It also increases tourist footfall in the local area bringing additional revenue to local businesses.



Membership of the LEADER Subgroup 2024

Name	Membership 2024
Marian Higgins	Subgroup Chairperson, Chief Officer LCDC, Director of Services, KCC
Cllr. Tracey O'Dwyer	LCDC Member, Elected Representative
Sinead Ronan	LCDC Member, CEO, County Kildare Chamber of Commerce
Jacqui McNabb	LCDC Member, Head of Enterprise, Kildare County Council
Tom Malone	LCDC Member, Irish Farmers Association
In attendance	
Karl Duffy	LEADER Manager, CKLP (until August 2024)
Maeve Howe	LEADER Manager, CKLP (from September 2024)
Supported by	Susan Bookle, Marie Kane, Kathryn Morbin

4.4 Healthy Ireland Programme

Healthy Ireland (HI) is the national framework for improved health and wellbeing nationally. It provides specific funding to LCDCs to implement and promote positive health and wellbeing at local level.

Following the success of Healthy Ireland Rounds 1, 2 and 3, Kildare commenced Healthy Ireland 4 in mid-2023. Priorities in Kildare centred on two outcomes; 1) Improving Physical Activity, 2) Mental Health.

This is a three-year programme 2023-2025, with funding provided to KCC to employ a Co-ordinator, in addition to funding of €40,000 per annum to support projects. In 2024 the project funding was increased to €75,000. A detailed plan is submitted to Pobal, on an annual basis which aligns to the overall outcomes and targets agreed for Kildare.

The projects funded in 2024 were as follows:



## Physical Activity

	Project Implementer and Budget	Target set 2024	Target Reached
<b>Increase physical activity particularly targeting people with disabilities, older people, disadvantaged families and communities</b>	Kildare Sports Partnership (KSP) €25,000	People with Disabilities -40	156
		Disadvantaged Families -625	875
		Older People - 550	750
		Training- physical literacy/community outdoor leaders - 80	102

Kildare Sports Partnership implemented five programmes in 2024 to increase participation in physical activity amongst all members of the community in County Kildare, particularly those in disadvantaged areas.

1. There were two new disability programmes completed in 2024. 'An Cuan Games Secondary School Multi-Sport Event' for ASD Units and Special Schools in Kildare and the 'Barrow Blueway Inclusive Programme'.
2. Two courses were completed - 'Back to Basic Physical Literacy Training Programme' and 'Walk the Leader Training Programme' to support physical literacy/community outdoor leaders, training for community leaders to deliver programmes,
3. The Get Kildare Walking Programme, included a wellness walk and exercise programme, The STEPtember walking challenger and The Hillwalking festival, were also completed.
4. Women's Couch to 5k - there were two programmes completed over a five-week period.
5. Fitsticks for Farmers- two blocks of twelve weeks duration were completed.

All elements of the programmes led by KSP 2024 were completed, with the budget spent and targets set were surpassed.



## Mental Health

	Project Implementer and Budget	Target Set 2024	Target Reached
Increase mental health outcomes	CAMS-Care - €8,000	18 participants	18 participants
	Kildare Mental Health Association (€2,000 from 2023 funding)	100 participants	390 participants
	County Kildare LEADER Partnership (CKLP) Dads Fest -€3,000	120 participants	200 participants
	County Kildare LEADER Partnership -Heads Up - €9,000	12 participants	17 participants
	Substance Use Regional Forum (SURF) - €10,000	40 participants	120 participants
	Kildare Traveller Action (KTA) - €10,000	50 participants	65 participants
	McVerry Trust -€5,000	100 families	136 families

Seven mental health and wellbeing projects were agreed with four fully completed in 2024 with work on the remaining three continuing into 2025.

