

ANNUAL REPORT 2019



Connected Strategies for Sustainable Communities



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**CONNECTED STRATEGIES
FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES**





Chairman's Address

Denis Drennan
Chairman of the KLP Board of Directors

2019 saw Kilkenny LEADER Partnership (KLP) enter its second decade as an integrated development company. The previous year with the activity that surrounded the 10th anniversary was a landmark one but there was no sense of 2019 having a sense of being 'after the Lord Mayor's Show'. Indeed, 2019 saw the intensification of KLP's work across its various programmes and initiatives. The Board and staff are looking confidently and excitedly to and beyond 2020.

In 2019 the company entered into a number of strategically important partnerships. These included projects with LEADER local action groups (LAGs) and other EU states on transport, cycling and tourism. KLP also partnered with local development companies in other parts of the country notably with our neighbours in Laois, Tipperary, Offaly and Carlow but also further afield, on environment, community services and recreation.

The Social Inclusion section of the company built on the success of the 'Town Social Animators' initiative with the County Council's Local Enterprise Office in continuing support of the broad-based work in Castlecomer and Graiguenamanagh. The results of these supports can be seen in both the aesthetics of the towns and the confident quality of initiatives emerging from these settlements. The growth and continued high quality results of the KickStart programme, an employment placement partnership co-funded with the State Street, is worthy of mention here for its positive impact of all the participants. We thank State Street again for their continued support.

A major addition to our partnership in the past year was the agreement made with the Tomar Trust to co-fund a portfolio of identified strategic community-led projects across the county between 2020 and 2024. It is a massive boost to those communities and will assist KLP's ambitions for the county in the current and future round of programmes. Tomar have committed to provide

€2.3 million in total towards KLP-funded projects. In this report, we give some further details on Tomar Trusts story and vision. But for here, I'd just like to record my own thanks to Dr Tom Cavanagh and all the trust for their faith in KLP and generosity towards the communities of Kilkenny.

As is traditional at this stage, but genuinely heart-felt I'd like to thank the staff, Evaluation Committee, Members and my fellow Directors for their hard work and support over the year. It was a year we lost one of our stalwarts: Mary Egan (RIP). Mary is remembered in this report. She was a member of the Evaluation Committee for many years and was a wise and shrewd participant in that crucial role. Mary was both a massive intellect and on-the-ground worker for her community in Tullaghought village and Windgap parish over decades. Few of us are indispensable, but in Mary's case we can safely use the Gaelic saying; "ní fheicimid a leithéid arís."

On a happier note as we go to print, the general election of February 2020 saw the election of another stalwart of KLP: Malcolm Noonan as a Teachta Dála (TD) for the Carlow Kilkenny constituency. Malcolm has been a long-time supporter of community-led local development and of KLP specifically. With his commitment to sustainability, Malcom was a natural ally in KLP's several ambitious initiatives on transport, environment, energy, etc. We wish him the very best in his onerous new role and know he will remain a supporter of bottom-up development.

Denis Drennan
KLP Chairman of the Board of Directors

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Denis Drennan
Chairman/Social Partner



Martha Bolger
Statutory Representative



Pat McAuley
Community Representative



Richie O'Brien
Statutory Representative



Marion Acreman
Chamber of Commerce



John Burke
Community Representative



Kevin Mahon
Kilkenny Tourism



Mags Whelan
Community Representative



CLLR. Eamon Aylward
Local Authority



Suzanne Campion
Statutory Representative



Ger Mullally
Social Partner



Rory Williams
Small Business



Janet Beck
Community Representative

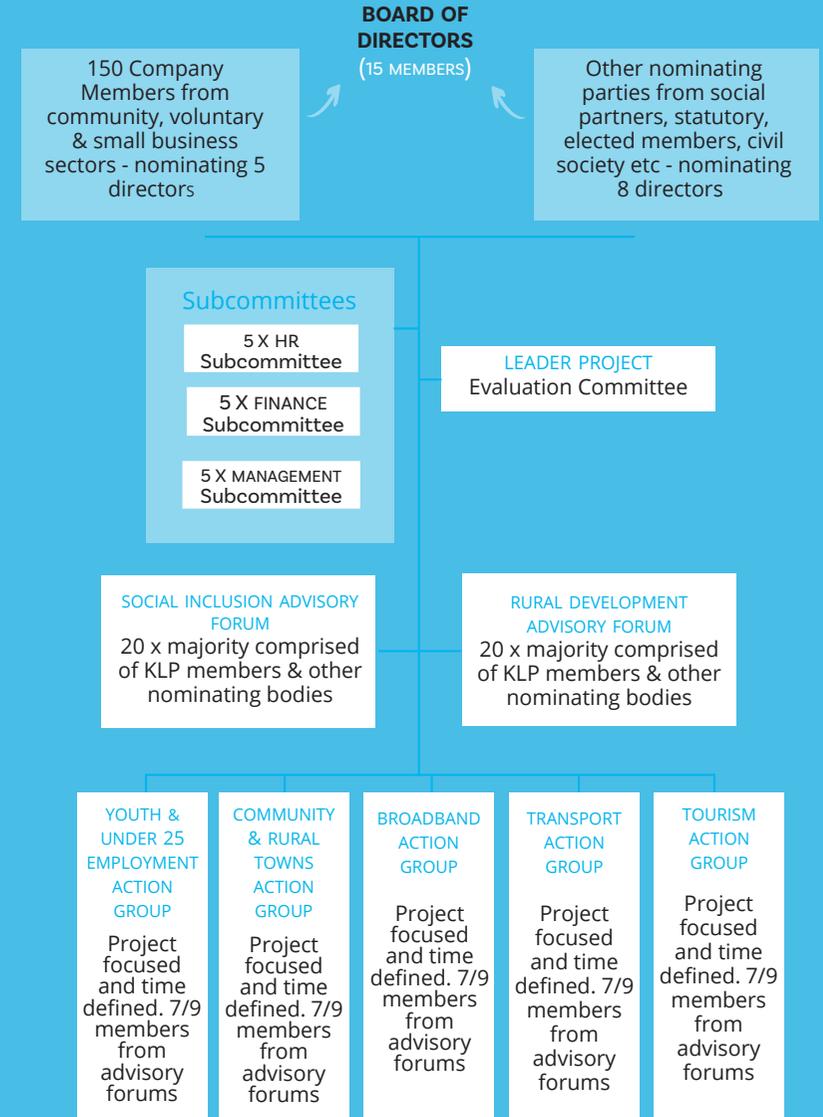


Liz Dermody
Social Partner



CLLR Malcom Noonan
Local Authority

BOARD COMPOSITION





In Memory and Appreciation of Mary Egan

Mary Egan who died on 12th May 2019 was a community stalwart not just for her home village of Tullahought or her parish of Windgap but of communities and voluntary groups throughout Kilkenny and everywhere. Mary sat on the KLP Evaluation Committee for a number of years up to her passing and in that role her keen intelligence, judgement and impartiality was always evident. KLP staff and Board members relied on those qualities and her hard-earned understanding of what it took to manage a community project in decision making.

Mary was always a 'community activist' long before that phrase was commonplace. But the breadth of her interest and involvement was not typical and it covered a broad spectrum of the community and voluntary sector from the social inclusion, cultural, heritage, social enterprise (tourism, etc.), sporting. She was a proud Kilkenny hurling fan in that beautiful border territory on the Lingaun Valley. Whatever the project or activity in the community Mary was always there in the 'engine house' driving and organising it. She

may not have always been the key person in the photograph for the inevitable awards that followed from the excellent work but was usually the person that everyone looked to for direction.

LEADER in the county inevitably encountered Mary in its early years first through BNS LEADER from 1991 and as it merged into KLP from 2009. Mary returned to third level education in her middle years and naturally excelled. This equipped her with the tools to be even more ambitious in her planning and involvement. She remained a huge supporter of the concept of community-led development and of KLP from there on. As was mentioned among colleagues at her wake in admiring her community legacy, "There's only one Mary Egan!"

As they go through the difficult process of accustoming to her passing, we record our best wishes to her husband Paddy who was always a great support behind Mary, to her son Tom and daughters Kathleen, Teresa and Trish. Ní fheicimid a leithéid arís.



Join Us: KLP Membership

If your group or business is interested in becoming a KLP member, contact the main KLP office and we'll tell you what's involved.

Kilkenny LEADER Partnership (KLP) is a membership-based organisation. It is governed by a Board of fifteen Directors who oversee strategy and make grant aid decisions. It is supported by professional staff that are the presence on the ground of the Company. KLP is ultimately owned by its approximate 150 Members. These Members are primarily community groups and small Kilkenny businesses.

