

# OUTLOOK



THE TEN YEAR STRATEGIC  
PLAN FOR COUNTY WICKLOW

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Strategy represents a unique opportunity to plan for a decade of enormous change in a way that will benefit all those who live in one of the most beautiful counties in Ireland.

In this document we sought to outline the needs of the people of Co. Wicklow from a social, cultural and economic perspective. To do this we established a process through which we consulted with members of the public and interest groups. We then used their expertise and concerns to inform the actions devised to address the needs of the people of Co. Wicklow.

**These actions address key needs in the following three integrated thematic areas:**

**Urban Shadow:** containing actions which address the specific pressures placed on the county's physical and built infrastructure as a result of our close proximity to Dublin.

**Sustainable Communities:** containing actions which will help us meet our present needs in a way that will also benefit and facilitate the needs of future generations.

**Social Inclusion:** actions to enable full participation and equality of opportunity for everyone in Co. Wicklow.

All of these actions must be delivered efficiently and effectively, with minimum overlap and the complete co-operation of all parties involved. Co-operation is central to the successful delivery of this Strategy. Only by working together will we create a future together... a future that we can all enjoy.

Ni neart go chuir le chéile.

THIS IS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY  
TO PLAN FOR A DECADE OF  
ENORMOUS CHANGE.

THIS IS A GREAT CHANCE  
TO WORK TOGETHER TO  
CREATE A BETTER FUTURE  
FOR EVERYONE.

# CONTENTS



**WE HAVE USED THE EXPERTISE AND CONCERNS OF THE PEOPLE OF CO. WICKLOW TO FIND ANSWERS TO THE PROBLEMS THAT FACE US ALL, SEE PAGES 23 TO 32.**

- PAGE 23 **WHAT THE COMMUNITY TOLD US**
- PAGE 24 **EDUCATION & TRAINING**
- PAGE 25 **TOURISM**
- PAGE 26 **RURAL DEVELOPMENT & AGRICULTURE**
- PAGE 27 **YOUTH AND CHILDREN**
- PAGE 28 **EMPLOYMENT & ENTERPRISE**
- PAGE 29 **SOCIAL INCLUSION**
- PAGE 30 **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, ARTS, SPORT & RECREATION**
- PAGE 31 **HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT**
- PAGE 32 **HOUSING & INFRASTRUCTURE**

- PAGE 2 **A VIEW TO THE FUTURE BY CLLR MICHAEL LAWLOR**
- PAGE 4 **WHAT IS THE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD?**
- PAGE 6 **A SNAPSHOT IN TIME**
- PAGE 7 **WHO LIVES IN CO. WICKLOW AND WHERE?**
- PAGE 8 **WHAT SERVICES CAN WE OFFER?**
- PAGE 10 **THE ECONOMIC OUTLOOK**
- PAGE 14 **THE SOCIAL OUTLOOK**
- PAGE 18 **THE CULTURAL OUTLOOK**
- PAGE 20 **REGIONAL CO-ORDINATION**
- PAGE 22 **THE NEXT STEP**

**TURN TO PAGE 34 FOR OUR RESPONSE TO THE EXTRA PRESSURE THAT THE CAPITAL PLACES ON OUR COUNTY.**



**ACHIEVING A SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT, TURN TO PAGES 40 TO 49 TO FIND OUT MORE.**

- PAGE 33 **DEVELOPING A STRATEGY THAT WILL WORK**
- PAGE 34 **URBAN SHADOW**
- PAGE 40 **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES**
- PAGE 50 **SOCIAL INCLUSION**
- PAGE 57 **GETTING THE JOB DONE**
- PAGE 58 **MAKING SURE THE JOB IS DONE RIGHT**
- PAGE 59 **OUR LONG TERM GOALS**

# A VIEW TO THE FUTURE

I AM VERY PLEASED AS CHAIR OF THE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD TO PRESENT THE STRATEGY FOR THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF COUNTY WICKLOW. THE STRATEGY COVERS A TEN YEAR PERIOD FROM 2002.



The publication of the strategy completes the first phase of the process. I look upon this strategy as the cement which binds together the activities of many agencies. Changes will flow from this document – changes for the good, building on the strengths of existing systems.

The public sector is complex and large. It delivers many essential and varied services. Public sector organisations have local arrangements for delivering their services. There is no coherent framework within which these and local development services are delivered. The County/City Development Boards are the mechanism for Local Government, Local Development, the State Agencies and the Social Partners to work out an agreed vision for their County or City. The County/City

Development Boards were set up following the report of the Task Force on the integration of Local Government and Local Development which was chaired by the Minister for Environment and Local Government, Mr. Noel Dempsey, T.D. The difficult task undertaken by the Task Force and subsequently by the County/City Development Boards is underlined by the fact that the Task Force contained representatives from twelve Government Departments. This demonstrates the breadth of policy and service delivery which will be impacted by this strategy.

I believe that it is appropriate to pay tribute to Minister Dempsey for initiating, chairing and driving the process forward. I also wish to acknowledge the contribution of the other members of the Task Force who applied themselves diligently

in developing, agreeing and recommending an innovative approach to the integration of Local Government and Local Development.

The report of the Task Force presented all of us identified in the report with a major challenge. The challenge was to sweep away the individualistic approach which we all had and to replace it with a coherent, integrated and realistic shared vision for the future. Working together in partnership, sharing information over the lifetime of this strategy will, I hope, enable us all to achieve our objectives.

The County Development Board process has developed a significant role for itself in carrying out its brief. It has reached into areas which traditionally remained untouched by Local Government and other Local and National Agencies. It is a valuable

reference point for all service providers within Co. Wicklow. The strategy provides valuable input to critical areas of policy development and service delivery within Co. Wicklow. The publication comes at a pivotal point in terms of our social, economic and cultural development. As a country, we have experienced our greatest ever period of growth which has seen unemployment fall to record lows and significantly reduced levels of consistent poverty and social exclusion. While our prosperity has increased considerably, this process has increased our awareness of poverty and social exclusion issues. Now that we are facing into a period of uncertainty arising from the slow-down in the world economy, we are being faced with more difficult choices. In arranging our public finances, it will be essential that the increased awareness of poverty and



social exclusion arising out of the County/City Development Board strategies will receive due consideration by Central Government.

The preparation of the strategy involved a wide-ranging consultation process and considerable research was also undertaken to underpin the strategy. At the first meeting of the Board, I said "This new vision and new way forward will effectively mean that we will not see ourselves in the traditional role of a Board of Directors, or a Board with a judicial role, but rather as a Working Board where each sectoral representative will make a significant active working contribution to the preparation and implementation of the Social, Economic and Cultural strategy for the County".

The Board lived up to the task set and I want to express my thanks to all members of the Wicklow County Development Board, both past and present, for their commitment and dedication to the process, for their positive approach and the mutual respect exhibited for each other. I also want to thank those people who participated in public, sub-group and parallel group meetings without whose public-spirited contributions this strategy would have been greatly deficient.

