

# Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin

**Smart Villages  
Action Plan Manual:**

**Naul**



SmartVillages

Prepared by  
KPMG Future Analytics on behalf of Fingal LEADER Partnership

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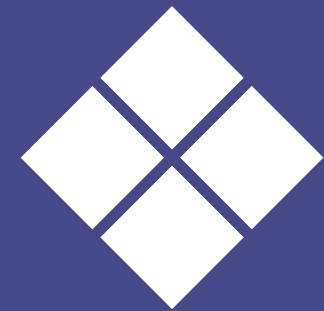
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# Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin

## Introduction

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# Introduction

The “*Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin*” is a pilot initiative led by Fingal LEADER Partnership in association with [KPMG Future Analytics](#). The project addresses the unique challenges facing Ireland’s rural regions today. With support under the Rural Development (LEADER) Programme 2014-2020, this programme aims to further strengthen the capacity of local communities to unlock innovative new solutions for the sustainable growth and development of rural areas across Dublin.

**The term ‘Smart Villages’ broadly refers to rural communities that seek to build on and enhance existing strengths and assets through creative solutions and collaborative working; embracing innovation to create attractive and sustainable places in which to live and work.**

The ultimate aim of the Smart Villages Training Programme is to assist local communities across rural Dublin in developing the knowledge and skills needed to produce local Smart Village Action Plans – which will outline a community vision for the future sustainable development of their local area. This pilot project has utilised 6 primary case study areas (which purposely vary in scale and population) to illustrate the application of the smart village approach in a particular spatial context (please see list overleaf).

However, despite the use of case studies, the training and learnings of the programme are designed to be applicable for communities across rural Dublin.

An effective Smart Villages Action Plan should ultimately lay the foundation for local communities to act on self-identified challenges or opportunities – through signposting and capacity building. Within the Irish context, these Plans can provide a clear roadmap to inform community decision making and funding pursuits.

This Smart Village Training Programme should assist communities in developing a more thorough understanding of the dynamics of the rural environment in which they live (inclusive of key demographic, economic and societal trends) and enable them to build their own vision for its future development.

**This document represents a manual for the development of a Smart Villages Action Plan – based on the core learnings of the Programme as a whole. A separate manual has been prepared for each of the case study areas. Each manual contains a step-by-step guide to preparing a Smart Village Action Plan – inclusive of a number of core chapters which can be included in a finalised Action Plan.**

# Case Study Approach

There are two important considerations when selecting appropriate Smart Village case studies in the Dublin context.

1. Firstly, it is recognised that the definition of a “village” varies greatly across Europe. Indeed, what constitutes a town within the Irish context could be construed as a village in other European settings.

2. Rural Dublin is not homogenous. The characteristics of its towns and villages vary greatly due to the relative proximity of the capital city, Dublin (though all settlements are under high urban influence).

In order to reflect these contextual variances it is proposed to examine three settlement typologies to explore the concept of ‘smart villages’ in practice. These are as follows:

- **Satellite town:** A satellite town is self-contained but is adjacent to a principal city (in this case, Dublin). This adjacency creates demand for further expansion of the existing settlement and the town is largely dependent on the city for employment and major services.
- **Independent town:** An independent town is self-contained with a range of local services which serve its surrounding (generally more rural) area.
- **Village:** A village is a small, rural settlement with a limited offering of local services. Villages are typically highly dependent on larger towns or cities in the wider region for employment and other key services.

As illustrated in the table below, the selected towns and villages are of widely varying scale. Please refer to Appendix 2 for a visual map of the case study areas.

County	Case Study
Fingal	• Balbriggan
	• Lusk
	• Combination of 4 small villages – Oldtown, Naul, Garristown, and Ballyboughal
South Dublin	• Rathcoole
	• Saggart
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown	• Glencullen

# Creating a Smart Village Action Plan:

## A Five Step Process

As noted previously, this document represents a manual for the development of a Smart Villages Action Plan. These guidelines have been developed in order to outline a clear and straightforward process to create an actionable plan that addresses the specific needs of the local community.

The guidelines comprise of **five key steps**, spanning baseline analysis and project inception through to the development and phasing of specific actions. These steps are further detailed overleaf.

**However, it is noted that, by definition, a Smart Village Action Plan is context-specific.** It is informed and led by the local community in order to address key opportunities and issues for the sustainable development of a defined town or village. Each community will have their own strengths, resources and priorities for action. As such, this document does not seek to be prescriptive. Rather, it provides general guidelines that can be used by communities to help structure subsequent local organisation and action.



**1. Map**



**2. Engage**



**3. Identify**



**4. Target**



**5. Roadmap**

# Steps to a Smart Village Plan

The five-step process outlined below has been developed to provide a clear and ordered approach to the development of a Smart Village Action Plan. It aims to provide a coherent, logical throughline from project inspection to implementation.



# Report Overview

This manual is broadly structured around the five key steps towards developing a Smart Village Action Plan, as follows:



## 1. Map

The policy review provided in this manual can be used by communities to inform the development of a smart village plan, as well as related funding applications. The socio-economic regional and local profiles provide insight into the development trajectory of rural Dublin and can be used as a baseline for comparison in the future



## 2. Engage

The public survey findings provide an initial indication of community concerns and priorities. Correspondingly, the workshop notes provide further insights into the sentiment of the local community. These results can be compared to the regional/local profiles to identify alignment/divergence of key trends.



## 3. Identify

The indicative thematic priority areas outlined in this report are based on community feedback gathered throughout the programme. These can help inform the initial consideration and development of a smart village plan. However, the final objectives pursued under a plan must be tailored to the local context and community priorities.



## 4. Target

The indicative, sample actions outlined in this report have been developed to respond to the thematic priorities and opportunities identified by the participating communities. They may be brought forward, dropped, or used to inspire and develop additional actions for inclusion in a Smart Village Plan. The final set of actions established for a Smart Village Plan should be context-specific and address the needs and opportunities of the community in question.



## 5. Roadmap

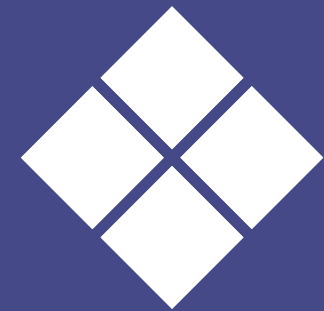
The approach to project prioritisation and phasing outlined in this report can help inform the development of a realistic and actionable roadmap for the implementation of a Smart Village Plan. A flexible approach to phasing and delivery should be adopted. Ultimately, the roadmap for delivery will reflect local priorities and resourcing.



# Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin

## What is a Smart Village?

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# What is a Smart Village?

Smart Villages is a relatively new policy concept in Europe – with its current focus stemming from the EU Action on Smart Villages, which was published in 2017 (see overleaf).

The definition of a ‘smart village’ formalised by the EC is deliberately broad and inclusive. This is to reflect the fact that, though many rural areas share common characteristics, their challenges and needs are diverse and context-specific. The concept of smart villages is not prescriptive and does not condone a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach. Rather, it is broad enough to be applied and tailored to meet the specific needs and challenges of different rural areas.

**Smart villages are rural communities that build on and enhance existing strengths and assets through creative solutions, embracing innovation to strengthen the economic, social and environmental resilience of rural communities.** A smart village approach will see individuals and community groups come together to overcome local challenges by exploring new ways of doing things and implementing practical and tangible solutions.

Both the embracing of new technologies and the exploration of low-tech social engagement and innovation are equally paramount to the creation of a Smart Village. Community participation and engagement is paramount to inform and underpin smart village projects.

## The following key features are identified as integral to the Smart Village concept:

- The participation of rural communities in informing and delivering new solutions.
- The implementation of new technologies and digital services to address the needs of rural communities.
- Strengthening the economic, social and environmental resilience of rural communities.



# EU Action for Smart Villages

The concept of 'Smart Villages' is a European initiative to support sustainable rural development. Formalised by the European Commission in 2017 with the launch of the '[EU Action for Smart Villages](#)'. The initiative seeks to support the use of digital technology and social innovation in order to unlock new opportunities for community development in rural areas.

**The delivery of Smart Village projects in Europe is supported under LEADER, the EU's programme for community-led rural development. Co-funded under the European Common Agricultural Policy, LEADER seeks to support community-led projects that contribute to development and economic activity for rural areas.**

The current indicative allocation for the LEADER programme in Ireland is €180 million for the period 2023-2027. The Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) are responsible for the overall implementation of the LEADER programme in Ireland, with funding administered through Local Action Groups/Local Development Companies.

According to the '[Guidance on LEADER Local Development Strategy](#)' published by DRCD, smart village projects are to be integrated and delivered under LEADER.

*"Smart Villages are communities in rural areas that use innovative solutions to improve their resilience, building on local strengths and opportunities. They rely on a participatory approach to develop and implement their strategy to improve their economic, social and/or environmental conditions, in particular by mobilising solutions offered by digital technologies. Smart Villages benefit from cooperation and alliances with other communities and actors in rural and urban areas. The initiation and the implementation of Smart Village strategies may build on existing initiatives and can be funded by a variety of public and private sources."*

*([European Network for Rural Development, 2017](#))*



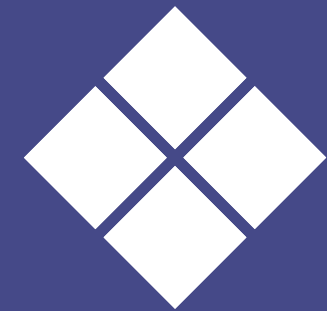
*"There will also be a requirement for the **Smart Villages concept**, climate change mitigation and adaptation and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be overarching elements of LEADER LDS interventions."*

*([Guidance on LEADER Local Development Strategy, 2023](#))*

# Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin

## Smart Village Action Plans: *A Five Step Process*

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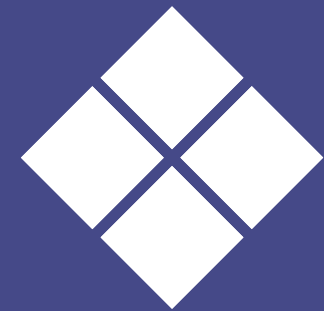


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## Step 1: Map

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# Step 1: MAP

Step 1 of the process aims to develop an initial evidence-base to inform the subsequent development of the Smart Village Action Plan. It involves developing an initial understanding of your community, and the assets and resources available that can ultimately support action. This section of the Manual contains two core components:

1. A **Review of relevant policy** at the national, regional and local level.



This stage should also account for the wider strategic policy context that informs and guides development in Ireland. This presents an opportunity for communities to identify policies and objectives that align with their own aspirations and use these as a springboard for further action.

2. A **Socio-economic profile** of the county/local area.

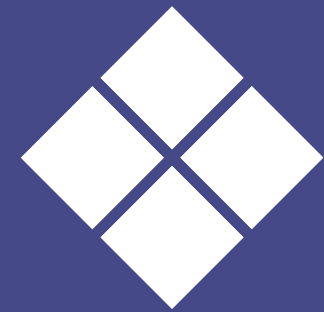


In building this evidence base, Census data\* from the Central Statistics Office, available at <https://www.cso.ie/en/>, can be used to develop a socio-economic profile of the community.

# Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin

## Step 1: Map *Policy Context*

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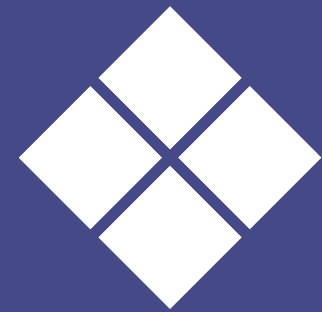


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# Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin

## *Policy Context: National Level*

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# Step 1: MAP

## Policy Context

It is acknowledged that rural development policy across Europe is rapidly evolving in response to a suite of societal shifts in recent years. The Covid-19 pandemic had devastating impacts, creating new global challenges as well as sharpening pre-existing ones. It has also seen a rapid and unprecedented shift in working patterns across much of the world. The rise of mass remote working has led to a greater reliance on technology as offices (as well as schools and universities) moved largely online. While the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent public health measures has acted as a headwind to development, it proves to be an opportunity to accelerate a healthy transition to becoming a more sustainable, smart and resilient county.

Technological change, global consumer trends, climate change, and the implications of the Covid-19 pandemic thus necessitate new and innovative approaches to town and village centre development. While some of these trends could be perceived as potential threats to smaller urban centres, many of these changes also present important opportunities.

In order to adequately chart and guide the future development trajectory of rural Dublin, it is important to first understand the broader policy context through which Smart Village actions or initiatives can be shaped and supported. As part of this project, a detailed review of the national, regional and local policy context was undertaken. This section provides a summary overview of relevant policies in this regard.





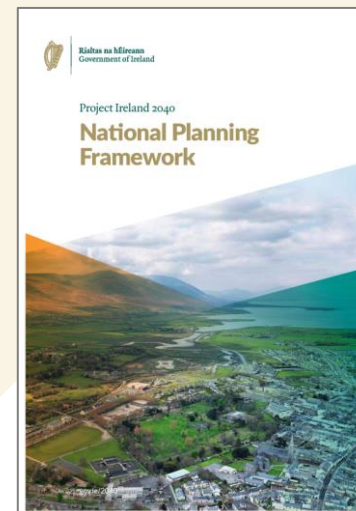
# National Planning Framework

The National Planning Framework (NPF) is a high-level strategy that shapes planning policy and spatial development to the year 2040. It establishes a strategic direction of travel which more detailed planning documents at the local level must follow.

The NPF establishes ten National Strategic Outcomes for Ireland’s development over the next two decades. A Smart Village Plan represents the opportunity to align with and deliver several such outcomes at the local level, including strengthened rural economies, enterprise and innovation, enhanced amenity and heritage climate resilience.

The NPF sets out several National Policy Objectives (NPOs) that emphasise the social and economic development of rural communities.

- **NPO 21:** Enhance the competitiveness of rural areas by supporting innovation in rural economic development and enterprise through the diversification of the rural economy into new sectors and services, including ICT-based industries and those addressing climate change and sustainability.
- **NPO 28:** Plan for a more diverse and socially inclusive society that targets equality of opportunity and a better quality of life for all citizens, through improved integration and greater accessibility in the delivery of sustainable communities and the provision of associated services.



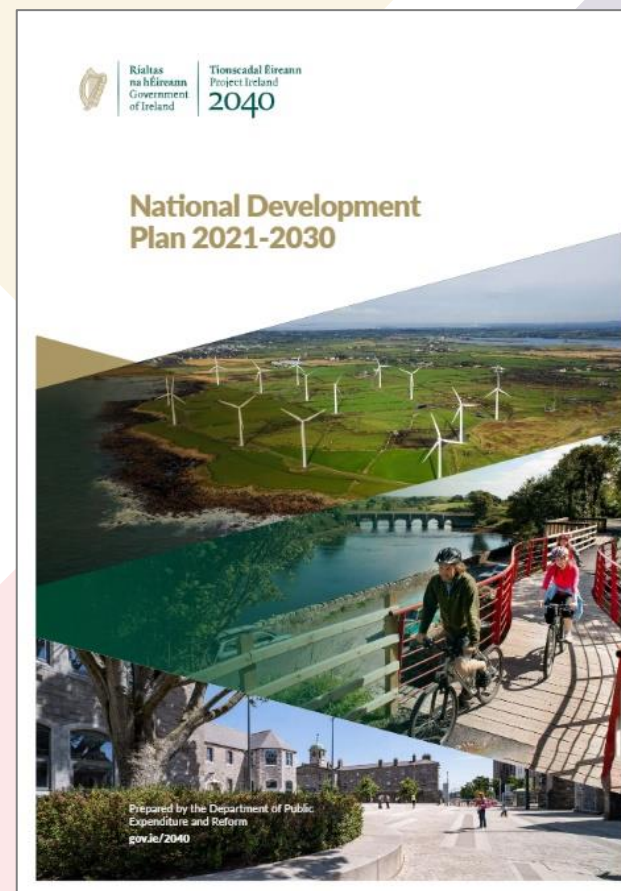


# National Development Plan 2021-2030

The National Development Plan (NDP) sets out the investment priorities to underpin the implementation of the NPF. Through an overall investment of €165 billion, it establishes a program of capital investment to deliver infrastructure and development across Ireland.

The NDP supports investment and development in rural communities under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF). This aims to deliver investment at scale to tackle rural revitalisation, vacancy and dereliction and enterprise development. The RRDF has been allocated €1 billion to support development in rural regions. To date, the Fund has delivered €249 million for 164 projects worth a total of €338 million across the country.

Rural development is also supported under the LEADER program, which is co-funded by the European Commission. The LEADER program for 2023-2027 has been allocated an indicative budget of €180 million.



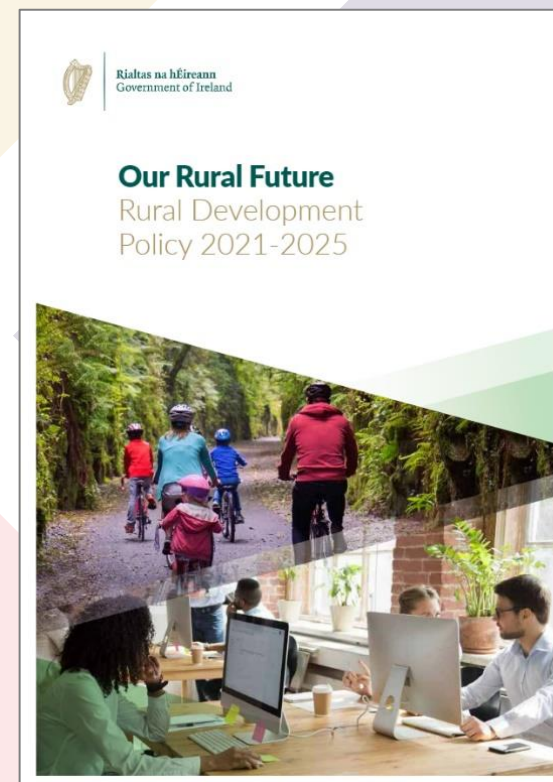


# Our Rural Future – Rural Development Policy 2021-2025

Our Rural Future reiterates the Government’s commitment to supporting the sustainable growth and development of Ireland’s rural communities. It aims to address the challenges facing many rural areas, such as depopulation, housing and services availability. It also seeks to support rural communities in capitalising on emerging opportunity areas around digitalisation and remote working, the green economy, tourism and town centre revitalisation.

Our Rural Future provides a framework for rural development based around 8 Policy Themes:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1. Optimising Digital Connectivity</b></li><li><b>2. Supporting Employment and Careers in Rural Areas</b></li><li><b>3. Revitalising Towns and Rural Villages</b></li><li><b>4. Enhancing Participation, Leadership and Resilience in Rural Communities</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>5. Enhancing Public Services in Rural Areas</b></li><li><b>6. Transitioning to a Climate Neutral Society</b></li><li><b>7. Supporting the Sustainability of Agriculture, the Marine &amp; Forestry</b></li><li><b>8. Supporting the Sustainability of our Islands and Coastal Communities</b></li></ul>
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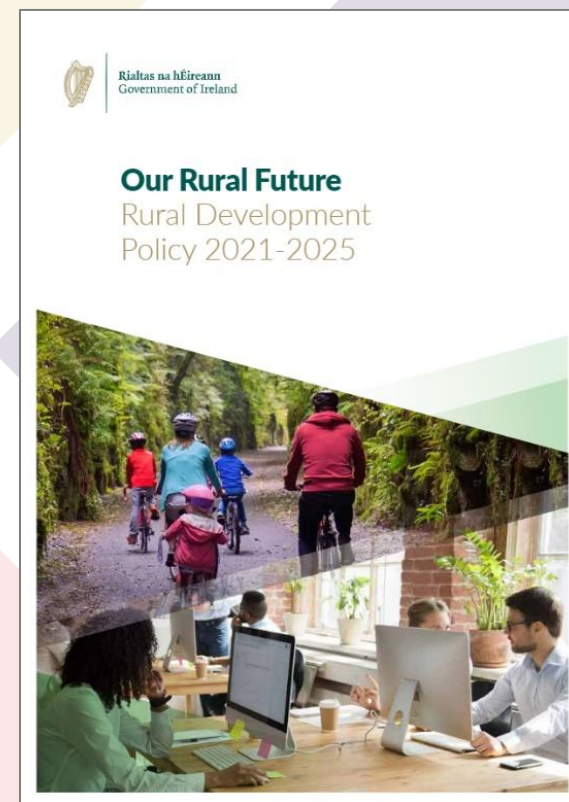
# Our Rural Future – Rural Development Policy 2021-2025

Many of the policy themes and priorities outlined in Our Rural Future align closely with the smart village approach to local community development. There is particular overlap around optimising digital connectivity and opportunities, enhancing community participation and enhanced access to public services. Indeed, it is noted that:

*“The Smart Towns and Villages concept can be used to enable rural communities to explore how local services, such as health, education, social services, renewable energy, transport and retail, can be enhanced and sustained through community-led actions and projects. The approach can also be used to develop responses to issues such as the transition to a climate neutral society, retaining and attracting people to live and work in the local area and creating disability-friendly communities and environments.”*

It is noted that the LEADER programme will be the key policy vehicle to support development of Smart Villages in Ireland.

**Policy Measure 68:** Support the development of Smart Towns and Villages which use innovative solutions to improve resilience, build on local strengths and maximise opportunities to create desirable places for people to live and work.





# Town Centre First

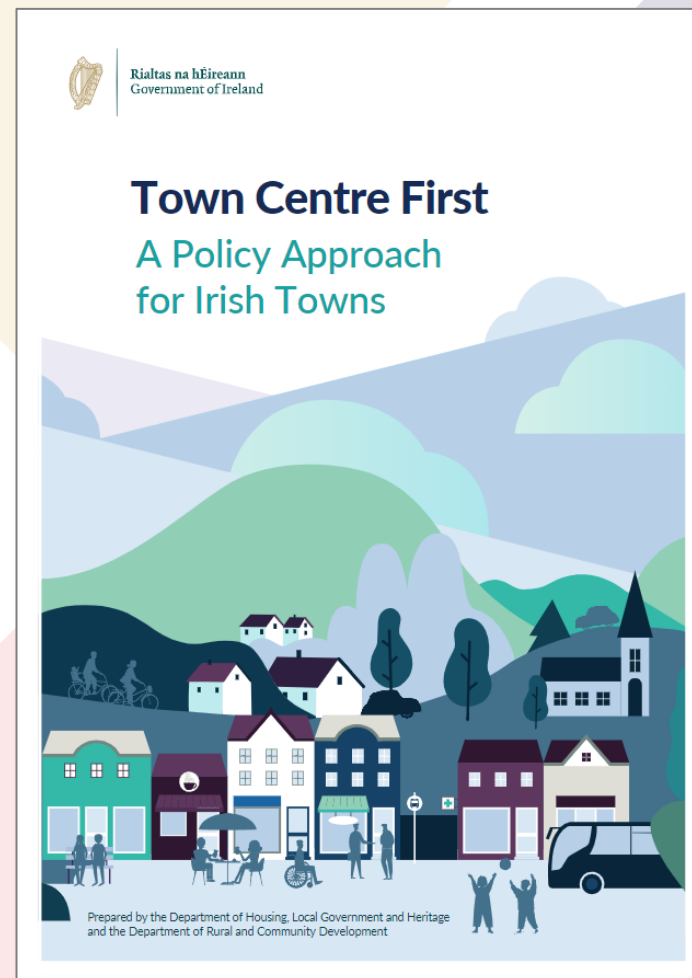
Town Centre First (TCF) is the Irish Government's formal policy approach to support regeneration and revitalisation for Ireland's town and village centres. It aims to create town centres that are attractive and functional places in which to live, work and visit, and serve as vibrant hubs for social, economic and cultural activity.

TCF defines three different town typologies based on the size of the local population:

- Large Towns – population of 20,000+
- Medium-Large Towns – population of 5,000+
- Small Towns – population of 400-5,000

The TCF approach is intended to be applicable to towns of varying size. It does not seek to impose a one-size-fits-all approach but rather recognises that every town is unique and requires their own path forward to address their particular context.

TCF introduces a structured approach to town centre regeneration and development in Ireland. Local Authorities are to appoint Town Regeneration Officers who will lead regeneration initiatives and work closely with local communities. Local community and business stakeholders will be supported in forming Town Teams who help inform and drive the delivery of TCF projects and initiatives. The vision and specific interventions for town centre regeneration are to be outlined in a dedicated Town Centre First Plan, which will provide an agreed roadmap for action and delivery.

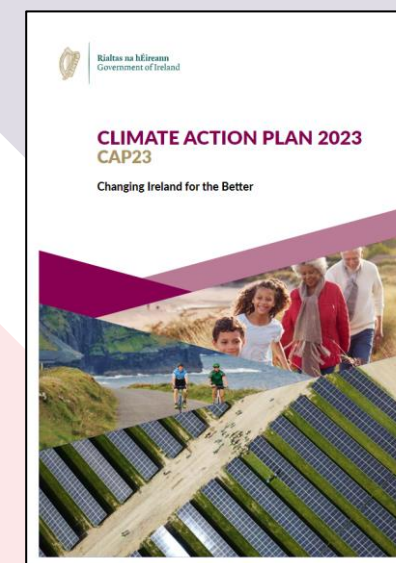


# Climate Action Plan

The Climate Action Plan (CAP) is a whole-of-Government plan for Ireland to fulfil commitments under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2021. It sets out a roadmap for Ireland to achieve a 51% reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050. The CAP is a living document and is updated annually to reflect progress made. The CAP's 2023 update is the first to implement carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings as agreed by the Irish Government in 2022.

The CAP highlights recent positive trends in remote and hybrid working as a key opportunity area to reduce emissions in rural areas. It is stated that *“For each new remote worker, an estimated average net saving of up to 10kWh per day will be achieved, reducing commuter transport energy use and carbon emissions.”* The successful rollout of the National Broadband Plan and the establishment of suitable remote working facilities will be key to ensuring that rural communities can avail of opportunities for remote and hybrid working.

The CAP identifies transport for rural communities as another priority area for emissions reductions. It aspires to provide greater connectivity and public transport options for rural communities, delivered under the NTA's Rural Mobility Programme. It also acknowledges that private cars will remain the dominant mode of travel for many rural households, and highlights the importance of improving the efficiency of traditional motor vehicles and supporting the uptake of EV's as an alternative.