Every three years the members get the opportunity to elect five of their number to sit on the renewal of the KLP Board for that period. 2017 was the start of a new cycle and KLP will be organising a June election and board nominations/co-options for the other ten Directors. The new Board will be formed at the annual general meeting (AGM) in June 2020.

Membership of KLP is open to all active and open membership community and voluntary groups that operate in Kilkenny. Also all small food businesses: essentially organisations with less than five hundred employees are eligible. There is a very modest annual fee. If your group or business is interested in becoming a KLP member, contact the main KLP office and we will explain what's involved.

Board membership is about more than just elections. KLP hope it will be part of a process whereby the Company can inform its members about opportunities and challenges that are emerging from policy development and enthuse them to grasp the potential and see off the difficulties.





BNS LEADER Completes a Job Well Done...

On Tuesday, 3rd February an organisation that had a major role in local development in Kilkenny and indeed the wider region, held its last meeting before dissolution. Barrow Nore Suir Rural Development widely known as BNS LEADER, or just BNS wound up as a non-profit company after almost thirty years of existence. But BNS's story is not just of extended existence but a huge achievement to in that period.

BNS was, along with Kilkenny Community Action Network and Castlecomer District Community Development (CDCD) the three 'foundation companies' whose staff and functions merged as part of the government directed 'cohesion process' to form our own Kilkenny LEADER Partnership (KLP) in late 2008. But while KLP moved on to its new integrated mission- and KCAN and CDCD dissolved soon after the merger, BNS continued to exist and operate, if at a less intense rate, for the next decade. That was an interesting period but the previous two decades are an even better story.

BNS was founded as one of the initial sixteen pioneering LEADER 'local action groups' (LAGs) in Ireland. Its purpose was to pilot the European Union's radical proposal to give local stakeholders, separate to central and local government control, the power and resources to develop their rural communities and small businesses. Ireland and Greece were the selected laboratories to test the new concept.

EU Agriculture Commissioner Ray McSharry, made an announcement about the novel partnerships of business and community stakeholders formed in many parts of Ireland. These LAGs would be set up to secure the valuable funding

for their community. The pilot programme from 1991 to 1993 required private match funding from local stakeholders to secure the LEADER contract and all-important funds. In our region, Avonmore Creameries (the predecessor of Glanbia) donated the private funding necessary and mentored the foundation of BNS. It established a connection that determined the initial operation area of BNS, which mirrored the Avonmore 'milk region' centred in Kilkenny and Carlow but including a large part of South Tipperary, South Laois and South Kildare.

BNS quickly established a reputation for innovation, cooperation and responsible administration of LEADER. While the initial BNS region reduced over the intervening decades to its final Kilkenny and east Tipperary base, the LEADER company made a lasting impression across all parts of the region. In Kilkenny BNS supported many strategically impactful projects- large and small. They are frankly too many to mention here. Even in its latter years, from its own remaining private funds, BNS kindly supported important projects prompted by KLP that lacked other sources of private funding.

In a final act of strategic cooperation and generosity, BNS gifted its remaining resources to KLP on condition that they be focused on projects that advance the LEADER pioneer's ethos. KLP thanks Chairman Tommy Cooke, and the rest of the BNS Board of Director for their trust on the future and inspiration from the past. KLP intends to honour their founder's legacy into the future.



Pictured: 1. BNS Final Meeting 03.02.2020 2. River Valley Food Circle Group 1996 Cooke at Carrick Marina Launch 9. BNS staff at Savour Event 10. Harry Everard w



1. BNS 1997 3. Bertie Ahern at the launch of the Savour Food Guide in 2005 4. Minister O'Cuiv at Trails Launch 5. Angela Campion and Christine Walshe at info event 2006 6. Pride in Place Event 7. Castlcomer Lakes 8. Tommy O'Cuiv with former Minister O'Cuiv at the Launch of the Trails 11. BNS staff and Board members 12. Tullaghought Biodiversity area launch



A Word from the CEO

Declan Rice
Chief of Executive

Partnership, Network & Cooperation

Partnership and cooperation was always KLP's theme but in particular in the past year. Across the company's activities, KLP has forged alliances and partnerships locally in Ireland and further afield in Europe. The development timescale on such initiatives is by its nature extended but KLP is assured of their strategic importance in the long-term for County Kilkenny. KLP's partnership with the Tomar Trust is referenced in more detail elsewhere but I would like to state that the agreement with Tomar is a hugely important and valuable continuance of KLP's long-term commitment to partnership and collaboration.

In 2019 KLP once again performed well across its range of programmes. Both 'pillar' programmes- LEADER and SICAP had good years in their own terms and in terms of their integrated support benefit of KLP's overall mission to "improve the quality of life of the communities and small businesses of County Kilkenny".

In raw figures on LEADER by the end of 2019, the Company had approved 59.68% of its available budget to projects; paid out 29.44% of that amount approved equivalent to 17.57% of the total budget. This is in line with the approval, expenditure profile of previous LEADER programmes. KLP is confident that it will have approved the remainder of its available LEADER project budget by the end of 2020 and have paid it out by the official close of the programme.

The Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) team continued to perform very strongly with excellent results in meeting targets and in adding significant value and depth to the social inclusion and community development goal beyond the basic metrics. These achievements include the continued operation of the innovative participant placement Kick Start initiative. The support of our Kilkenny-based State Street International Ireland Limited to this project is very much appreciated.

KLP's smaller development programmes such as the Rural Recreation Officer (RRO) programme on recreational and trail development., the First Start initiative supporting migrants into employment, the Traveller Primary Healthcare programme also achieved their varied targets. While the Rural Social Scheme (RSS): providing community-based part-time employment to lower income farm families and the TÚS community placement initiative for long-term unemployed people also maintained and grew their numbers and reach to assist the participants and the communities involved.

2019 saw the transfer of Deenside Early Years: KLP's childcare facility in Castlecomer, transfer into a separate independent company. 'Deenside' has emerged from a period of difficulty to become a high standard and sustainable business. In accordance with its overall ethos of 'bottom-up' development KLP believes that it is important that local people have the most input to their local services and this drove the establishment of the independent company. However, KLP will continue to support the new company in its growth and development as long as necessary. KLP is happy to be able to transfer the childcare service in good order. We wish to thank the manager and staff of the service for their hard work and dedication over the last few years.

Inevitably, the past year was not without downsides. The level of administrative burden and complexity imposed by national operating rules on project beneficiaries and 'local action groups' (LAGs)- as LEADER approval boards are officially called remains a real issue of concern, that KLP and its colleagues must manage. For instance, this has a clear chilling effect on communities and businesses considering innovative projects. However, there is no fear that funding will not be allocated-or spent before the programme closes. KLP is also confident on the quality of the projects it has approved and their strategic impact at local and regional level.

Indeed, the issue of concern to KLP's Board and management now is the news emerging from the EU in recent months that the start of the next LEADER programme will be delayed by over a year! The question now is- if there is such a protracted delay, how are communities and small businesses to manage in that extended interregnum? KLP suggests that a national programme of short duration be introduced to bridge the gap between the official EU funded LEADER programmes.

As we go to press the very serious COVID-19 pandemic is causing significant disruption across the globe, Kilkenny and Ireland is not spared. KLP is active through its social inclusion section (SICAP, TÚS, RSS, Traveller Primary Healthcare) in pivoting in its service to directly assist in the immediate challenge of protecting individuals and vulnerable communities. As ever we are working in partnership with colleague organisations. LEADER and the Rural Recreation sections are continuing to work on projects and initiatives that will support the county's eventual recovery. It is difficult at this stage to estimate the effect and extent of the pandemic on local development. We can safely guess that it will be serious and long-lasting, but recover we must. In that likely context there will be even more reason to support communities and small businesses to recover and sustain their communities.

My thanks to all my colleague staff members; KLP has a great team that supports and challenges each other. But particular appreciation to the volunteers on the Board of Directors, Evaluation Committee and Members without whose trust and backing the staff could not operate to their desired level. This year will be the second time that the Membership-based company that KLP is now has to organise elections for Directors. KLP proposes to host a series of events to arm Members to participate in that process- and as importantly to aid the Company in plotting its course into the next decade. You will be hearing from us on that in due course.