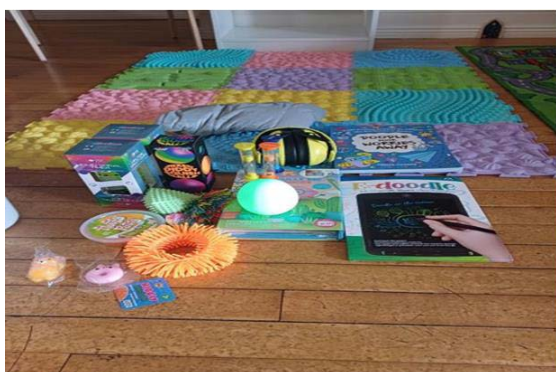
1. **CAMS-Care** ran **training** for therapeutic professionals in the Kildare area who work with people who are experiencing suicidal ideation. This included staff from In Sync and local Family Resource Centres. Eighteen participants were trained with nine having access to additional training required to be CAMS-4 Teens trained. This was a very successful programme with very positive feedback from participants.
2. **Kildare Mental Health Association** operated four **Connect Cafes**. One of these cafes was held in Naas General Hospital. They provided 29 gender personalised self-care packages one for each patient in the Lakeview Mental Health Unit. Each personalised self-care package held an individual recovery mantra from the mental health association.
3. **Dad's Fest** took place in Leixlip and Athy in 2024. This targeted fathers through a range of events. 88 dads and 140 children attended these events.
4. The **WRAP** programme under **Heads Up (CKLP)** ran successfully in 2024. This programme aimed to encourage participants to make positive changes to their lives, develop resilience and offers support to access local services and supports. 17 participants took part in 2024.





5. The **Substance Use Regional Forum (SURF)** focused on providing information on the impact of **Vaping**. In February 2024 there was a vaping seminar for all schools across County Kildare. Posters were developed before the event to raise awareness on the impact of vaping. A workshop is scheduled to complete this action with Comhairle Na nOg in 2025.
6. **Kildare Traveller Action** delivered a number of **wellbeing initiatives** in 2024. This included horse-riding, women's walking groups, summer activities and football. Due to a delay in sourcing a Traveller specific counsellor, the therapeutic element of the project will be delivered in 2025.
7. **Peter McVerry Trust** delivered **sensory packs** to homeless families in Kildare with 136 families benefitting. Completion of the sensory garden in the homeless hub, which was funded in 2023 was delayed and will be completed in 2025.

From August 2024, the Healthy Ireland Co-ordinator post became vacant. However, work continued to progress with the support of the wider LCDC team. Recruitment for a replacement took place in late 2024.



*Sensory packs provided to children in Peter McVerry Trust family hubs.*



*Dads Fest 2024 in Athy and Leixlip*



## 4.5 Slaintecare Healthy Communities Programme

Athy is one of nineteen Slaintecare Healthy Communities nationally. The purpose of Slaintecare Healthy Communities is to reduce health inequalities through a range of evidence-based programmes and to increase targeted health related programmes.

The programme commenced in 2022 with the employment by Kildare County Council of a dedicated Local Development Officer. The programme was extended nationally in 2024 until 2029.

The HSE oversee the roll out of a range of evidence-based programmes, with the LCDC overseeing local co-ordination, building key working relationships, opportunities for collaboration and identification of the health and wellbeing needs of the community for planned actions. In addition, seed funding is provided to support this local co-ordination role. In 2024 €75,000 was made available through this funding. The targeting of this funding is agreed locally, by a Local Implementation Group, who meet regularly in Athy supported by the Local Development Officer.

In 2024 five new themes emerged to direct the allocation of funding. These priorities were: a) Food Insecurity, b) Neurodiversity and Inclusion, c) Trauma Informed Practice, d) Place Based Wellbeing and e) Emotional Resilience and Wellbeing through Creative Writing.

### Seed Funding Budget 2024

Dept of Health Seed Funding	Partner Organisations	Amount
Food Supports	County Kildare LEADER Partnership, Grow it Yourself	€20,000
Place Based Wellbeing (Place Standard Tool)	Slaintecare Healthy Communities Local Implementation Group	€15,000
Local Child Poverty Action Plan – Neurodiversity and Inclusion Trauma Informed Practice	CYPSC & Family Resource Centre	€25,000
Trauma Informed Practice	Creative Places, Empowering Communities Programme	€5,000
Creative Writing Through Wellbeing	Kildare Libraries, Athy School Completion Project, Emma-Jane Leeson (author)	€10,000
<b>Total Seed Funding</b>		<b>€75,000</b>