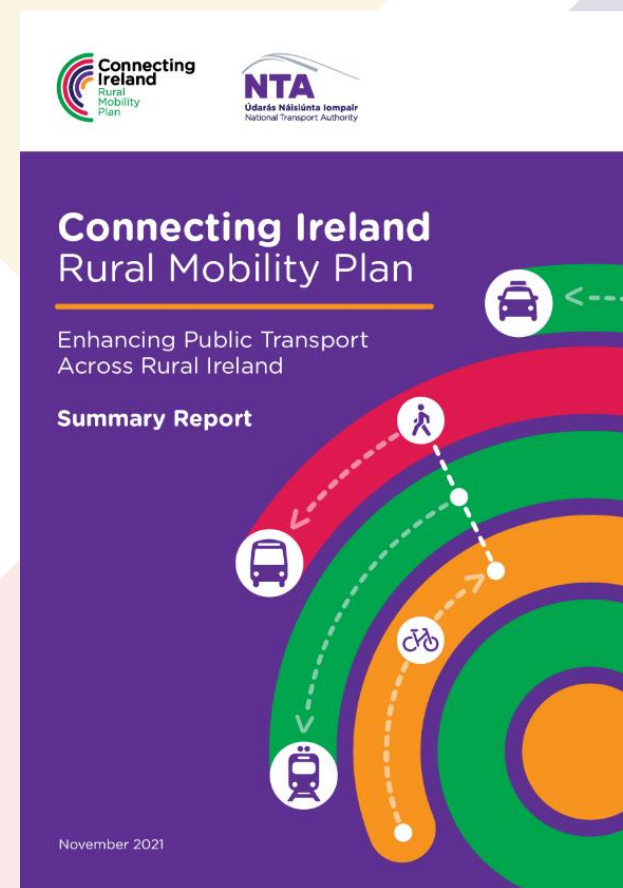
# Connecting Ireland: Rural Mobility Plan

Connecting Ireland is a major initiative developed by the National Transport Authority to significantly enhance public transport provision for rural areas across Ireland. Connecting Ireland seeks to “*make public transport for rural communities more useful for more people*”. It aims to do so by:

- Improving existing services
- Adding new services
- Enhancing the current Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) network which meets the transport needs of people who live in remote locations

Connecting Ireland will address identified gaps in transport service provision and improve connectivity to local service centres. The Plan estimates that two in five villages are not connected to their nearest town or service. Proposed improvements aim to ensure that 70% of those living outside Ireland’s cities have access to public transport options that provide at least three return trips each day to their nearby town.

As exhibited overleaf, Connecting Ireland includes a number of public transport improvements for the rural Dublin area. These will provide enhanced connectivity to Dublin City and between different towns and villages. These include new proposed local routes connecting Balbriggan, Naul, Garristown, Oldtown and Ballyboghil with Swords and Ashbourne.







# Connecting Ireland: Rural Mobility Plan





# National Broadband Plan

The National Broadband Plan (NBP) is the Irish Government's initiative to deliver high speed broadband services to all households and premises in Ireland. The implementation of the NBP is administered by the Dept. of Environment, Climate and Communications. The rollout of the NBP is being delivered by National Broadband Ireland (NBI), a registered Irish company that is building, operating and maintaining the national broadband network.

The NBP aims to extend broadband services to those areas where private providers have opted not to invest. These areas are primarily situated outside of Ireland's existing urban settlements and built up areas, and include rural areas of Dublin to the north and south of the city centre. The overall extent of the NBP implementation area includes:

- almost 560,000 premises
- 1.1 million people
- Over 54,000 farms
- 44,000 non-farm businesses
- 679 schools

The NBP also provides for the rollout of approximately 300 Broadband Connections Points (BCPs). These BCP's were identified by local authorities and comprise of community facilities that will provide free public Wi-Fi, hot-desking, remote working and enterprise supports.





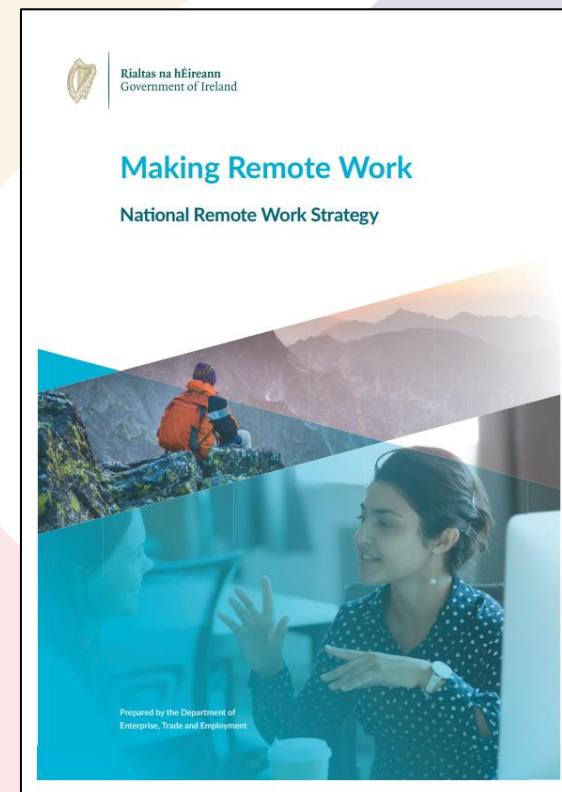
# Making Remote Work: National Remote Work Strategy

Making Remote Work is the national strategy to promote and facilitate remote and hybrid working across Ireland. It aims to ensure that “*remote working is a permanent feature in the Irish workplace in a way that maximises economic, social and environmental benefits.*” It advocates for the significant benefits and opportunities that remote working poses for both urban and rural communities, including reductions in commuting, traffic congestion and emissions, improved labour market participation for cohorts who may have difficulty accessing traditional work spaces, better work/life balance, reduced accommodation pressure in urban centres and support for rural regeneration and development.

The strategy is structured around three key pillars:

1. **Create a Conducive Environment** – Creating safe and attractive remote working environment that balances work with employee obligations with the right to disconnect.
2. **Develop and Leverage Remote Work Infrastructure** – Delivering national broadband coverage and developing digital hub infrastructure to facilitate remote working.
3. **Build a Remote Work Policy and Guidance Framework** – Develop an adaptable policy framework to inform guidance, collaboration and data gathering on remote working.

As proposed under the strategy, a draft bill on the right to request remote working has been published and will go through the legislative procedure to enter law.



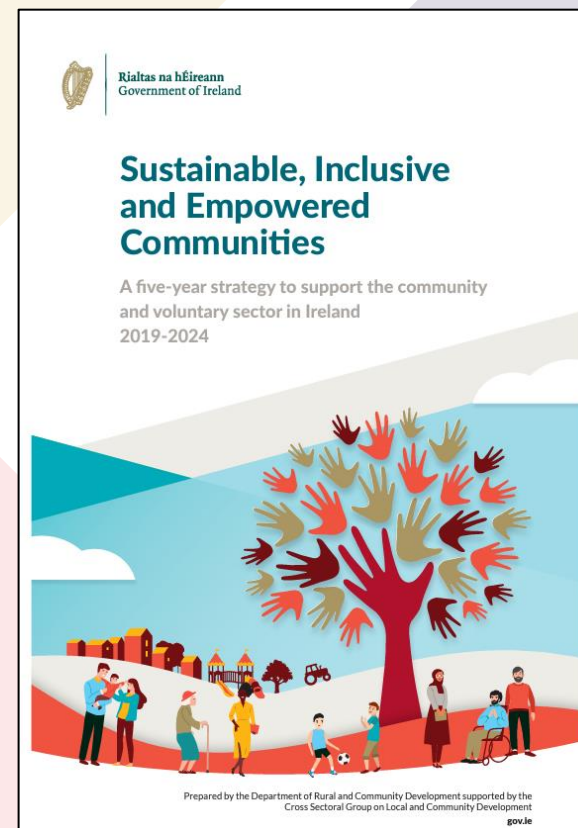


# Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities 2019-2024

‘Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities’ is a five-year strategy to support Ireland’s community and voluntary sector. It recognises the essential contribution that the voluntary sector makes to our society and commits to ongoing support to enhance their capacity for action.

The Strategy estimates that there are approximately 29,000 non-profit organisations in Ireland, with one third of these comprising registered charities. All together it is estimated that the total direct, indirect and induced value of work contributed by Ireland’s charities comes to €24bn per annum.

The Strategy sets out a suite of actions to support the community and voluntary sector up to 2024. These include the development of a national volunteering strategy, a long-term goal to develop a sustainable multi-annual funding model to support the community and voluntary sector, the provision of training to community organisations in relation to climate change adaptation and mitigation, and enhancing supports to help community groups manage and fulfil official compliance requirements.





# National Volunteering Strategy 2021-2025

The publication of the National Volunteering Strategy (NVS) fulfils the commitment under the Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities Strategy to develop and publish a dedicated national strategy for Ireland's voluntary sector. The stated purpose of the NVS is to "recognise, support and promote the unique value and contribution of volunteers to Irish society." It acknowledges the valuable contribution that Ireland's volunteers make to Irish society across a diverse range of sectors, including arts and heritage, education, health, sport, environment and social inclusion.

The Strategy defines volunteering as "...any time willingly given, either formally or informally, for the common good and without financial gain." Overall, it is estimated that over 1 million people in Ireland volunteer. This encompasses formal volunteering (i.e., within formal institutions or agencies), informal volunteering (i.e., outside an organisational setting) and those individuals that might not consider themselves as volunteers but who 'lend a hand' to others in their community. Notably it is estimated that roughly half of all volunteers assist in sport-related activities.

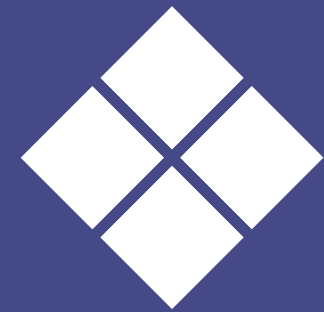
The Strategy sets out a suite of actions to support and assist capacity in the voluntary sector. These include linking volunteer portals to make a more cohesive online network of volunteer services, undertaking a pilot project for professional mentoring to support volunteer organisations and examining opportunities to reduce costs and administrative burdens for volunteer organisations compliance and administrative burden of regulation, insofar as possible, in order to free up resources for volunteering.



# Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin

*Policy Context:  
Regional Level*

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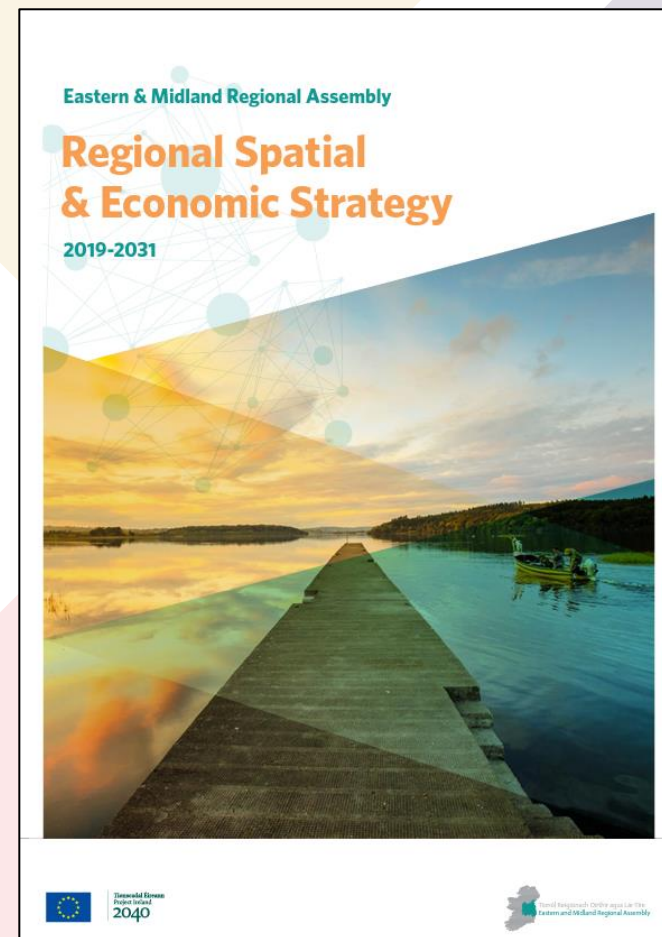
# Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the eastern and midland region is a high-level plan that provides a coordination framework for spatial and economic development at the regional level. It seeks to support the implementation of the NPF and help translate national policy to the regional and local level. It sets out a vision to:

*“create a sustainable and competitive Region that supports the health and wellbeing of our people and places, from urban to rural, with access to quality housing, travel and employment opportunities for all”.*

The RSES acknowledges and supports the potential of the smart village approach to help rural communities capitalise on the opportunities afforded by *“improved rural connectivity and digitisation and to build on local enterprise and infrastructure assets to drive innovations around energy, transport, agri-food, tourism, e-services, remote working etc.”* It also notes that Local Authorities can play a role in supporting the development of smart communities by allowing for the use of public assets to help increased local connectivity.

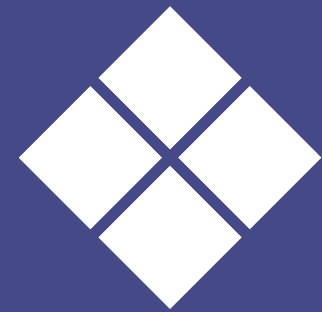
**Regional Policy Objective 6.30:** *Support existing smart city initiatives such as Smart Dublin and the All Ireland Smart Cities Forum and support the development of smart city programmes in Athlone, Dundalk and Drogheda.*



# Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin

*Policy Context:  
Local Level*

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# Fingal County Development Plan

## 2023-2029

The Fingal County Development Plan (CPD) sets out the policies and objectives that will shape Fingal's spatial development over the period 2023-2029. The CDP projects that Fingal's population will increase to between 327,000 and 333,000 up to 2026. It establishes a framework for the county's spatial development that aims to guide future growth and create attractive places in which to live and work.

The CDP's Settlement Hierarchy identifies **Oldtown, Naul, Garristown, and Ballyboughal** as a 'Towns and Villages'. These are defined as:

*“Towns and villages with local service and employment functions.”*

The CDP notes the **distinct heritage and recreational assets of Oldtown, Naul, Garristown, and Ballyboughal**. It recognises that rural economy of Fingal is driven by these diverse towns and villages thus, the CDP supports the growth of existing rural employment, commercial enterprises, and other small scale enterprises. The CDP seeks to actively facilitate environmental works under any relevant Town and Village Renewal Scheme and Small Towns & Villages Growth Programme in these four villages.





# Fingal County Development Plan

## 2023-2029

The CDP highlights the importance of rural towns in providing employment opportunities and contributing to the diversification of the rural economy. It acknowledges current challenges for rural economic development, including an ageing population and reduced access to services and new technologies. It seeks to proactively address these challenges by supporting new enterprise and further promoting communities and locally-based tourism opportunities.

The CDP commits to the further development of Fingal's digital infrastructure and services. It supports the actions outlined in the Fingal Digital Strategy 2020-2023 Digital and the provision of ICT infrastructure such as broadband, telecommunication infrastructure, phone coverage and future technologies which will contribute to economic development.

In June 2020 Balbriggan was designated as a 'Smart District', where ICT and smart projects will be piloted to improve services, employment opportunities and contribute to a sustainable community. The CDP notes that Fingal County Council will seek further opportunities to pilot smart projects across the county.

### **Objective IUO50 – Smart Districts/Smart Places**

Support the development of Smart Districts/Smart Places to enhance socio-economic development.

### **Objective IUO51 – Digital Hubs and Co-working spaces**

Facilitate the development of digital hubs and co-working spaces at appropriate locations, including towns and rural villages.



# Fingal Digital Strategy 2020-2023

The Fingal Digital Strategy seeks to “to encourage and support communities and businesses to reap the full rewards of a digitally enabled society.” It outlines the current supports and services available and establishes a suite of actions and a pathway for implementation to support communities in leveraging the potential of broadband and digital technologies to enhance public services and support economic growth.

Actions under the Digital Strategy are organised under four pillars:

- *“Digital Infrastructure – Develop a world-class digital infrastructure across Fingal, ensuring that both rural and urban Fingal are equipped with a fit-for-purpose digital infrastructure.*
- *Digital Community – Empower citizens and communities to participate in the development of their communities and enable them to promote and support those communities to access digital skills, digital services and unlock opportunities for all.*
- *Digital Business – Make Fingal the best place to start and grow a business. We will continue to support the digital economy by providing vital supports and facilities to businesses and entrepreneurs.*
- *Digital Government – Transform key public services, focusing on driving efficiencies and accessibility for all as well as designing digital public services that are inclusive by default.”*

Together these pillars and their associated actions aim to improve digital infrastructure for rural and urban areas, empower communities in accessing and utilising digital service, support new businesses and improve the efficiency of public services. Though the term ‘smart villages’ is not cited explicitly, the initiative aligns with several objectives under the digital strategy, including those to develop smart city infrastructure to improve services and to support the development of smart communities to enhance socio-economic development.





# Fingal Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2020

The Fingal Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2016-2020 is an integrated plan to promote sustainable economic and community development for Fingal. It is a cross-cutting plan that identifies integrated actions between different agencies and bodies, with the aim of:

- *“Building stronger communities through strengthening economic performance; and*
- *Improving well-being through prosperity, job creation and financial stability.”*

The LECP seeks to support local economic activity from the group up, whilst combating social exclusion and poverty through enhanced service provision and access to education and employment. The structure of the LECP is based around six overarching themes, with a number of subsequent goals, objectives and actions for implementation.

- |                                    |                                      |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Enterprise and Employment       | 4. Leader and Community Empowerment  |
| 2. Learning, Training and Working  | 5. Tourism, Environment and Heritage |
| 3. Well-being and Social Inclusion | 6. Urban Towns and Rural Communities |

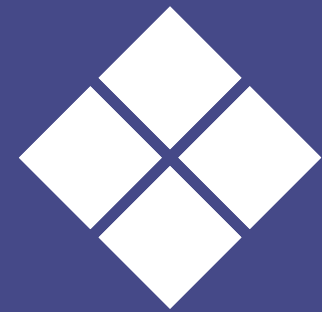
Notable actions proposed under the LECP include developing micro-enterprise incubation units, provide capacity-building training for Fingal Community Network Members, working with communities to develop evidence-based local plans and supporting existing community groups in providing social supports and services.



# Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin

## Step 1: Map *Regional Profile: Fingal*

Prepared by  
KPMG Future Analytics



SmartVillages



# Step 1: MAP

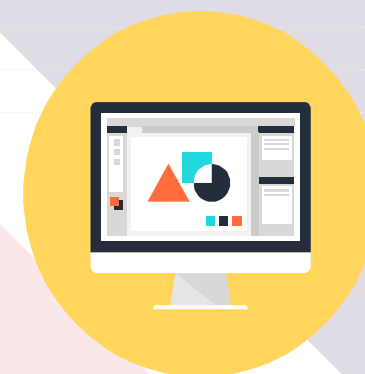
## *Regional and Local Profiles*

As shown in the policy review section of this report, there are a complex set of trends and variables affecting the future growth and development of rural areas across Ireland – including in Dublin. While the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent public health measures has acted as a headwind to development, it also proves to be an opportunity to accelerate a healthy transition to becoming a more sustainable, smart and resilient country.

**The Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin spans three Local Authority areas – Fingal, South Dublin, and Dun-Laoghaire Rathdown. In order to develop a comprehensive understanding of regional development trajectories over time, a detailed socio-economic profile of each region was prepared – utilising available data from the 2011, 2016, and 2022 Census\*. Similar profiles have also been developed for each of the case study communities. These profiles are presented in this section.**

County and local analysis and profiling is essential in producing a baseline and foundation for charting the best possible future for the region and its communities. These profiles were presented to the participating communities during the Programme and were used to inform engagement and the iteration of potential objectives and interventions. These profiles serve as an essential evidence-base from which to develop local Smart Village Action Plans.

**Profiling in tandem with extensive community and stakeholder engagement will help to ensure that any smart village interventions proposed for the county or its communities are aligned with local needs and potential.**



# The Picture at Present

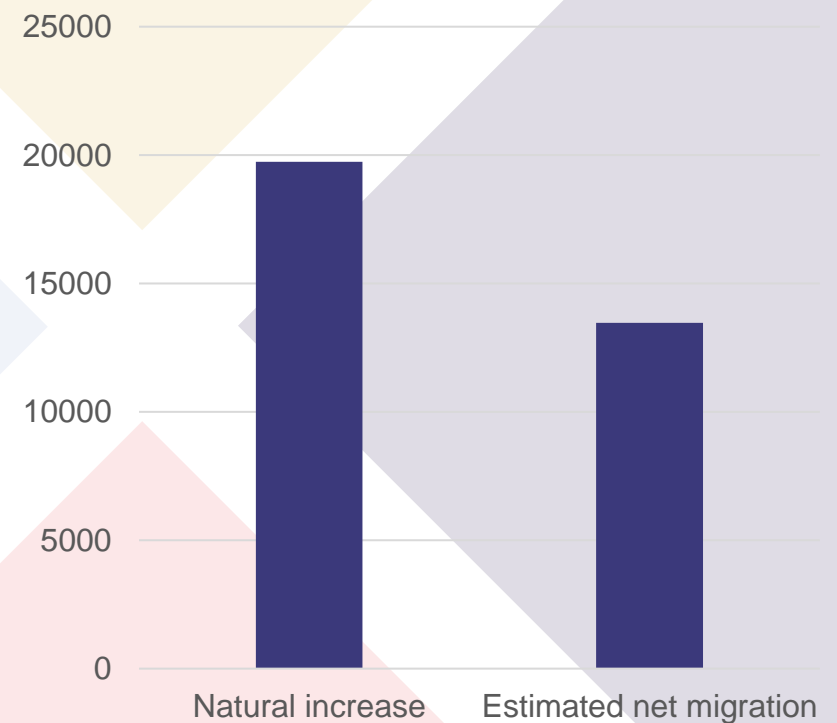


## Population

### The population of the County is increasing and ageing...

- Dublin City continues to have the largest population with 588,233 people counted on the night of the **census in 2022** followed by Cork County at 358,898, **Fingal at 329,218** and South Dublin at 299,793.
- **Fingal saw increases of 33,198 in terms of population growth** between 2016 and 2022 (equating to a **growth rate of 11%** (considerably above the national average of 8%).
- **Fingal** has the highest proportion of **births compared to deaths** in the state at **3.97** i.e., for every one person who dies, there are 3.97 births.
- The 'Natural increase' was **19,736** and the 'Estimated net migration' was **13,462**.
- Fifteen of the thirty local authorities had **an excess of natural increases over net migration** that exceeded the national average of 47%.
- In Fingal, this figure was 59%.

Fingal Population Increase Breakdown (2022)



# The Picture at Present

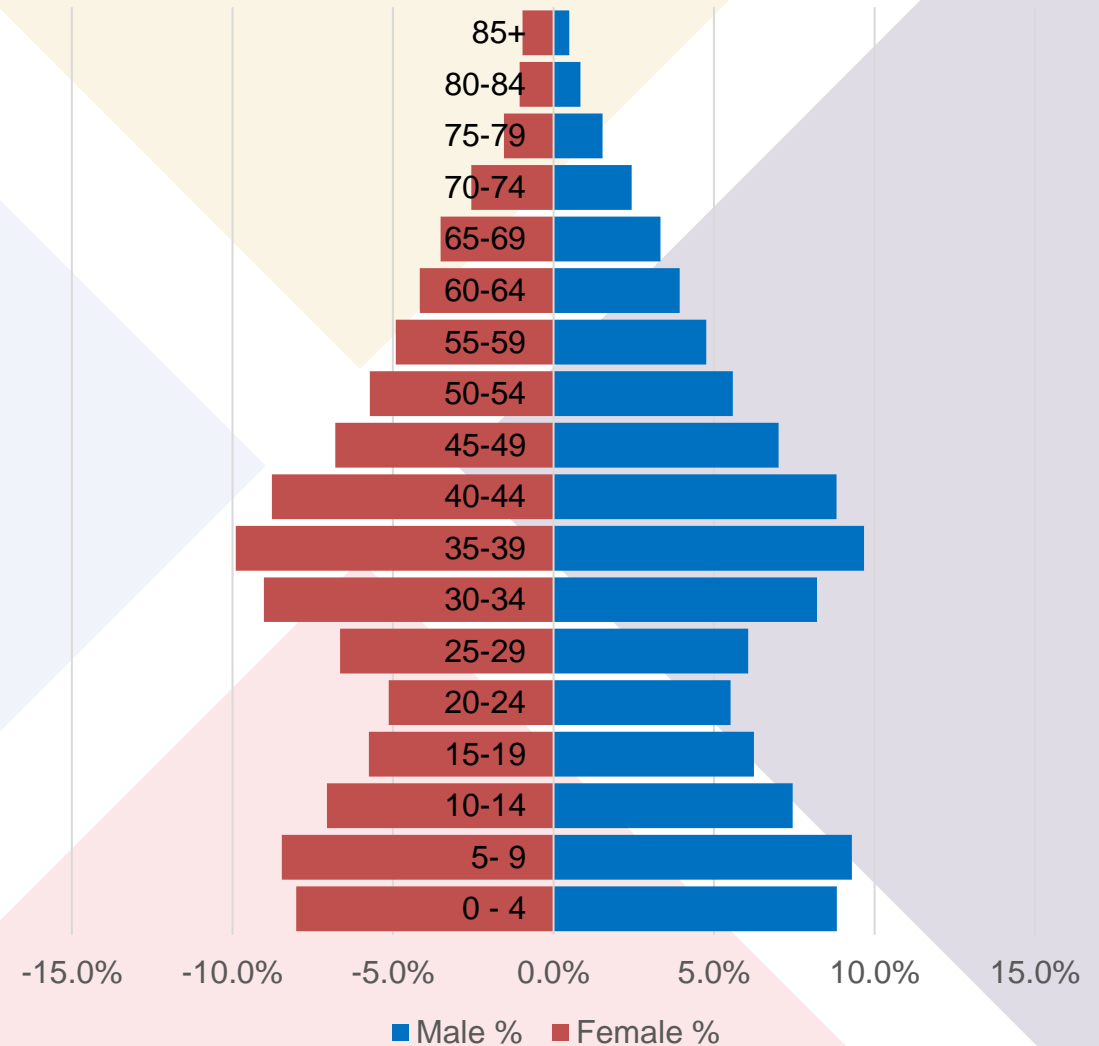


## Population

*The population of the County is increasing and ageing...*

- Fingal is the youngest local authority in the State and had an average age of **33.8 years in 2016**. The national average at this time was **37.4 years**.
- The average **male** was **33.1 years** and the average **female** was **34.4 years**.
- Within the 30-39 age group, **25,874** were **male** and **28,534** were **female** (2016).
- The **20-29** and **30-39** age cohorts **decreased by 15.6%** and **1.7%** respectively (2011-2016).
- On the contrary, **60-69, 70-79** and **80+** increased by **20.4%**, **43.6%** and **34.7%** respectively (2011-2016).