KLP STAFF

Management Administration SICAP Rural Development Other Programmes & Initiatives



Declan Rice
CEO



Martin Rafter
Assistant CEO
SICAP Manger



Bernie Thorpe
Financial Controller



Joan McGrath
Finance Officer



Mary Breen
Compliance Officer



Claire Doheny
LEADER Administrator



Hannah O’Gorman
LEADER Administrator



Diane Ryan
LEADER Administrator



Ljilana Dolenc
Administration



Miriam Kelly
Administration



Sharon Stone
Graphics and
Communications



Kevin Barcoe
Web Design



Alison Iremonger
Development Officer



Moira Duggan
Development Officer



Amanda DeBurca
Development Officer



Yuvi Basanth
Development Officer



Conor Cleere
Enterprise Officer



Brian Spratt
SICAP Monitoring



Mags Morrissey
Development Officer



Therese Curran
Development Officer



Tom McDonald
New Start



Fergus Horgan
Development Officer



Christine Walshe
Development Officer



Angela Campion
Development Officer



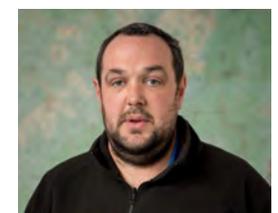
Mairead Rohan
Enterprise Officer



Seoirse Butler
Rural Social Scheme
Supervisor



Harry Everard
Rural Recreation Officer



Declan O’Shea
Housing Aid



Finbar Phelan
Housing Aid



David Coughlan
Tús Supervisor



Seamus Davis
Tús Supervisor



Liam Mooney
Tús Supervisor



Mike Redmond
Tús Supervisor



Catherine Lennon
Traveller Community
Health Prg. Coordinator



Bridget Cash
Traveller Community
Health



Eileen Delaney
Traveller Community
Health



Josie Cash
Traveller Community
Health



Hannah Kirwan
Traveller Community
Health



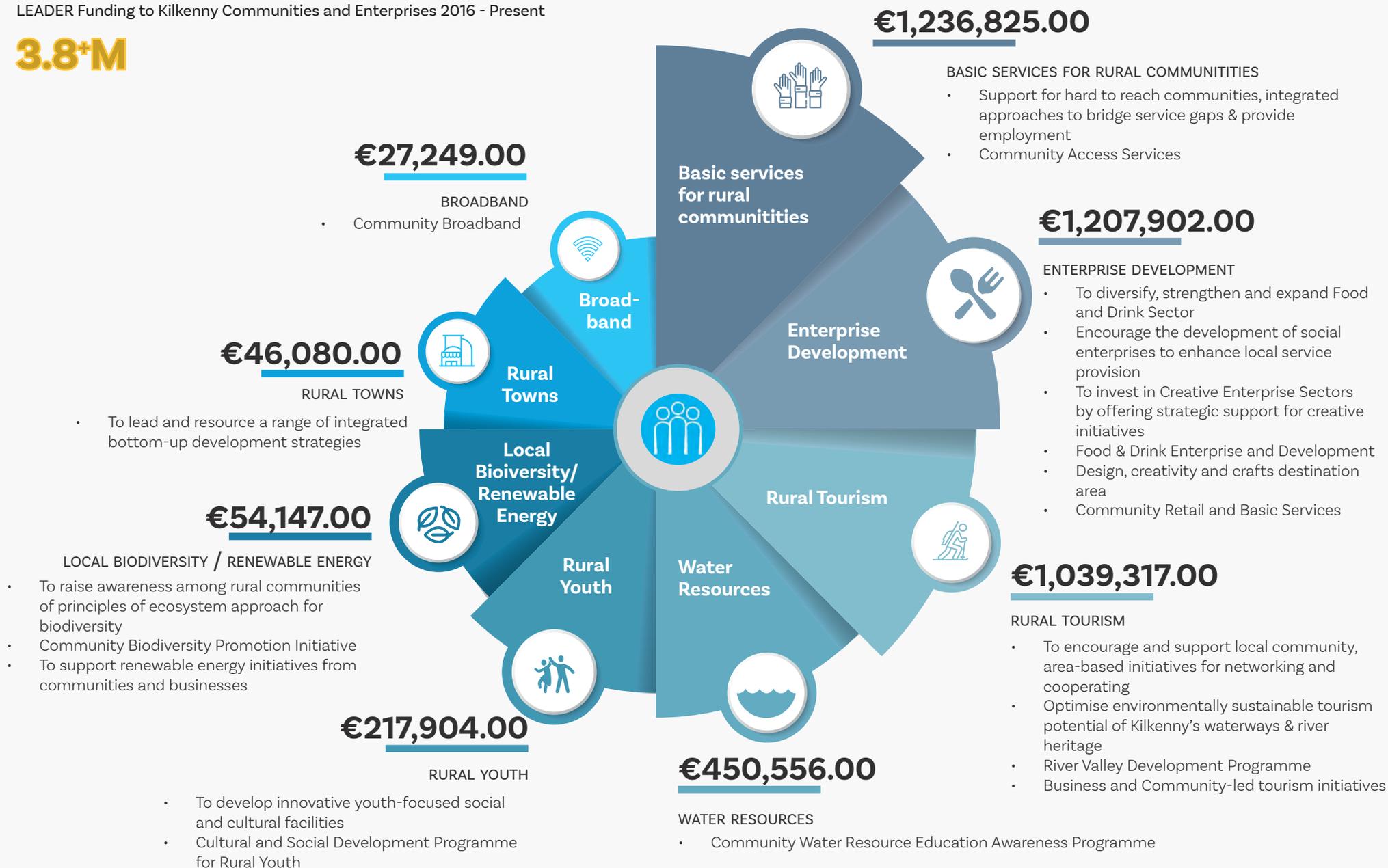
Hannah Carthy
Traveller Community
Health

Also:
Margaret Mary O'Reilly
Traveller Community
Health



LEADER: RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

LEADER Funding to Kilkenny Communities and Enterprises 2016 - Present

3.8+M

New Partnerships: Tomar Trust



KLP has agreed a very significant co-funding partnership with Tomar Trust that will provide funding from Tomar Trust towards strategically important local development projects in Kilkenny. The total value of Tomar's commitment is over €2.25 million covering the current end of this current LEADER programme and the start of the next round of the rural development programme. The twenty identified projects are generally large-scale with a '6-figure budget' and will be delivered between 2020 and 2024. The projects will cover all parts of the county with a specific focus on the smaller towns that can act as hubs of economic and social development for their hinterland. Those communities will include Callan, Graiguenamanagh, Thomastown, Castlecomer, Piltown/Lingaun Valley and Glenmore/Barrow Corridor.

Denis Drennan, KLP's Chairperson stated, "We are delighted to have such a strategically far-sighted and generous partner in Tomar Trust. This initiative is not just very welcome news for KLP's ambitious plans for the future; it is great news for the communities of the county. I'd like to thank Dr Tom Cavanagh, the founder of Tomar, the trustees and the wider Cavanagh family for their faith in KLP and Kilkenny's people."

Tomar Trust was founded by Dr Tom Cavanagh and his late wife Marie (the title Tomar comes from a combination of their names, Tom and Marie) in the 1980s and has supported many projects in Tom's native Cork and also in Waterford and Clare, where he and Maire have connections. Dr Cavanagh has a very progressive attitude towards those who can afford to help their communities. "I think, if you are fortunate enough in this life to be given a few breaks, you have to help wherever you can. If you don't, I think you're failing in your responsibilities. We are all part of the

broader community and we are all there to help when we can." KLP will be discreetly approaching some of Kilkenny's people of means to seek their support for projects in their communities.

Tomar is based in Fermoy in north Cork and the Trust's straightforward statement makes clear that its "geographic bias is Munster", so KLP feels privileged to have secured its support for its work. As KLP's Chairperson jested, "Given the rivalry between Cork and Kilkenny on the hurling field over the years, we really appreciate that a staunch Cork patriot like Tom Cavanagh would agree to support communities that wear the 'black & amber' in opposition- luckily KLP can't support hurling teams, so that removed a lot of potential tension!"

Dr Cavanagh who is also the founder and mover of the behind the hugely successful Irish Business Against Litter League (IBAL) has spoken previously on his keen interest in the future of rural Ireland. "The rural nature of the country is an important part of why we are successful. In the future you will see more people moving away from cities to areas where the quality of life might be better and accommodation less expensive. Where community can be more diverse. It's vital then that we support rural towns and villages and keep that beating heart of Irish society alive." KLP shares that passion and the cooperation initiative is an exciting partnership to prove the potential of communities in Kilkenny.

Pre-development and even physical work has already begun on many of the projects and KLP will be including Tomar and other co-funders in the promotion and publicity that is attached to these projects.