On my own behalf and on behalf of the Board, I would like to express appreciation for the work done by the staff of Community and Enterprise, Wicklow County Council – Seamus Walker, Director, Community and Enterprise, and his predecessor, Sinead Carr; Margaret Malone and

Deirdre Whitfield, Community and Enterprise Development Officers; Des Nichols, Administrative Officer and his predecessor, Bernie Byrne, and the ongoing support provided by Peg Redmond. The staff worked as a team throughout and made an enormous contribution to the process.

As I said above, publication completes the first phase. Implementation must now commence. The implementation phase will require all the agencies to be imaginative in their policies and service delivery so that the actions identified by the strategy are acted upon for the betterment of the people of County Wicklow.

It will not, of course, be the end of the commitment of the Board members to the process. Each will be a

member of at least one of the implementing work groups. They will also be involved in the monitoring, reviewing and evaluation of the strategy. This will ensure that the strategy will not be static but dynamic, addressing the changing needs of County Wicklow over the next ten years.

I believe that the County Development Board strategy is about improving the quality of life for all the people of County Wicklow and for those who visit the county. Put simply, it is about "making a difference".

Cllr Michael Lawlor – Chairperson

# WHAT IS THE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD?

**IN 2000 THE GOVERNMENT ESTABLISHED 34 CITY AND COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARDS ACROSS THE COUNTRY TO PREPARE AND IMPLEMENT AN INTEGRATED ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL STRATEGY FOR THEIR CITY OR COUNTY.**

**THE WICKLOW COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD WAS ESTABLISHED LATER THAT YEAR. ITS 28 MEMBERS ARE DRAWN FROM THE FOUR SECTORS THAT HAVE THE GREATEST INFLUENCE OVER OUR LIVES; THESE INCLUDE LOCAL GOVERNMENT, LOCAL DEVELOPMENT, STATE AGENCIES AND SOCIAL PARTNERS.**

## Why is there a County Development Board?

We live in a time of enormous change. While change brings opportunities it also presents us with unforeseen problems. These issues are complex and need integrated solutions. To improve our quality of life, we have a responsibility to plan for the future and embrace the opportunities that change has brought us.

While we recognise the value and previous achievements of all those involved in the development of the County, the County Development Board provides us with an opportunity for a deeper level of co-operation and a greater integration of service delivery than was formerly possible.

## What will the County Development Board Do?

The main function of the Board is to co-ordinate the plans and activities of all the main players in County Wicklow. This will ensure that the people of Wicklow will benefit from a more efficient and effective service delivery. It is important that any overlaps or gaps in this delivery are identified and addressed, in an integrated way.

In order to achieve this, the CDB has drawn up a ten year Strategy for the Social, Economic and Cultural Development of County Wicklow. In addition the strategies and operational plans of agencies and groups in the county will be proofed against the CDB strategy.

## A STRATEGIC PLAN IS A LONG-TERM PLAN FOR ACTION, WHICH TAKES A BROAD OVERVIEW OF THE PRESENT SITUATION AND WHAT IS LIKELY TO BE THE SITUATION IN THE FUTURE.

This plan can be seen as a framework for decision-making, a look into the future, a problem-solving initiative and a shared values document. The strategy will be delivered by the member organisations of the CDB through their own operational plans.

## The process is part of the solution

The ongoing process of developing an integrated strategy is in effect the solution to many problems. The CDB has given agencies the space and framework to work together in a way that was not previously possible. It has allowed for the flow of information between them when facing problems, addressing issues and identifying gaps as well as areas for co-operation.

## Wicklow County Development Board Members

### Cllr Michael Lawlor, Chair

Local Government, Wicklow County Council

### Cllr Thomas Cullen

Local Government, Wicklow County Council

### Cllr George Jones

Local Government, Wicklow County Council

### Cllr James O'Shaughnessy<sup>1</sup>

Local Government, Wicklow County Council

### Cllr Jim Ruttle

Local Government, Wicklow County Council

### Cllr Pat Vance

Local Government, Wicklow County Council

### Cllr Lance O'Brien<sup>2</sup>

Local Government, Wicklow Town Council

### Mr. Eddie Sheehy<sup>3</sup>

Local Government, Wicklow County Manager

### Ms Anita Carroll<sup>4</sup>

Social Partner, Wicklow Community Platform

### Mr. Gerry Doyle

Social Partner, Wicklow Communities Networking

### Mr. Chris Hill

Social Partner, Agriculture & Farming Pillar

### Mr. John McEvoy

Social Partner, Business & Employers Pillar

### Mr. John O'Brien

Social Partner, Trade Union Pillar

### Mr. Conor Agnew

State Agency, IDA Ireland

### Mr. Michael Brady<sup>5</sup>

State Agency Midlands-East Regional Tourism Authority Ltd.

### Mr. Vincent Colman

State Agency, Enterprise Ireland

### Mr Tom Kennedy<sup>6</sup>

State Agency, FÁS

### Mr. John Melia

State Agency, Dept. of Social, Community & Family Affairs

### Supt. Philip Moynihan

State Agency, Garda Síochana

### Mr Hugh O'Brien<sup>7</sup>

State Agency, Co. Wicklow VEC

### Mr Lorcan O'Toole<sup>8</sup>

State Agency, Teagasc

### Dr. Brian Redahan

State Agency, East Coast Area Health Board

### Ms. Jo Conroy<sup>9</sup>

Local Development, Wicklow Working Together

### Mr. Peter Brennan

Local Development Bray Partnership

### Mr. Brian Kehoe<sup>10</sup>

Local Development Wicklow Rural Partnership

### Mr. Tom Gregan

Local Development, Wicklow Rural Partnership

### Mr. Tom Broderick

Local Development, Wicklow County Enterprise Board

### Ms Mary Savage

Local Development, Wicklow County Enterprise Board

## Seats previously held by the following:

<sup>1</sup> Cllr. Pat Doyle

<sup>2</sup> This seat is rotated between four Town Councils & was previously held by Cmmr. Kathleen Kelleher, Greystones Town Council

<sup>3</sup> Hubert Fitzpatrick

<sup>4</sup> Pauline Long

<sup>5</sup> Anne Prendergast

<sup>6</sup> Eddie Shaw

<sup>7</sup> Seamus Reynolds

<sup>8</sup> Larry O'Loughlin

<sup>9</sup> Sandra Duffy (Arklow Community Enterprise)

<sup>10</sup> Jim Healy

**INVOLVEMENT OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY**

The Board is committed to facilitating the participation of all in this process.

**SOCIAL INCLUSION**

The Board will work to involve the disadvantaged and marginalised in the process.

**FEEDBACK**

The Board will encourage feedback to member organisations and the wider community.

**SIMPLICITY**

The Board will avoid duplication of effort and keep structures as simple as possible and will endeavour to harness voluntary effort.

**PARTNERSHIP**

The Board will adopt a partnership approach and will work for the common good of County Wicklow.

**AGENT OF CHANGE**

The Board will be open to change and receptive to new ideas and new approaches.

**MUTUAL RESPECT**

All contributions at meetings will be valued and respected.