Study Area - Population by Gender and Age Group (2016)





# The Picture at Present

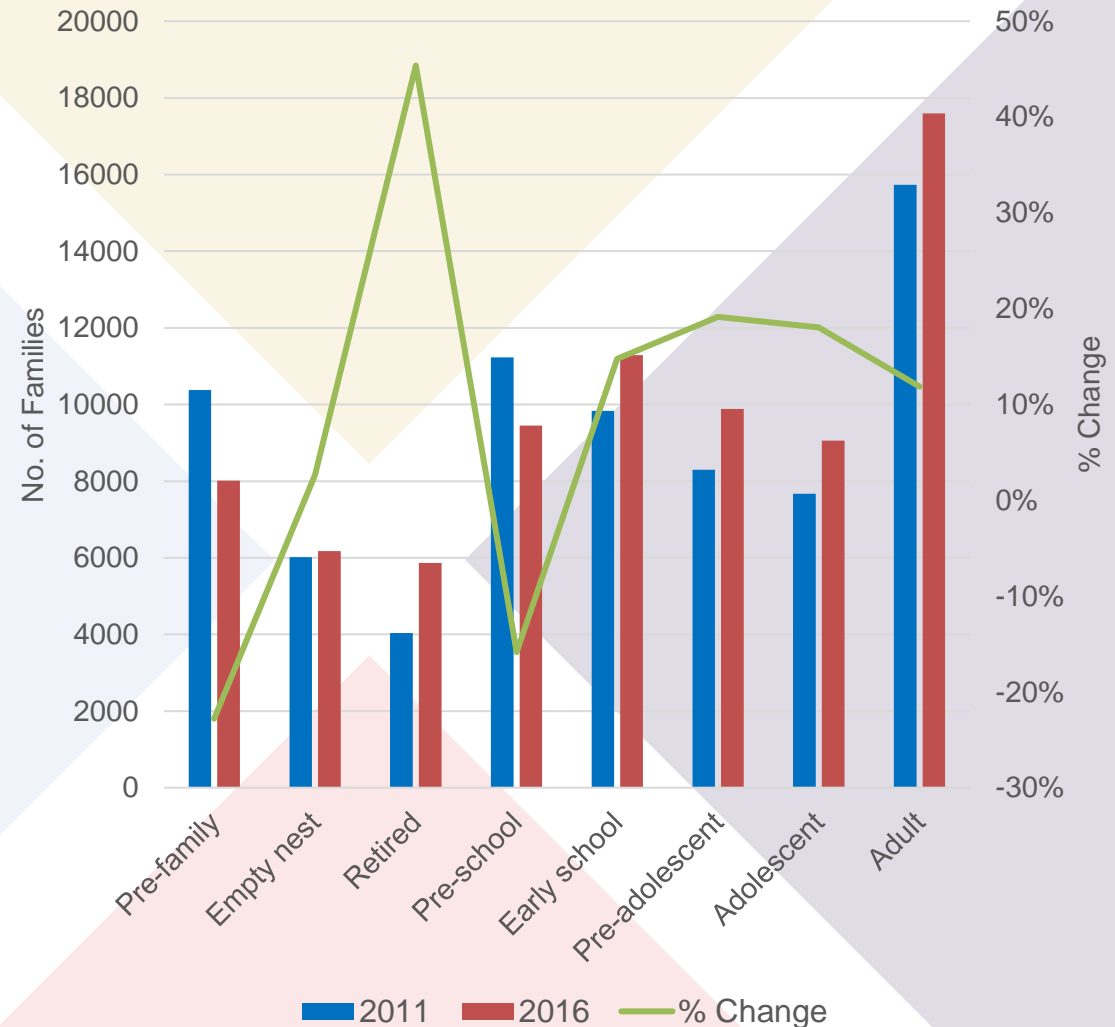
## Households and Housing

### Households are getting bigger...

- The average household size grew by 4% from 2.92 (2011) to 3.03 (2016).
- In terms of composition of households, **'Couple children and others'** and **'Two or more family units'** recorded the greatest increase (+34% and 28% respectively).
- On the contrary, **'Cohabiting couple'** recorded the greatest decrease (-19%).
- **'Apartment Living'** increased by 2%.
- **'Pre-family and Pre-school'** stages of family cycle decreased by 23% and 16% respectively. Whereas, **'Retired'** increased by 45%.



### Stages of Family Cycle

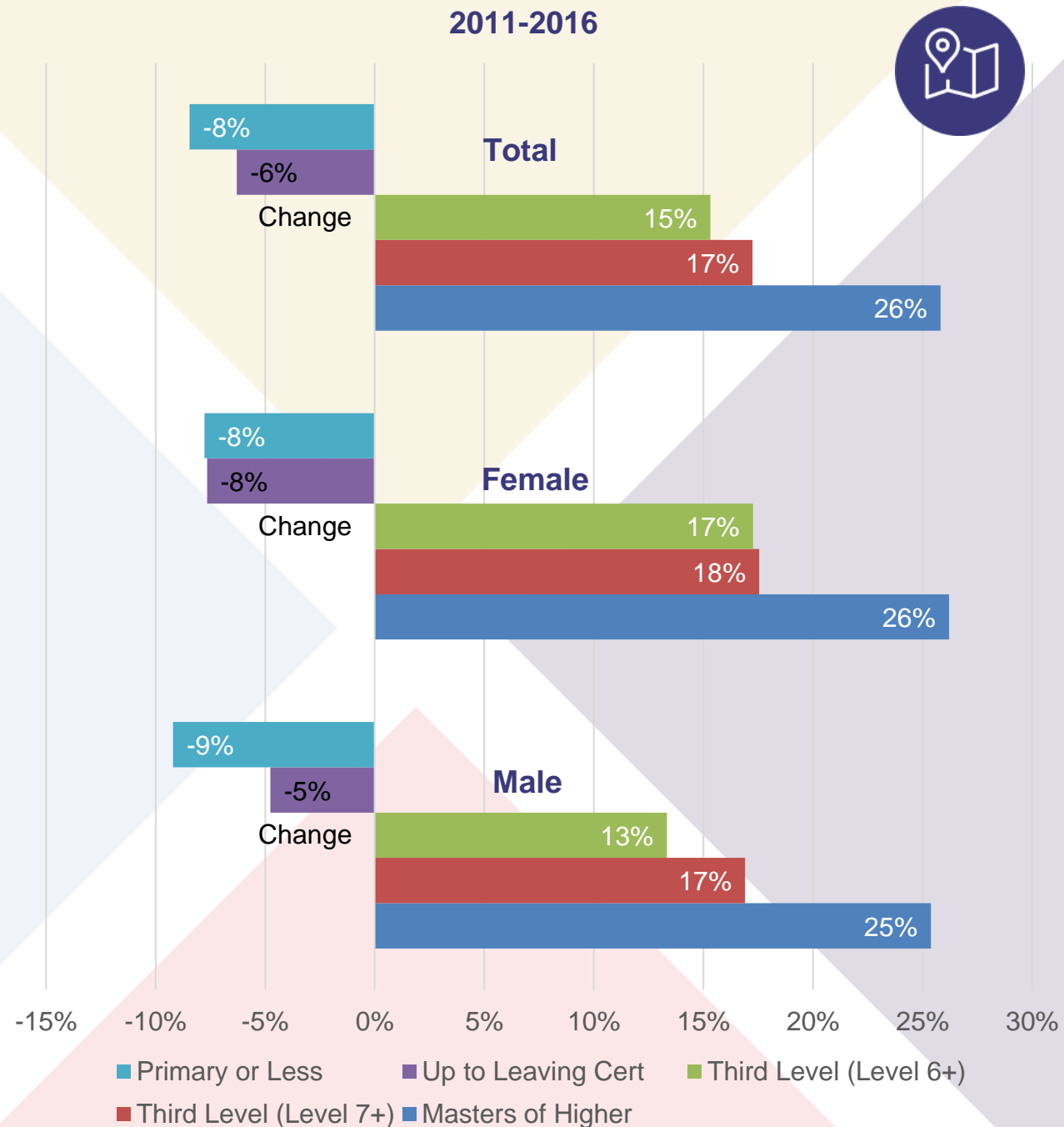


# The Picture at Present

## Education

### Post-Leaving cert education attainment is increasing...

- The number of those aged 15 years or older attaining '**Primary education or less**' as the highest level of educational attainment **decreased by 8%**.
- Those attaining '**Third level education**' **increased by 15%**.
- Those attaining '**Masters or Higher**' **increased by 26%**.



# The Picture at Present

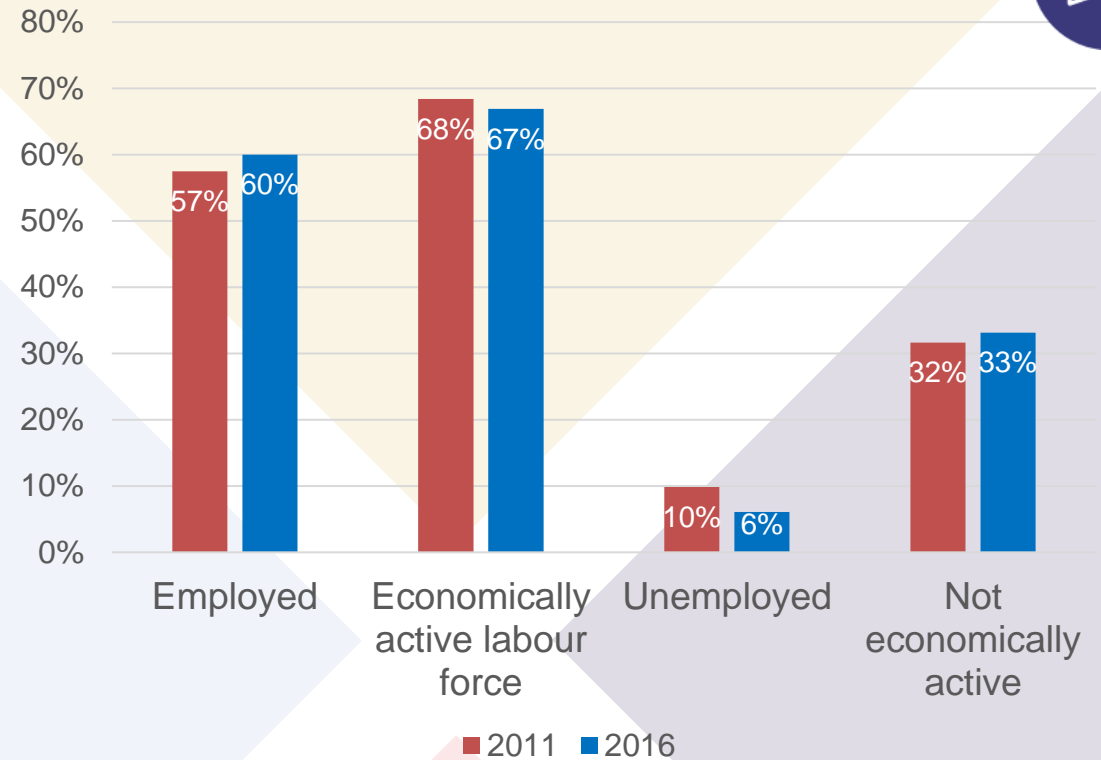
## Economy

### An Evolving Employment Context

- **36.1%** of Fingal residents worked within Fingal in 2016.
- Those **'Employed'** increased by **3%**.
- 'Unemployed' decreased by 4% reaching 6% in 2016.
- 'Professional workers' and 'Managerial and technical' workers increased by 18% and 10% respectively (2011- 2016).
- Employment in the county increased by 15% between 2011 and 2016.

**Note:** The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for February 2023 (for all persons aged 15-74 years) was 4.3%.

### Employment Trends in the County



Social Class	2011	2016	Change
Professional workers	22,445	26,454	18%
Managerial and technical	88,380	97,322	10%
Non-manual	50,853	54,632	7%
Skilled manual	37,696	38,090	1%
Semi-skilled	23,973	25,216	5%
Unskilled	7,407	8,283	12%
All others gainfully occupied and unknown	43,237	46,023	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>273,991</b>	<b>296,020</b>	<b>8%</b>

# The Picture at Present

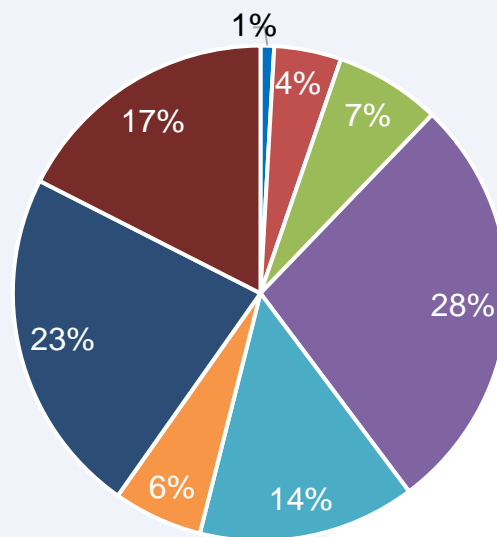


## Economy

*However, occupation by industry remains stable...*

- 'Professional services' and 'Commerce and trade' are the most **popular industries**.
- Those in the '**Other**' and '**Building and construction**' cohort marginally increased (3.2% and 0.5%, respectively).

Occupation by Industry (2016)



- Agriculture forestry and fishing
- Building and construction
- Manufacturing industries
- Commerce and trade
- Transport and communications
- Public administration
- Professional services
- Other

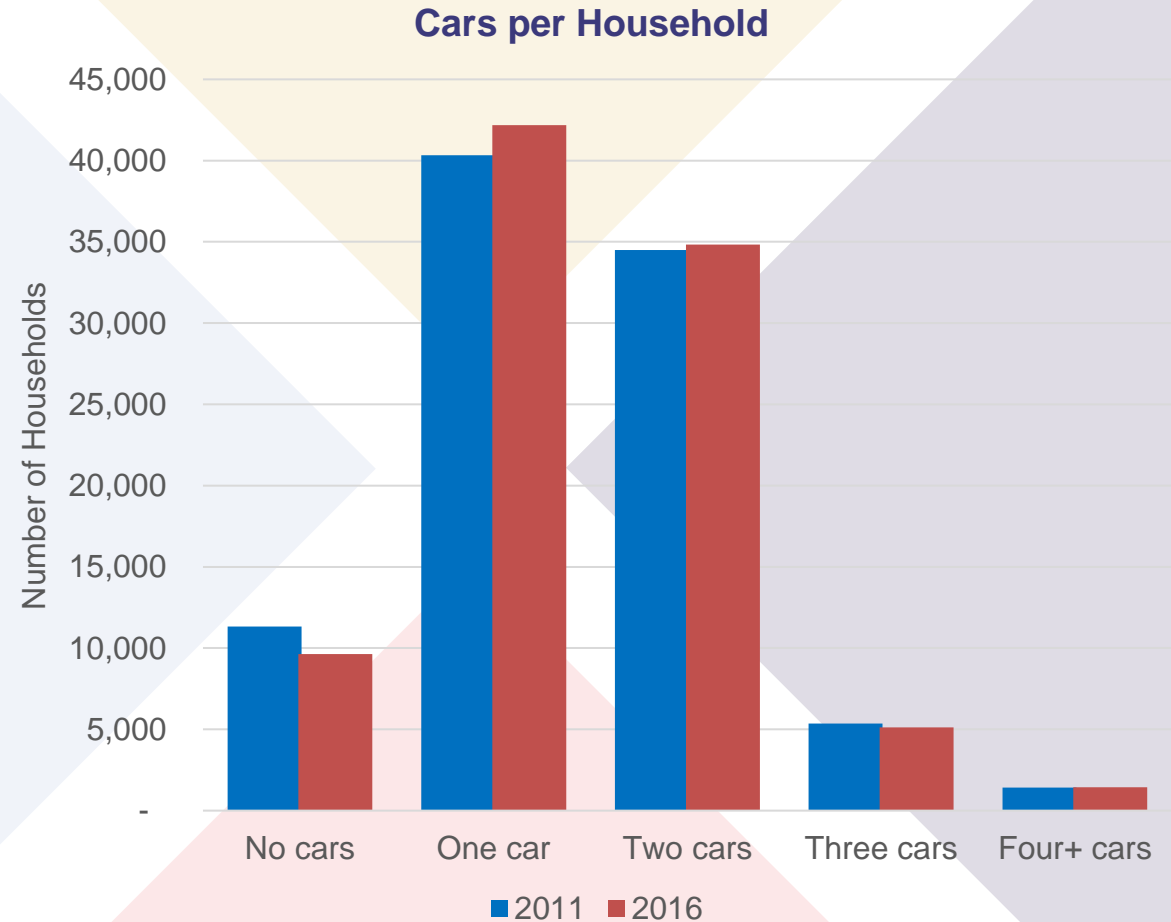
# The Picture at Present



## Transport & Mobility

### One car households are increasing..

- The total number of cars per household increased from 92,951 to 96,607 from 2011 to 2016 (+4%)
- One car households increased by 5% and two car households increased by 2%.



# The Picture at Present



## Transport & Mobility

### People are walking more..

- In 2016, 33% of students travelled to education **by foot**, 16% by bus and 35% by car (as a passenger).
- The average commute time was **32 minutes**.
- **56%** of those travelling to **work travelled by car** (as a driver) in 2016.

Means of Travel [CSO]	2011		2016	
	Work/Educ	Work	Work	Educ.
On foot	15%	5%		33%
Bicycle	2%	3%		3%
Bus minibus or coach	12%	11%		16%
Train DART or LUAS	8%	9%		5%
Motorcycle or scooter	1%	1%		0%
Car driver	40%	56%		3%
Car passenger	14%	3%		35%
Van	3%	4%		0%
Other (incl. lorry)	2%	0%		0%
Work mainly at or from home	0%	3%		0%
Not stated	3%	5%		5%
Total	100%	100%		100%

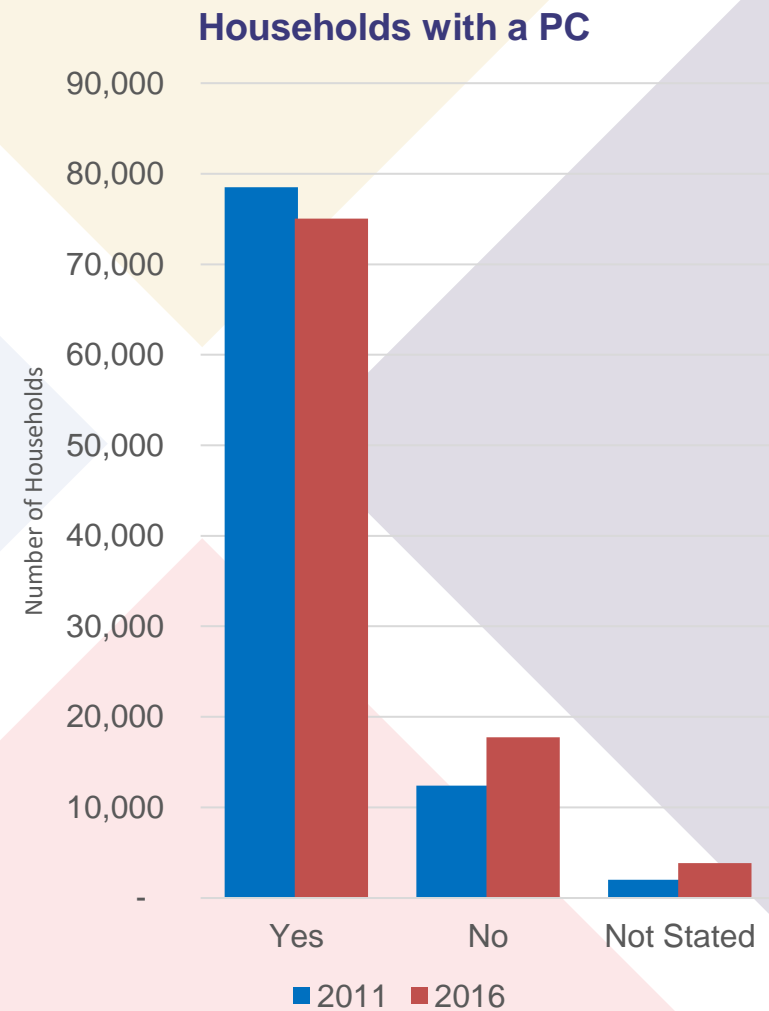
# The Picture at Present



## Connectivity

**Households with PCs are decreasing...but internet access is increasing..**

- The number of households with a PC **decreased by 4%** from 78,532 to 75,038 (2011 to 2016).
- However, **85% of households have access to broadband** (+11%).



# The Picture at Present



## Connectivity

### Fingal has 7 Broadband Connections Points (BCPs)

- BCPs are delivered under the National Broadband Plan to provide free public Wi-Fi and help facilitate remote working, learning and enterprise.
- Locations chosen by Local Authorities, generally include schools, community centres and GAA clubs.

#### BCP Locations

Luttrellstown Community Centre, DUBLIN, D15 DY29

Tyrrelstown Community Centre, DUBLIN, D15 PWY2

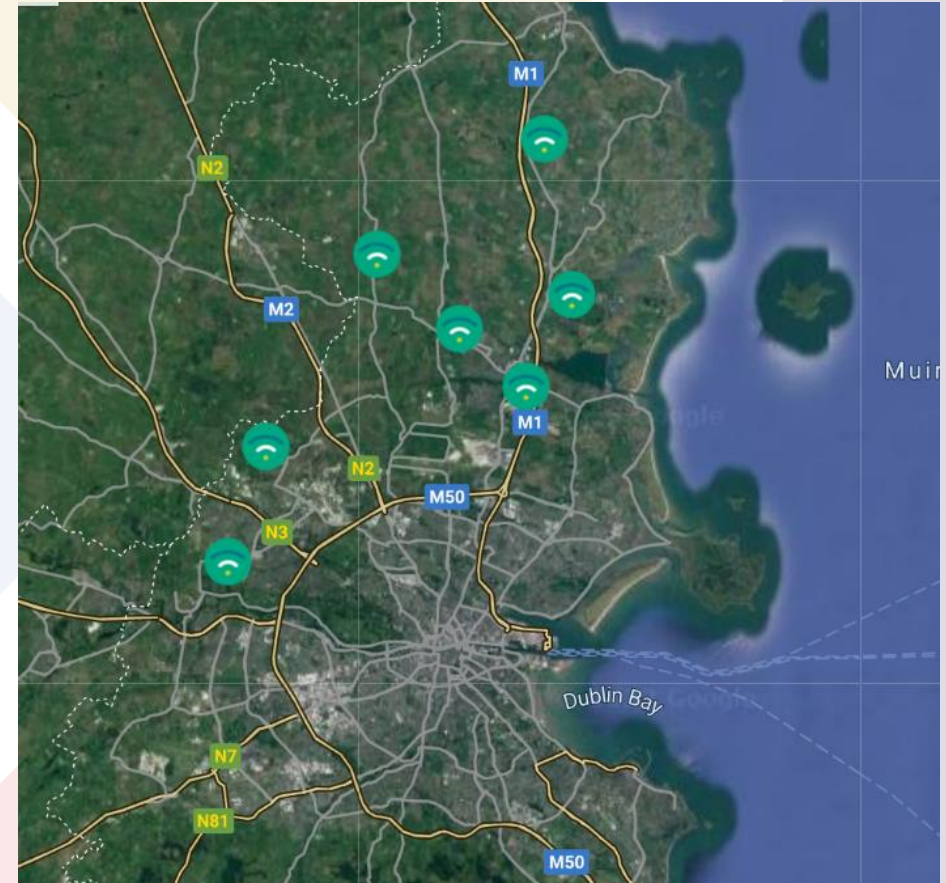
Fingal Liam Rodgers Centre, DUBLIN, K67 A0Y1

Applewood Community Centre, DUBLIN, K67 P7V2

Newbridge House & Farm, DUBLIN, K36 VR90

Fingal Ravens GAA Club, DUBLIN, A45 C791

Man O War GAA Club, DUBLIN, K45 AE80



Further reading: [Broadband Connection Points - NBI](#)



# The Picture at Present



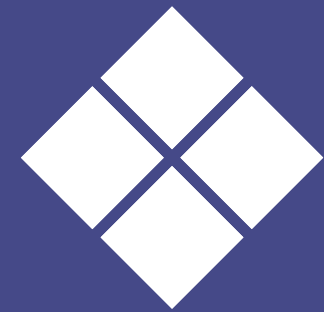
## Summary

- Fingal is one of the most populous counties / local authority areas in Ireland
- It saw a population increase of 33,198 between 2016 and 2022 (growth rate of 11%).
- The population of Fingal is projected to increase to between 327,000 and 333,000 up to 2026.
- Fingal has the highest proportion of births compared to deaths in the state.
- One of the youngest local authority areas in the state. The average age is 34 years.
- The average household size grew by 4% to 3.03.
- Apartment housing stock increased by 2%.
- Post-Leaving cert educational attainment is significantly increasing.
- Those 'Employed' increased by 3% and industry occupation remained relatively stable.
- 'Professional services' and 'Commerce and trade' were recorded as the most popular industries.
- Total number of cars per household increased by 4% between 2016 and 2022.
- 56% of those travelling to work travelled by car (as a driver) in 2016.
- 33% of students travelled to education by foot in 2016.
- The number of households with a PC decreased by 4%. However, broadband access increased by 11%.

# Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin

## Step 1: Map *Local Profile: Naul*

Prepared by  
KPMG Future Analytics



SmartVillages

# The Picture at Present

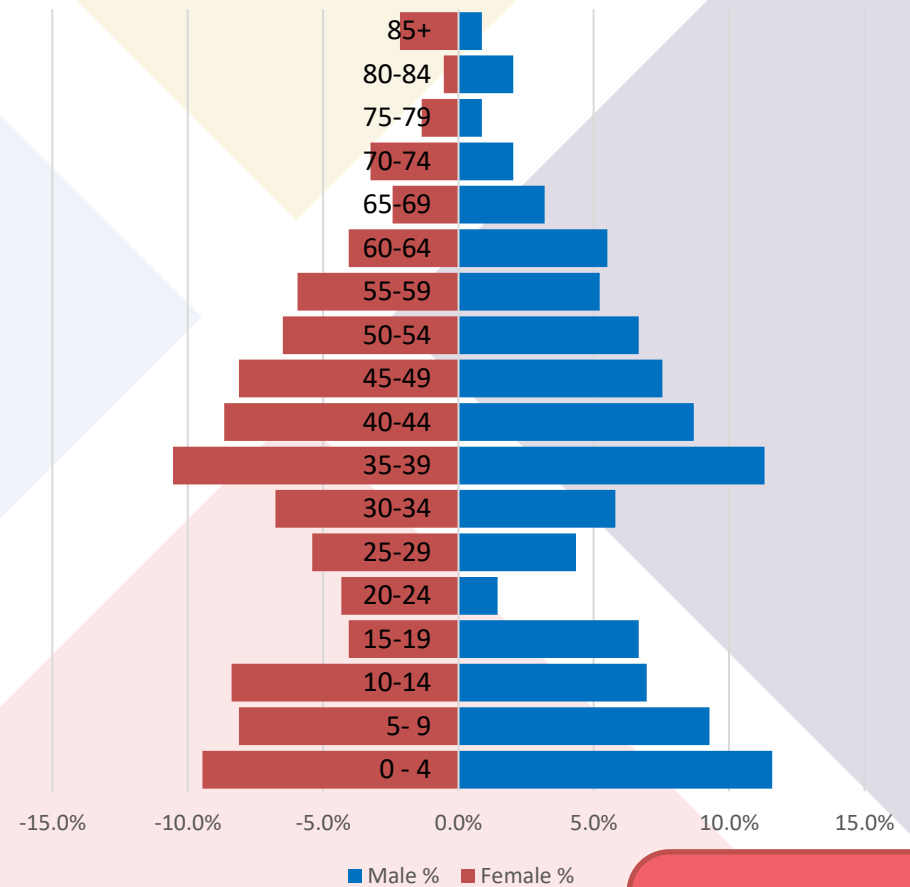
## Population



- A total of 715 persons were living in Naul in 2016, an increase of 21% from 2011.
- Naul had an average age of 35 years.
- This average age was lower than the national average of 37 years.
- Those aged 65 years or older accounted for 9% of the total population in 2016.
- Those aged 29 years or younger accounted for 40% of the total population in 2016.
- The working age population (15-64 years) accounted for 64% of the population in 2016.