### A Snapshot of the work 2024

- 113 children and young people participated in targeted Food Support programmes during school holiday periods designed and delivered by the Slaintecare Healthy Community Food and Nutrition Worker in collaboration with local school and community stakeholders.
- A Neurodiversity and Inclusion programme delivered by Dr. Dorothy Armstrong in collaboration with SHCP, CYSPC and local Family Resource Centres engaged 39 professionals, 46 parents and 36 children in five-week education and awareness programmes and Occupational Therapy sessions in Athy and throughout Co. Kildare. This work provided a strong basis for the successful Child Poverty Application outlined in section 4.9.
- Thirty professionals participated in Trauma Informed Practice training.
- Turas Le Cheile trained eleven local volunteers to support their free Bereavement Support Service in Athy and South Kildare.
- Woodstock Castle Press was launched in October 2024 after a series of facilitated community development programmes and events facilitated by Woodstock Artists in Residence. The website, coordinated by local community members, launched a Book, a collection of locally developed newsletters on the history and heritage of the Woodstock community on the 11<sup>th</sup> of October in Athy Library.
- Kildare Traveller Action engaged 50 families, 20 Traveller Women, and 17 young people in activities throughout 2024 including; Day trips to Emerald Park, Knock, the Salt Caves, Easter Youth programme, weekly young girls' and boys' youth groups and a Traveller Pride Event.
- Sixteen children from three DEIS primary schools in Athy completed a 12-week Creative Writing Through Wellbeing programme with Kildare based author Emma-Jane Leeson supported by Athy School Completion Project.



*Children who participated in the Creative Writing Through Wellbeing Programme,  
and an example of one of stories produced through this programme.*





*Local professionals engaging in Trauma Informed Practice Training*

### Health and Wellbeing Subgroup

Kildare LCDC continued to work through a Health and Wellbeing Subgroup to support oversight of Healthy Ireland and the Slaintecare Healthy Communities Programme. The Subgroup met six times in 2024 and reported into Kildare Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) meetings for final decision making

The membership of the Health and Wellbeing Subgroup was as follows:

Name	Membership 2024
Cllr. Aidan Farrelly	Chairperson/LCDC Member
Anne Myler	Kildare Library Service
Edel Byrne	HSE
Karen Heavey	HSE
Carmel Cashin	Kildare Age Friendly
Lisa Baggott	SWRDATAF (up to March 2024)
Steven Joyce	SWRDATAF (from May 2024)
Karl Duffy	CKLP
Emma Berney	CYPSC
Sinead Ronan	LCDC Representative/Co. Kildare Chamber of Commerce
Sarah Shakespeare	Family Resource Centre's representative
Pat Balfe	LCDC Member/PPN Community Development representative (resigned January 2024)
<b>Supported by:</b>	Marie Kane/Susan Bookle LCDC Co-Ordinator, Maria Healy Slaintecare Local Development Officer, Claire Morrissey HI Co-Ordinator (resigned August 2024)

## 4.6 Empowering Communities Programme Athy

Athy was designated as one of fourteen Empowering Community Programme (ECP) sites in 2022. This programme is co-ordinated by the Local Development Companies and overseen by the LCDC. The ECP is located in areas experiencing significant disadvantage and aims to empower local communities to respond to area-based poverty, social exclusion, and the resulting consequences.



The focus of work is on supporting and building the capacity of the individuals, households, families and communities within the area to address issues impacting them. This work spans individual, family, education, training, employment, health and wellbeing themes.

An ECP Community Worker continued to be employed by County Kildare LEADER Partnership in 2024 with an annual budget of €140,000 to lead out on actions and approaches which aim to build and maintain trusting supportive working relationships with the residents of the Athy West Urban Area targeting five estates, namely Towns Park, Castle Park, Carbury Park, St. Dominic's Park and Green Hills. This post was supplemented by an additional part time worker in 2024.