**DEMOCRATIC LEGITIMACY**

The democratic mandate of the elected representatives is recognised and will be respected.

**COMMITMENT**

Board Members will commit to the process and be willing to share information on current and planned projects with the Board and look at areas of possible co-operation.

**“COUNTY WICKLOW IS THE GARDEN OF IRELAND. IT IS OUR MISSION TO IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL THOSE WHO LIVE AND WORK IN THIS SPECIAL PLACE.”**

IN FORMULATING THE FOLLOWING STRATEGY, THE WICKLOW COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD WILL ALWAYS BE GUIDED BY THIS SET OF PRINCIPLES, NOW AND IN THE FUTURE.

# A SNAPSHOT IN TIME

BY EXAMINING OUR CURRENT SITUATION HERE IN CO. WICKLOW WE CAN IDENTIFY A POINT FROM WHICH WE CAN MOVE FORWARD.

This chapter provides a brief contemporary assessment of County Wicklow in relation to social economic and cultural development. It is not a comprehensive analysis of the county but rather a snapshot in time that can tell us 'where are we now?' In turn this will help us map our way to where we want to be in ten years time.

Most of the data comes from the 1996 Census, which is a limitation. However this is the best data available for most indicators. Where appropriate, comparative data for neighbouring counties is given. Where available, county level data has been used; otherwise comments have been inserted on the most likely direction of change since 1996.

## The Land.....

The County of Wicklow is situated on the East Coast of Ireland. It occupies an area of 2,027 square kilometres and is a county of contrasts in terms of its landscape and structure. It is part of the Greater Dublin Region and is, therefore, subject to many of the pressures that come from the expansion of the capital city.

At the same time it is also known as 'The Garden of Ireland', which suggests an ideal place that is rural and unspoilt in character. The landscape of Co. Wicklow is one of mountains, rolling foothills, forests, coastline and lakes, all with attractive views. Wicklow Mountains National Park, one of six national parks in Ireland, covers a total area of 15,700 hectares which is almost 8% of the county's land mass.

The spine of a granite mountain range runs in a Northeast to Southwest direction across the county and forms one of the most extensive areas of continuous upland terrain in Ireland. This provides a physical barrier to transportation systems and creates an east/west divide.

## Where we live...

The "functional areas" of Co. Wicklow are divided with a rural/urban contrast. The existing patterns of development have been influenced by the location of key items of infrastructure and a settlement pattern that has evolved over centuries. In recent times the dominant influence has been the increased commuting by the population overspill from Dublin. Therefore development is at its most intense around Dublin and along the two main transport corridors of the N11 and the N81.

# WHO LIVES IN CO. WICKLOW AND WHERE?

**THE POPULATION OF CO. WICKLOW IS GETTING LARGER, IT'S GETTING YOUNGER AND IT IS CONCENTRATED IN THE NORTHEAST.**

- The population in 1996 was 102,683.
- The population in 2001 was estimated at 116,300.
- There was a 5.6% increase between 1991-1996 compared to an increase of 2.8% for the state.
- The largest increases were in the East, mainly the Northeast.
- Density levels vary considerably – the highest in the low-lying areas in the east; the lowest in the central uplands.
- Population forecasts produced in 2000 for the Strategic Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area indicate that by 2006 the county population may have grown to 132,216 and that it may reach 139,016 by 2011. This will represent an increase of 35% over the period 1996-2011.
- It is expected that the growth will be unevenly spread throughout the county. Almost 40% of the projected increase is likely to occur in the parts of Co. Wicklow most under pressure from Dublin.
- The vital statistics for the population of Co. Wicklow can be summarised as consisting of a very high birth rate and a low death rate.
- Between 1991-1996 there was an above average increase in the 15-24 year old category, and the 45-64 and 65+ categories, than was the case nationally.
- The age profiles vary throughout the county giving rise to demands for different types of services. In some of the remoter parts there is a higher elderly component than in the expanding areas, which will need to cater for a more youthful population.

## The Three Regions

The county can be divided into three sub regions based on the sphere of influence of large settlements both in and out of the county.

### 1. North Wicklow

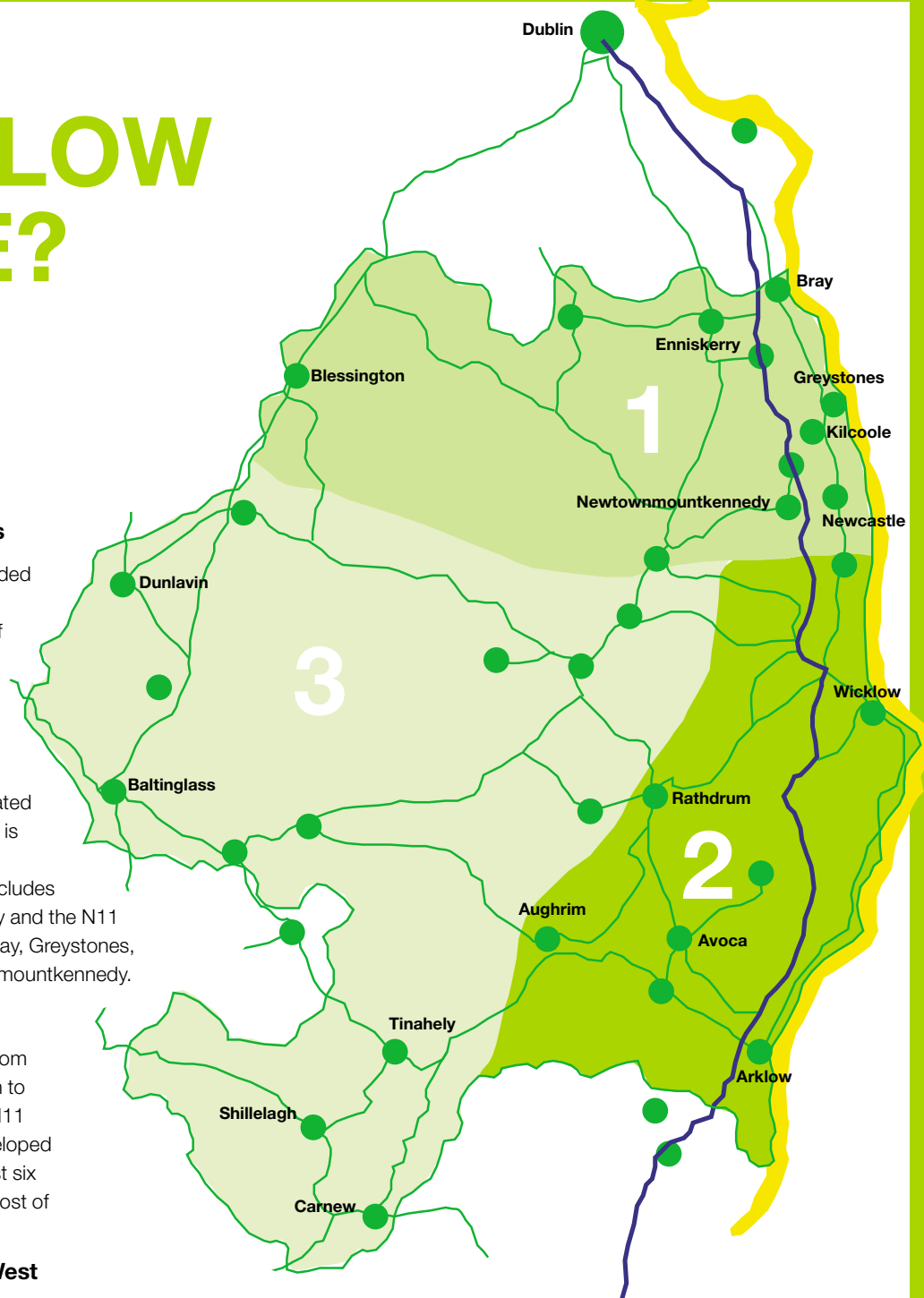
This is the most populated part of the County as it is adjacent to the Dublin Metropolitan Area. It includes Blessington, Enniskerry and the N11 commuting areas of Bray, Greystones, Kilcoole and Newtownmountkennedy.