38 in  
2022\*

Study Area - Population by Gender and Age Group (2016)



Fingal, Kildare and Meath continued to be the counties with the youngest age on average [2022 data]

# The Picture at Present



Population – 

An Emerging 2022 Picture

## Naul

2016 settlement pop: 568

2016 ED pop: 1,397

2022 ED pop: 1,499

ED growth rate: 7.3%

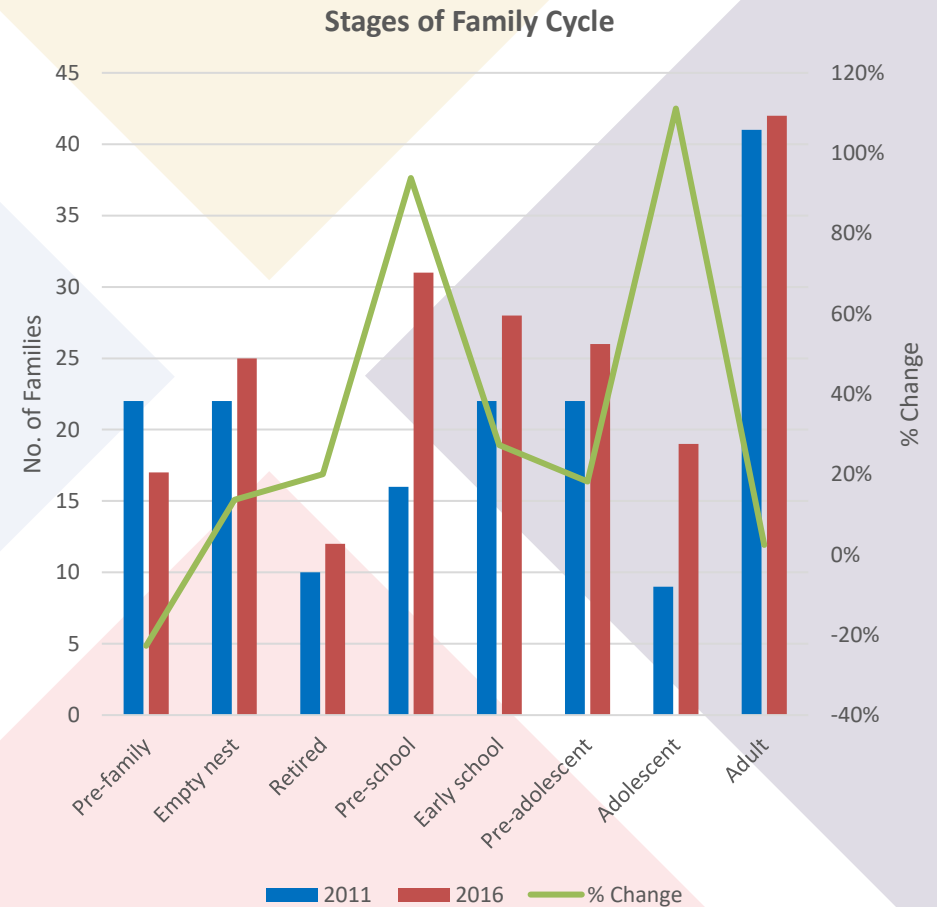


# The Picture at Present

## Households



- **‘Married couple and children’ households comprised 41% of all households in 2016.**
- ‘One person’ households comprised 14% of all households in 2016.
- ‘Mother and children’ families comprised 8% of all households in 2016.
- ‘Adult’ families comprised 21% of all families in 2016, with ‘Pre-Adolescent’ families comprising 13%.
- **‘Adolescent’ and ‘Pre-school’ households recorded the greatest increase (110% and 94% respectively).**



# The Picture at Present

## Education



- The table below presents a summary table of the population aged 15 years and over by highest level of educational attainment.
- **The number of those aged 15 years or older with ‘Masters or Higher’ education was 51 in 2016 (increase of 76% compared to 2011).**
- Those with ‘Up to Leaving Cert’ was 213 and those with ‘Primary or less’ was 57 in 2016 (+5% and -10% respectively).

	Totals		
Education Level	2011	2016	Change
Masters or Higher	29	51	76%
Third Level (Level 7+)	90	132	47%
Third Level (Level 6+)	141	192	36%
Up to Leaving Cert	202	213	5%
Primary or Less	63	57	-10%

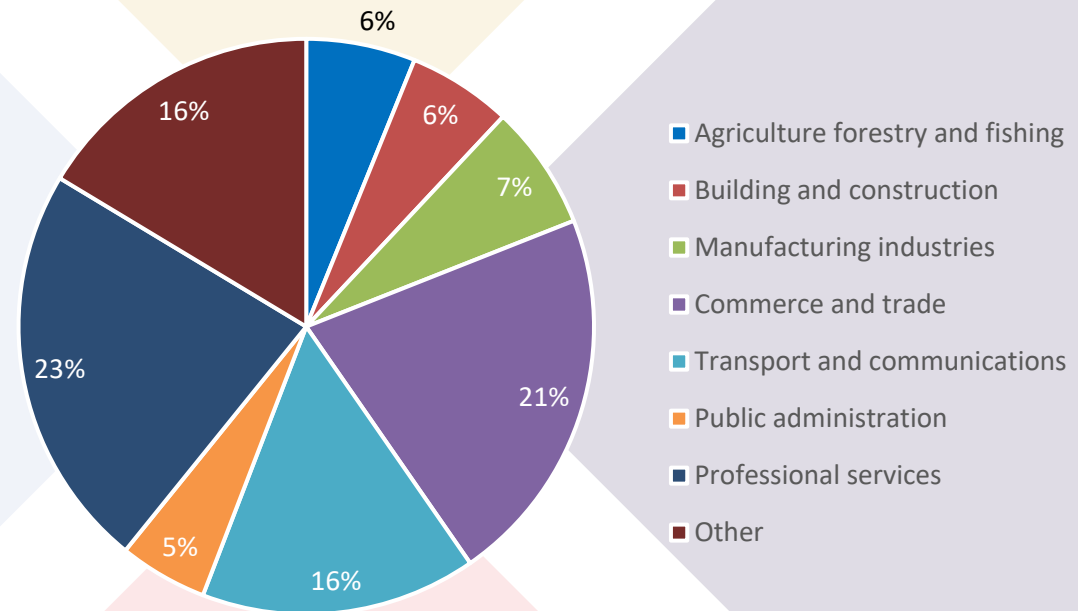
# The Picture at Present



## Economy

- The population at work in Naul is increasing while the number of those unemployed is decreasing.
- Those in 'Professional' and 'Employer and Manger' increased by 10% between 2011 and 2016, comprising 45% of all those employed in 2016.
- Those in 'Non-Manual', 'Manual Skilled', 'Semi-Skilled', 'Unskilled' and 'Own Account' workers decreased between 2011 and 2016, comprising 40% of all those employed in 2016.
- 'Farmers', 'Agricultural workers' and 'Others gainfully occupied/unknown' decreased by 7% between 2011 and 2016, comprising 15% of all those employed in 2016.

Occupation by Industry (2016)



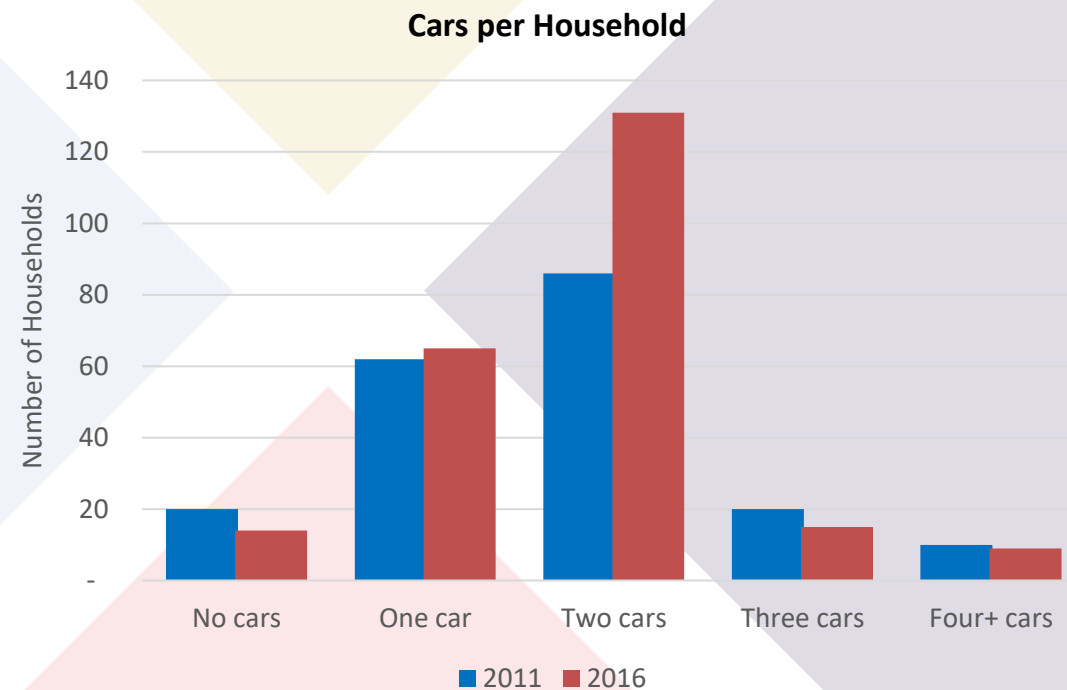
Fingal was the area with the highest labour force participation rate at 66% (Census 2022).

# The Picture at Present

## Transport



- There was an increase in the number of one and two car households between 2011 and 2016 (5% and 52% respectively). However, there was a decrease in households with no cars, three cars and four or more cars.
- **The most popular mode of transport for those travelling to work in 2016 was by car (as primary driver)**
- **Whereas those travelling to education primarily travelled as a car passenger (69% and 62% respectively).**
- Average journey time increased slightly between 2011 and 2016, from 31 minutes to 32 minutes. 57% of all journeys were under 30 minutes in 2016.



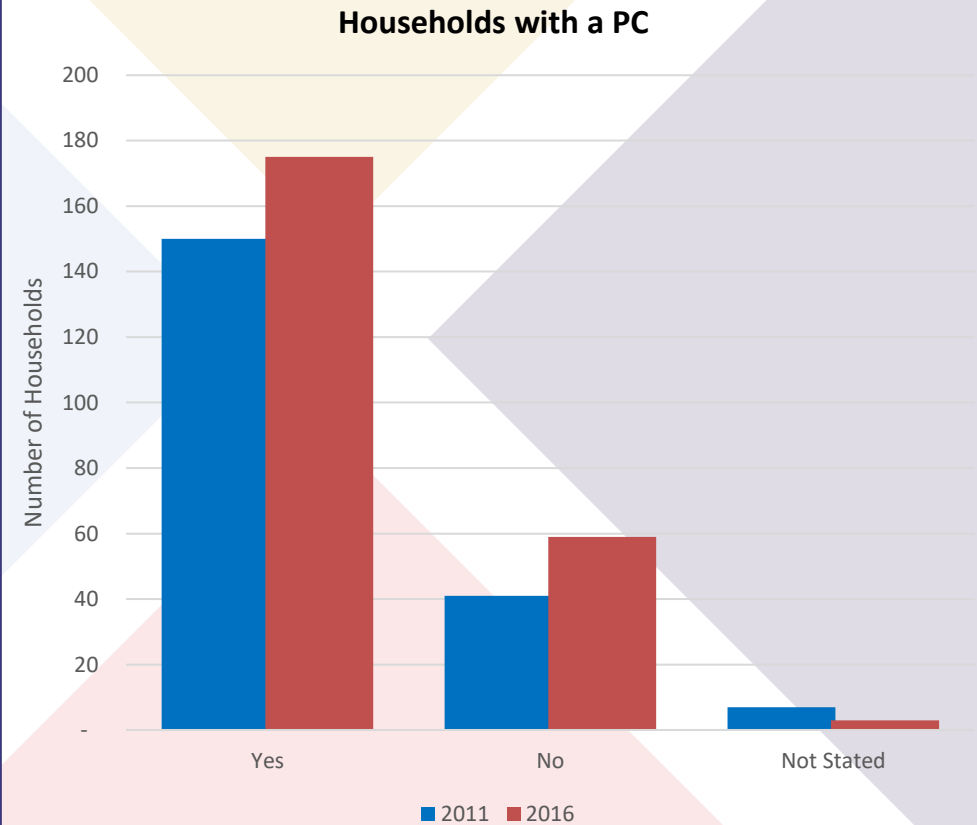


# The Picture at Present

## Connectivity



- **The number of households with both a personal computer increased significantly between 2011 and 2016 (17%).**
- Specifically, 175 households in Naul owned a personal computer in 2016 whereas 59 households stated that they did not.
- Broadband access increased by 102% between 2011 and 2016, with an additional 89 households having access to broadband in 2016.
- However, 34 households are still without broadband access in 2016, comprising 14% of all households in 2016.



# The Picture at Present

## Summary

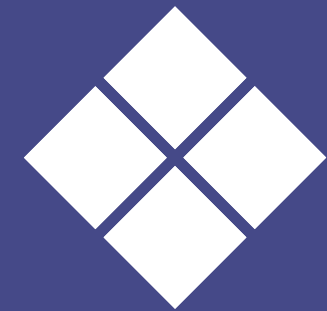
- The average age is 35 (lower than the national average of 37).
- The population increased by 21% between 2011 and 2016.
- The 15-64 age cohort accounted for 64% of the population.
- Married couple and children accounted for the largest composition of households at 41%. Moreover, this cohort increased by 24% between 2011 and 2016.
- Families classified as 'Retired' accounted for 6% of the population in 2016 and grew by 20% between 2011 and 2016.
- There was a 76% increase in those achieving 'Masters or Higher' education between 2011 and 2016.
- Those 'At work' increased by 24% between 2011 and 2016, comprising 65% of the total working age population in 2016.
- 'No car' households decreased by 30% and 'One car' households increased by 5% between 2011 and 2016.
- The most popular mode of transport for those travelling to work in 2016 was by car (as primary driver) whereas those travelling to education primarily travelled as a car passenger (69% and 62% respectively).
- 57% of all journeys to work were under 30 minutes in duration in 2016.
- 74% of households had a personal computer in 2016. This figure increased by 17% between 2011 and 2016.
- Broadband access increased by 102% between 2011 and 2016. However, 34 households remain with no access.



# Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin

## Step 2: Engage

Prepared by  
KPMG Future Analytics



SmartVillages

# Step 2: Engage



Stage 2 comprises public consultation and stakeholder engagement to raise awareness and help further inform the development of the Smart Village Plan. Engaging the local community is essential to informing a realistic and effective Smart Village Plan. Consulting with members of the local community can help validate emerging findings from the previous stage, fill in gaps and gather more detailed information on the local area. It also helps promote the plan making process, so that residents understand its intentions and how they can participate going forward.

At this stage it is also beneficial to engage with key stakeholders who can provide further insight into specific areas or sectors. This can include both public and private sector actors. Engaging with the Local Development Company, local authority and other public bodies can help identify potential supports or synergies with their own projects. Local businesses can provide insight into the supports or interventions they feel could support local enterprise. Other active community groups can provide input into their own priority areas. Involving stakeholders at this stage can also help promote a feeling of ownership and buy-in for the final Smart Village Plan, supporting its implementation.

**It recommended to consider a range of engagement types to reach a wide audience. These might include:**

**Focus groups or interviews** with key stakeholders to gather sectoral insights and promote ownership and buy-in.



**Public surveys** to gather information from a wide number of respondents in the community. These can be shared both in paper format or online using tools such as <https://www.surveymonkey.com/>.



**Community workshops** to present emerging findings and gain direct feedback. Workshops with multiple attendees are also useful to allow different community members to engage with each other and support the cross-pollination of ideas.



**Social media.**

# Community Consultation



Community consultation and engagement played a central role in the “Smart Village Training Programme for Rural Dublin”. Specifically, engagement was pursued in three core ways (as elaborated throughout this section):

## Community Survey

- The community participants co-created an online survey with the project team. This was designed to capture information on respondents perceptions and priorities for their local community.
- This online survey was live from May 19th to June 19th 2023 and promoted by Fingal LEADER Partnership and the project participants
- In total the online survey received 320 responses.



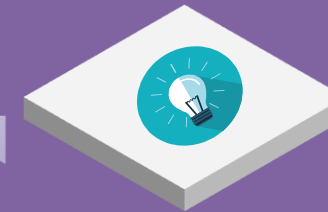
## Lecture Series

- KPMG utilised a blend of in-person and online workshops to deliver the Smart Village Training Programme. Each workshop included a training and capacity building component.
- The training element involved KPMG delivering lectures around core themes that are central to the Smart Village concept .



## Community Reflections

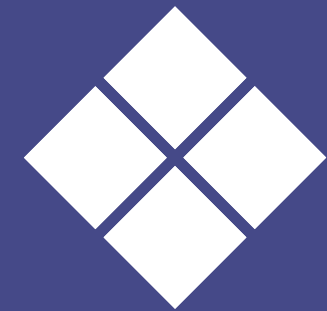
- Each workshop promoted a two way learning exchange.
- During each workshop, KPMG invited participants to break into smaller groups in order to complete an exercise based on the theme of the training.
- During this session, detailed community feedback and suggestions was recorded.



# Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin

## Step 2: Engage *Community Survey*

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KPMG Future Analytics



SmartVillages



## As discussed in Lecture 5 – ‘Social Research Techniques’

- Researchers use **data** (facts/statistics/items of information) to help explain, calculate, analyse or plan.
- Data can be subdivided into two broad categories:
  - Quantitative** - Data in the form of numbers or measurements
  - Qualitative** - Data which is not in the form of numbers

	Qualitative Research	Quantitative Research
Objective/Purpose	Gain an understanding of underlying reasons or motivations Uncover trends in thought and opinion of individuals	Quantify data and generalise results to the population of interest Often followed by qualitative research to explore findings further
Sample	Usually, a small number of samples	Usually, a large number of samples
Example	Focus Groups, Interviews, Group Discussions	Surveys, Profiling, Simulations

*The project team co-developed a community survey in consultation with workshop participants. The findings stemming from this survey will be outlined in the following slides. The survey received 316 responses and 0 responses from Naul. **Therefore, the following slides present the total quantitative responses (316) and a selection of qualitative responses from across rural Dublin (i.e., DLR, Fingal and South Dublin).***



The following slides present the findings of the **quantitative and qualitative** questions from the community survey.

**Quantitative** - Respondents to the survey were asked questions about their background (e.g., place of residence, employment status and living arrangement) and were given an option to “select one/many” predefined answers.

In addition, respondents were asked to prioritise a list of strengths, constraints, opportunities and threats (SCOT) to the future development of their local town/village. The answers for these lists were co-created with programme participants during the lecture series.

**Qualitative** - Respondents also had an option to select “other” if they felt that an alternative answer to the SCOT based questions were appropriate but not listed. The responses for these questions were open-ended and provided a text box that respondents could type their answer into.

A sample of relevant qualitative responses are presented after the quantitative responses. It should be noted that some qualitative responses for particular towns/villages were left blank and in these cases, we have provided a examples of responses from alternatives towns/villages.

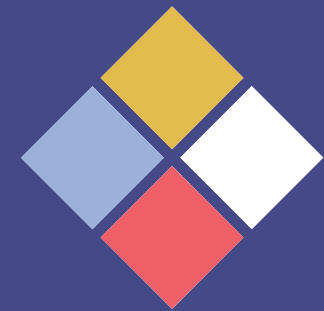


# Smart Villages

## Understanding the County Context

### Community Survey: Quantitative Responses

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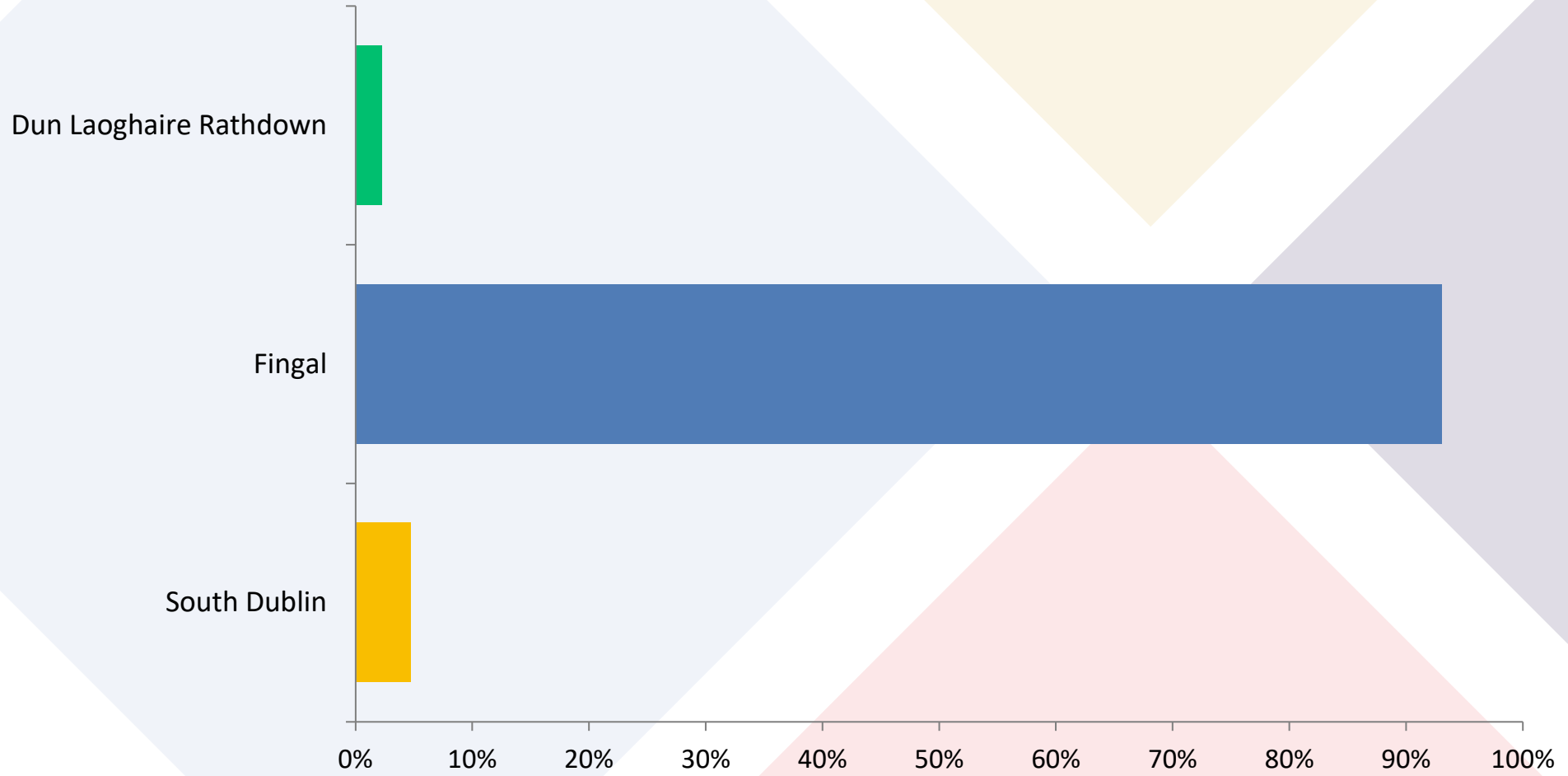


SmartVillages

# Survey Results

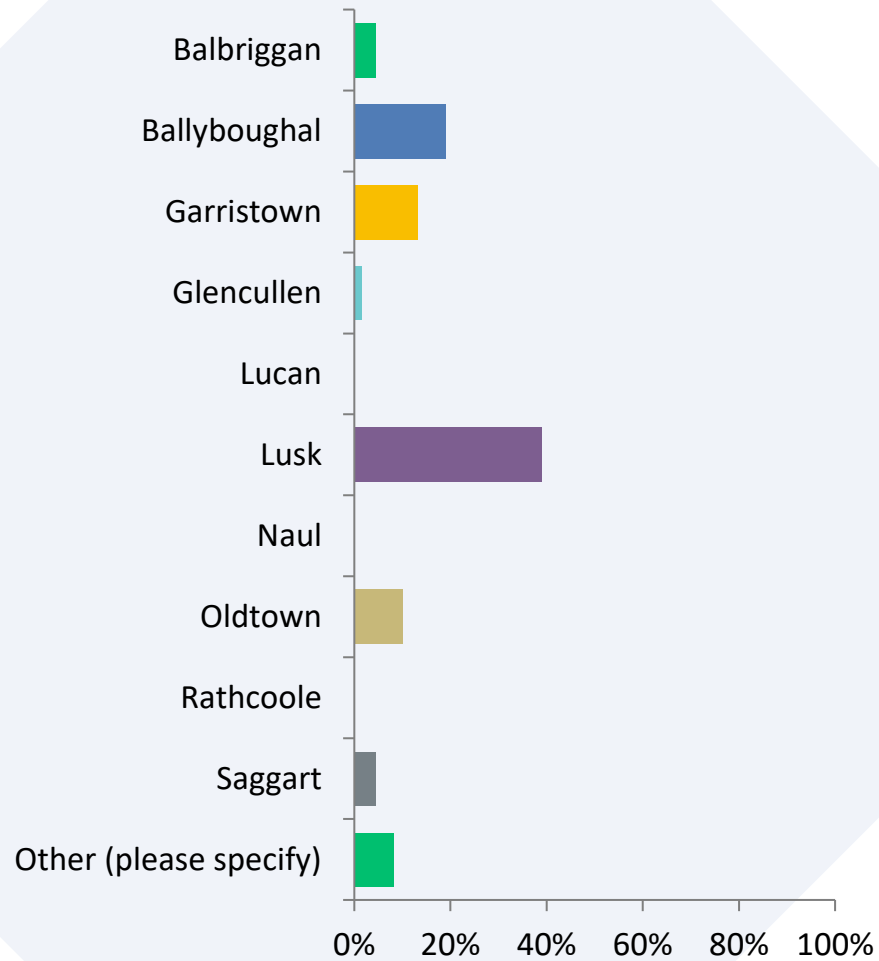
## County

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Dun Laoghaire Rathdown	2.22%	7
Fingal	93.04%	294
South Dublin	4.75%	15
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>316</b>