Bringing History Back to Life in the Lingaun Valley

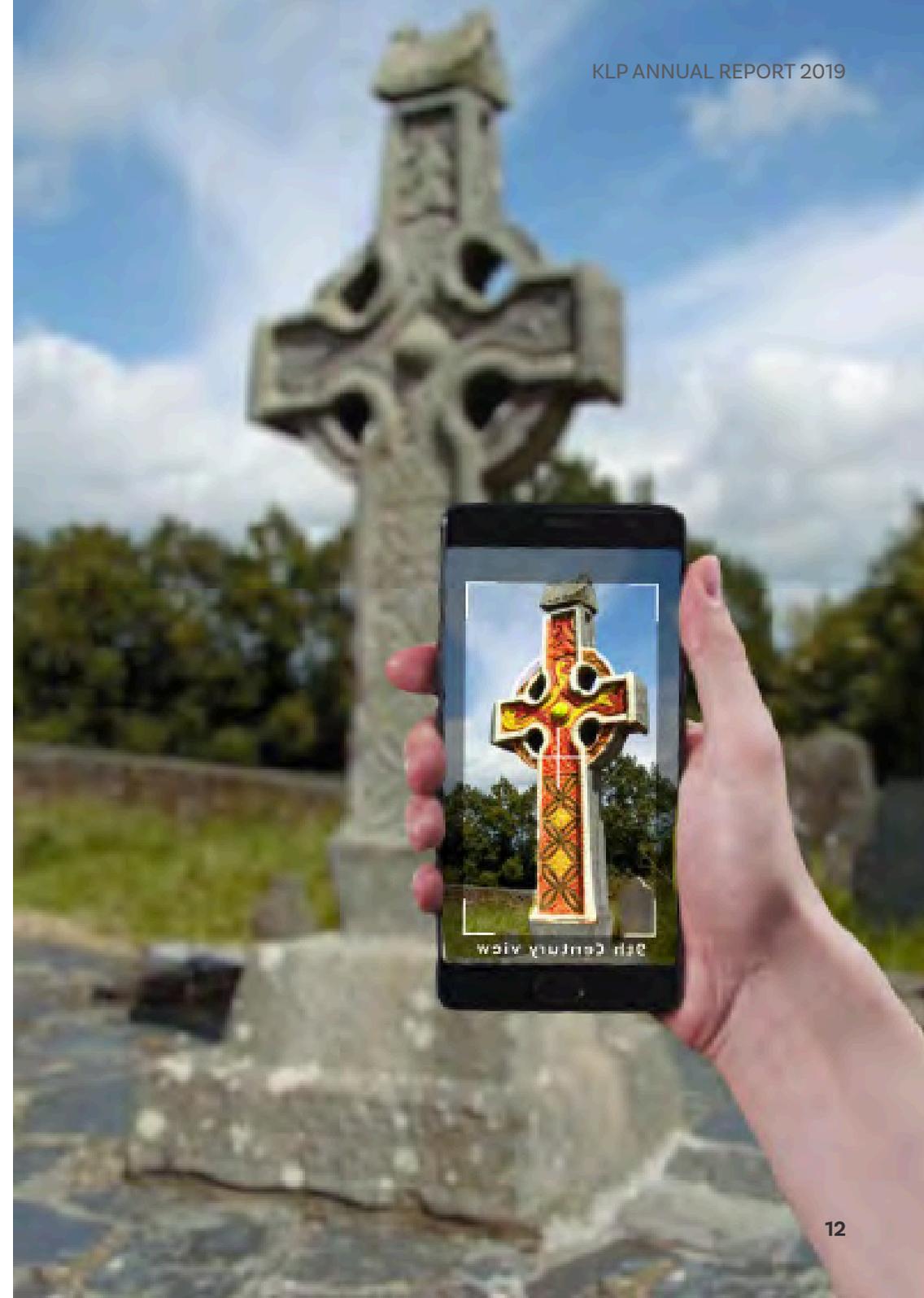
The Lingaun River Valley, which lies on the border between Kilkenny and Tipperary could be described as one of South East's most spiritually historic locations. The region boasts a significant number of high status heritage sites such as the Ahenny, Kilamery and Kilkeiran 9th century high cross complexes and the Neolithic period Knockroe solar-aligned passage tombs. These majestic monuments contribute sacred insight into Irish Middle Age art and have a high potential for rural tourism.

KLP in partnership with the Lingaun Valley Tourism, Kilkenny County Council and the equivalent bodies in Tipperary have long been committed to developing the region in line with the Ireland Ancient East brand destination. Work has already started which aims to improve the region with branding, signage and marketing. In 2019, KLP in Cooperation with Pote territorial Quest Charente- Pays du Cognac France applied for funding to develop, implement and commission a unique visitor experience for the Lingaun River Valley. The cooperation approach between Kilkenny and France will provide significant dual learning ranging from technology to challenging perspectives and outcomes.

Visitors will be able to experience the historic locations as they would have been at the time of their original construction using augmented reality technology accessible through their smartphones. Unlike virtual reality in which a completely artificial environment replaces the virtual one, augmented reality expands the physical world in your direct view with layers of digital information such as sounds, graphics and videos.

Building on the initial feasibility study commissioned by KLP, Telecommunications Software & Systems Group (TSSG) and innovative local media tech company, Glass Eye Productions of Thomastown, the augmented project has now moved to the implementation stage. Information and communications technology research group. TSSG will be developing this visitor experience software, illustrating the sites from its most interesting perspectives for tourists in search of the historic gems Kilkenny has to offer. TSSG's team of historians, designers and software developers have started initial research and development for this 'turn-key' visitor experience with hopes of the final product available later on this year.

Picture: Augmented Reality on High Cross



The “Big Chapel” Production

Callan used theatre as a means to build their community and bring a diverse array of people in the area together. Innovative Callan production team, Trasna Productions applied to KLP for funding to support this project which would envelop the history, heritage, literature and creativity of the town and people.

The project began with workshops, events, podcasts and community gatherings which culminated in the large promenade theatre production “The Big Chapel” in the town during the 2019 Kilkenny Arts Festival.

The production provided a great opportunity to celebrate local creative people, allowing their many hidden talents in singing, acting and dance to emerge. “The Big Chapel” is based on Callan’s past and its historical precedent of community division. The project proved to be an enriching experience for those who took part as well as those in the audience. This theatre experience highlighted the diverse cultural resources that exist in Callan today. While inspiring the essence of true community it also encouraged an understanding of the complexity of humanity when it comes to socialisation and communication.



Picture: Scenes from the “Big Chapel” Production

Plans for a Kilkenny Crisis Cafe

Lifelink Kilkenny have been funded by LEADER to undertake a feasibility study into the potential for a 'Crisis Café' in Kilkenny. The vision is for a community peer-led response to those presenting with a mental health crisis outside of doctors hours.

The Crisis Café would be complimentary to existing services provided by the HSE and other voluntary and community groups. Currently out of hours services for those with mental health issues are almost non-existent in Kilkenny. People in distress or crisis have to go to the Emergency Department of St Lukes which may not be an ideal scenario for patients in such distress. It has been reported that many are left feeling more unwell than before due to the circumstances.

In the UK, a number of community led Crisis Cafés have been developed and this study would explore those models in detail. One

model of particular interest is The 'Safe Haven' café in Aldershot, on the Surrey and Hampshire border which opened in 2014 and operates all year round as a drop in centre for people who need support. Reports indicate that this facility has helped reduce mental health hospital admissions by a third in seven months. In the "Safe Haven" cafe, national health service workers and other third sector partners are on site to provide mental health crisis support which has helped some people avoid the need for NHS care including A&E altogether. While Lifelink are particularly interested in exploring the Aldershot model, a number of other European models of best practice should also be examined.

The study will provide Lifelink with recommendations on the next steps to develop the vision for supporting a community response to mental health and assess the potential of the Aldershot model of a Crisis Café for Kilkenny.



Picture: Planning meeting with Trish Finnegan, Fergus Horgan (KLP), Susan Fahy of TASK

Segway Sights: A Greener way to Travel!

Segway Sights has given tourists and visitors to Kilkenny City a truly unique way to explore Kilkenny City. The tourism company has incorporated Segways as the mode of transport, taking visitors on a fun-filled tour around Kilkenny's historic attractions with stories of ancient medieval times and Irish historical tales.

Segways are two-wheeled, self-balancing, battery-powered electric vehicles that offer an alternative, environmentally way of getting around. The segway's speed, range and manoeuvrability ensures riders have an amazing and unforgettable experience. The segway can easily transform a standard tour into an exhilarating experience by allowing the rider to get up close and personal with sights and points of interest.

Proprietors, Michael Timmons & Evan Kelly identified a gap in the market that represented an opportunity for a new tourist business in Kilkenny. They aimed to capitalise on this opportunity and provide a unique and bespoke tourist service which greatly improved

upon current transport options for tourists. This tourism enterprise brings Kilkenny to the forefront of green transport technology, benefiting the local environment and community. Following an application to KLP, funding was granted for the purchase of ten Segways, one wheelchair friendly associated equipment and marketing.