### Key Outcomes 2024

- A number of new groups have been formed in the targeted estates- four residents' groups, four social groups, three health and wellbeing groups, one event group and two environmental groups.
- There was a significant increase in residents taking part in courses, i.e. forty-two residents achieved their safe pass, a further twenty-eight graduated at QQI Level 5 on the community addiction course, fifteen residents qualified with QQI4 static security training and fifteen took part in sports literacy training.
- Community Activities – research trip to Carlow community garden, Easter family programme, Social Inclusion Day event, IN THE BAG initiative for primary school children, fundraising winter market, Easter, Halloween and Christmas events for children, road safety initiatives, cycle safety workshops, raised planting beds installed across the estates, family fun days.
- Collaborations – Strong collaboration on the programme with Kildare County Council, Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme, Healthy Ireland, Kildare Sports Partnership, Creative Places, Alternative Project Athy, KWETB and Neighbour network.

**Empowering  
Communities  
Programme  
residents taking  
part in a baking  
course**





## 4.7 LCDC Grants 2024

### Local Enhancement Programme Funding

Kildare LCDC was allocated €198,071 from the Department of Rural and Community Development in 2024 to support community groups to carry out necessary repairs and improvements to their facilities, energy efficiency type projects and the purchase of equipment. This included an allocation of €34,749 for capital/equipment for Women's Groups. The fund was advertised for four weeks, and the closing date was 29<sup>th</sup> of February 2024. 68 applications were approved for funding in March 2024 (see Appendix One)

### LGBTI+ Dormant Account Funding

In 2024, the Department of Rural and Community Development invited applications from LCDCs for dormant account funding to promote visibility and acceptance of LGBTI+ young people across Kildare, provide LGBTI+ young people with safe spaces to access supports in line with the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy. Funding was available to organisations locally for the provision of services that include:

- Extending drop-in hours, developing information and guidance tools, holding additional community events
- Delivering LGBTI awareness/sensitivity training in healthcare settings, businesses, schools etc.
- Providing outreach support
- Providing sporting/physical activity programmes to promote inclusion, community participation, health and wellbeing

Kildare LCDC applied for funding and were awarded €4,620 in late 2024.

## 4.8 Ukrainian Community Response Forum

The Kildare Ukrainian Emergency Response Forum was formed in 2022 as a direct response to Russia's invasion of The Ukraine. The role of the Forum was to co-ordinate the community-led response in the provision of assistance and support to Ukrainian refugees as they were accommodated around the country. It is modelled on the Community Response Forums established across the country to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, which in Kildare was based on an expansion of the LCDC membership.

This forum is an interagency, information sharing group that include members of Kildare County Council, Kildare LCDC, County Kildare LEADER Partnership, Department of Social Protection (DSP), Kildare Volunteer Centre, Health Service Executive (HSE), Kildare Wicklow Education & Training Board (KWETB), Maynooth University, Kildare Citizen's Information Services (CIC), Kildare County Childcare Committee (KCCC), An Garda Síochána, Kildare Children and Young People's Services Committee (CYPSC), Local Link, Helping Irish Hosts and the Irish Red Cross.



The Community Response Forum continued to be co-ordinated by the LCDC in 2024 until it fell under the remit of KCC's Local Authority Integration Team in April 2024.

## 4.9 Additional Funds secured

Kildare LCDC was successful in helping to secure additional resources of almost €312,331 to respond to needs identified in 2024. These applications were collaborative, and this whole of county approach, using tested approaches proved successful. Slaintecare Healthy Communities Programme in Athy proved an important mechanism to inform these applications.

The key applications are outlined below:

Project	Funding Body	Partner Organisations	Funding secured	Brief description
Local Child Poverty Action Plan	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth (DCEDIY)	CYPSC, LCDC, Family Resource Centres	100,000.00	CYPSC led this application with LCDC endorsement. This focuses on learning from extending and expanding on work with neurodiverse children, young people and their families in Athy, Newbridge, Kildare Town and the Curragh
Traveller Health Initiative	Department of Health, Genio through Dormant Accounts funding	Kildare Traveller Action	142,000.00	Slaintecare Athy made an application to the Dormant Accounts fund to extend educational supports to children and young people in addition to expanding on Traveller Men's development work.
Athy Health and Wellbeing Kiosk	Healthy Ireland Local Government and Athy MD	Athy MD, Slaintecare Healthy Communities Local Implementation group.	30,331.60	Slaintecare Athy led on this initiative to put a dedicated interactive, information kiosk in the centre of Athy.
Home Visiting Programme	Tusla	CYPSC	40,000	Two Home Visiting Posts were secured for Athy. This application was supported by Kildare LCDC
<b>Total Funding</b>			<b>€312,331.60</b>	