# Survey Results

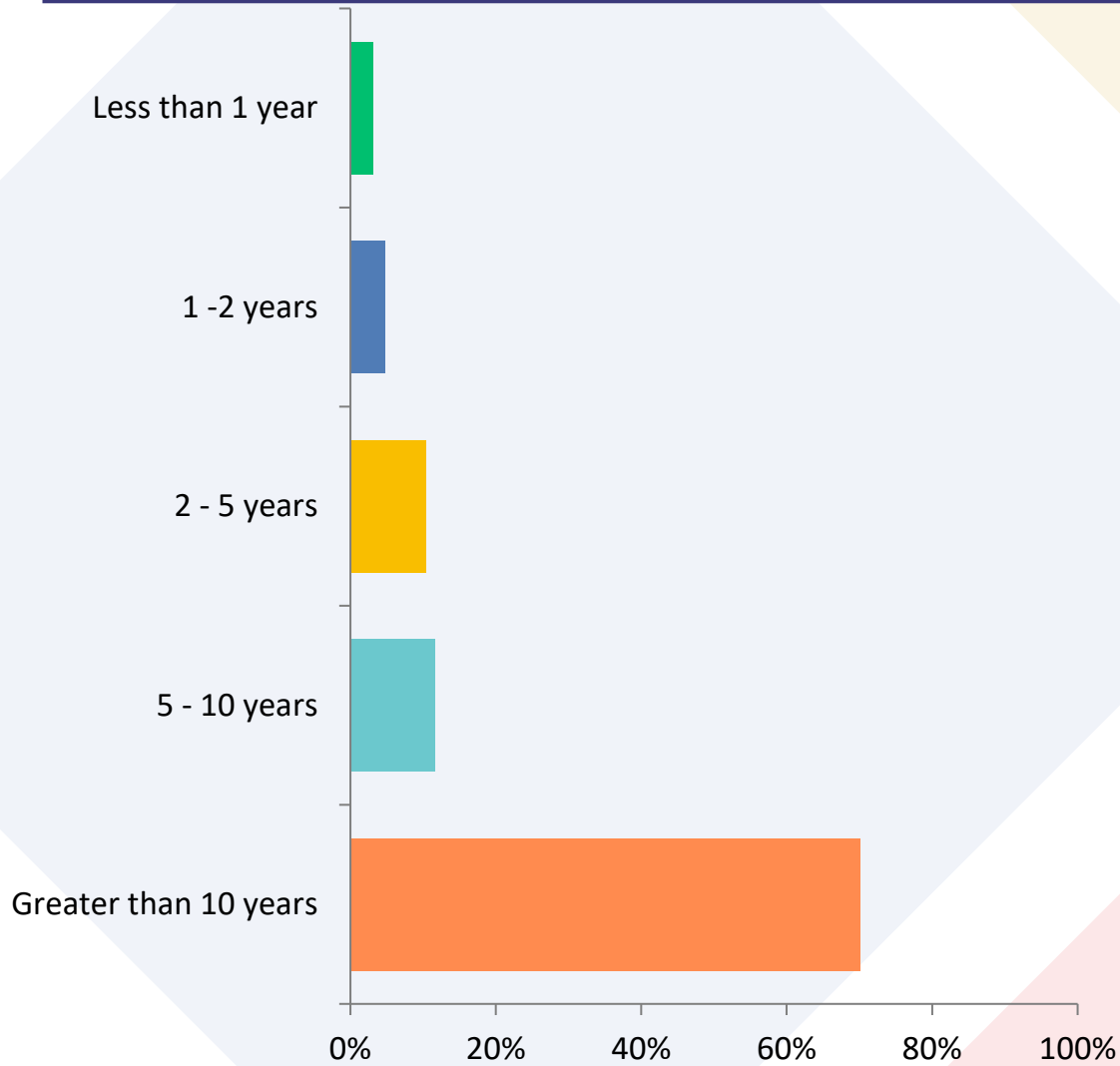
## Town/Village



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
		Percentage
Balbriggan	4.43%	14
Ballyboughal	18.99%	60
Garristown	13.29%	42
Glencullen	1.58%	5
Lucan	0%	0
Lusk	38.92%	123
Naul	0%	0
Oldtown	10.13%	32
Rathcoole	0%	0
Saggart	4.43%	14
Other (please specify)	8.23%	26
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>316</b>

# Survey Results

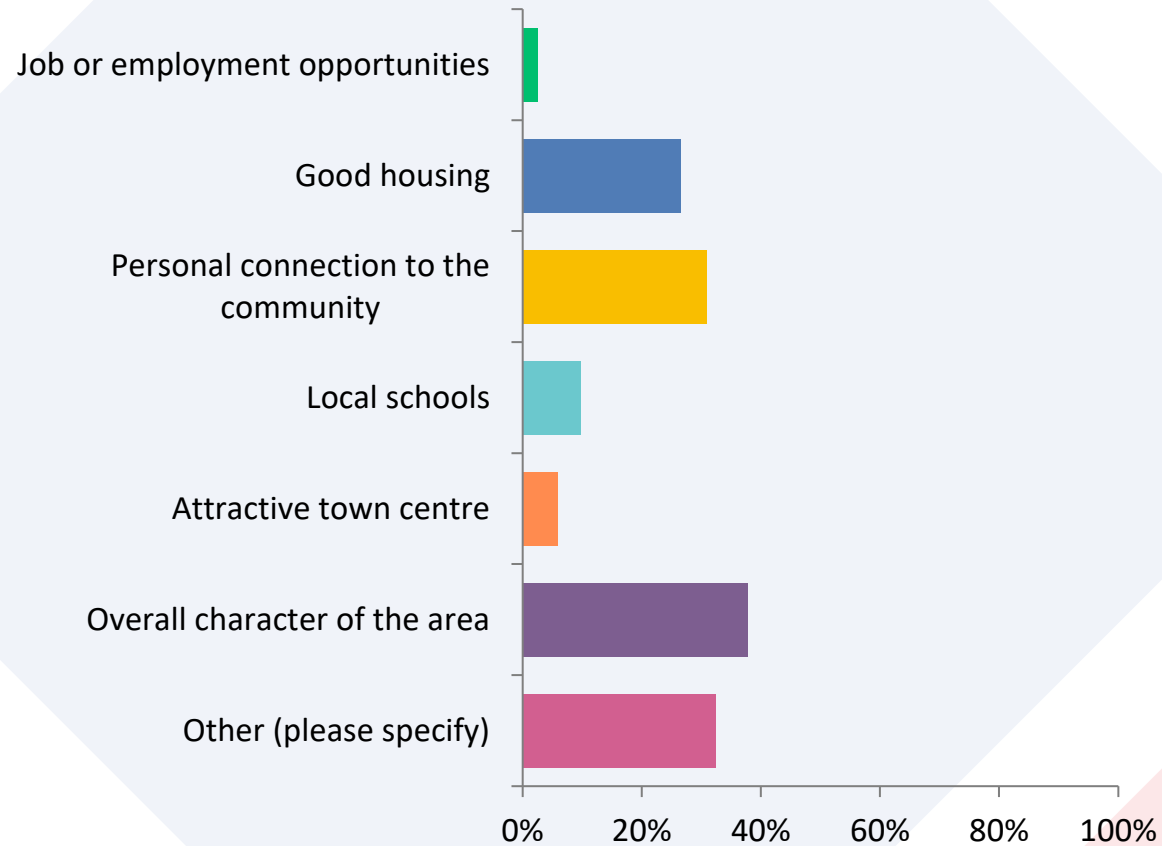
*How many years have you been living in your current location village or town?*



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Less than 1 year	3.15% 10
1 -2 years	4.73% 15
2 - 5 years	10.41% 33
5 - 10 years	11.67% 37
Greater than 10 years	70.03% 222
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>317</b>

# Survey Results

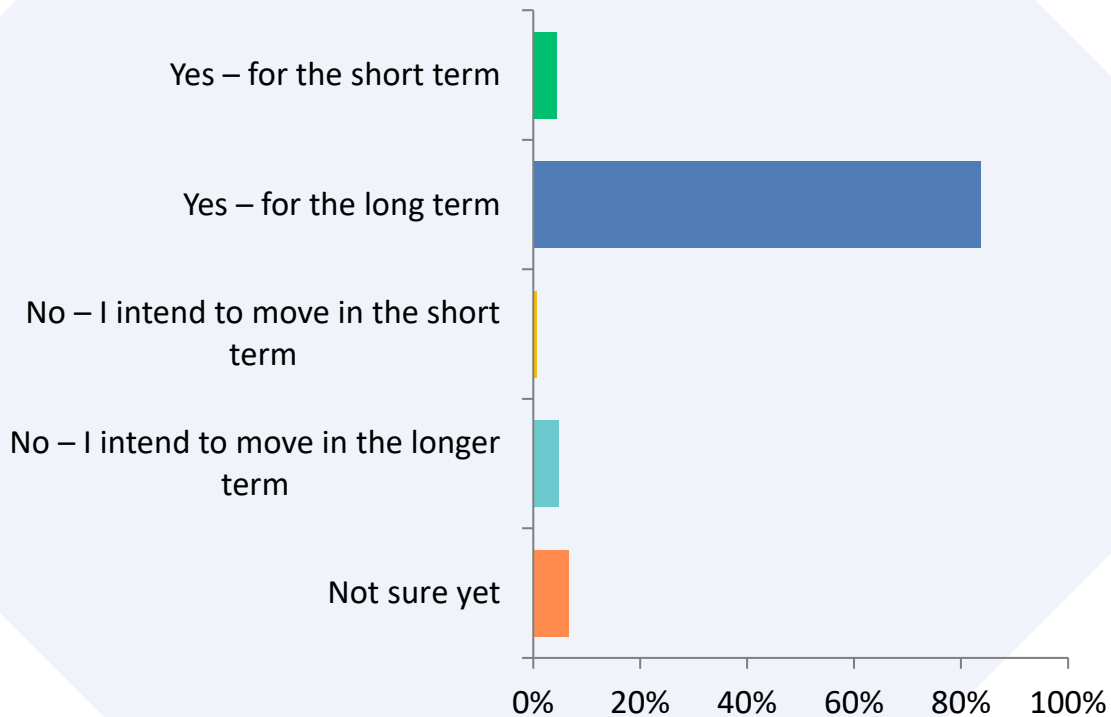
Why did you choose to live at your current location? (please select all that apply).



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Job or employment opportunities	2.52%	8
Good housing	26.50%	84
Personal connection to the community	30.91%	98
Local schools	9.78%	31
Attractive town centre	5.99%	19
Overall character of the area	37.85%	120
Other (please specify)	32.49%	103
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>463</b>

# Survey Results

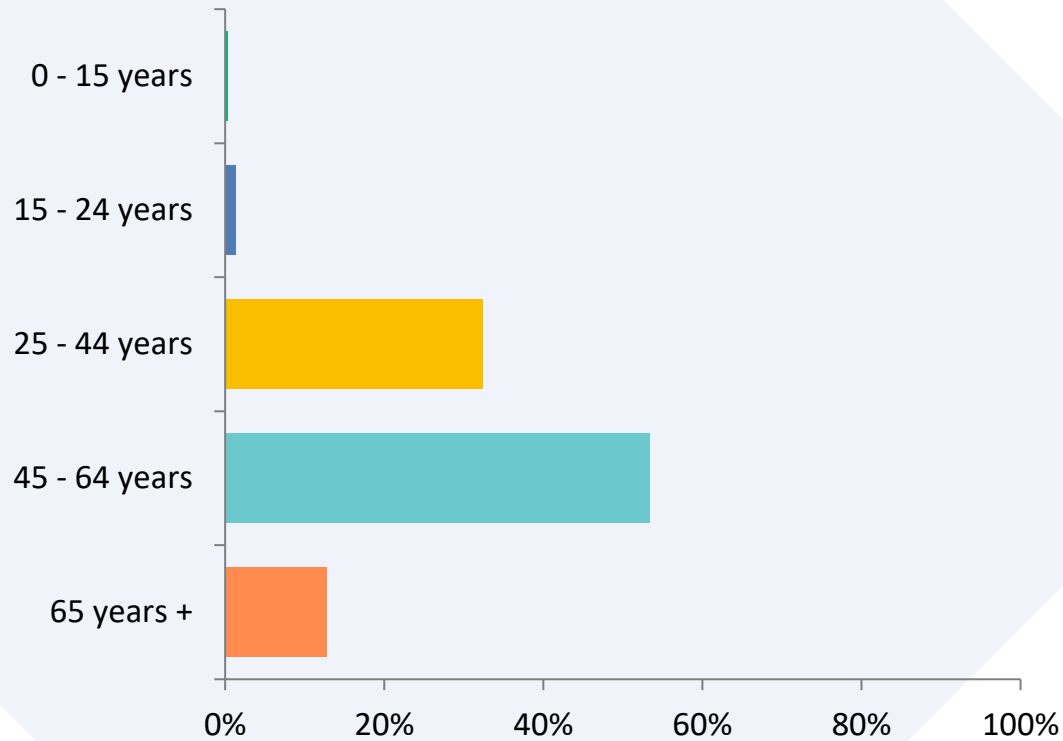
## Do you intend to continue to live in your current location?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes – for the short term	4.42%	14
Yes – for the long term	83.60%	265
No – I intend to move in the short term	0.63%	2
No – I intend to move in the longer term	4.73%	15
Not sure yet	6.62%	21
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>317</b>

# Survey Results

## Age

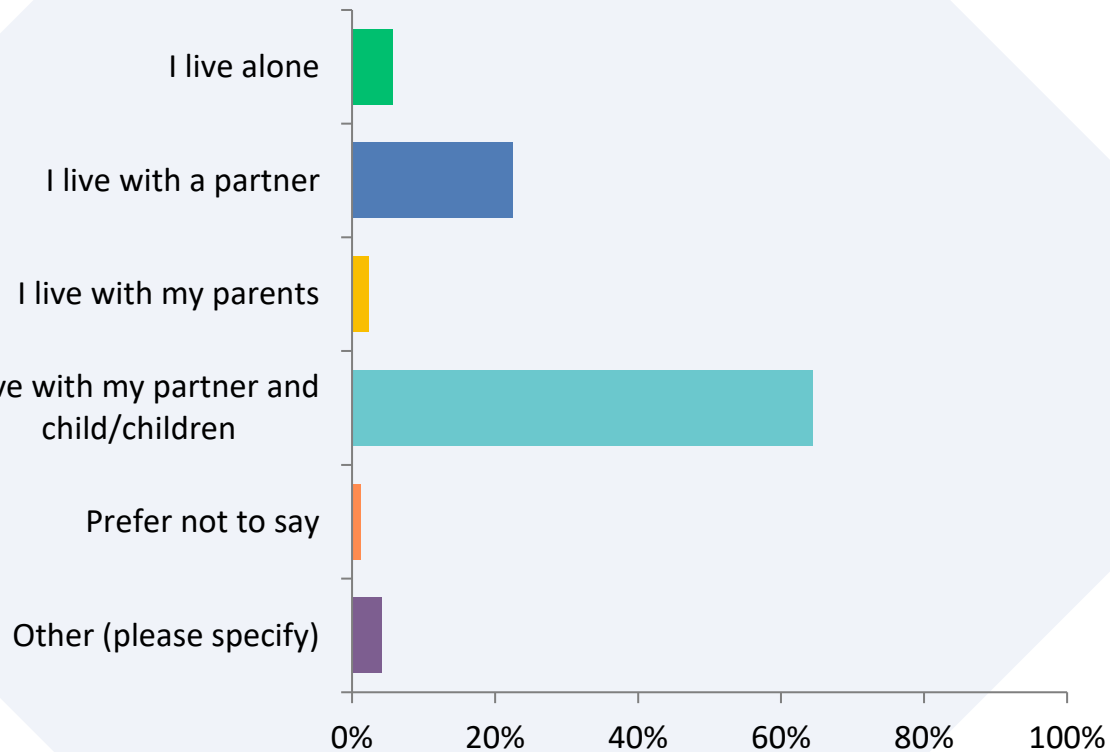


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0 - 15 years	0.32%	1
15 - 24 years	1.27%	4
25 - 44 years	32.38%	102
45 - 64 years	53.33%	168
65 years +	12.70%	40
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>315</b>



# Survey Results

## What statement best describes your current living arrangements?

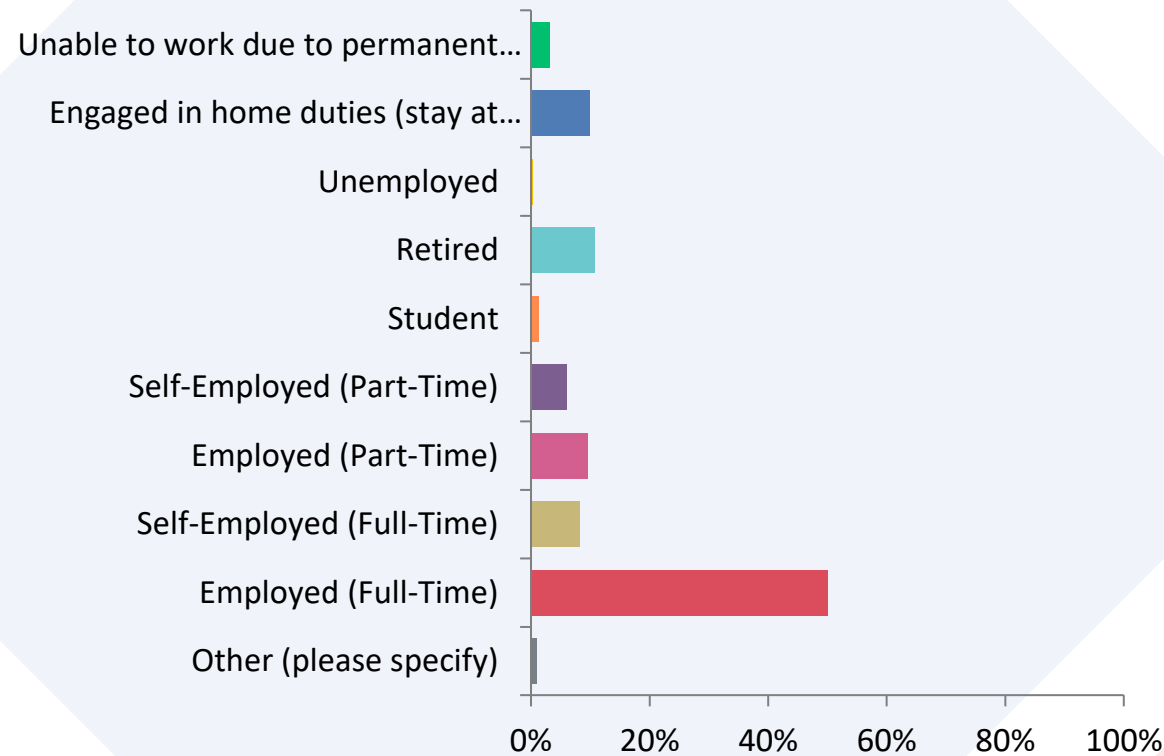


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I live alone	5.68%	18
I live with a partner	22.40%	71
I live with my parents	2.21%	7
I live with my partner and child/children	64.35%	204
Prefer not to say	1.26%	4
Other (please specify)	4.10%	13
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>317</b>



# Survey Results

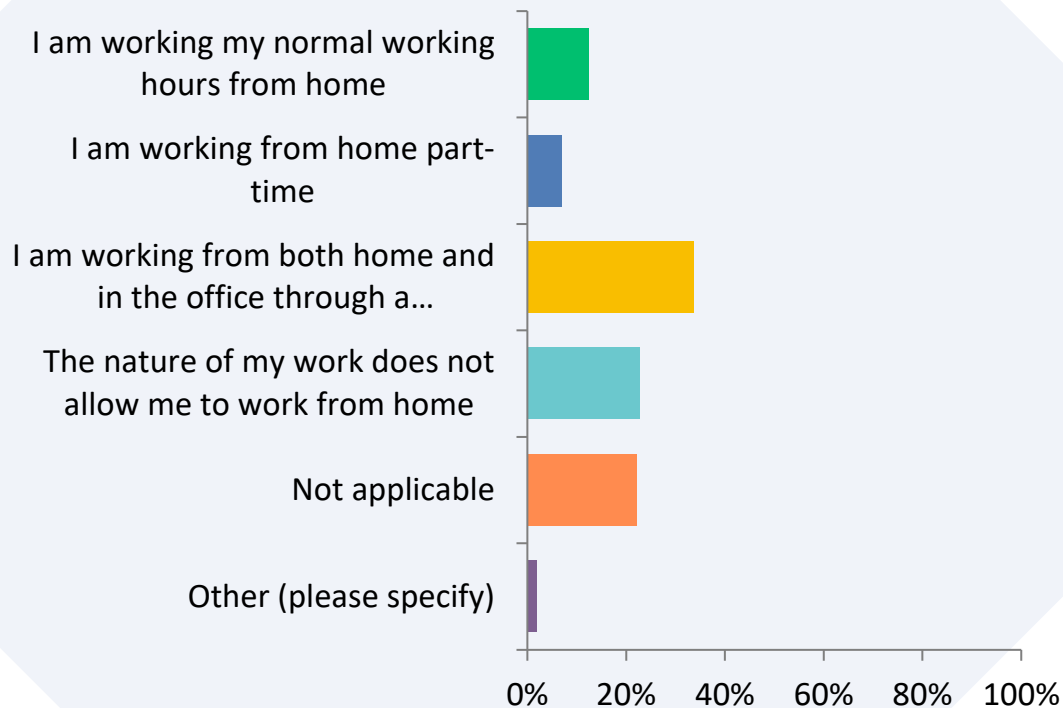
## How would you best describe your current employment status?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
	Percentage	Count
Unable to work due to permanent sickness/disability	3.16%	10
Engaged in home duties (stay at home parent, carer etc.)	9.81%	31
Unemployed	0.32%	1
Retired	10.76%	34
Student	1.27%	4
Self-Employed (Part-Time)	6.01%	19
Employed (Part-Time)	9.49%	30
Self-Employed (Full-Time)	8.23%	26
Employed (Full-Time)	50.0%	158
Other (please specify)	0.95%	3
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>316</b>

# Survey Results

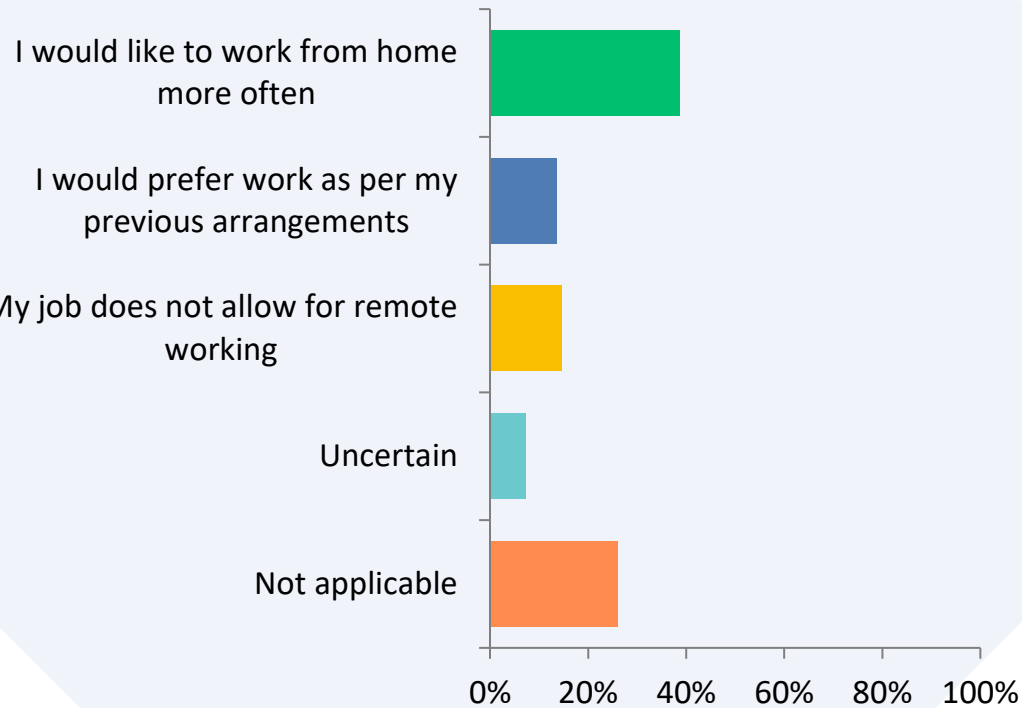
## What statement best describes your current working arrangements?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
	Percentage	Count
I am working my normal working hours from home	12.38%	39
I am working from home part-time	6.98%	22
I am working from both home and in the office through a hybrid/blended working arrangement	33.65%	106
The nature of my work does not allow me to work from home	22.86%	72
Not applicable	22.22%	70
Other (please specify)	1.90%	6
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>315</b>

# Survey Results

*What statement best describes your preferred working arrangements for the future?*

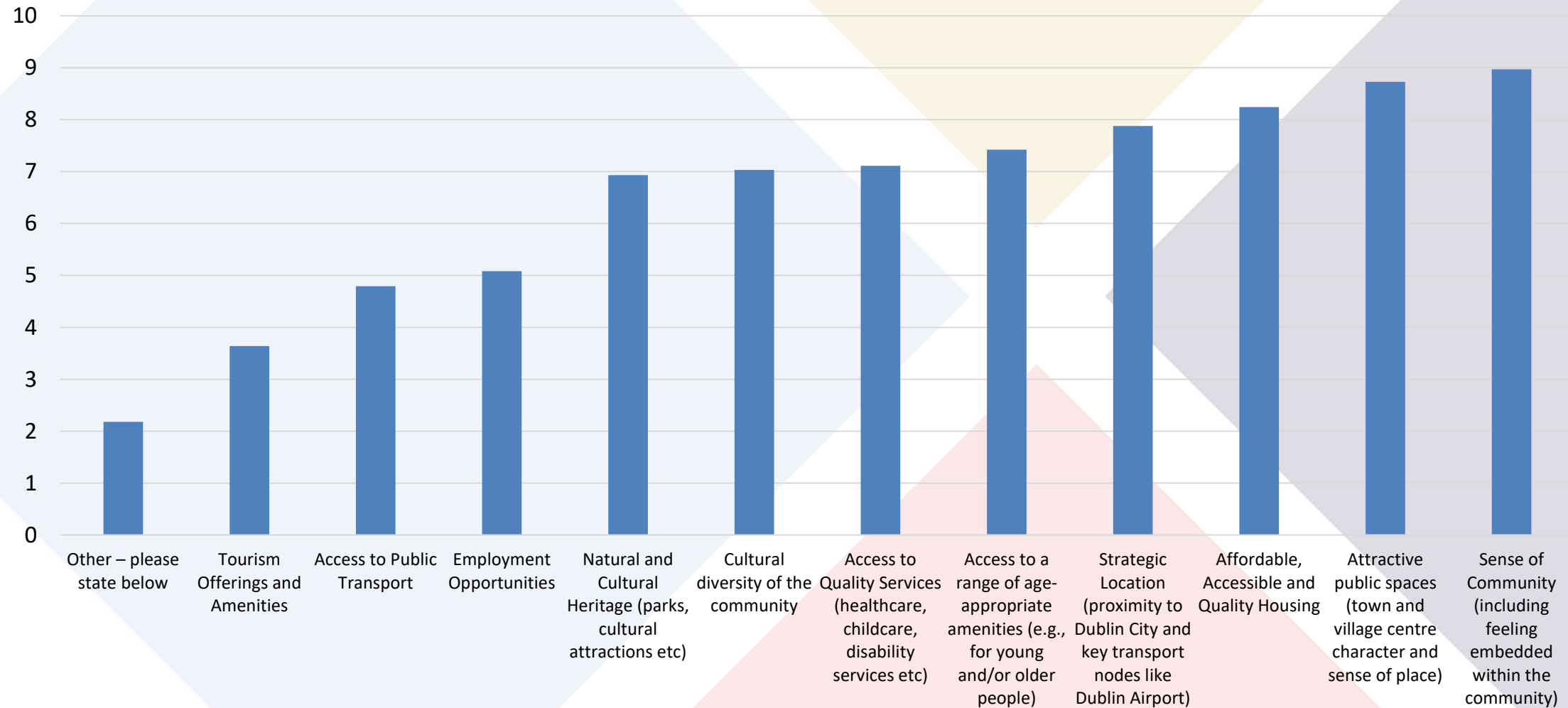


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I would like to work from home more often	38.61%	122
I would prefer work as per my previous arrangements	13.61%	43
My job does not allow for remote working	14.56%	46
Uncertain	7.28%	23
Not applicable	25.95%	82
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>316</b>

# Survey Results

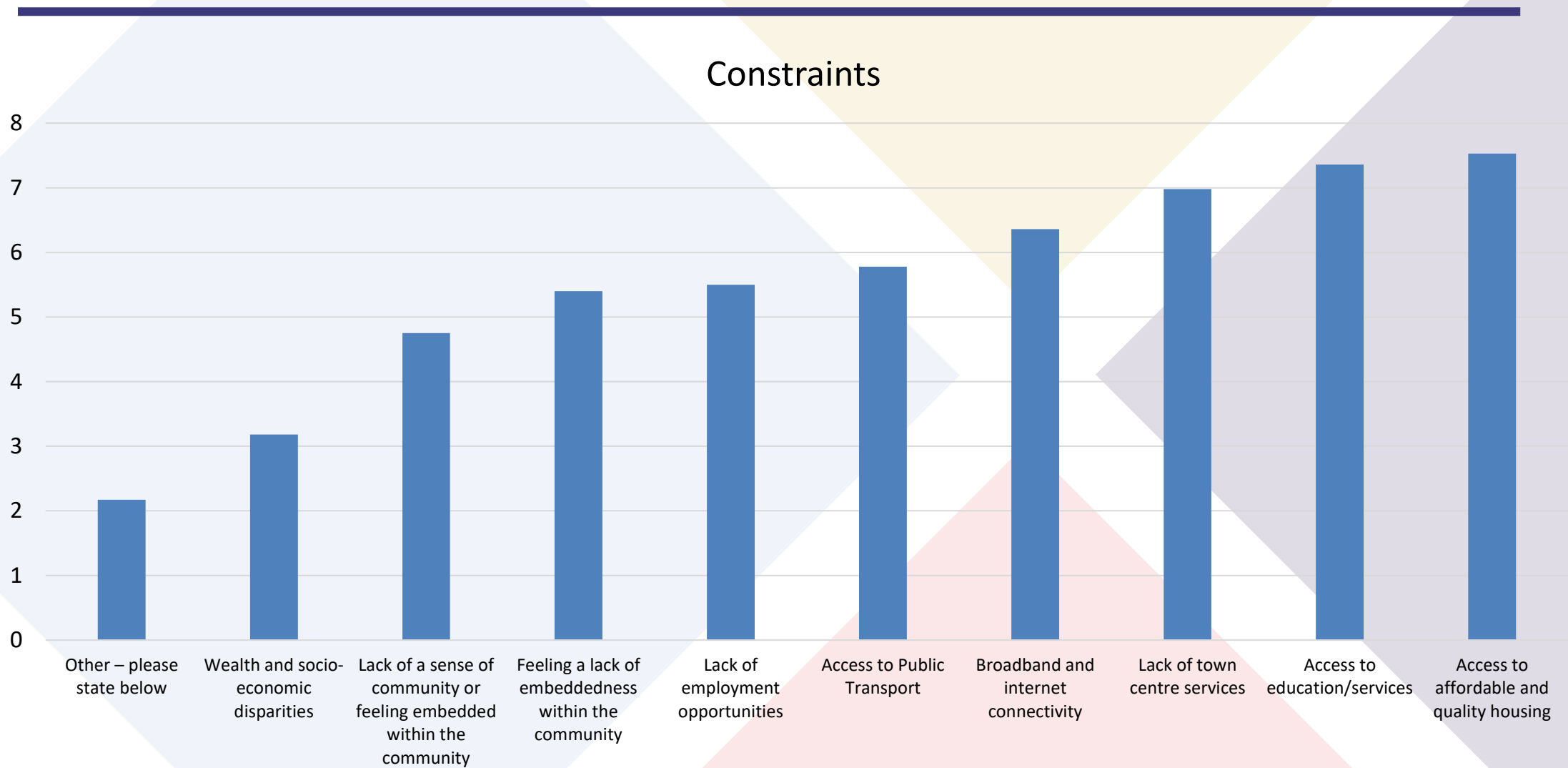
What are your town or village's greatest strengths?