Segway Sights offer premium tours. Tours include helmets, safety equipment and training on the basics of how to use the segway. Sightseers are guided on fun, historic excursions of Kilkenny City's major attractions: medieval churches, abbeys, castles, jails, gardens, and taverns. They will hear stories of witches, monks and Norman history and all a Segway tour has to offer.

For more information on their services, visit their website: <https://segwaysights.com/>.

Picture: Geared up and ready to tour



Butterfly Valley Glamping the Perfect Retreat!

Butterfly Valley Glamping is a glamorous camping enterprise set up by Mary Devy and based in Thomastown's "Happy Valley". Butterfly Valley Glamping was established in 2017 with three bell tents, kitchen and toilet facilities. Intending to extend the business by offering an alternative range of camping accommodation, Mary approached LEADER for funding to help her company reach full potential. The KLP board awarded funding to construct two timber pods including associate works and modification of the existing bathroom facilities to meet disability access requirements. Their environmentally friendly eco-pods were handcrafted from sustainable materials and furnished with handmade beds and upcycled furniture. Customers now have the option to spend their time in the glamping site's newly renovated vintage caravan.

This upgrade from basic camping allows families and outdoor enthusiasts all the fun of camping in the great outdoors while still enjoying the luxury and comforts of home.

This unique camping experience is in the heart of the Thomastown countryside overlooking the River Nore and woods. It is conveniently located about two kilometres from Thomastown. A converted wooden lodge accommodates a fully equipped kitchen/dining/chill-out area and luxury bathroom facilities. An outdoor BBQ and play area reconnect to the outdoors. At night the campfire area allows stargazing and marshmallow toasting as the sun goes down. Butterfly Valley Glamping has received marvellous reviews, highly recommending it as an ideal breakaway.

Mary has a Masters degree in Tourism and aims to attract families, couples and small groups to the area and link with other businesses that provide rural tourism. Butterfly Valley Glamping is located near Trail Kilkenny's 7km Grennan Loop Walk. This idyllic stroll goes along the river with lovely views of Grennan Castle.

For more information, visit their website: <https://butterflyvalleyglamping.ie/>



Picture: Timber pods at Butterfly Valley Glamping

Beotanics: Leading the way in Niche Crop Production

Award winning, family owned agricultural company, Beotanics is on its way to becoming one of Ireland's leading innovative superfood enterprises. This global Irish company is on a quest to improve human health, discover new ways to feed the planet and enhance biodiversity by developing a range of commercially viable crops with unique stable characteristics. As an Agri-Tech company, it provides biotechnological services to achieve its role in niche plant development.

Patrick and Noirin FitzGerald are the innovators behind Beotanics. Patrick is renowned internationally for his in-depth knowledge and development of plant varieties and has won many international awards for his extended work in horticulture. Noirin was previously an administration officer in the government health services and has worked at FitzGerald Nurseries for the past fifteen years. Under the LEADER funding measure "Enterprise Development", Beotanics made an application to KLP, to create and establish a new brand identity and market that identity effectively.

The project involved the design development of a new company website, company pitch presentation and other company marketing assets.

The company has forged links with local food companies who are interested in the use of natural, minimally processed plant-based alternatives. Beotanics has developed an in-depth knowledge in the development and provision of innovative food ingredients that not only meet the demand for plant-based solutions but have the potential to provide proven health benefits and alternative food ingredient solutions to the food industry both locally and internationally. They specialise in a unique range of crops such as sweet potatoes, yacon, taro and wasabi. The innovative food ingredients that can be extracted from these crops address modern healthy eating concerns from athletes to consumers with various special dietary requirements.

For more information on Beotanics, visit their website at: <https://beotanics.com/>

Picture: Purple sweet potato

The New Kilkenny Food Vision 2020-2025

Kilkenny is bidding to become Ireland's strongest local food economy and food culture hub to increase the amount of local food and beverages on menus and retail shelves in the county. The new vision focuses on growing local food consumption by 30% over the next three to five years through the new "Kilkenny Food Vision 2020-2025: Add 3 Ingredients Strategy".

the publication of "Growing a Local Food Economy - the County Kilkenny Food Strategy 2010-2014" which resulted in the development of the County developing its food landscape and growing its food reputation significantly since its publication. In 2018, Kilkenny was recognised at a national level and named "Foodie Destination of the Year for 2018".

The Food Vision development process involved over seventy local stakeholder inputs, initially led and supported by a partnership of the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) Kilkenny and KLP. It maps the pathway for growth

“*I've yet to meet a wealthy food producer. Everything they make is pumped back into their business.*”

The Kilkenny Food Vision 2020-2025 was officially launched in the Autumn of 2019. Special Guest and celebrity chef Edward Hayden said: "Kilkenny today is a fabulous food destination. We have amazing food producers,

of the local sector in Kilkenny city and county and the surrounding hinterland over the next three to five years.

culinary tours, restaurants, hotels etc all offering a very high standard experience. It's a challenging industry and a challenging time. I've yet to meet a wealthy food producer. Everything they make is pumped back into their business. We need to get a cohort of a few good people together who can put their hands up, shoulders back and chests out to support one another and make this Vision a reality,"

In February 2019, KLP and LEO tendered the creation of a food strategy for the county. Following a tender process, James Burke & Associates (JB&A) were appointed to facilitate the research and creation of a food and beverage strategy for County Kilkenny. This food strategy builds on the previous work carried out in County Kilkenny following

Picture top: Gathered for the launch were celebrity chef, Edward Hayden along with Business Advisor Catherine Hennessy(LEO), Declan Rice(KLP CEO), Canadian-based food expert, President & CEO of Culinary Tourism Alliance, Rebecca MacKenzie and James Burke(James Burke & Associates). Picture bottom: Food stalls on the parade