## 4.10 Collaborative Networks

– Kildare LCDC works with other partners to ensure that work is co-ordinated and that high levels of collaboration exists. While the LCDC provides oversight and leads on a number of programmes required nationally, Kildare LCDC, through its members and support staff, are involved in a number of shared initiatives. A small snapshot in 2024 includes:

- **Eastern Midlands Regional Assembly (EMRA) Chief Officers Network** - The LCDC Chief Officer attends this network meeting bi-monthly to share information and liaise with the Department of Rural and Community Development.
- **CYPSC:** The LCDC Chief Officer is the Vice Chairperson of Kildare CYPSC. There are very strong links and working relationships between Kildare LCDC and CYPSC given the demographic of the county, with CYPSC being a standing item on LCDC agendas.
- **Royal College of Surgeons Ireland**- The LCDC Co-ordinator is participating in a steering group, led by the RCSI, to evaluate the Slaintecare Healthy Communities Programme nationally.
- **Irish Hospice Foundation Bereavement Network:** The LCDC Co-ordinator is a representative on this network which aims to provide a range of supports and services to people experiencing bereavement.
- **Connecting for Life - Suicide Prevention:** This HSE led network plays an important role in implementing the Connecting for Life Plan for Kildare. The LCDC Co-ordinator is a member of this multi-agency group.



## 5. Kildare LCDC Financial Overview 2024

The funding that Kildare LCDC was responsible for allocating and overseeing in 2024 was over €3.5 m as follows:

Programme	Budget 2024
Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP)	€1,381,815
SICAP additional funding for Ukrainian Refugees	€311,368
LEADER – including Projects and Administration costs	€1,185,231
Grants:	
Local Enhancement Programme	€198,071
LGBTI+ Funding	€16,852
Healthy Ireland	€147,516
Slaintecare Healthy Communities Seed Funding	€161,434
Empowering Communities Programme	€140,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>€3,542,287</b>

### The work of the LCDC in 2024 was supported by Kildare County Council Staff

Marian Higgins	LCDC Chief Officer, KCC Director of Service Climate, Community, Environment and Water
Susan Bookle	LECP Co-ordinator until September, LCDC Co-ordinator
Marie Kane	A/LCDC Co-ordinator until September, LCDC Administrator
Terrie Devlin	LCDC Administrator until September, LECP Co-ordinator
Kathryn Morbin	LCDC Administration
Maria Healy	Slaintecare Healthy Communities Local Development Officer
Claire Morrissey	HI Co-ordinator (Resigned August 2024)

Further information is available on the Kildare County Council website at:

**Kildare LCDC - Kildare County Council**



## Appendix 1

### Local Enhancement Programme 2024 – Successful Applicants

Group/Organisation Name	Eligible Capital Description	Recommended Amount
9th Kildare (Kilcullen) Scouts	Carpet, blinds, heater	€1,592.52
Anne Street Residents Association Prosperous	Equipment, maintenance	€5,698.67
Ardclough Youth Theatre	Lighting, equipment	€1,205.28
Ashgrove Derrinturn Residents Association	Desks, equipment	€2,398.54
Athy and District Anglers Club	Mower, mesh	€2,069.56
Athy Badminton Club	Equipment	€2,131.20
Athy Community Council	Windows, doors	€5,016.00
Athy Golf Club Bridge Club	Table, laptop, tablets	€762.24
Athy Resource Centre	5 laptops, 7 desktops	€4,952.76
Athy Sing and Sign	Equipment	€4,147.76
Ballycane Celtic FC	Lighting	€960.00
Ballymore Eustace Community Development Association	Swift boxes	€450.00
Caragh GFC Prosperous	Lighting for walking track	€4,800.00
Carbury Village Residents Association	Storage container and base	€4,205.18
Castlefen Residents Association	Basketball space, net, tarmac	€3,071.16
Clongorey FC	Mower, equipment, compost station	€4,309.92
Dunmurray Rise Residence Association, Kildare Town	Generator and speaker, mower	€3,475.86
Griese Youth Theatre & Children's Drama	Door, paving repair, painting	€2,505.44
John Sullivan Centre (Irish Wheelchair Association) Clane	Equipment, hoist	€2,831.31
Kilcock Scouts	Repair roof (large project)	€4,800.00
Kilcullen Community Centre	New doors	€2,346.79
Kildare 7th Rathangan Scouts	Removal of wall, install patio	€4,660.03
Kildare Town Youth Hub	Replace windows	€2,553.60
Kildare Volunteer Centre	Interactive whiteboard	€2,299.61
Kingdom Life House LG Athy	Equipment, repairs	€4,945.46
Leixlip Youth Premises Group Ltd	Upgrade facilities, vending machine	€5,315.78
Lock 19 Community First Responders Group, Robertstown	First Responders equipment	€5,576.12
McAuley Place	Painting	€1,879.61
Midlands LGBT+ Project trading as Laois Youth Services	Staff phones, speaker, tablets	€1,090.34
Milltown GAA	Gym flooring, equipment	€1,903.01