## Strengths



# Survey Results

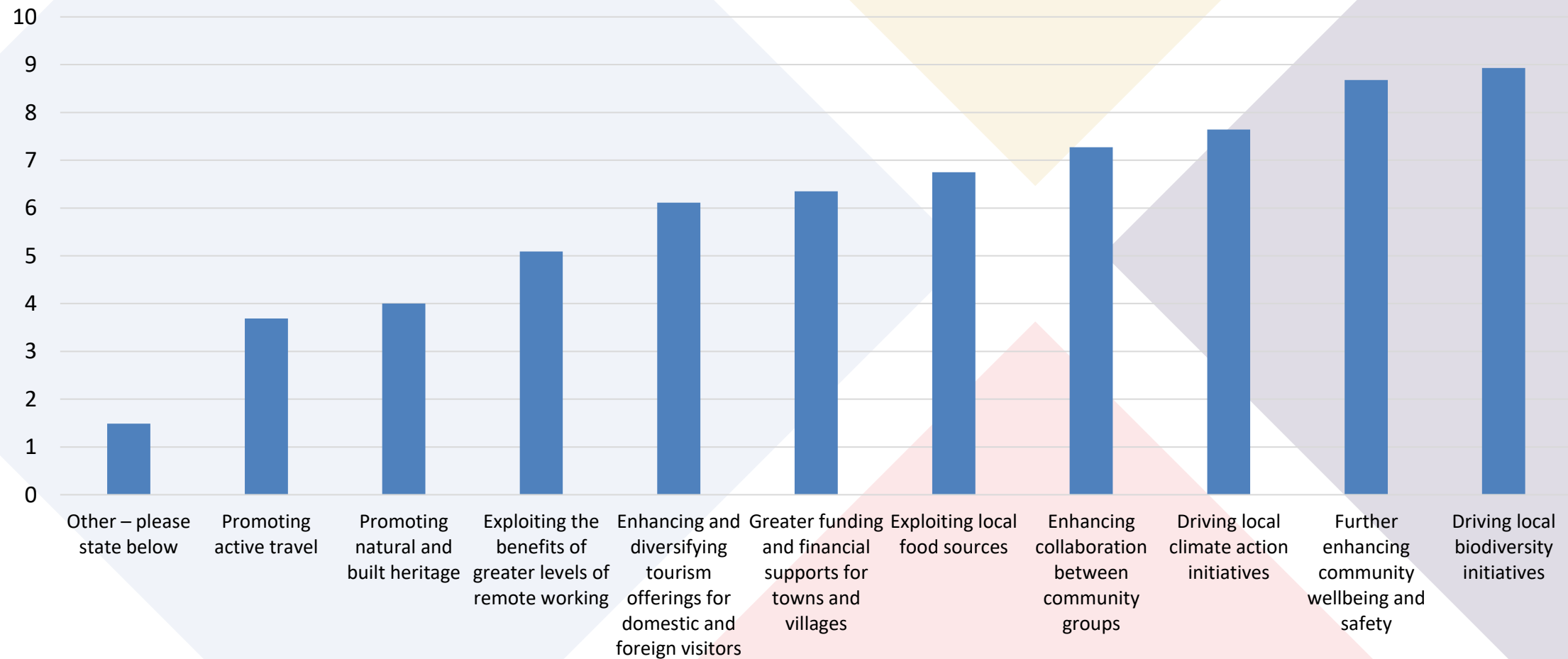
What are your town or village's greatest constraints?



# Survey Results

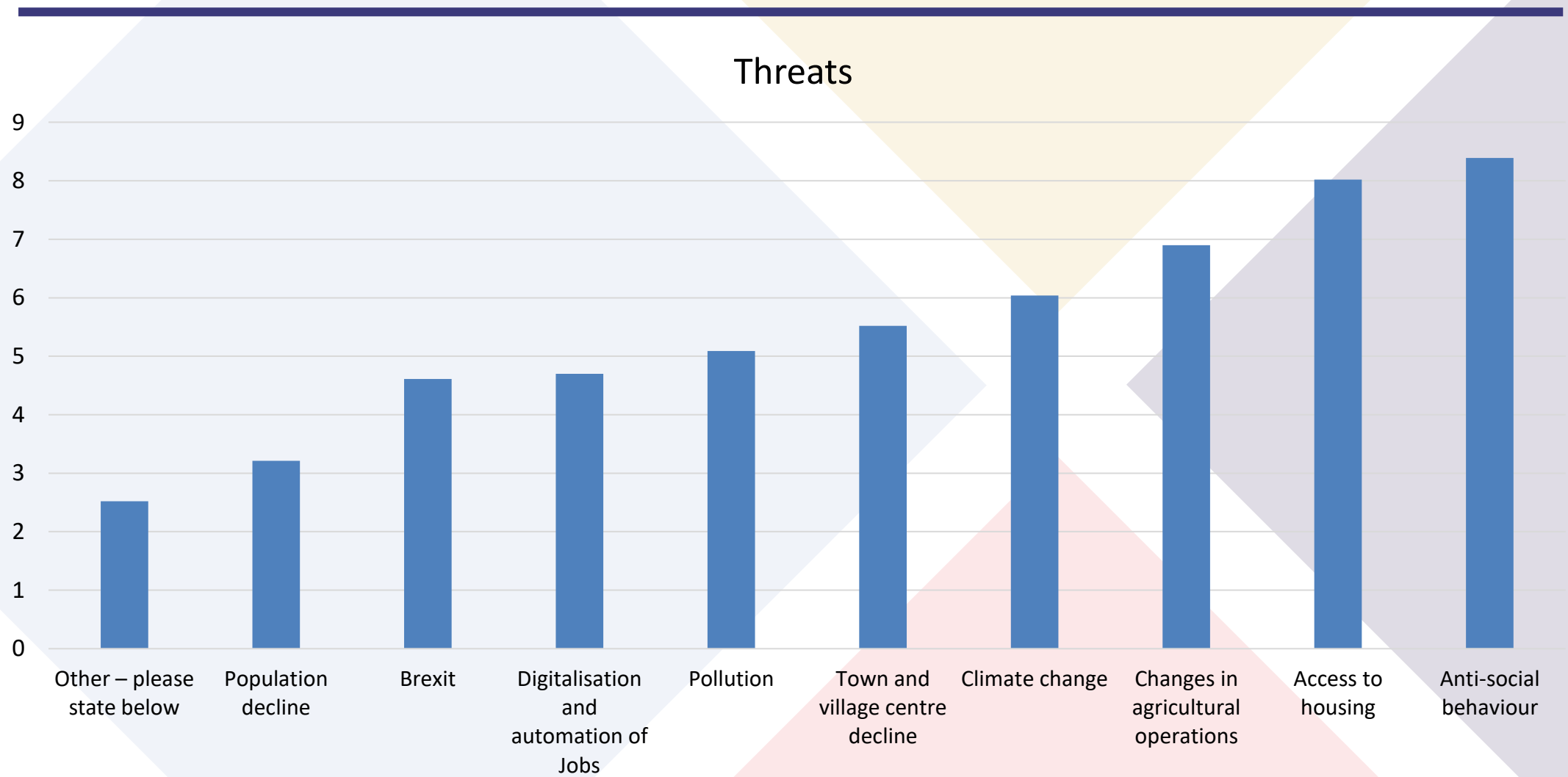
What are your town or village's greatest opportunities?

## Opportunities



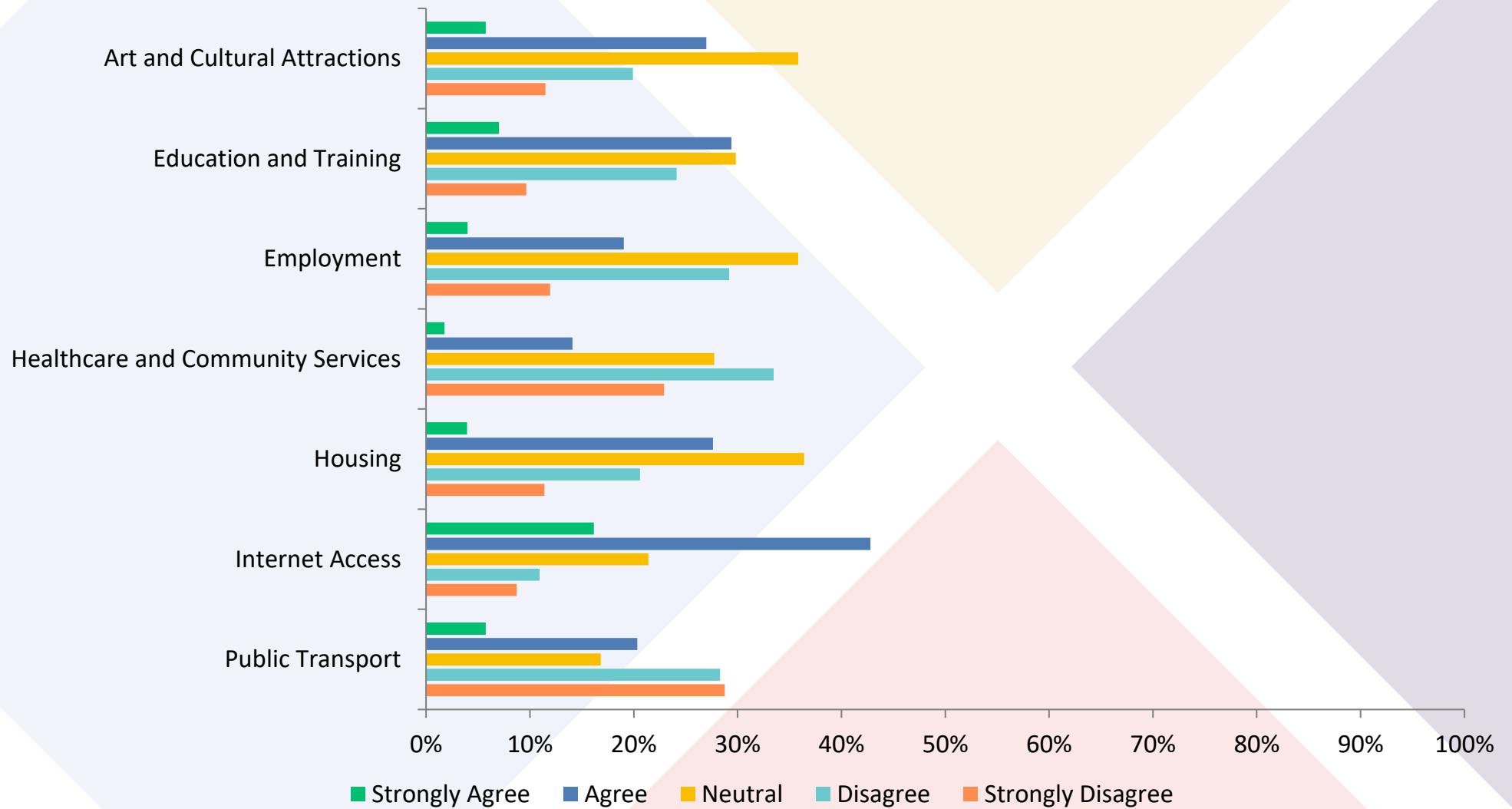
# Survey Results

What are your town or village's greatest threats?



# Survey Results

Do you agree with the following statements – “Our community has good access to”:

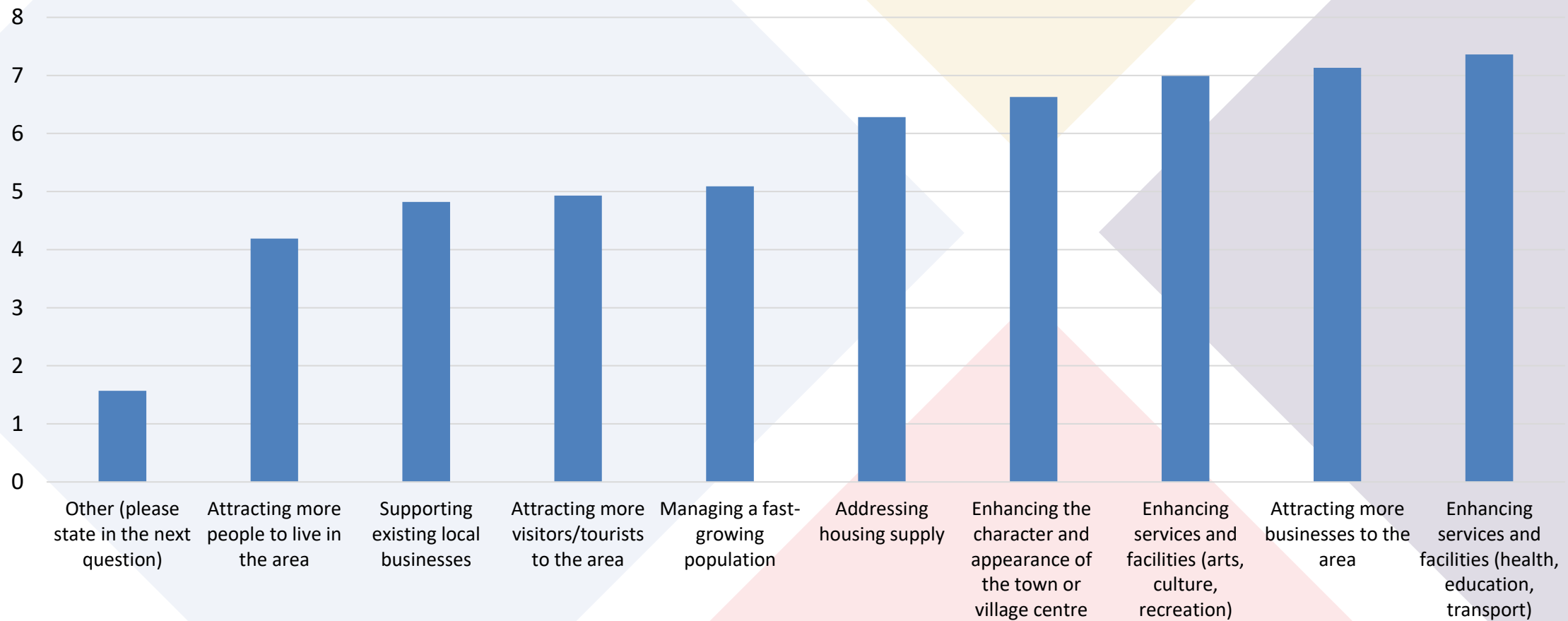




# Survey Results

*What are the main objectives you would prioritise to create a resilient, inclusive, sustainable, and prosperous future for the people of your community and the region? Please rank these in order of priority.*

## Priority Objectives



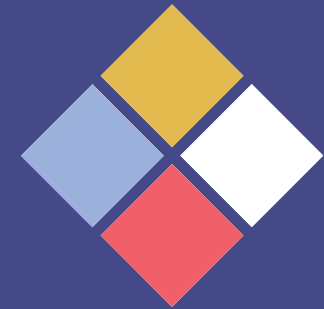
# Smart Villages

## Understanding the County Context

### Community Survey:

### Qualitative Responses (Examples)

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SmartVillages



As previously outlined, the survey comprised of quantitative and qualitative questions. The following slides set out a sample of qualitative responses to the strengths, constraints, opportunities and threat (SCOT) based questions (for those that selected 'other') as well as the questions that required a response in a free text box (e.g., what is your vision for the future of the county/town/village, what actions do you believe are needed to realise this vision). **Please note: There were limited responses to the survey were from Naul. Therefore, the responses below are examples from other towns/villages and are intended to illustrate the types of responses that can be collected from qualitative survey questions.**

## Strengths

- Great volunteers organising local clubs (e.g. GAA, soccer, athletics, clean up group etc.).
- Great local public representative who works tirelessly for our community.
- Proximity to beaches and parks.
- Sports clubs.
- History of the town.
- Great community spirit and willingness to improve the local area.
- Lovely community spirit.
- Sense of place.
- Rural location.

## Opportunities

- Reducing crime rate by providing adequate youth centre and sports facilities.
- Developing tourism.
- Local tradespeople and services.
- History.
- Heritage and food producers.
- Greatest assets are the volunteers in Lusk.
- I think there are a number of community groups in who work independently and could achieve a lot more if there was more collaboration between the groups.

## Constraints

- Poor offering for the youth in the town. A good community centre is badly needed, a focal point.
- Lack of sports facilities. No basketball courts, no clubhouse for athletics club, no decent all-weather pitches.
- No youth centre for teenagers, no dedicated sports centre, no restaurant.
- Severe lack of amenities for growing population.
- No facilities for adults or kids.
- Unsafe roads into village and through village. Volumes of traffic increasing, no safe way to cycle to school for example.
- No amenities or park area for kids, teenagers, adults and elderly. Better community centre. Town is growing but school and amenities are not in place.



## Threats

- Not enough Garda policing station closes and crime huge.
- Lack of amenities leading to anti-social behaviour.
- Lack of sports facilities.
- The lack of facilities being provided for young people is starting to bring big problems which will only get worse. The town desperately needs facilities.
- Our young population have nowhere to go. We need restaurants & cafes for them.
- Lack of green open space for public gatherings to host outdoor events.
- Increase in anti-social behaviour.
- Lack of public parking spaces.
- Lack of regular public transport.

## Priority objectives

- Enhanced efficient and reliable public transport.
- Safe cycle routes.
- More sports facilities - esp. an athletics track.
- Facilities.
- We need facilities (sports, restaurants, community centres).

## Vision for County

- Good transport and increase in shops and businesses will reduce the burden on other places and will in turn generate employment opportunities.
- Massive improvement in youth facilities as Fingal has the largest % of young people in the country.
- Community driven space with collaboration between diverse groups with equal access to recreation and facilities services for all.
- A safe environment for communities to flourish and support local businesses.
- A bold, accountable and educated community working together with strategically planned and purposeful action towards the well-being of future generations through our treatment of all carefully considered aspects of the environment and each other.
- Grow local amenities for residents of towns & villages, offer public spaces & community facilities for them & visitors, protect heritage/history. Aid voluntary groups financially. Improve Main Street views. Encourage volunteers.
- More employment opportunities, more facilities needed for children and young people.
- An integrated county which is well serviced by public transport and which is laid out sufficiently to accommodate increased traffic safely. It should plan for both ends of the demographic - very young and old so the working population can work in as stress free a way as is possible.



## Vision for your Town/Village

- Better shops, leisure facilities in the town but keep it green and don't create a sprawl. Don't ruin what we already have, enhance it.
- Proper sporting facilities, a town centre with useful shops, restaurants etc.
- Town providing for both locally working and commuting population. Well connected with wider active travel network, attractive for active recreation and proud of local heritage and produce.
- Better services and facilities for all ages.
- Providing amenities to growing population while maintaining the villages heritage.
- A vibrant town centre with amazing sports facilities.
- To enhance and improve services for growing population to improve quality of life and connectivity to nearby towns and amenities.
- More cohesive as a community. Better public transport and extending footpaths will help.
- More community spaces (indoor and outdoor).
- A potential decarbonisation zone for Fingal, that supports both local business and agriculture, remote working and a vibrant community.
- Better amenities for children to play, residents to eat and shop and to exercise safely (e.g. parks and cycle tracks).

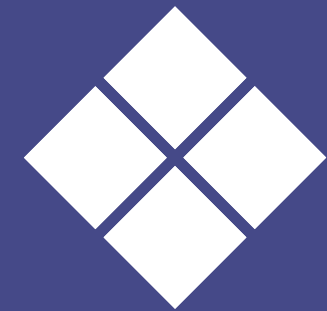
## Actions needed

- React to dangers of overpopulation, respect the environment.
- More funding available for local businesses, sports and recreation.
- Better and safe links for active travel. Develop sport and other local facilities. Promote businesses, especially produce sector. Act on the biodiversity protection and expansion.
- A collaborative approach from all groups in the area and representatives for each estate and existing business owners and entrepreneurs.
- More amenities and better infrastructure for an already growing population. Better housing and public transport and better communication between the Residents, Council and the Gardai.
- Identifying local volunteers or community reps and encouraging them to develop ideas.
- Bring people together to really map out what is needed to make our community a great place to live, work and visit. Turn the map into an action plan, build clear communication, collaboration and shared purpose with existing landowners to enable the vision and then break it into tangible, well-managed and funded actions towards realising the path to commencement and realisation.
- More consultation, more investment in cultural opportunities. Village is too reliant on volunteers.

# Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin

## Step 2: Engage *Thematic Workshops: Lecture Series*

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KPMG Future Analytics



SmartVillages

# Thematic Workshops



A Smart Village Training Programme should assist communities in developing a more thorough understanding of the dynamics of the rural environment in which they live (inclusive of key demographic, economic and societal trends) and enable them to build their own vision for its future development.

This involves specific training around key themes relevant to the trajectory of rural places – but also specifically to the smart village concept. This should enable communities to identify key priorities, challenges or opportunities for their areas and integrate these considerations under a core vision and/or set of objectives for the short, medium and longer term.

As part of this training Programme, KPMG utilised a blend of in-person and online workshops. The overarching objective of the Training Programme is to demonstrate the core elements of a Smart Village Action Plan and to train communities in how to develop a Plan themselves.

As such, each workshop included a training and capacity building component. The training element involved KPMG delivering lectures around core themes that are central to the Smart Village concept – to build participants’ knowledge and understanding of how these themes apply in practice.

The capacity building element sought to promote a two-way learning exchange. In this instance, KPMG invited participants to break into smaller groups in order to complete an exercise based on the theme of the training. The KPMG team then facilitated discussion and mutual learning. An overview of each workshop module is outlined below and overleaf.

**Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin**



PROGRAMME OF EVENTS				
Workshop	Date	Time	Format	Location
Launch Events: Introduction to Smart Villages - Promoting Collaborative Working (x3 events)	13/04/23	18.30-20.30	In-Person	• Balbriggan Bracken Court Hotel • Rathcoole Community Centre
	17/04/23	18.30-20.30	In-Person	• Glencullen Community Hall
A Cohesive Approach to Smart Villages – The Role of Networking, Leadership, and Communication	20/04/23	18.30-20.30	Online	
Our Rural Future – The Role of Digitalisation	27/04/23	18.30-20.30	Online	
Building Resilient Communities – The Role of Health and Wellbeing	04/05/23	18.30-20.30	Online	
Analysing the Potential of the Local Area: Social Research Techniques	11/05/23	18.30-20.30	Online	
Building a Circular Economy – The Role of Sustainable Tourism and the Social Economy	18/05/23	18.30-20.30	Online	
Future-Proofing Our Strategies – The Impact of Climate Change, Renewable Energy and Emission Reduction	25/05/23	18.30-20.30	Online	
Creating a Smart Village Plan (x6 events)	01/06/23 08/06/23 15/06/23	18.30-20.30	In-Person	6 Locations TBC
Towards Smart Villages – Final Reflections	19/06/23	18.30-20.30	Online	

# Online Workshops

## Online Workshop 1: A Cohesive Approach to Smart Villages: The Role of Networking, Leadership and Communication



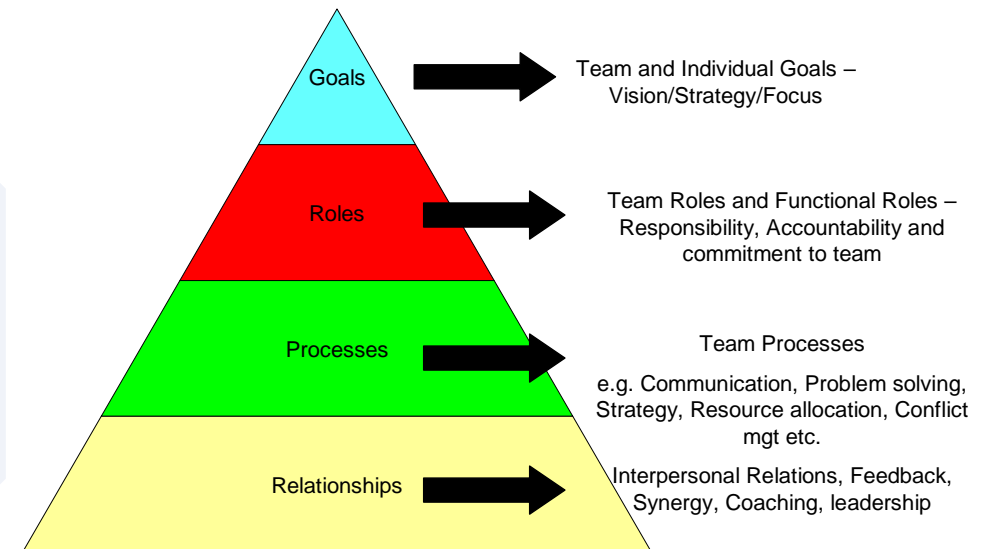
This workshop focused on the skills and tools necessary for effective networking, leadership, and local action in the smart village context.