### 2. The Southeast

This region stretches from North of Wicklow Town to south of Arklow. This N11 corridor has been developed extensively over the last six years due to the high cost of housing in Dublin.

### 3. The South and West

This region covers the area west of Rathdrum/Aughrim to Dunlavin/Baltinglass and south towards Tinahely and Counties Carlow and Wexford. With no links with any major urban centre, this is the least developed part of the County and will require specific attention if it is to realise its potential.



THE POPULATION IN  
2001 WAS ESTIMATED  
AT 116,300

# WHAT SERVICES CAN WE OFFER THE PEOPLE OF CO. WICKLOW?

THE FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF THE VARIOUS PUBLIC SERVICES THAT ARE CURRENTLY AVAILABLE TO THE PEOPLE OF CO. WICKLOW. SERVICES IN ALL SECTORS TEND TO BE CONCENTRATED AROUND THE MAIN POPULATION AREAS. THE PURPOSE OF THIS AUDIT IS TO ASSESS WHAT SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE, WHO IS PROVIDING THEM, WHO IS USING THEM AND WHERE THE GAPS IN SERVICE PROVISION LIE.



Photographer: Simon Burch

## Emergency Services

- There are 18 Garda stations dispersed throughout the county. The stations are linked to Garda Administrative regions, with Co. Wicklow shared between the Dublin Metropolitan East Division, Wexford-Wicklow Division and the Carlow-Kildare Division.
- There are ten fire stations at strategic locations throughout the county.

## FÁS

- FÁS has six outreach offices in the county.

## DSFCA

- There are three local offices for the Department of Social Community and Family Affairs (DSCFA) and three branch offices.

## Post Offices

- There are 44 post offices in Wicklow.

## Housing

- The number of persons on the waiting lists of the combined Local Authorities for social and affordable housing increased from 1,240 in December 1998 to over 3,000 in June 2001.
- In order to meet the need for social and affordable housing the Wicklow Housing Strategy recommends that each of the Planning Authorities should aim to reserve 20% of the zoned residential land for this purpose.

## IT Facilities

- There is a network of 16 IT centres dispersed throughout the county. This is a unique and valuable resource, which enables inclusion in the Information Society. These are mainly located in rural areas and are co-ordinated by Wicklow Information Network.

## Social Inclusion and Services Provision

The key organisations providing Social Inclusion Measures in Co. Wicklow are shown in the table on the right.

From an audit of service provision carried out by the WCDB, what emerged was strong evidence of a lack of co-ordination between service agencies. Agencies have difficulty gaining access to the more marginalised members of the community. This is a specific problem in the south of the county where there is a high dependency ratio. Resources are limited and the service infrastructure is strained.<sup>1</sup>

### The key client groups being targeted by these organisations are:

Targeted Socially Excluded Groups	Total No. services delivered per target group
Adult Students	6
Children at Risk	4
People with Disabilities	8
Disadvantaged Rural Communities	9
Disadvantaged Urban Communities	9
Marginalised Women	8
Marginalised Men	8
Early School Leavers	8
Ex Drug Addicts	1
Ex Prisoner/Probation Services	2
Long Term Unemployed	6
Refugees / Asylum Seekers	3
Rural Smallholders	5
The Homeless	2
Travellers	9
Young People at Risk	8

Note the type of service and geographic spread of the services vary.

### Developing Community Networks

Here we look at the structures and organisations that have already been put in place to facilitate change in Co. Wicklow. Effective community development needs the state, private and the voluntary sector all working together to reach the common goal of a sustainable community.

Two community fora have been set up to assist in the organisation of community development structures within Co. Wicklow.

These networks, Wicklow Community Platform (Social Inclusion focus) and Wicklow Communities Networking

(broad-based Community Development Network) are both represented on Wicklow CDB, Strategic Policy Committees and the County Childcare Committee.

Funding is made available from the Dept. of Environment and Local Government to resource these Networks on an annual basis. These networks are recognised as the main structure through which community and voluntary consultation and participation are to be carried out.

As can be seen from the figures, the challenge exists to work with the remaining unaffiliated groups to include them, where relevant, in specific programmes and enable access to timely information and supports.

WCP members	36
WCN members	100
Non affiliated/other groups	247
<b>Total</b>	<b>383</b>

There is no Local Development Programme for Co. Wicklow as a whole. There are three urban-based groups – Wicklow Working Together, Bray Partnership and Arklow Community Enterprise. Wicklow Rural Partnership administers the LEADER funding in the county except the areas of Bray, Rathmichael and Kilmacanogue.

### Community and Voluntary sector

County Wicklow is well served by sporting and broad based community development groups, but less well so in other sectors. The needs of women and older people in particular are not well represented by groups on the ground. There is room for development here.

Type of Group	No. of Groups
Sport	68
Community Development	68
Culture	48
Issue/Hobby	43
Youth	38
Tidy Towns/Residents Associations	31
Health/Disability	30
Enterprise Development	16
Training	14
Women	12
Older People	9
Environment	6

Within this classification there is a wide variation of types of groups and variations in the geographic spread of these groups.<sup>2</sup>



### Childcare

The dispersion of childcare facilities is uneven. The approximate number of places provided in each of the three geographical areas are:

→ 148 in West Wicklow.

→ 375 in South Wicklow (71% of the childcare in South Wicklow is concentrated in Arklow and Wicklow Town).

→ 1,147 in Bray and North Wicklow (Bray accounts for 53% of total childcare provision in the North Wicklow Area).

→ 80% of childcare facilities have a waiting list.

→ There is a particular lack of provision for the Under 2's and after school care. (Wickow County Childcare Committee)<sup>3</sup>

### Rural Transport Services

A rural transport audit and needs assessment was carried out by Fitzpatrick Associates for the CDB.<sup>4</sup> This audit is part of a wider national rural transport study and includes the following key points:

→ There is one national primary route in Co. Wicklow, the N11, which runs along the East Coast of the county. The N81, from Dublin to Bunclody is a national secondary route to the west of the mountain range serving Blessington and Baltinglass.