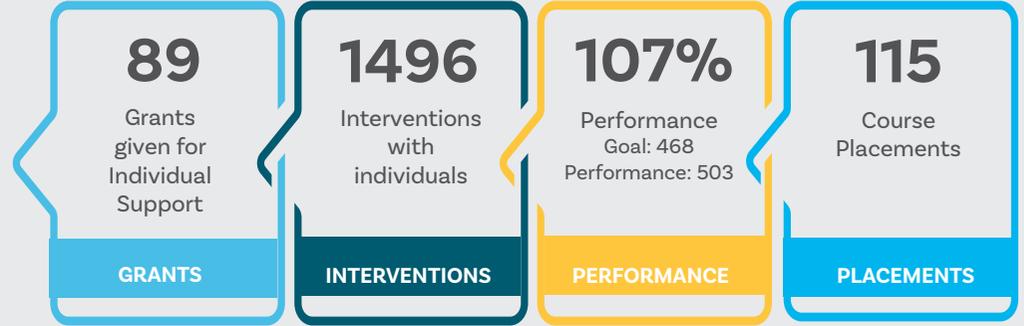
GOAL 1

SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES

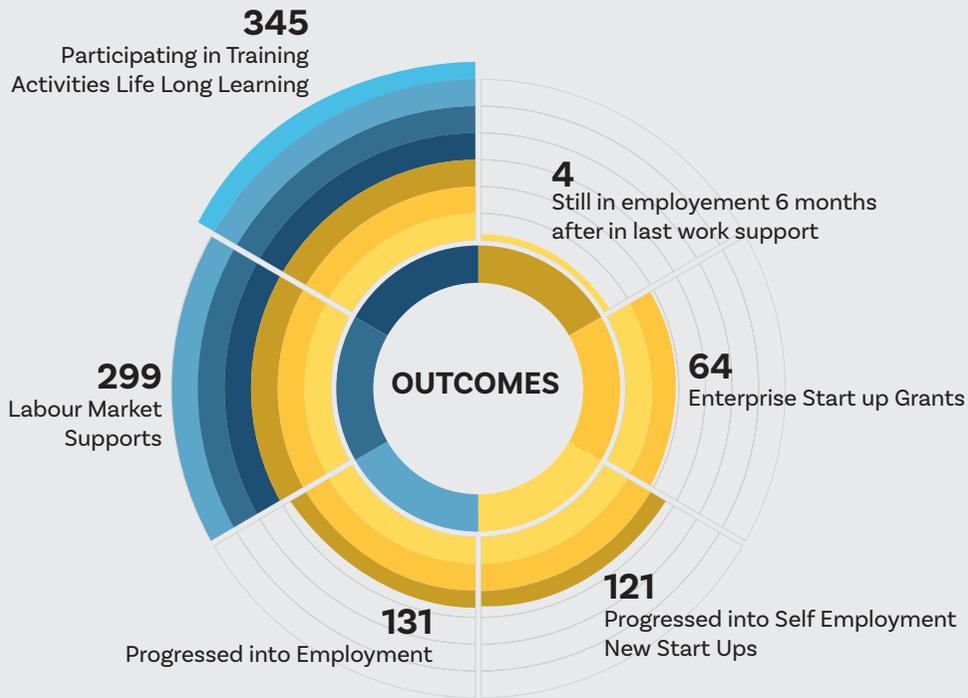


GOAL 2

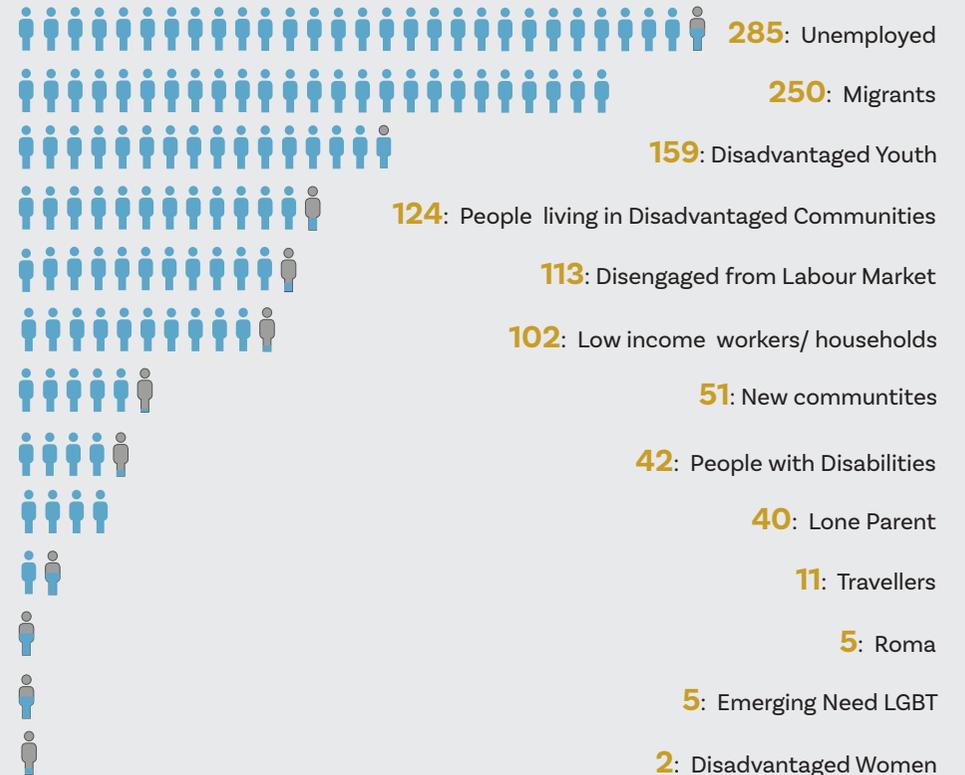
SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS



OUTCOMES OF SICAP SUPPORTS



INDIVIDUALS/GROUPS THAT RECEIVED SUPPORTS FROM KLP SICAP



OVERVIEW

OVERVIEW 2019

The KLP SICAP team had a very positive year in terms of both performance and engagement.

Collaboration in Communities

Several initiatives have promoted collaborations between community groups. Castlecomer, Ferrybank and Graiguenamanagh continue to receive attention through the combined community development and social enterprise whole town approach. Such initiatives include the Festival of Cultures, Festival of Lights, Social Enterprise Training, networking and learning events. Opportunities like this create an open space for community groups to express their respective achievements, challenges and build solidarity among diverse community groups.

Men's Sheds

There are high levels of activity in the Men's Sheds. SICAP noted growth in the numbers of groups and improved levels of organisation in each one. Good levels of funding has resulted in the development of small enterprises and very good exchange across the groups.

Traveller Community Support

The Kilkenny Traveller Community Movement continues to receive high levels of support through SICAP. KLP administers the organisation, provides support to projects and coordinates community development activity.

Migrant Support

KLP has been implementing the Newstart project throughout 2018/19. Funding for this project was obtained from the ESF as part of the Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) to enable the delivery of employment supports to migrants. To date SICAP has engaged with approximately 150 individuals providing English and IT training, pre-employment individual training packages and one to one support towards employment. A Civil Society & Politics course was a successful collaboration between SICAP and Failte Isteach. This course covered topics such as local, national and European government, citizenship and community.

Employment Initiatives

KLP's bespoke Kickstart Programme continued in 2019. Some modules were delivered in conjunction with the Newstart (migrant) work placement programme. This highly successful programme offers short term in-house training and work placement with local employers. The programme is co-funded by State Street.

The Personal Ongoing Development Programme (POD) was delivered four times throughout 2019. The programme addresses overall personal development, health and wellbeing. Thirty seven participants registered for the programme, of which twenty six participants have progressed into employment, education, training or employment schemes.

Communication skills, reaffirmation of personal skills and attributes are key modules of the POD and Kickstart programmes. Individuals who participate in both programmes show a higher rate of learning and progression on their individual journey.

Youth Programmes

Youth Programmes ranged from summer camps, small area youth programmes, school completion programmes and a number of programmes in partnership with youth agencies such as Foroige and Ossory Youth.

Further Education

KLP believes that lifelong learning encompasses all purposeful learning activities. Nearly 50% of individuals who availed of SICAP support received educational advice, with 25% registering into formal educational programmes. The SICAP offering of individual funding supports and assists individuals along the training or education continuum and was very successful in 2019. KLP proposes to continue this in 2020.

LGBT

The LGBT+ community was identified as the emerging needs group for a second year in 2019. This largely international group of people have been active members of lively LGBT+ communities in other locations and have the potential to develop 'a scene' in Kilkenny.



Celebrating Culture!

The 2nd Festival of Cultures (FOC) took place on 30th June drawing an enthusiastic crowd of over 500 locals and visitors. Countries were represented from all over the world making the festival a great success again. The Family friendly fun day gave all the opportunity to sample the best of global cuisine, enjoy drumming and other activities.

The Festival of Cultures is a grass-root community initiative led by KLP under the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme. It consists of a broad participation of community groups. This enables participants from diverse communities and groups to engage, strategize and develop the festival based on inclusion and equality. The festival

has two elements: the organizing and hosting of the actual festival and the preparation of food within a professional environment. The food aspect is funded by the Education & Training Board and prepared by participants from diverse communities and countries.

Based on community feedback and enthusiasm, the vision is to host FOC annually and further develop social enterprises such as a Catering Co-operative based on the cooperation of the festivals food providers.

FOC is a gradual process of developing integration and overcoming social challenges.



Castlecomer: Street Food Festival

In 2019, Castlecomer launched its first-ever Midsummer and Autumn Street Food Festivals. The festivals which took place in the lovely Castlecomer estate yard proved to be a major success bringing locals and visitors to the area together to celebrate good food and community spirit.

The festivals featured a fabulously diverse range of food and drink from some of Kilkenny's finest local and artisan producers: The Good Farm Free Range Pork, Breaghagh Artisan Meats Fintan White's Sheep Shack, Olivia's Raw Treats, Costellos Brew Co., Highbank Orchards, Goatsbridge Trout Farm and The Redwood Café. The atmosphere

in the Castlecomer Estate Yard comes alive as locals and visitors gather and the aroma from the stalls fill the yard. During the Autumn Festival, the impressive Castlecomer Male Choir sang a beautiful selection of songs. Robert Grace from Graiguenamanagh entertained the crowd with a selection of his own songs and covers from Leonard Cohen and George Ezra. A bonfire later in the evening added to the atmosphere of the festival.

Due to the success of the Street Food Festival, KLP is planning another year of street food festivals for 2020, comprising of local food and craft stalls, live music and a traditional bonfire set in the heart of the estate yard.





Youth Outreach

Funding from SICAP assisted projects across all the youth activities/programmes engaging with approximately six hundred and eighty youth in Kilkenny.

KLP SICAP development officers meet new residents of the Aislinn Centre, Ballyragget (Adolescent Residential Addiction Treatment Centre) every 6 weeks to discuss their progression and link them in with SICAP equivalent support in their area once leaving the centre. The What's Next programme in Castlecomer Community School continues to be a success with development officers meeting all Leaving Cert Applied students to plan for progression options other than third level once they leave school. The school also refers other students who are at risk of leaving school early or those with no planned progression route.

The KLP SICAP team reached out to TUSLA to address referrals and links between young people who are/have been in foster or residential care. KLP

now sit on the Aftercare Steering Group and have links to La Nua residential team in Kilkenny city to enable them to meet the young people and plan their future prior to them leaving care.

A tender for SICAP Youth programmes was put out in January 2019 for the delivery of educational and developmental supports to children and young people. The tender closed on Friday, 1st March. As in previous years, the tender received a great response from various agencies & groups across the county. Nearly all applicants received some level of support from SICAP.