It covered the importance of building and maintaining relationships, the role of effective communication in building trust and cooperation and the importance of leadership in bringing people together to achieve common goals.

The role of local champions was explored as an exemplar of best practice in the domain of community-led engagements and smart village development.

The workshop also explored various communication tools and technologies, including social media, video conferencing, email, and their potential to support effective networking, leadership, and communication.

### Building a High Performing Team





# Online Workshops

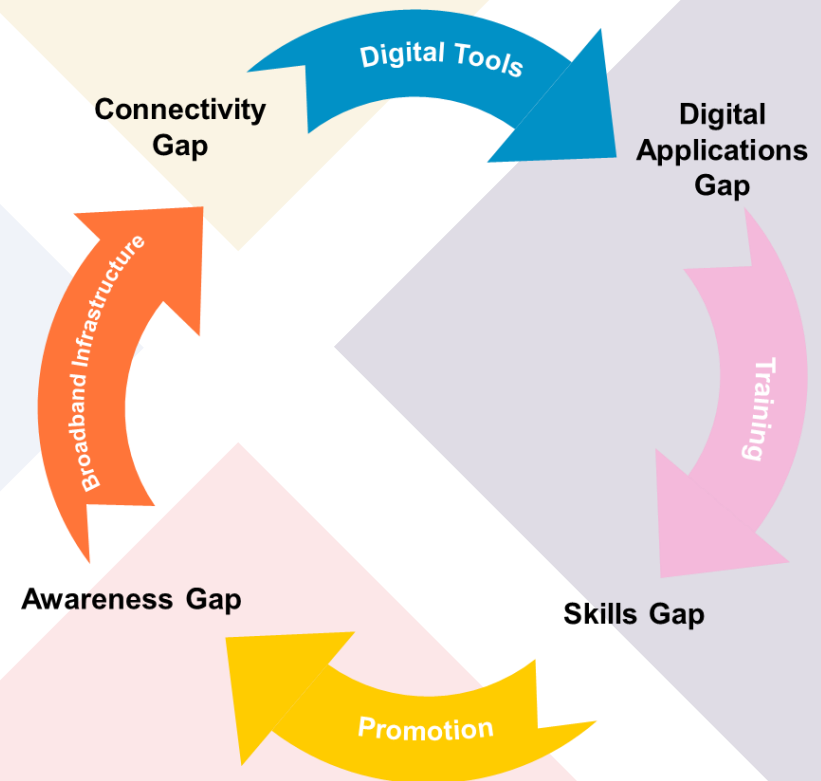
## Online Workshop 2: Our Rural Future - The Role of Digitalisation



Workshop 2 explored the role of Information and Communications technology (ICT) and digitalisation in supporting smart villages and unlocking opportunities for rural development. The term 'ICT' refers to a broad set of tools and resources that can be used to create, store and exchange information (e.g. the internet, smart phones and computers, sound and video broadcasting equipment, broadband infrastructure).

The application of ICT and digital tools can help solve challenges, address needs, connect key players and enhance innovation. Indeed, the implementation of new technologies and digital services to address the needs of rural communities is a core element of the smart village approach. However, it was emphasised that ICT and digital tools is not 'fix-all' solution and must be applied in a measured and targeted manner to address a particular need or challenge.

The workshop highlighted the concept of the 'digital divide'. This refers to the fact that access to digital technologies and the opportunities they present is not equitably distributed and can be hampered by factors such as geography and age. A smart village approach can help to tackle the digital divide for rural areas and close gaps in infrastructure, skills and awareness. Potential interventions can help develop infrastructure to ensure access to high speed broadband, develop new digital tools and applications to meet local needs, help improve skills and promote awareness.



# Online Workshops

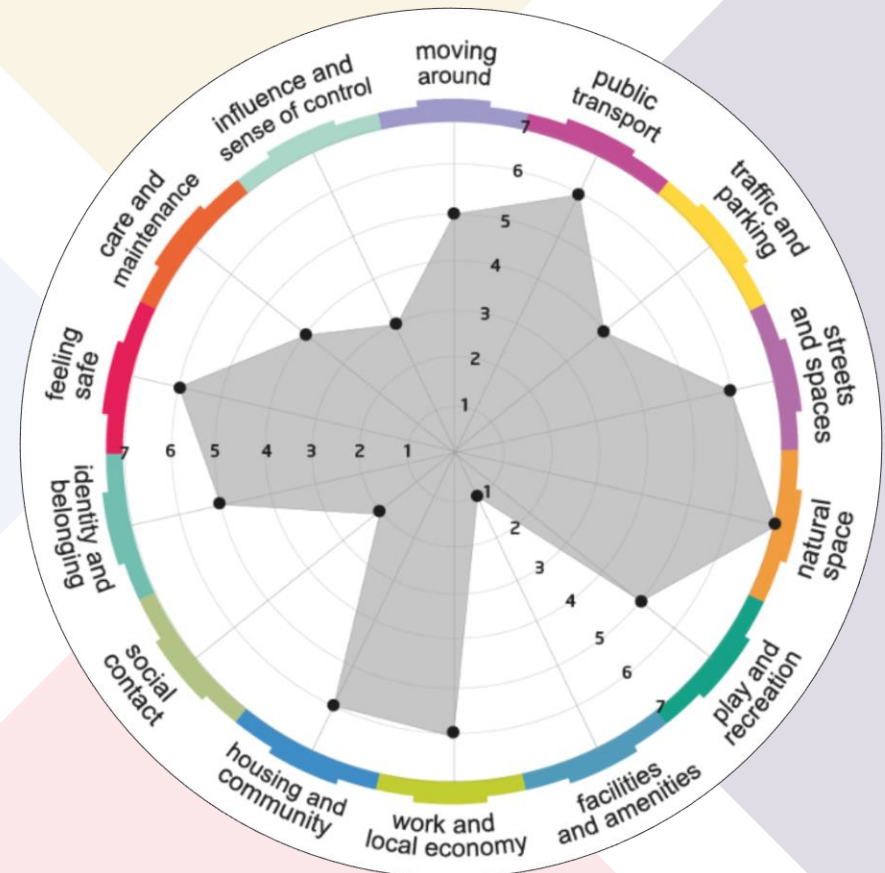
## Online Workshop 3: Building Resilient Communities – The Role of Health and Wellbeing



Workshop 3 examined the role of health and wellbeing in contributing to sustainable and resilient communities. The workshop placed a particular focus on health and wellbeing at the community, exploring how social, physical and demographic determinants can impact mental and physical health. Car dependency, access to active travel options such as walking and cycling, air and noise pollution and access to green space and recreational amenities are all important physical that contribute to a healthy community.

At the same time, opportunities for social interaction and engagement, perceived safety and the sense of identify fostered by a community are more intangible, social factors that contribute to a community's character.

The Place Standard tool was presented as a useful measuring tool to evaluate the overall health and quality of a community and identify priority areas for intervention. The tool sets out fourteen factors that are designed to encompass both the physical and social experience of a place. Each is scored on a scale of 1-7 to provide a visual representation of a communities performance against each factor. This tool can be used to facilitate conversation amongst community stakeholders, identify priority areas and help develop ideas for interventions.



# Online Workshops

## Online Workshop 4: Analysing the Potential of the Local Area – Social Research Techniques



Every community across Ireland and indeed the globe is continually changing. As such, communities need tools to track these shifts, address existing and emerging challenges, develop their resources and build on their strengths.

This workshop sought to train participants to use data gathering tools (including, surveys, interviews, focus groups and secondary data analysis) and demonstrate how to analyse, interpret and present regional and local data.

It also sought to co-develop an online community survey.

### Smart Villages: Training Programme for Rural Dublin



**The Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin: Have Your Say!**

**Do you live in a rural community in Fingal, Dún Laoghaire–Rathdown or South Dublin?**

The Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin is an initiative led by Fingal LEADER Partnership in association with KPMG Future Analytics. The programme aims to further strengthen the capacity of local communities to unlock innovative new solutions for the sustainable growth and development of rural areas across Dublin.

One of rural Dublin's greatest assets is the people that make up its communities. It is thus important that your voice helps to shape the Smart Villages Training Programme and its outcomes. **We wish to hear from you on your thoughts and views on the key opportunities for rural Dublin, and your suggestions for what the region needs to make it a thriving place to live, work and prosper.**

**The project is now launching a *Community Survey* to help build up a detailed picture of rural Dublin. Please have your say before Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> of June 2023.**



To complete the survey, please visit:  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/smartvillages>



For more information on the project, please visit: <https://dublinruralleader.ie/training-dublin-smart-village/>



Workshop 5 focussed on how local tourism initiatives can support improved employment and career opportunities for rural areas.

The workshop emphasised the importance of adopting a sustainable and responsible approach to local tourism, where visitor needs are balanced with those of the local community. A smart, community-led approach to tourism presents an opportunity to create more attractive places to both visit and live in. There are several trends and barriers that impact the development of the tourism offer in rural Dublin. These include a shortage of accommodation across the Dublin region, a lack of viable public transport options for visitors and tourism marketing that can emphasise Dublin City to the detriment of the surrounding rural area.

Participants discussed opportunity areas for tourism development in rural Dublin. Mountain biking was highlighted as an emerging area of interest for both North and South Dublin. It was suggested that a continuous coastal cycling route could connect visitors in Dublin City to Fingal and DLR. Hedgerows and other natural and historic heritage features could be connected to create new local networks of attractions.

### Developing your community tourism project

#### Develop a Plan

- Set up a structure
- Develop a clear 3-5 year plan to guide you
- Identify the people you need
- Keep track of progress

#### Understand your visitors

- Identify your target market
- Create experiences that will appeal to that market
- Tell the story of the project and why it has local impact
- Seek a value add – e.g. local info

#### Package your offer

- Make it easy to understand
- Link to regional brand/themes
- Deliver on the promise
- Link to the wider community

#### Connect with visitors

- Direct sales – brochures, website, social media, collaborative marketing
- Other channels – e.g. Tour operators, Airbnb experiences
- Networking – local/regional/national



# Online Workshops

## Online Workshop 6: Future Proofing Our Strategies – The Impact of Climate Change, Renewable Energy and Emissions Reductions



Workshop 6 examine the role that smart villages can play in improving the resilience of rural communities to climate change impacts. The workshop provided an introduction to the drivers of climate change and anticipated impacts on the Dublin region as a result of climate change. These include drier summers and increased risk of drought, wetter winters and greater likelihood of storm weather events, coastal erosion and flooding, and threats to native habitats and species.

It examined Ireland's targets under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2021 to achieve a 51% reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050, and explored what sort of interventions might be used to reduce emissions across different sectors. The distinction was made between climate mitigation and adaptation. The former seeks to reduce the rate of climate change of by reducing the emission of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. The latter seeks to anticipate climate change impacts and improve our resilience and minimise the damage they can cause on our built and natural environment.

The workshop also provided an overview of key resources and supports for community-based climate adaptation and mitigation initiatives.



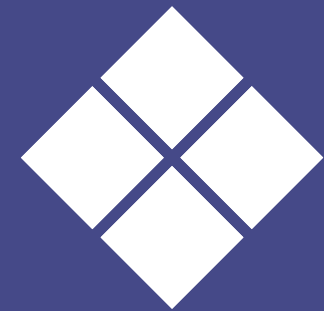
# Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin

## Step 2: Engage

*Thematic Workshops:*

*Community Feedback*

Prepared by  
KPMG Future Analytics



SmartVillages

# Workshop Notes: Thematic Discussion Points



Over the course of the online workshops, a number of thematic priorities were discussed by participants. Three themes were raised most frequently: transport; community engagement; and employment and enterprise. A summary of these discussions are presented in this section.

In the first instance, transport was raised as a priority theme. Enhanced regional accessibility and improved connectivity within and across Dublin in terms of the road, rail and public transport network, together with cycleway and pedestrian facilities are felt to be critical to support the development of industry and tourism - and to strengthen and support sustainable rural economies and communities.

However, there are a large number of tourism attractions across rural Dublin which some participants felt are not easily accessible – inhibiting the growth of further tourism potential. For example, it was suggested that the Dublin Mountains can be “out of reach” for those who do not own a car. The Dublin Commuter Coalition are currently calling on the National Transport Authority to revisit two new bus routes for the area which could be connected to form a loop around the mountains.

It should also be noted that the NTA recently published the “Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan”, a 5-year programme to improve rural public transport. It acknowledges that 2 out of 5 villages in Ireland are not connected to their nearby town – but the Plan aspires to 70% of people in rural Ireland having access to a public transport service that provides at least three return trips daily to the nearby town.

## Transport (Summary Points)

- **Access to public transport was cited as a key priority item** for the majority of participants. While some participants noted that their town or village was reasonably well connected (in terms of access to bus services, luas or a train station) the relative distance from public transport stops and town and village centres – or issues with walking routes along this journey - was often noted as a potential inhibitor for some members of the community (inclusive of older people; those with disabilities; or people pushing prams).
- In terms of public transport, it was suggested that **further investment is required to better connect settlements to major transport options, such as the DART and the LUAS to help draw more visitors to rural Dublin**. For example, it was noted that many tourist attractions close to the Dublin Mountains are not easily accessible via public transport connections
- **Reliance on private motor vehicles may also be contributing to congestion and air pollution** (e.g. pollution from the N7 near Rathcoole was highlighted as an area for concern).

# Workshop Notes: Thematic Discussion Points



it is acknowledged that Smart Village strategies must go beyond isolated activities of individual local actors and aim instead to enable communities to jointly implement actions which respond to their long-term challenges and opportunities. This requires going beyond individual grants and measures for local development to create a toolkit of support which enables local people to test out and implement new solutions to the problems they face.

This necessitates strong local leadership and collaboration. Indeed, the success of such bottom-up initiatives involves building platforms and partnerships among relevant stakeholders and, particularly, the active involvement and support of the appropriate local and regional authorities.

The Government's 'Our Rural Future' document states that *“One of the most important ways in which social cohesion and community empowerment is built is by encouraging participation at all levels. Better decisions are made if the people affected are involved in the process and feel a sense of ownership over outcomes affecting their lives”*.

Yet, challenges identified as being of concern to communities in the development of this policy included: not feeling sufficiently supported, an increasing burden on volunteers, as well as worries about the future in terms of generational renewal in rural areas. Financing, governance and compliance, and the cost of insurance, have also become significant operational challenges for community-based organisations, it states.

Many of these themes were also raised by participants throughout the Smart Village workshop sessions.

## Community Action and Engagement (summary points)

- A strong sense of community identity and engagement was highlighted as a **key strength for many local areas**.
- Many groups working across the region are **driving positive actions** across a variety of areas e.g. Ballyboughal Hedgerow Society, Saggart Village Residents Association, Lusk Community Council, Smart Balbriggan. However, ongoing pressure on a small number of volunteers was also cited as a challenge.
- **COVID-19 presented many difficulties but also opportunities for social inclusion and community engagement**. E.g. annual Saggart Christmas Event involves local residents and Ukrainian refugees, Wild Geese GAA in Oldtown organised check ins and deliveries for elderly residents.
- **Greater communication and collaboration between different community groups** could further enhance opportunities for local development. It is felt that there is not currently any meaningful opportunity to promote mutual learning across communities – an opportunity which could be pursued under a Smart Villages framework.



# Workshop Notes: Thematic Discussion Points



All of the participants noted the strategic location of towns and villages across rural Dublin – in terms of their close proximity to Dublin city centre, Dublin Airport and Dublin Port. In addition, a number of emerging trends were felt to present significant opportunities to support enterprise and employment across rural areas – most notably around remote working and a growing proliferation of co-working hubs.

The potential of remote working opportunities to revitalise local communities in Ireland was recognised in a report published by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI) in December 2019. The report, entitled 'Remote Work in Ireland: Future Jobs 2019' states that in a time characterised by increased digitalisation, remote work is increasingly viewed as an intervention with the potential to widen the talent pool across Ireland, stimulate regional growth, lessen accommodation pressures in cities and support the transition to a greener economy.

The tourism potential of rural Dublin was also discussed – given Dublin's unique position with the sea to the east and the mountains to the south. While some communities expressed a perception that their area underperforms in terms of tourism, there are a number of ongoing initiatives in this area that can bolster the regions draw for visitors, particularly in regards to outdoor and active tourism.

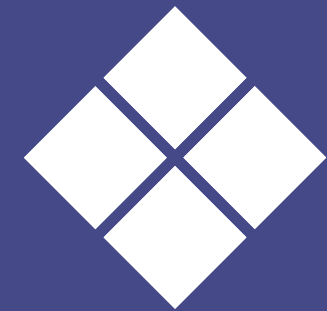
## Employment and Enterprise (Summary Points)

- It was suggested that **local community centres could help provide local spaces for remote / hybrid working and improve options for employees.**
- More broadly, the role and function of community centres could be further examined, it was noted
- In terms of **tourism, there is a need to attract both international and domestic tourists**, and draw out visitors and residents from the city centre.
- Mountain biking highlighted as an energy area of interest for both north and south Dublin.
- The coast is another key asset. Ideally one would be able to walk or cycle the entirety of Dublin's coastline uninterrupted.
- **Rural Dublin's unique natural and cultural assets are key strengths which should be further promoted** e.g. mountains, hedgerows, historic sites, can be leveraged to create new attractions.

# Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin

## Step 3: Identify

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# Creating a Smart Village Plan

## 3. Identify



The preceding two stages are primarily concerned with gathering information. By mapping the strategic policy context, accounting for community assets and engaging the wider community and key stakeholders, the team will have developed a comprehensive evidence base for further action. **Stage 3 involves using this evidence base to look forward and begin developing a strategic approach for the Smart Village Plan. Reviewing and analysing the preceding information will help identify key strategic objectives to guide the direction of the Smart Village Plan.**

In particular, community members and stakeholders will likely share some common concerns, priorities and ideas for the communities development. Summarising and reviewing information gathered from key stakeholders and community consultation will help identify these shared thematic ideas and interests. This will help identify key priority areas for further consideration and can be used to develop the strategic objectives that will guide the development of subsequent actions.

The project team summarised and analysed information gathered as part of the Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin to identify potential objective areas for further consideration by the participating communities.

These objective areas reflect information gathered during the training workshops, as well as the results of the public survey. Each Smart Village Plan will have its own priorities and objectives, shaped the needs and priorities of the local community. As such, these objective areas are not intended to be prescriptive. Rather, they reflect potential areas of consideration for a Smart Village Plan.

The following section includes:

- Summary of key themes and objective areas identified as a result of the public survey and training workshops.



# Identify

As previously noted, three primary themes emerged as particular priority areas across the range of thematic workshops held (transport; community action; and enterprise and employment). This analysis of primary themes was further bolstered by a detailed review of the findings of the community survey.

As a result of this further analysis, a total of six thematic areas have been identified as of particular interest to the participating communities. Specifically – sustainability; safety; and local services were added to the overall batch of priority thematic areas.

It should of course be noted that a number of sub-themes (e.g tourism, public realm; agriculture) can be considered under these core themes. In addition, participants felt that all of these key themes should be reviewed and analysed through a social inclusion lense.

## Transport

- Addressing gaps in public transport provision.
- Alleviating congestion.
- Exploring alternative transport solutions.

## Sustainability

- Recognising value of natural environment.
- Opportunities for energy efficiency and renewable energy.
- Improving health and air quality.

## Community Action

- Recognise breadth of work being carried out across the communities.
- Enhance opportunities for engagement and collaboration.

## Safety

- Enhancing safety and community cohesion.
- Addressing anti-social behaviour.

## Enterprise and Employment

- Drawing in new business.
- Supporting remote working.
- Further developing tourism industry.

## Services

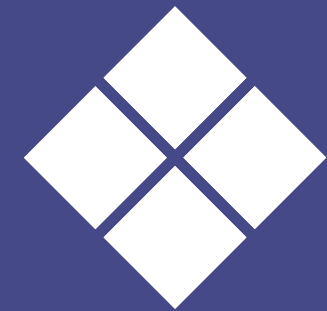
- Enhance access to health and education services.
- Supporting mental and social health.
- Agility of services to respond to pressures e.g. Covid, refugees.



# Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin

## Step 4: Target

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# Creating a Smart Village Plan



## 4. Target

Stage 4 involves setting specific targets and actions for inclusion and implementation under the Smart Village Action Plan. These actions will be context-specific interventions and solutions to address local needs and solve identified problems for the community. This process should be guided by the strategic objectives identified the previous stage. Tying targets and actions to the established strategic objectives will ensure that they reflect and address priorities for community.

When developing actions for the Smart Village Plan it is useful to break the process down into the following key elements:

- **Objective** – *What we want to achieve .*
- **Action** – *What we will do to achieve it.*
- **Potential Supports** – *Guidance or resourcing opportunities that can help us do it.*

By considering how actions will help address a specific objective and target, and considering potential opportunities for support, we can ensure that actions are context-specific and realistic.

The project team have developed a number of indicative, sample actions for consideration. These are based on information gathered throughout the Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin, and in particular on input from the programme participants. Proposed actions are organised under the objective areas set out under Stage 3: Identify.

Several of these actions are shared actions that may be common to communities in the rural Dublin region. Other actions are context-specific and intended to tackle a particular issue or opportunity in a participating community. It is noted that these actions are not prescriptive and are intended to represent potential actions that a community might consider bringing forward. The final Smart Village Plan should include actions developed and validated with the local community and other relevant stakeholders.

The following section includes:

- Indicative action areas for a Smart Village Plan.

# Target



As noted previously, Stage 4 involves setting specific targets and actions for inclusion and implementation under the Smart Village Plan. As part of the community engagement undertaken as part of this Programme, some sample objectives and action areas were discussed and co-developed under each priority theme. It should be noted that these objectives and actions are indicative only and can be used as a source of inspiration for a finalised Smart Village Action Plan – inclusive of a detailed implementation strategy.

	Objective	Action Area	Potential Supports*
Thematic Area – Community	Enhance capacity of communities to participate and benefit from Smart Village initiatives.	Explore the potential funding of a local animator to maximise the potential of wider smart villages interventions and to facilitate collaboration and peer-to-peer learning opportunities	LEADER
	Enhance opportunities for engagement and collaboration between communities.	Establish a series of community forums for participating communities to support ongoing engagement and collaboration in the rollout of smart village initiatives.	LEADER
	Promote knowledge and awareness of local community initiatives.	Explore the development of an online Smart Villages Portal to act as a 'one stop shop' for smart villages resources – including local case studies.	LEADER, Town and Village Renewal Scheme

\* These potential supports are indicative only and would need to be further examined and agreed as part of a detailed implementation strategy for a Smart Village Action Plan

# Target



	Objective	Action Area	Potential Supports*
<b>Thematic Area – Transport</b>	Improve public transport provision for communities.	Investigate the potential to utilise Smart Village funding to conduct a ‘smart mobility’ research project aimed at monitoring and improving the efficacy of the Local Link service in the region	LEADER, Local Link
	Improve public transport provision to facilitate tourism activity.	Explore potential to work with local transport providers to develop part-time seasonal routes to local destinations and festivals.	LEADER

*\* These potential supports are indicative only and would need to be further examined and agreed as part of a detailed implementation strategy for a Smart Village Action Plan*



# Target



	Objective	Action Area	Potential Supports*
Thematic Area: Sustainability	Promote awareness and education around climate change and its impact on local communities.	To explore opportunities associated with the Creative Climate Action Fund and thus stimulate initial dialogue and discussions on potential future projects. This could, for example, be in the form of a dedicated lecture series	Creative Climate Action Fund
	Enhance energy efficiency across the community.	Join the Sustainable Energy Communities Network and develop an Energy Masterplan for the community.	SEAI SEC
	Maintain the quality of the local environment to promote public health.	Use sensors to assess local air quality across the town centre.	LEADER

\* These potential supports are indicative only and would need to be further examined and agreed as part of a detailed implementation strategy for a Smart Village Action Plan

# Target



	Objective	Action Area	Potential Supports*
Thematic Area: Safety	Enhance connectivity to improve community cohesion and safety.	Explore the potential to adopt a community alert system e.g. Cairde App.	LEADER
	Promote accessibility and safety in the public realm.	Explore case studies around inclusive urban design and opportunities for wayfinding enhancements – and consider barriers to equitable use of the town/village (e.g distance to nearest public transport stop; extent of public lighting; access to seats or resting places)	LEADER

*\* These potential supports are indicative only and would need to be further examined and agreed as part of a detailed implementation strategy for a Smart Village Action Plan*

# Target



Thematic Area:	Objective	Action Area	Potential Supports*
Enterprise and Employment	Establish remote-working hubs in existing community centres	Engage with the National Hub Network to explore the potential to create new micro remote-working hubs in existing community centres in the region.	Connected Hubs Scheme
	Enhance marketing of existing infrastructure to attract visitors	Map and promote local heritage trails, cycle routes and local bike rental services for visitors.	Town and Village Renewal Scheme

*\* These potential supports are indicative only and would need to be further examined and agreed as part of a detailed implementation strategy for a Smart Village Action Plan*

# Target



	Objective	Action Area	Potential Supports*
Thematic Area: Facilities and Services	Improve awareness of online services.	Collaborate with local authority and local service providers to hold an in-person information day on accessing and using online services.	Local Authorities
	Improve the provision of local retail and other services.	Explore opportunities to innovate and maximise opportunities presented by local Community Centres, develop multi-functional spaces that can be used for local producers and service providers.	LEADER, Community Centres Investment Fund

\* These potential supports are indicative only and would need to be further examined and agreed as part of a detailed implementation strategy for a Smart Village Action Plan

# Grants and Supports

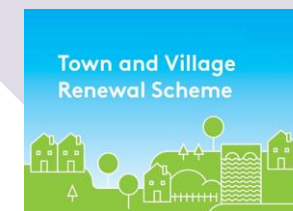


There are a range of different grant schemes and support programmes that are available to communities throughout Ireland. Many of these schemes can help support the implementation of smart village initiatives. A number of key relevant schemes are outlined below.

- **LEADER:** Administrated through Local Development Companies, LEADER is the primary delivery mechanism for smart village initiatives. The current indicative allocation for programme in Ireland is €180 million for 2023-2027.m
- **Community Heritage Grant Scheme:** Administered through Heritage Council, supports projects that promote inclusion and access to local heritage.
- **Town and Village Renewal Scheme:** Supports small to medium projects that drive rejuvenation and regeneration town and village centres. Grant funding ranges from €20,000 to €500,000.
- **Creative Climate Action Fund:** Supports creative projects that promote awareness and engagement around climate change. Grants can range between €20,000 to €250,000 depending on the scale of project and experience of the lead partner.
- **Sustainable Energy Communities:** Organised by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland. The Sustainable Energy Communities Programme is a network of communities across Ireland working together to improve energy efficiency and contribute to a low-carbon society. The programme providing funding and training for community energy projects.
- **Community Centres Investment Fund:** Provides funding for the refurbishment of existing community centres and construction of new community centres.