→ The length of national primary and secondary road per 100km<sup>2</sup> in Co. Wicklow is less than the national average.

→ The Dublin Area Rapid Transport (DART) serves the county at Bray and Greystones while Iarnród Éireann services stop at Bray, Greystones, Kilcoole, Wicklow, Rathdrum and Arklow.

→ There are approximately 39,600 private cars in the county, with car ownership per head at 38.6%, above the national average (35%).

→ There are 4 Bus Éireann routes and 20 privately licensed bus routes, in both cases less than Kildare or Meath.

→ It is estimated that there are nearly 2,800 people living in rural Co. Wicklow who have unmet transport needs. This need is particularly acute among young people followed by lower income groups, older people and people with an illness or a disability.

→ Inter-town linkages are virtually non-existent especially those between the East and West of the county. This affects community cohesion in the county.

### Healthcare and Hospitals

→ The primary responsibility for the provision of health services lies with the East Coast Area Health Board and the South Western Area Health Board.

→ Wicklow has four community hospitals.

→ The nearest acute hospitals are Loughlinstown and St. Vincent's for residents of the east of the county, Tallaght and Naas for those resident in the west, and Kilkenny and Wexford for the southwest.

→ The East Coast Area Health Board and South Western Area Health Board have a network of day-care centres throughout the county.

<sup>1</sup>A copy of the audit of service provision is available from the Office of Community & Enterprise.

<sup>2</sup>A copy of the database of community groups is available from the Office of Community & Enterprise.

<sup>3</sup>The full report on childcare is available from Wicklow Co. Childcare Committee.

<sup>4</sup>The full report on the Rural Transport Audit is available from the Office of Community and Enterprise.

# THE ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

THE ECONOMIC FORTUNES OF COUNTY WICKLOW MIRROR THOSE OF THE REST OF THE COUNTRY. UNEMPLOYMENT HAS FALLEN DRAMATICALLY AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO IF ECONOMIC GROWTH CONTINUES.

Photographer: Eugene Langan

**Table 1: Output and Income indices**

	GVA per capita 1995 Per capita 1998	Disposable Income covered by medical cards, September 2000	Percent of population
Meath	68	90.9	27.8
Kildare	111	102.0	26.4
Wicklow	80	93.0	32.3
Mid East	88	95.8	N/A
Dublin	127	114.1	25.6
Ireland	100	100.0	30.6

GVA (Gross Value Added) is the commonly used measure of the level of economic activity in an area but it is important to keep in mind that it is affected by distortions because it measures output where it is produced and so is affected by commuting. In addition it is distorted by transfer pricing/profit shifting among foreign multinational enterprises. A major challenge for the future will be to increase the level of wealth creation and employment opportunities in the county.

Another index of the level of household incomes is the percentage of the population covered by medical cards, which was 32.3% in September 2000 compared with an overall figure of 30.6% for all counties. The percentage for Co. Wicklow is higher than in the neighbouring counties.

### Employment

→ In 1996 the total labour force (those at work, unemployed and first time job seekers) was 42,600 of whom 85% were classified 'at work'. A significant share of the workforce is based in Dublin.

→ Almost 34,500 aged 15+ were not in the labour force. 47% were classified as engaged in home duties and 26% were students.

→ Unemployment declined by 55% between 1996 – 2001.

→ 17.5% of the workforce is employed in the manufacturing sector, slightly less than the national average of 19.1% but overall higher than in 1973.

→ 57% of the workforce is employed in the services sector.

→ Most of those employed in commerce insurance and finance are concentrated along the East Coast and in the north of the county reflecting the influence of Dublin based employment.

→ Co. Wicklow has the second highest (after Dublin) percentage (16.6%) employed in international services, mostly in call centres located in Bray.

→ 8.5% of the workforce is employed in agriculture, forestry and fishing. This is of greater importance in the south of the county. The more marginal farms are mainly located in the central upland areas.

→ The foreign owned sector, which consists of 27 companies in 1999, accounted for 41% of all employment, compared with 69% in Kildare and 55% in Dublin. Between 1995-99 foreign owned firms generated 60% of the net gain in employment in manufacturing and internationally traded services. Most foreign owned firms are located in the east of the county.

→ The Irish owned manufacturing sector is extensive with approximately 140 companies assisted by Enterprise Ireland. The vast majority of the companies are classified as either micro (1-10 workers) or small (11-50 workers). There were seven firms with more than 100 workers. The size distribution is important to the extent that it influences the possibility of achieving economies of scale and also the potential for developing a strong base of internationally competitive enterprises.

→ Tourism is a major activity and source of income. However compared with other counties, tourism is comparatively underdeveloped in Co. Wicklow (292,000 bed nights in 1998 compared with 877,000 in Galway). The main source of visitors is the domestic market and day-trippers. This type of tourism can be difficult to generate revenue from yet can result in the greatest social costs regarding the environment.

→ The Midlands East Regional Tourism Authority is responsible for marketing counties Wicklow, Kildare, Laois, Longford, Louth, Meath, N. Offaly, and Westmeath. Wicklow County Tourism has been established to focus on Co. Wicklow.

→ Forestry is a major land use in Co. Wicklow, occupying almost 42,000 hectares or one-fifth of the total area of the county. In addition to the planting and growing of trees there is a significant timber processing sector, though the total number employed in the sector has declined considerably.

FOREIGN OWNED COMPANIES HAVE INVESTED HEAVILY IN THE COUNTY. THESE ALONG WITH MANY INDIGENOUS COMPANIES HAVE CREATED THOUSANDS OF NEW EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES PARTICULARLY FOR WOMEN.

BUT IN SPITE OF THIS SUCCESS, 32.3% OF THE POPULATION STILL CARRY MEDICAL CARDS, AN INDICATION THAT ECONOMIC GOOD FORTUNE IS NOT AN EXPERIENCE SHARED BY ALL.

## Change/Future Trends

→ Labour force projections suggest an increase of approximately 40% between 1991 and 2006. Most of the increase will be in the service sector and up to 90% will take place in the north of the county.

→ The service sector accounts for 57% of the workforce and is the most rapidly growing sector with the largest increases in female employment.

→ The female participation rate in the labour force has increased steadily by over 20% between 1996 – 2000.

→ Future expansion of the service sector will depend on a number of factors such as local demand for traded services. For internationally traded services there are different requirements such as the availability of a workforce with appropriate skills; key infrastructure (especially for ICT services) attractive work environments (family friendly work policies) accessible locations.

→ It is expected that more farmers will seek off-farm employment to supplement their incomes. It is estimated that 60% of all farm households now have off-farm sources of income, compared with 33% in the early '90's.

The following SWOT Analysis is based on the research carried out by or on behalf of the CDB and the feedback from the public consultation meetings.