KLP and the Kilkenny & Carlow Education and Training Board delivered a very successful ten week Outdoors Pursuits, Hospitality & Introduction to the Workplace programme at the Outdoor Hub Graiguenamanagh. The programme proved to be an important learning and life choice event for the group of young people.

Testimonial

Thank you Alison and Moira so much for agreeing to be part of our team yesterday, the feedback was really positive, with many identifying your presentation as one of the highlights of the day and /or one of their two things to try and incorporate into their practice. We could not do these days if we didn't have people like yourselves to come forward and give it a go. Clearly, it went very well for you and people loved it. Thanks again and look forward to the next one!

R. Byrd (Principal Social Worker) TUSLA

Ferrybank: Turning on the Lights

Ferrybank’s “Switching on the Christmas Lights” annual event attracted a crowd of over six hundred locals in 2019 as they gathered to celebrate the Christmas spirit!

The “Switching on the Ferrybank Christmas Lights” event was first initiated by the Ferrybank Community Development Residents Group (FCDRG) in 2016. Under the SICAP programme, KLP supports FCDRG and the festival with funding to help enhance the event and encourage attendance from groups of all ages and ethnic backgrounds through a mutual love of Christmas.

In true community spirit, locals came together to make the event a great and memorable experience for everyone. Ferrybank Christian Community Church volunteers provided crafting and hosted a colouring competition for the children. Local crafters had the opportunity to display and sell their crafts. The hot coffee and doughnut stand proved very popular with parents while they waited for Santa. St Mary’s boys schools provided tables to facilitate the stands. Councillor Jim Griffin attended the event to award prizes as the deputy Mayor of Waterford for the evening. The community Garda delivered Santa

safely to the event. VIP guest Peter Glendon from the Brothers of Charity was given the very important task of switching on the lights for the third year in a row! D.J. William from the Brothers of Charity provided the music on the day and the children from Ferrybank sang Christmas Carols to entertain the crowd.

KLP as part of their contribution to this event supplied crafting materials, competition prizes, selection boxes, refreshments, P.A system and brand new outfits for Santa and Mrs Elf.

“ People attend for the love of their children and to celebrate the Magic of Christmas. ”

The Ferrybank Festival of Lights has gone from strength to strength with a dedicated and enthusiastic community as the key driver to its success.

KLP Development Officer Therese Curran stated, “It is an event that everyone is made feel welcome, included regardless of age, religion and cultural background. People attend for the love of their children and to celebrate the Magic of Christmas. We look forward to more events like this that unite communities and brings people together”

Pictures:
 1. Waiting for Santa in the Ferrybank Library
 2. Santa and Mrs Elf
 3. Santa Arrives!



Castlecomer: It's Who You Are!

In November 2019, Castlecomer launched the Castlecomer Historical projects in the apt setting of the Avalon House Hotel. The hotel itself is a building steeped in history, constructed in the late 17th Century by the Garroway Family and later the offices of the Estate and Collieries companies.

This event was funded by the Town and Village Renewal Scheme operated by KLP and the Local Enterprise Office. Three projects were developed for the launch; historical information boards, heritage plaques and historical souvenir packs.

Information boards were a collaboration between six historians and enthusiasts Errol Delaney, Maire Downey, Seamus Walsh, Christy Ryan, Margaret O'Neill and Margaret McGrath. The boards are beautifully designed and describe events, buildings and the characters that have shaped the town. They were installed in four locations in the town and have been very well received by the community and visitors. The plaques are produced in etched zinc and show a sketch by artist Graham Carew including information about the relevant building. Placing a plaque on a building doesn't just inform the passer-by of the history of the building, it tells that this building and its heritage is valued and cared for.

The historical Souvenir packs published locally by Pack Publishing are a lovely gift to send to friends and family abroad or take home as a souvenir. Each contains nuggets

of information, post cards and a map, all beautifully designed. Available to buy at a number of local outlets.

Maire Downey, local historian spoke eloquently about the 1798 rebellion in Castlecomer and how the Fassadinin Historical Society have commemorated the event with the 1798 monument. The centre stone of the monument is inscribed with the poem Requiem for the Croppies by Seamus Heaney (by kind permission). Maire read this beautiful and poignant poem and received a well justified round of applause. On behalf of the community she thanked KLP for their involvement and support of the projects. Seamus Walsh (former miner and author of a number of books and poems) gave a powerful recount of the 100s of years of mining in Castlecomer. Errol Delaney spoke about a painting that has been donated to the community by the Wandesforde family. Declan Rice, (KLP CEO) concluded the speeches with a very uplifting comment on community projects and Leader's support for Castlecomer now and into the future.

The launch was a lovely recognition of the immense history of Castlecomer and a testament to the value the community places on its history.

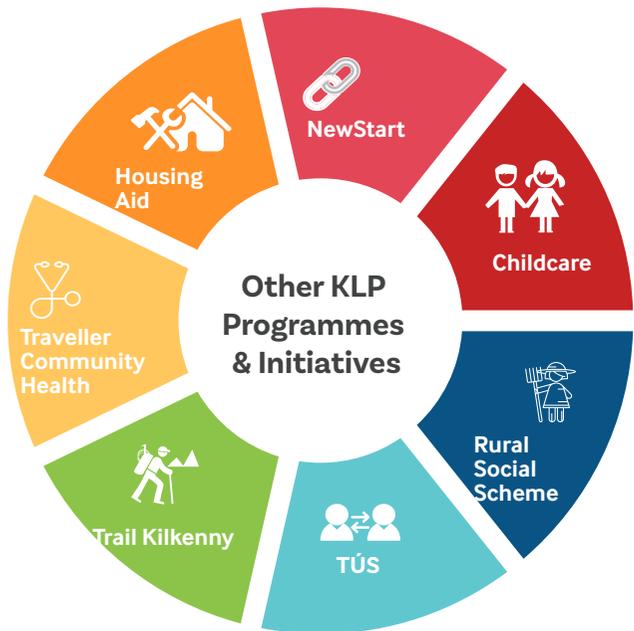
Pictures

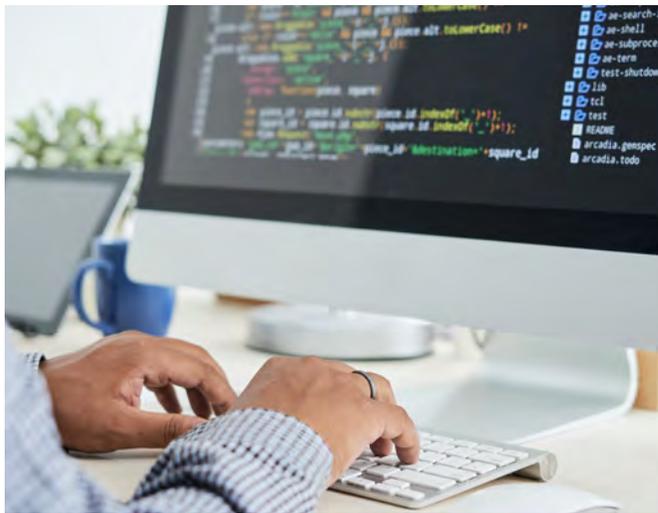
1. Left to right: Mags Morrissey (KLP), Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick, Kathy Purcell and Seamus Walsh
2. Maire Downey (local historian)



Other Programmes and Initiatives 2019

KLP administers a number of supporting programmes to improve the quality of life for the people and businesses of County Kilkenny. Supports for the Traveller Community continue with the Traveller Health Programme. An exciting new opportunity has become available for a member of the Travelling Community to work with the Traveller Health Project as the programme recruits its first Traveller Community Wellbeing Awareness Worker. The overall aim of this post is to promote positive mental health within the whole Traveller population thus building capacity and reducing stigma. This will in turn support Travellers to talk about Mental Health and reach out for supports when required. The Housing Aid programme was supervised by KLP in 2019, focusing on home repairs, maintenance and adaptation improvement to the homes of eligible clients. The Kilkenny Newstart program is the 1st initiative KLP implemented which specifically targets migrants for employment/ further training and which attempts to equip them with the skills necessary to compete in the jobs market (including improved English language). The Rural Social Scheme(RSS) continues to provide support to low income Kilkenny farmers addressing a number of issues that affect rural farmers today including social exclusion. These programmes are vital links which empower local communities and provide supports to disadvantaged individuals and groups in the County.





TÚS

TÚS (which means “beginning”) is a Community Work Placement Programme which began in 2011. The programme is managed by local development companies such as KLP in conjunction with the Department of Social Protection. Its purpose is to help long-term unemployed people to get back into the workforce by providing twelve months work experience while also contributing certain services and training which is of benefit to many participants.