An Chomhairle Oidhreachta  
The Heritage Council



Creative  
Climate Action

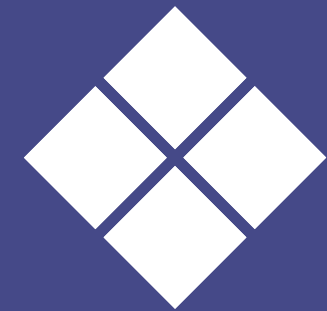
seai  
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CENTRES  
INVESTMENT  
FUND

# Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin

## Step 5: Roadmap

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# Creating a Smart Village Plan

## 5. Roadmap

Stage 5 seeks to develop a clear and coherent roadmap for the delivery of actions under the Smart Village Plan. It is a chance to review and evaluate established actions to inform their prioritisation and phasing. This will help focus efforts and those actions which should be brought forward as a priority, which are long-term projects and which are best put off or deferred.

As a straightforward exercise actions can be evaluated according to their:

- **Projected Impact** – The scale of an actions likely impact towards achieving a target or objective, and its outcome for the community as a whole.
- **Effort Required** – An estimation of the time and resources likely required to deliver an action. This should account for the monetary resources and funding required, as well as the time and skills required to organise and implement the action.

An initial review and evaluation will help inform the development or a more detailed and realistic timeline for the implementation of actions under the Smart Village Plan. Developing an agreed multi-year timeline will help inform planning and the allocation of resources through the lifetime of the plan.

**The following section includes:**

1. Outline of an **evaluation scale** that can be used to review and assess potential actions in terms of their impact and effort required.



2. **Illustrative timeline** with phasing for the proposed smart village actions.

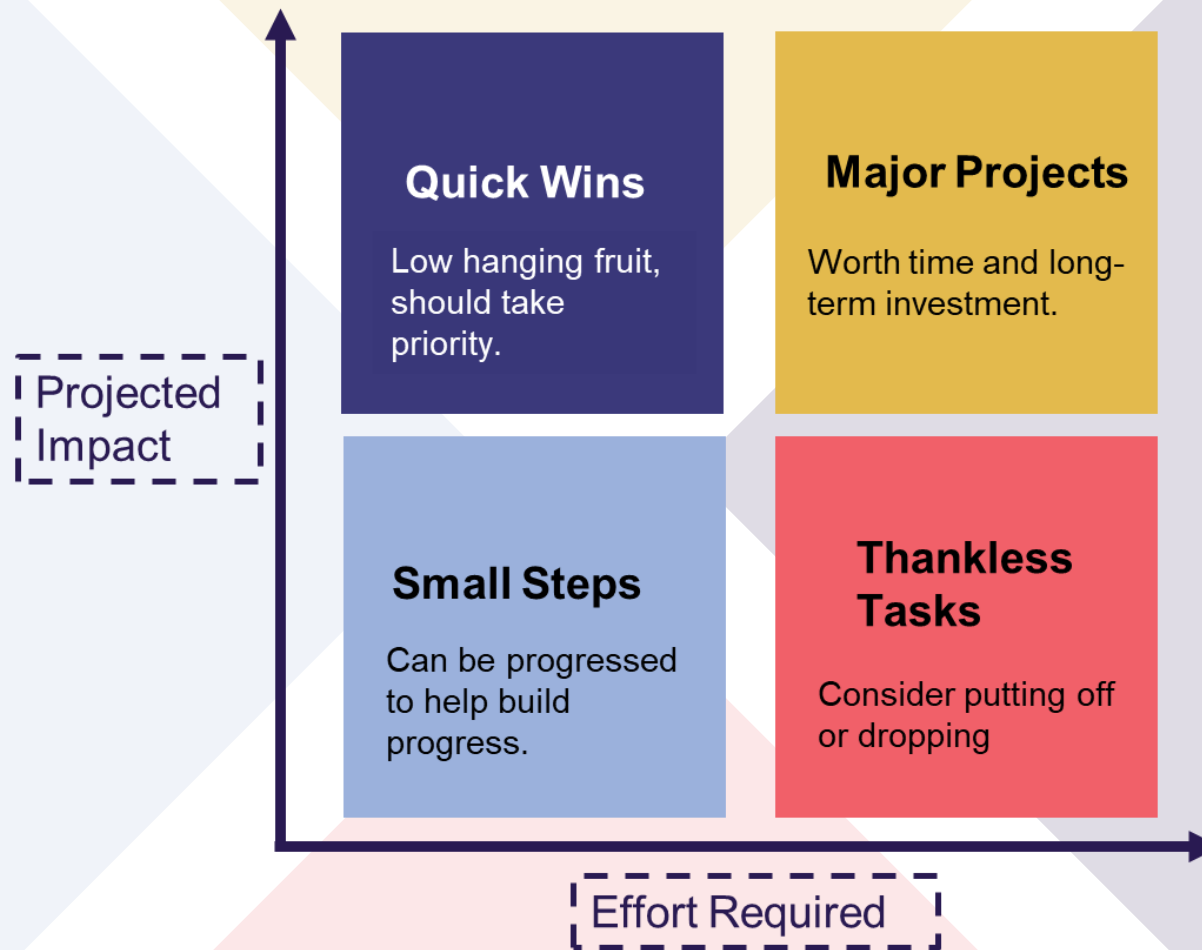




# Creating a Smart Village Plan

Depending on where they land on each scale, actions can be classified as:

- Small Steps
- Quick Wins
- Major Projects
- Thankless Tasks





# Roadmap



An initial review and evaluation will help inform the development of a more detailed and realistic timeline for the implementation of actions under the Smart Village Plan. ‘Small Steps’ and ‘Quick Wins’ can likely be progressed relatively quickly, while ‘Major Projects’ will likely require longer term planning and investment. This will be a multi-year, flexible timeline. It should not be considered definite but rather as a guideline for activity under the Smart Village Plan. The timeline can be reviewed and refined on a regular basis to reflect progress made and new opportunities as they emerge.

**An indicative timeline has been developed based on the proposed actions set out in Stage 4.**

Action	2024 Q1	2024 Q2	2024 Q3	2024 Q4	2025 Q1	2025 Q2	2025 Q3	2025 Q4	2026 Q1	2026 Q2	2026 Q3	2026 Q4
Establish series of community forums.	■											
Explore potential funding of a local animator.		■										
Explore development of an online Smart Villages Portal.		■										
Investigate potential to conduct a ‘smart mobility’ research project.							■					
Explore potential to work with local transport providers to develop part-time seasonal routes.			■									
Explore opportunities under the Creative Climate Action Fund for creative projects.	■											

# Roadmap



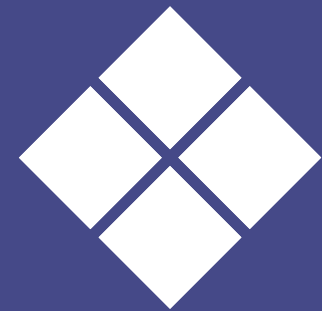
Action	2024 Q1	2024 Q2	2024 Q3	2024 Q4	2025 Q1	2025 Q2	2025 Q3	2025 Q4	2026 Q1	2026 Q2	2026 Q3	2026 Q4	
Join the SEC Network and develop Energy Masterplan for the community.			■										
Use sensors to assess local air quality.					■								
Explore potential to adopt a community alert system.			■										
Explore case studies around inclusive urban design and opportunities for wayfinding enhancements.													
Create new micro remote-working hubs in existing community centres.			■										
Map and promote local heritage trails, cycle routes and local bike rental services for visitors.				■									
Organise an in-person information day on accessing and using online services.			■										
Explore opportunities to innovate and maximise opportunities presented by local Community Centres, develop multi-functional spaces that can be used for local producers and service providers.				■									



# Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin

## Concluding Reflections

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KPMG Future Analytics



SmartVillages

# Concluding Reflections

The “**Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin**” was a pilot initiative led by Fingal LEADER Partnership in association with **KPMG Future Analytics**. The purpose of Programme was to equip communities across rural Dublin with the skills and knowledge necessary to undertake the development of their own Smart Village Action Plans. To assist in this, the project team has developed **context specific manuals to help guide local communities through the process – from project inception to the co-development of Smart Village actions or initiatives.**

As discussed throughout the Programme, rural areas have been undergoing rapid change over the past two decades. This Programme has sought to chart these evolving circumstances – including the manner in which Government policy in Ireland is shifting to address these challenges and opportunities. In particular, the programme (and the profiling sections of these manuals) illustrates the development trajectory of rural Dublin over time – drawing on a range of data sources, including the perspectives of communities across the region. Indeed, an initial phase of community engagement has underpinned every phase of the project. **This evidence base has informed the co-development of a range of indicative, sample action areas under six key themes – Transport; Community Action; Sustainability; Enterprise and Employment; Safety; and Local Services.**

Yet, the heart of the project and its mission is empowering the communities of rural Dublin in steering the course of their own sustainable, resilient and smart future. This is a pivotal time for rural communities – as an array of supporting policy documents and initiatives are coming on stream. The Smart Villages concept is a useful umbrella framework through which to pursue this work.

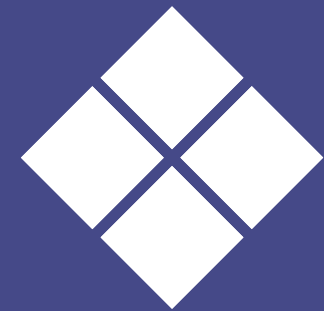
**However, it is critical that Smart Village strategies go beyond isolated activities of individual local actors and aim instead to enable communities to jointly implement actions which respond to their long-term challenges and opportunities.**

This requires going beyond individual grants and measures for local development to create a toolkit of support which enables local people to test out and implement new solutions to the problems they face – and importantly to share lessons with other communities. **Providing meaningful opportunities and mechanisms for communities to collaborate, build alliances and to promote mutual learning is the essence of a Smart Villages approach.**

# Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin

## Appendix 1: Case Study Examples

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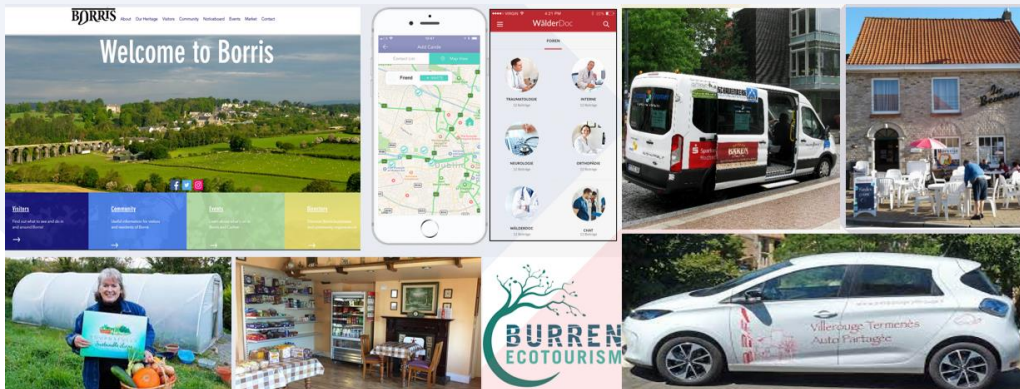


SmartVillages

# Case Study Examples

As previously noted, over the course of the online workshops, a number of thematic priorities were discussed by participants. Three themes were raised most frequently: transport; community engagement; and employment and enterprise. In addition, sustainability, safety and services were discussed frequently as part of the survey responses.

The following slides set out relevant case study examples at the national and EU level that align with each of the six thematic areas. It is envisaged that the lessons learned from these case studies can serve as sources of inspiration for potential Smart Village initiatives or actions across rural Dublin.



## Transport

- Addressing gaps in public transport provision.
- Alleviating congestion.
- Exploring alternative transport solutions.

## Sustainability

- Recognising value of natural environment.
- Opportunities for energy efficiency and renewable energy.
- Improving health and air quality.

## Community Action

- Recognise breadth of work being carried out across the communities.
- Enhance opportunities for engagement and collaboration.

## Safety

- Enhancing safety and community cohesion.
- Addressing anti-social behaviour.

## Enterprise and Employment

- Drawing in new business.
- Supporting remote working.
- Further developing tourism industry.

## Services

- Enhance access to health and education services.
- Supporting mental and social health.
- Agility of services to respond to pressures e.g. Covid, refugees.

# Transport

## Go Borders, Scotland

- Partnership between the Scottish Borders Council and Moovit, a public transport navigation app available in around 500 cities around the world.
- An on-demand transport service for the Ettrick Valley and Bonchester Bridge areas that targets rural residents that do not have easy access to existing public transport. App allows users to book a trip and view live updates to track their journey and arrival time. Notably, residents can also book trips by phoning the Council.



## Bürgerbus (Citizens Bus), Kirchzarten, Germany

- Community based transport service designed and operated by local volunteers and community groups. Runs 4 times a day across 4 different transport lines.
- In terms of funding, the service receives strong sponsorship from local businesses, that benefit from improved footfall in the town centre. Volunteers keep operational costs low and helps ensure service is responsive to community needs.



# Community Engagement

## Borris Smart Village Website Portal, Ireland

- Funded under the Town and Village Scheme 2021.
- Purpose of the portal is to wrap around and support all aspects of community development. Provides information and resources across a range of different themes.
- **Events:** Provides a single point of reference for all community information and events, includes a Noticeboard and events register.
- **Residents Group:** Includes a community WhatsApp group for residents to communicate and notify each other of events.
- **Visitors:** Proposed itineraries, guide to local walking and cycling trails.

## Tournafulla Community Shop, Limerick, Ireland

- Tournafulla Community Council established by volunteers in 2019 to help combat rural decline.
- Established a community shop. This is run as a social enterprise and operated by volunteers, provides everyday goods and services and acts as a meeting point for community events.
- Tournafulla have since developed a community garden, and community owned solar pv panels.





# Enterprise and Employment

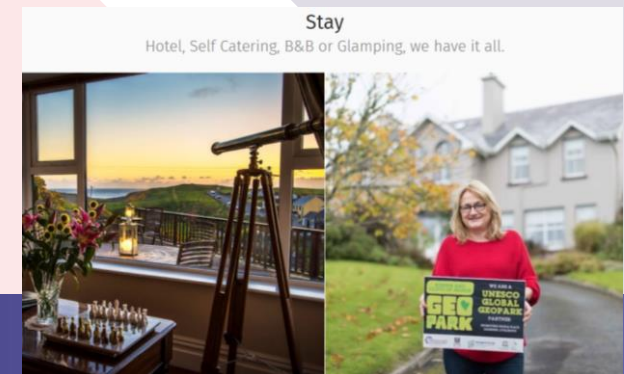
## Connected Hubs, Ireland

- ConnectedHubs.ie is a one-stop-shop that aims to simplify and standardise the process of sourcing and booking remote work spaces.
- The network includes regional hubs and enterprise/innovation centres, as well as more targeted local remote working hubs that serve a local area.
- For example, the Ardagh Remote Working Hub in Co. Longford is housed in the local community centre and has capacity for 16 people. By incorporating such facilities into existing community spaces, these smaller hubs can help support local enterprise and employment in a meaningful way, without the expense of developing wholly new facilities from scratch.



## Burren Ecotourism Network, Ireland

- The Burren Eco-Tourism Network is a network of tourism enterprises that seek to maintain the Burren as an internationally recognised tourist destination. Dating back to 2008, participants in the network work together to promote excellent standards for visitor experience.
- The network maintains a dedicated website that provides information on local bars, restaurants, hotels, hostels and other enterprises. By providing a directory of local businesses and services, this serves as a gateway for businesses to reach visitors to the area.



# Sustainability

## CéléWatt Community Solar Farm, France

- Co-operative established by a team of local volunteers living in the Célé Valley, aims to support renewable energy generation and local employment.
- Used local oak to build support structures for solar pv panels.
- 2 solar parks produce 640 MWh of electricity per year, which is sold to Enercoop, an electric utility company that only uses renewable energy.
- Since initial crowdfunding campaign CéléWatt has not needed any public funding, with ongoing costs and plans for future expansion met by the co-operatives energy sales.



## Communal Electric Car Sharing System, Villerouge-Termenès, France

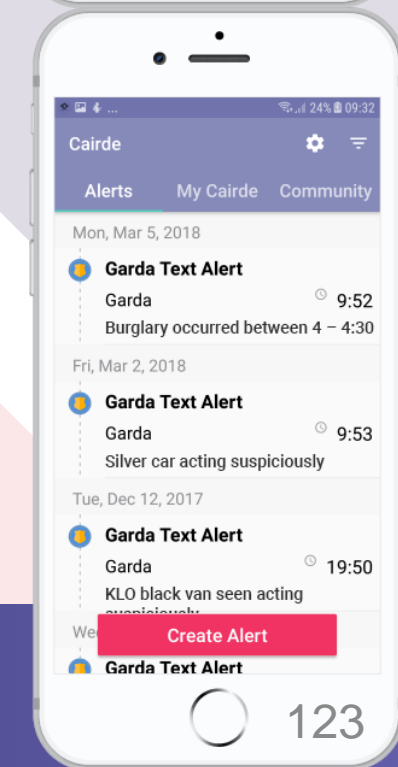
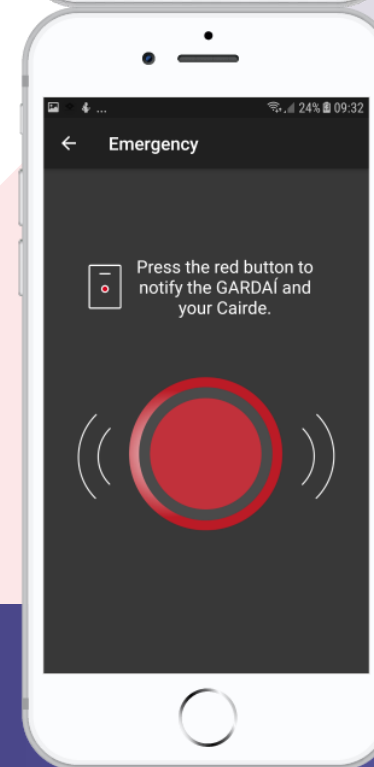
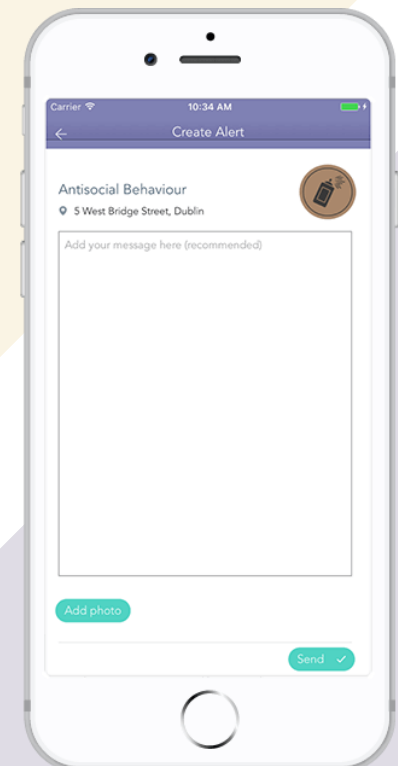
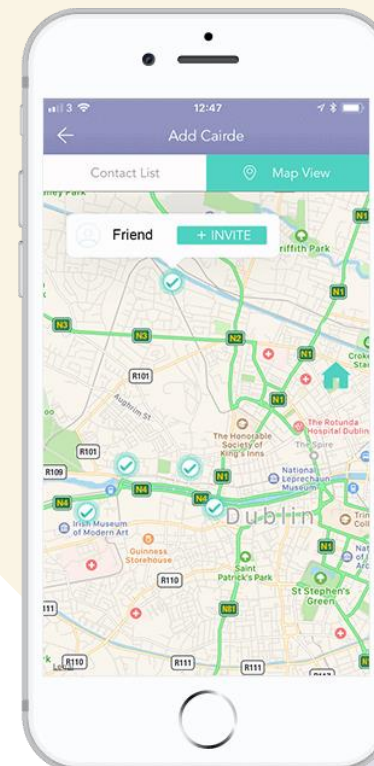
- Shared EV scheme established by the village of Villerouge-Termenès in southern France.
- In 2016 a pair of EV chargers were installed in the village. However, these chargers were rarely used. Local government agreed to use existing charging infrastructure to develop a shared EV service for the community. In 2018 the local government purchased a Renault Zoe EV.
- EV can be booked for up to a day at a time, intended to make short-term trips in the surrounding locality. Residents opt in by paying an annual subscription fee of €25, with each booking costing €6 per half day. Visitors can pay a higher charge of €15 per half day to rent the EV. To ensure that the service primarily serves the needs of the local community, residents are prioritised on the booking system.



# Safety

## Cairde App, Ireland

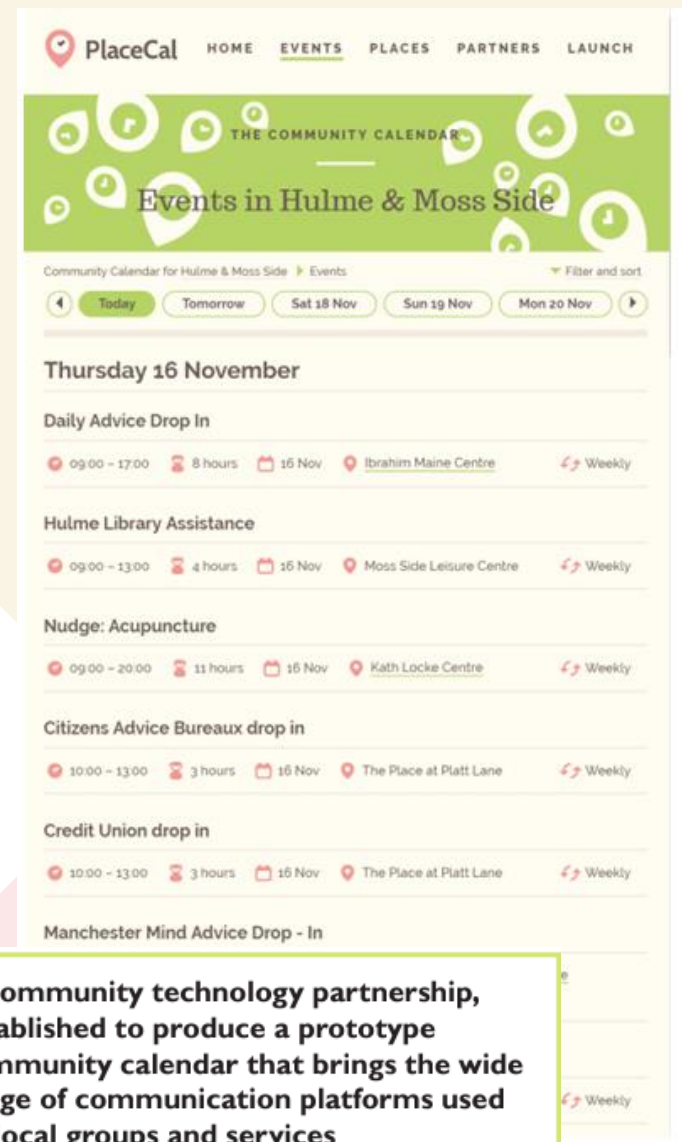
- App developed by Muintir na Tire that aims to help communities become safer and more connected.
- Uses smartphone technology to build on the Garda text alert system.
- Community establishes a group of 'Cairde' i.e. local people who have agreed to assist each other in case of emergency.
- Members can create community alerts and send messages to discuss issues.
- Users can press the red button to issue a panic alert that notifies Gardai and their network.
- Users can track where respondents are and when they will arrive to help provide security and assurance.



# Safety

## Manchester Age Friendly Neighbourhoods

- Manchester Age-Friendly Neighbourhoods (MAFN) was a practice-led research programme that aimed to address the barriers that people face in their daily lives and providing more ways for people to contribute to their communities.
- It was based on the World Health Organisation 'age-friendly cities' model, which calls for policy-makers, practitioners and older residents to come together in defining and addressing the needs and aspirations of specific communities.
- Over four years, the programme helped develop and support age-friendly neighbourhood partnership across four areas of Manchester; Burnage, Hulme and Moss Side, Miles Platting and Moston.
- Each partnership was provided with a resident investment fund to support the development of small projects (usually less than £2000), which could be used to enact their vision of an age-friendly community. These projects were developed by local residents, with projects supported, reviewed and agreed by a resident-led board in each area. Over £300,000 of investments were distributed to 110 community projects over the course of the programme.



**A community technology partnership, established to produce a prototype community calendar that brings the wide range of communication platforms used by local groups and services**

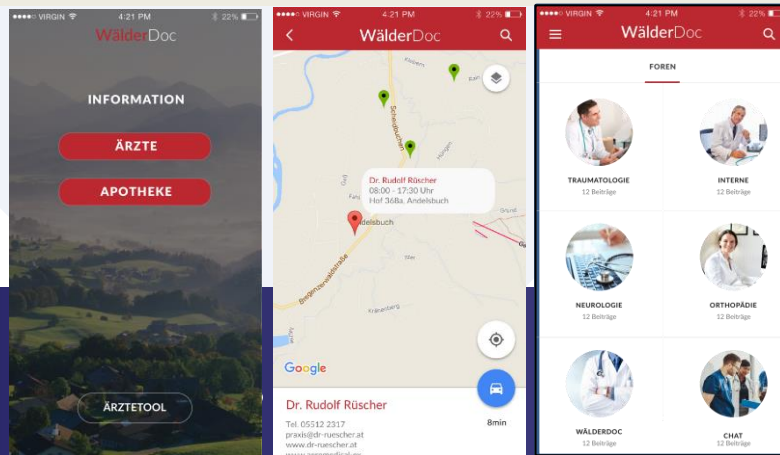
Neighbourhood: **Hulme and Moss Side**

Investment: **£50,000** (funded by CityVerve)

# Services

## Health in the Forest, Bregenz Forest, Austria

- Smartphone app that provides up to date information on health services in rural areas.
- Operational area includes 22 villages with 3,000 pop. Medical services and facilities dispersed across area. Different operational hours. So residents had to look up each service individually to see what was open when they had a problem.
- Patients can use app to view information on opening hours for doctors, pharmacies and other health services, information on weekend services and public health information.
- Development led by a local doctor. Contributions provided by public medical association and sponsorships from local businesses and private individuals.



## Village Points, Westhoek, Belgium

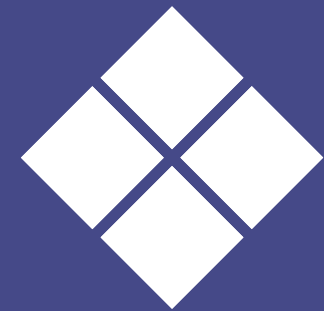
- A 'Village Point' is a community hub that provides a range of public and social services. There are now 18 interconnected Village Points across the Westhoek region.
- **Mobility:** Bike storage and rental; Charging station for E-Bikes; Bus service between different Village Points
- **Social:** Café that serves as an everyday meeting place; Spaces can be booked by clubs and community groups
- **Services:** Free WiFi; Mail pick up and drop off; Small shop with everyday goods; Open house days for health and welfare services



# Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin

## Appendix 2: Case Study Areas

Prepared by  
KPMG Future Analytics



SmartVillages

# Case Study Areas

As illustrated in the table below, the selected towns and villages are of widely varying scale.

County Area	Proposed Case Study	Settlement Typology
Fingal	• Balbriggan	Independent Town
	• Lusk	Independent Town
	• Combination of 4 small villages – Oldtown, Naul, Garristown, and Ballyboughal	Village (a combination of 4 villages)
South Dublin	• Rathcoole	Town
	• Saggart	Town
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown	• Glencullen	Village

## Legend

- Case Study Areas
- Admin Counties



# Smart Villages Training Programme for Rural Dublin



Comhar LEADER Fhine Gall  
Fingal LEADER Partnership



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