Photographer: Simon Burch

## SWOT Analysis

### Strengths

- Increased opportunity for employment
- Increased female participation rate
- Service sector
- Existing industrial base
- Serviced industrial land
- Proximity to large urban market
- Large young population
- Attractiveness of Co. Wicklow for employment
- Skilled labour force – mix of manufacturing, service and professional workers
- Gas pipeline
- Good infrastructure – rail port and airport linkages
- Tourism – landscape/diversity of activities/heritage

### Weaknesses

- High level of commuting
- Under development in west and south
- Manufacturing sector
- Mis-match between employment opportunities and skills
- Lack of childcare/elder care
- Tourism comparatively underdeveloped
- Viability of farms
- Marketing of Wicklow produce
- Contrasts between North and South
- Retention of staff
- Reliance on small number of multinational firms for direct and service based employment
- Shortage of zoned and serviced land
- Poor public transport

### Opportunities

- IT – teleworking
- WIN Network of IT centres
- Forestry and value-added activity
- Tourism – “Garden of Ireland” image
- Food produce – “green” rural image
- Market Wicklow Brand
- Proximity to Dublin market – linkage opportunity to service large industries
- Childcare – development of
- Attractive county for businesses to locate in
- Increase labour pool by targeting LTU
- Culture of Lifelong learning
- Culture of flexibility/family friendly policies in employment
- Decline in agriculture – need for diversification

### Threats

- Decline in agriculture
- Availability of a workforce with appropriate skills
- Growth will be unevenly spread throughout the county
- Electricity capacity
- Danger of a digital divide – IT infrastructure
- Absence of Third Level R&D capability
- Social exclusion
- High cost of housing/living/rents
- Lack of transport in rural areas
- Over reliance on multi-national IT companies
- Planning difficulties
- Downturn in global economy

# THE SOCIAL OUTLOOK

**IN CO WICKLOW THE DISPARITY BETWEEN THE “HAVES” AND THE “HAVE-NOTS” IS FURTHER EMPHASISED BY LOCATION. THE BETTER EDUCATED, HIGHLY SKILLED WORKFORCE TEND TO LIVE IN THE NORTH AND EAST OF THE COUNTY WITHIN COMMUTING DISTANCE OF DUBLIN WHEREAS THE SEMI-SKILLED AND UNSKILLED ARE STRONGLY REPRESENTED IN THE SOUTH AND WEST OF THE COUNTY. LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYMENT IS ALSO A PROBLEM IN THESE PARTS OF THE COUNTY.**

## Education – the facilities

→ Formal education is provided in Co. Wicklow through 86 primary schools (including five special schools) and 21 secondary schools, which are mainly located in the towns and villages.

→ Co. Wicklow Vocational Education Committee provides an extensive range of courses from its nine second level schools, four community education centres (in Arklow, Blessington, Bray and Wicklow town) and its Outdoor Pursuits Resource Centre in Baltinglass.

→ The VEC also organises a county-wide literacy scheme, which provides assistance to over 200 adults. Based on an OECD study, it is estimated that one fifth of the population of the county could have literacy problems.

→ There is no third level college in Co. Wicklow. However there is access to a range of universities and other third level colleges in Dublin as well as the NUI Maynooth and the Institutes of Technology in Carlow and Waterford. The Bray Institute of Further Education is collaborating with the Open University to provide degree level courses in Psychology, Health and Social Care, Social Science and Music. The overall participation rate in third level education in Co. Wicklow is slightly above the average for all counties.

→ There is a contrast in educational attainment between the north and the south of the county with higher levels of education attained in the North. This is influenced by in-migration

patterns and age profiles of these areas. Older people are more likely to have left school earlier than would be the case today.

## Education-the results

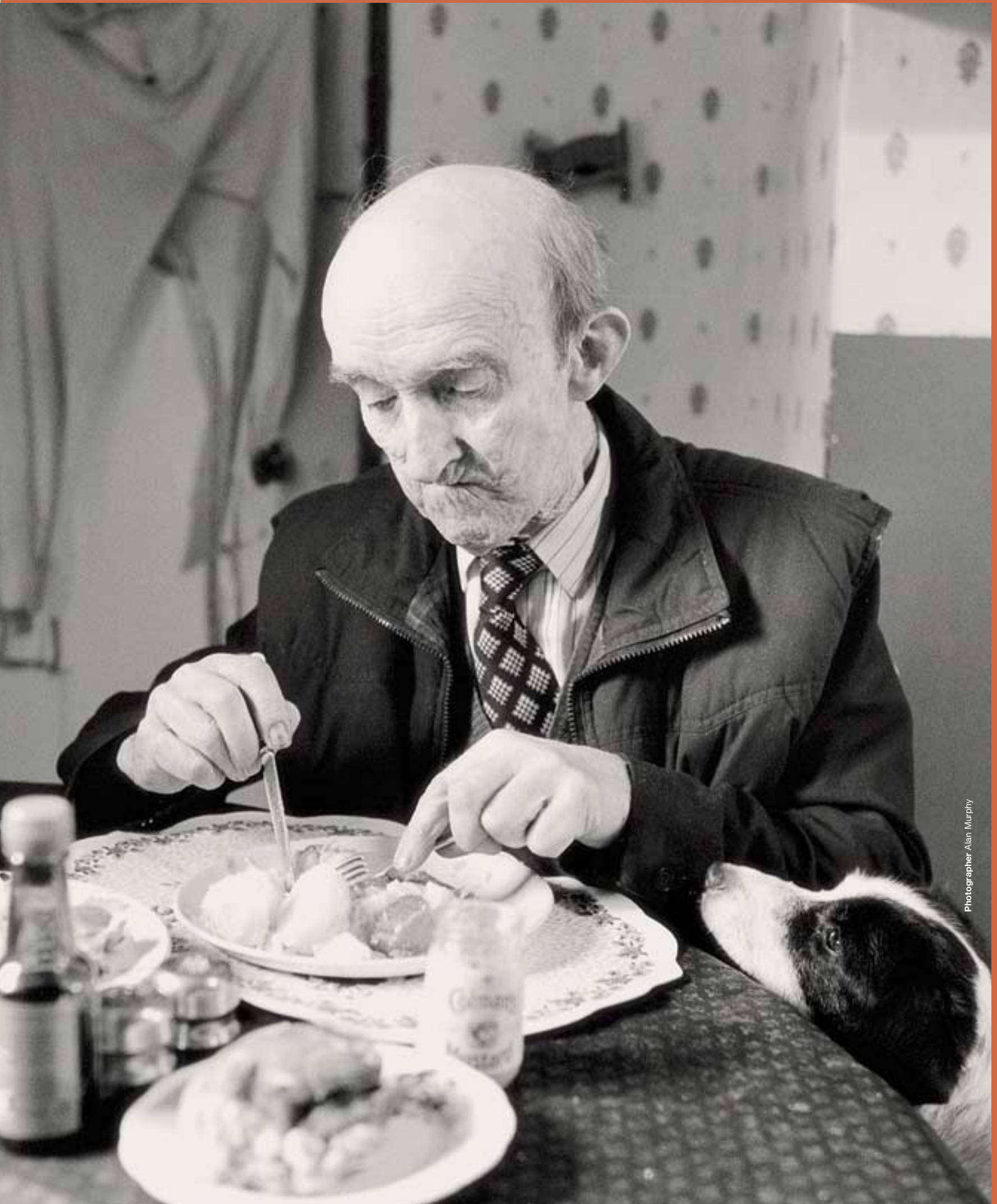
Education attainment levels have a strong influence on occupational choices, which together with information on status in the labour force largely determines the social class to which individuals are assigned by the Central Statistics Office.