The DEASP allocates participants on a randomised basis to KLP and eligible job seekers can also self-refer. The emphasis has been on high-quality placements with skill-sets and attitudes being closely matched with placement roles. A number of participants have already been offered full-time employment by their host organisations on completion of their Tús placement. Other candidates have secured employment independently or moved on to specific education programmes. The programme is supervised by KLP through its four Team Leaders: Mike Redmond, Liam Mooney, Seamus Davis and David Coughlan. There are one hundred participants currently on placement.

All work carried out under the TÚS programme must benefit the community. Only community and voluntary organisations, charities and sporting

bodies are eligible to apply to KLP to be included on its list of placement providers. Applications are judged in the context of potential benefit to communities and participants. A broad range of project types may be eligible for TÚS including energy conservation, childcare, retail, research, tourism, IT support, social care, caretaking, renovation of community, recreation and sporting facilities; community administration, coaching for sporting activities and work in support of cultural and heritage.

Nine hundred and forty people have acquired placements on the TÚS programme since 2011. Of that number, three hundred and nine participants have been supported into employment and one hundred and twenty one participants have gone into full /part-time education. One hundred and seventy one participants were directly supported on to another CE Scheme after their placement on the Tús programme and three hundred and thirty nine returned to Social Welfare. All participants received some element of training in 2019 depending on their individual needs. This training included health & safety, administration, IT support, childcare, retail, grounds maintenance & driving lessons.

TÚS has an ongoing collaboration with SICAP to provide the best supports to all participants.

Supporting the Farming Community

The Rural Social Scheme (RSS) showcases the talents of farmers who provide support to their local communities. This scheme is a key initiative of KLP and the Department of Social Welfare to support lower income Kilkenny farmers.

While on this scheme, farmers or close members of their families contribute 19.5 hours of part-time work to their community in return for an income supplement. The maximum time limit on the scheme is six years, assuming eligibility. Contracts are renewed annually. The RSS has led to the creation and maintenance of a multitude of projects in the fifteen years of its existence. These projects are situated in communities all over the county. The development of the popular Trail Kilkenny walking routes is one example of the valuable work carried out by members of this scheme.

Benefits of the scheme extend far beyond extra income. Participants gain work experience, learn new skills, network and gain an overall boost in self-confidence. Some have described the effects of the scheme as a “new lease of life”. Whether it’s the opportunity to meet new people or the financial boost, every participant has his / her own story to share about the ways the RSS has improved their lives. To be eligible

to participate, applicants must be in receipt of a social welfare payment such as Farm Assist, Jobseeker Allowance, Widow(er) pension or Disability Allowance.

RSS Coordinator Seoirse Butler added, “The participants on the RSS have benefited while on the scheme through social interaction, financial benefit and the connection within the community where they work. The feeling of accomplishment that being part of the team had brought to them while being involved in community projects and witnessing the benefits to both participants and communities.”

Kilkenny currently has eighteen participants and recruitment is ongoing. From office administration and art tutoring to grounds maintenance, the work carried out is varied to support the skills of the participant with the needs of the community. Trail Kilkenny has a dedicated team of RSS participants working on the development and maintenance of walking routes throughout the county. The team tackles the day-to-day challenges of maintaining and creating walking trails for outdoor enthusiasts, walkers and hikers.



Pictures:

1. Trail Maintenance 2. Art Tutoring 3. Community Gardening

Traveller Community: Tackling Education and Unemployment

The Kilkenny Traveller Community Movement and KLP commissioned a report to examine the factors that contribute to poor educational attainment and high levels of unemployment in young Travellers and across the entire Travelling community in County Kilkenny. Research was funded by the Irish Human Rights & Equality Commission & SICAP. .

The material gathered in this report is limited to the Kilkenny region only from a combination of consultations and interviews with the Kilkenny traveller community. This process involved indepth consultations with a cohort of twenty young Travellers, schools, education and training providers and the providers of employment-based services. It is anticipated that by identifying the factors that contribute to the challenges faced by young trainers in their learning that new responses/pilot programmes could be designed to support the management of these barriers.

The report highlights a range of issues which are preventing members of the Traveller community from progressing in the jobs market

- Early school leaving among travellers in County Kilkenny continues,
- There is anecdotal evidence that low expectations for Travellers in schools are leading to poor attainment levels in both primary and post primary education.
- There is continuing poor literacy levels in the two housing schemes in Kilkenny which is unchanged despite supports in place.
- At post primary level the Travelling community

in Kilkenny tends to be located in one particular school. It is not clear whether this school has the resources required to deal with the issues that this brings.

The report makes a number of recommendations to tackle these issues.

The Kilkenny Traveller Community Movement (KTCM) also identified that there was a deficit in its capacity to represent and lobby for an improvement in the lives of the Traveller Community in Kilkenny. With this in mind KTCM with the support of KLP successfully applied to the Community Foundation for an Ireland Traveller Leadership Grant.

This project reviewed the activities and perception of the KTCM as it currently operates. This involved engaging a consultant to travel to different Traveller communities to get their voice on how they would like to KTCM to work and what issues they were concerned about. A five day leadership training program that targeted new leaders was implemented.

They also introduced a three year strategic plan for the KTCM which outlines clear aims, objectives and activities identified by the members. This is a straightforward comprehensive plan listing actions which need to be achieved to alleviate issues affecting the Traveller community in Kilkenny.

We feel this is a good start towards implementing a successful strategy for the improvement of Traveller lives in Kilkenny.

Get Outdoors with Trail Kilkenny!

The Rural Recreation Office programme is funded through the Department of Rural & Community Development (DRCD). KLP employs a Rural Recreation Officer (RRO), who works with our partners in Kilkenny Sports and Recreation Partnership, Kilkenny Tourism and Kilkenny County Council. Kilkenny RRO, Harry Everard supports the continuing management of the walking, cycling and other leisure trails under the Trail Kilkenny company. He administers the Walks Scheme payments and landowner relationship and liaises with trail stakeholders in Kilkenny. The RRO is assisted in the actual development and maintenance by a dedicated team of five Rural Social Scheme participants.

Trail Kilkenny received funding through the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme for the initial signage and waymarking of a trail that links together a number of the sacred and heritage sites in the Lingaun Valley on the Kilkenny/Tipperary border. The idyllic, tranquil surroundings is a microcosm of Fáilte Ireland's Ancient East that extends from Slievenamon's slopes right into Carrick-on-Suir forming the county border. Key heritage resources such as the Ahenny and Kilkieran High Crosses, Knockroe passage tomb, Bessborough House (Kildalton College), and Ormonde Castle lie within the region. The primary objective of this project is to

develop and establish a strong and unified brand identity for Lingaun Valley. To stand alone as a distinctive and unique tourism product. This project seeks to help to create an environment where stories are shared and visitor sites are identified, forming a rich resource that will become an invaluable tourism and promotional asset for the region.

Trail Kilkenny funded the development of the Woodstock Loop walks and is delighted to include it as part of the trails walking suite. There are two Loops: The Woodstock Loop 5Km and the shorter Ladies Loop 3km. The trails encourage walkers to progress along the route reading local stories attached to the waymarkers, lecterns and benches. There are interactive plates attached to the waymarkers where users can take rubbings of local flora and fauna.

The Rural Recreation officer also supports recent developments to the Grennan Loop Walk. This 7kms community trail was originally developed by Thomastown Tidy Towns. The route varies from footpath to riverside, woodland and quiet country road across the River Nore. It takes walkers past many archaeological and historic features such as the 13th century Anglo-Norman Grennan Castle before looping back into the town.



Picture:

Lingaun Valley Knockroe Passage Tomb



Smart Villages Look to the Future Programme

KLP will be organising a series of events later in 2020 for all interested community groups and small businesses in the county. The aim is to introduce them to some of the developments on big themes that will be important to their future.

what needs to happen to optimise the potential.

5. “Social Inclusion”: how to involve the community in its work, is a fifth cross cutting horizontal themes in the overall programme.

The Smart Villages “Look to the Future” programme will comprise of up to eight events across five broad themes:

1. “Food for the Soul”: How Culture, Heritage & Arts can be both an aid to community development and in turn be aided by the process.
2. “Nature & Nurture”: The place of Biodiversity & the Environment in community planning.
3. “Our Town”: The sustainable future of Rural Towns and Villages.
4. “Access All Areas”: the role and future of Transport, Energy & Broadband in improving access to services and

The Smart Village concept emerged from the EU’s efforts to ensure that rural areas get the same focus in terms of the implementation of innovation as do cities and large towns. It will likely be very influential on both the EU and Irish government’s plans for local development in the next five years.

The events are scheduled to commence later this year in venues around the county and KLP hopes to make them both stimulating and entertaining for participants. We would be delighted to see you at some or all of them.