Group/Organisation Name	Eligible Capital Description	Recommended Amount
Monasterevin Community Centre CLG	Window replacement	€5,700.00
Monasterevin Tidy Towns CLG	Garden equipment, laptop	€5,695.92
Monasterevin Youth Action	Equipment	€1,923.18
Moone Celtic Football Club	2 steel sheds for changing rooms	€3,360.00
Naas Community Men's Shed	Fire equipment, dishwasher	€658.35
Naas Youth Project Insync	Expand music room	€2,843.35
Narraghmore Development CLG	Upgrade percolation area	€2,315.04
Newbridge Access Group	Benches	€1,914.00
Newbridge Community Development	Sound equipment	€634.98
Newbridge Family Resource Centre	Sensory room	€5,692.02
Old Greenfield RA Maynooth	Gardening tools	€604.37
One Town One Voice Singers Kildare	Equipment	€2,844.30
Open Door Kilcock-Senior Citizens	Trolley for bowls	€1,101.60
Peter Bradley Foundation T/A Acquired Brain Injury Ireland	Defib, cameras, speakers	€997.42
Rathangan Community Association Ltd.	Maintenance on building	€2,736.00
Rheban Manor Resident's Association (near Athy)	Storage shed	€2,850.00
Sallins Sunshine Club	Paint community hall, floor, blinds	€5,164.20
Sarto Park Residents Association Naas	Landscaping	€3,191.57
ShareRing Skills Group, Celbridge	Arts equipment, storage	€2,139.23
Teach Dhiarmada Ltd, Castledermot	Replacement of light fittings	€5,700.00
The Peoples Market Monasterevin	Storage shed, trollies	€1,771.34
Tir Mona Athletics club	Mower, pump, concrete floor	€4,752.05
Willow Community Counselling Services	Commercial cold tub	€4,981.80
Young Life Ireland Maynooth	Projector, sign	€318.00
<b>Total LEP Recommended Funding:</b>		<b>€163,842.45</b>



### Women's Shed Community Support Funding 2024 – Successful Applicants

Group/Organisation Name	Eligible Project Description	Recommended Amount
Athgarvan Women's Shed	Printer	€219.99
Athy Women's Shed	laptops projector	€4,246.50
Balyva LGFA	Equipment	€781.98
Broadford Camogie Club	Goal posts	€2,728.45
Cappagh GAA - social camogie group	Equipment	€4,197.86
Castledermot Ladies Gaelic Football Club (LGFA)	Portable lighting	€5,000.00
Curragh Family Resource Centre	Craft equipment	€1,079.97
Kildare Traveller Action	Sewing machine and printer	€1,105.00
Mná Beoga, Monasterevin	IT equipment	€1,856.68
Monasterevin Women's Shed	Accessibility work, lighting	€4,947.74
Rathangan Women's Shed	Art supplies	€630.85
Robertstown LGFA Club	Upgrade facilities	€5,000.00
Sallins Women's Shed	Shelving	€805.65
Sonos & Siamsa, Ladies Social & Cultural Club, Naas	IT and equipment	€4,429.35
<b>Total LEP Women's Groups Recommended Funding:</b>		<b>€37,030.02</b>