→ In Co. Wicklow 21% of the population are classified as belonging to either social classes 5 (semi-skilled) or 6 (unskilled) compared to 22% for the state. These social groups are strongly represented in the rural parts of the county especially in the uplands and Southwest.

→ 30% of the population are classified as class 1 or 2. The distribution of social classes 1 and 2 (professional and managerial/technical) is almost the reverse of that for classes 5 and 6 with the highest concentrations in the more urbanised districts in the east and north.

→ This high level of spatial segregation of social classes between different parts of the county is more exaggerated than the traditional rural-urban divide. It is likely that this is also influenced by the fact that the north of the county has a younger population with a higher educational level which commutes to work in Dublin.





Photographer Alan Murphy

THIS TABLE SHOWS AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF RECIPIENTS OF THE ONE PARENT FAMILY ALLOWANCE – SIMILARLY WITH DISABILITY PAYMENTS AND INVALIDITY PENSIONS...

Number of recipients of Social Welfare benefits 1999 and % change 96-99					
	Meath	Kildare	<b>Wicklow</b>	Dublin	Ireland
One parent family Allowance 1999	1,540	2,468	<b>2,289</b>	26,983	70,387
% change 1996-99	43.0	49.0	<b>40.5</b>	30.9	39.2
Disability payments	2,733	3,760	<b>2,849</b>	28,602	107,057
% change 1996-99	36.2	38.7	<b>33.6</b>	21.9	33.0
Invalidity pensions	1,050	1,414	<b>1,199</b>	15,920	46,946
% change 1996-99	18.9	12.3	<b>8.3</b>	6.0	9.1
No. on live register	2,753	4,347	<b>4,784</b>	45,483	176,539
% change 1996-99	-30.4	-44.7	<b>-36.8</b>	-45.6	-34.6

## Social Inclusion/Exclusion in Co. Wicklow

In recent times the focus on poverty has expanded to incorporate social exclusion which is defined as the:

“cumulative marginalisation from production (unemployment), consumption (income poverty), social networks (family, neighbourhood and community), decision-making and from an adequate quality of life.”<sup>1</sup>

Research has shown that the groups most at risk of social exclusion include single parents, stay at home mothers, educationally disadvantaged, long term unemployed, travellers, those with disability and substance abusers.

→ In April 2001 31.6% of those on the Live Register had been unemployed for more than one year. The highest proportions of long term unemployed live in Arklow and Wicklow town.

→ While there are concentrations of the incidence of long-term unemployment within most of the urban centres, there are a number of rural areas, especially in the west where over 60% of the unemployed were out of work for more than one year.

→ There were 2,581 persons aged over 65 living alone, one-quarter of the total aged over 65 years (1996). Females in this category outnumber males by more than two to one. Overall the highest rates can be found in rural areas, especially in the southwest. These people are particularly vulnerable to the effects of poverty.

→ The percentage of lone parent families in Co. Wicklow (11.7%) is above the national average (11.2%) (ESRI). The majority of lone parent families reside in the east of the county. In 1996, 12 % of all households in Bray were lone parent families. This compares with 10% nationally.

→ There were 2,849 persons in County Wicklow in receipt of disability payments in 1999. There were almost 1,200 persons in receipt of invalidity pensions.

→ In 2001 there were 74 traveller families located in Co Wicklow.

→ In 1999 there were 21 homeless persons in Co. Wicklow. It is difficult to compile a comprehensive picture of homelessness because of the nature of the issue. This is a particularly

vulnerable group who require accommodation as well as outreach services, health, education and training, and social welfare services.

→ The severity of the problems of disadvantage in Bray has been recognised by the inclusion of the town in the list of 25 areas selected for inclusion in the R.A.P.I.D programme. The programme to Revitalise Areas by Planning Investment and Development (R.A.P.I.D) will provide funding for health, education, housing, childcare, sporting facilities, youth development, anti-drugs measures and policing.

### Change/Future Trends

→ This table (on page 16) shows an increase in the number of recipients of the One Parent Family Allowance – similarly with disability payments and invalidity pensions. It is unclear whether this is because of increased awareness of entitlements, changing social attitudes or an actual increase in numbers. It may be a combination of all three factors.

→ In 2001 there were 53 asylum seekers residing in five hostels in the Co. Wicklow.

→ Early school leaving is an important issue because of the link to social exclusion. This is further exacerbated by the decline of traditional employment opportunities and the increased demands of a knowledge based economy. While it is difficult to build an adequate profile of early school leaving in the county, a study of Arklow estimated that between 18 and 20 students in primary and secondary schools drop out each year. Estimates from schools in Arklow indicate that for every early school leaver there are 4 with high absenteeism rates at risk of dropping out.

<sup>1</sup>Government of Ireland 1996, 'Partnership 2000 for Inclusion, Employment & Competitiveness'

## SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Declining unemployment</li> <li>• Existing educational infrastructure</li> <li>• Economic growth</li> <li>• Culture of lifelong learning</li> <li>• Increased awareness of social inclusion</li> <li>• State support schemes e.g. VTOS, CE</li> <li>• Capacity building of disability sector</li> <li>• Networks</li> <li>• Equality legislation</li> <li>• Drug treatment programmes</li> <li>• Youth Services</li> <li>• Community and voluntary sector</li> <li>• Existence of support organisations</li> <li>• New communities being formed</li> <li>• Health services</li> <li>• Family support programmes</li> <li>• Availability of training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social exclusion</li> <li>• Stark difference in social class between areas</li> <li>• Lack of baseline data at county/area level</li> <li>• Elderly dependency ratio in the south</li> <li>• Most over 65's living alone are in the most rural areas</li> <li>• High proportion of lone parent families</li> <li>• No third level college in the county</li> <li>• Lack of childcare/elder care</li> <li>• Inadequate transport facilities</li> <li>• Intergenerational poverty and underachievement</li> <li>• High cost of housing/living</li> <li>• Poor accessibility to services for those with disability</li> <li>• Unaware of rights/entitlements – lack of information</li> <li>• Literacy</li> <li>• Large estates, inadequate facilities</li> <li>• Inadequate facilities for youth</li> <li>• Traveller Accommodation Programme too slow</li> <li>• Inadequacies in health service – crises driven</li> <li>• No acute hospital in Co. Wicklow</li> <li>• East/west rural/urban divide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Inclusion</li> <li>• Economic growth</li> <li>• More intervention/prevention work with families</li> <li>• Equality legislation</li> <li>• Funding/support for childcare facilities</li> <li>• Community and voluntary sector</li> <li>• Local Development Organisations</li> <li>• CDB and anti-poverty strategies</li> <li>• Housing Strategy</li> <li>• Health Strategy</li> <li>• National Children's Strategy</li> <li>• Youth Work Bill</li> <li>• Potential of young people</li> <li>• Potential of older people/retired</li> <li>• Social Economy Programme</li> <li>• Getting schools involved with the community</li> <li>• Improved community development training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Exclusion</li> <li>• Widening inequalities</li> <li>• Disparity between national policy and day to day life</li> <li>• Lack of co-ordination of services and drugs culture</li> <li>• Decline in number of volunteers</li> <li>• Early School Leavers</li> <li>• Alienation of youth</li> <li>• Lack of consultation and involvement with young people</li> <li>• Poor measurement and understanding of poverty</li> <li>• Social welfare system erodes self-esteem and can lead to marginalisation</li> <li>• Culture of dependency</li> <li>• Future of FÁS CE Schemes</li> <li>• Culture of consumerism</li> </ul>

# THE CULTURAL OUTLOOK

## The Cultural Infrastructure of Co. Wicklow

→ Co. Wicklow has a rich heritage of archaeological sites and monuments, historical buildings, country houses, vernacular buildings and heritage gardens. There are many items of industrial interest such as mills, roads and rail bridges as well as a strong mining heritage in both Avoca and Glendalough. All of these resources help to define the county's character and identity.

→ The Wicklow County Council Arts Office is responsible for stimulating an interest, knowledge, appreciation and practice of the arts throughout the county. Arts Centres and venues have been established in Bray and Arklow as well as smaller centres at Laragh, Tinahely, and Glenmalure. The Tinahely Courthouse schedules up to 75 events a year. The Arklow Community Arts Centre organised 22 events in 2000 while the Signal Arts Centre in Bray was the venue for 31 events. There are also many groups involved in different arts activities (literature, music, theatre/drama, and youth arts), especially in the east and north. The Wicklow Arts Centre, to be located in Bray, will be completed in 2002 and will provide a multi-disciplinary arts facility and will serve as a platform for a variety of artistic practices.

→ Co. Wicklow does not have any area designated as a Gaeltacht. However, according to the 1996 Census of Population a very significant proportion of the population is able to speak Irish. Over two-fifths of the population claim to have this ability in many districts in the west and also in the southeast of the county.

→ As society has become more educated there are increasing demands for access to information in a variety of formats. There is a need for a well-resourced and accessible library service. Wicklow County Council provides a public library service. There are twelve branches throughout the county. All branches provide internet access.

→ Distinctive cultural features of Co. Wicklow include the Glenree Peace and Reconciliation Centre, and a wide range of summer schools, festivals and arts events.

→ Wicklow is used as a film location more than any other area in Ireland. Wicklow Film Commission has been established to promote and develop this sector.

To develop the cultural sector further, we must work to ensure that places of special aesthetic, architectural, cultural, historic, scientific, social or spiritual significance are preserved and enhanced to become safe and pleasant places for all members of the public.

**CULTURE DEFINES A WAY OF LIFE. IT DESCRIBES WHO WE ARE, WHERE WE CAME FROM AND WHAT WE WANT TO BECOME. IT DICTATES HOW WE DO THINGS AND WHAT WE VALUE AND IN THIS WAY IT IS INTEGRAL TO EVERY ASPECT OF OUR LIVES. CULTURE HAS A SPECIAL RELEVANCE TO THE INDIVIDUAL AS WELL AS THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE.**



Photographer: Liam O'Connor



## SWOT Analysis

### Strengths

- 'Garden of Ireland' image
- Beautiful and varied landscape – inspiring
- Archaeological sites, historical buildings, Peace and Reconciliation Centre, Summer Schools
- Strong sense of history
- Traditional culture
- Innovative people
- Strong tradition of art and crafts
- Good base of culture and arts activity
- Arts Development Officer
- Popular film location and strength of Wicklow Film Commission

### Weaknesses

- Access for all
- Lack of awareness of richness and diversity of culture
- Declining sense of local culture
- Culture of consumerism
- Poor infrastructure to support and develop arts and heritage
- Lack of resources for arts
- Access regarding transport and cost
- Lack of off-season festivals and strong festival themes for Wicklow

### Opportunities

- Culture of lifelong learning
- Culture of the Information Society
- Culture of 'Quality/Recreational Time'
- Youth Culture
- Library system
- Rural Transport Initiative
- Exposure to other cultures
- Multimedia
- Economic returns from art, craft, cultural and recreational activities

### Threats

- Decline in numbers of volunteers
- Lack of resources
- Culture of exclusion can become generational
- Culture of fear
- High costs of insurance/infrastructure
- Future of FÁS CE Scheme
- Multimedia
- Loss of traditional place names etc.
- Depopulation of areas in the south
- Barriers to participation

# REGIONAL CO-ORDINATION LET'S GET TOGETHER

**WIDER COMMON REGIONAL ISSUES WILL REQUIRE ONGOING CO-ORDINATION AND COOPERATION BETWEEN CDB'S IN NEIGHBOURING COUNTIES.**

## **Creating a Structure for Change**

### **...challenge**

The CDB development strategy for Co. Wicklow must be placed within a regional context, especially with regard to the Strategic Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area. The potential implications of the National Spatial Strategy must also be considered.

These wider intra and inter-regional issues will require on-going co-ordination between the CDBs within the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) and also between Wicklow CDB and its counterparts in the southeast Region.

### **...the solution**

It is proposed to establish a Regional Co-ordination Committee (RCC) for the GDA. This will consist of the Directors of the seven County and City Development Boards and the Directors of the Mid East and Dublin Regional Authorities. The Regional Authority Directors will represent the Regional Operational Committees which include agencies not represented on the CDBs. The RCC will meet at least twice a year.

In addition to the RCC for the GDA, the Director of Wicklow CDB will liaise, as the need arises, on a bilateral or multi-lateral basis with the Directors in neighbouring counties to ensure that there is a co-ordinated inter-county approach to the implementation of actions in order to maximise the benefits for each county and to avoid unnecessary duplication.

The Role of the Regional Co-ordination Committee is to promote joint actions on the following issues:

- Seek a review of the GDA Strategic Planning Guidelines, in particular the future roles of the primary growth centres within the context of the National Spatial Strategy.
- Investigate the possibility of providing lifelong learning opportunities at strategic locations throughout the region by using out-reach facilities linked to Higher Education Institutions.
- Promote stronger links between Higher Education Institutions and businesses in the region.
- Assess and monitor the impact of the expansion of the Dublin metropolitan area on the surrounding countryside, especially on agricultural land.
- Promote regional tourism itineraries and encourage co-operation between County Tourism Committees.
- Promote the region as a multiple centre functional area that can support internationally competitive manufacturing and service industries at a number of strategic locations.
- Build on the experience gained from the SRUNA project to devise a regional strategy for recreation and leisure.
- Promote harmonisation of administrative boundaries by all agencies.
- Promote a co-ordinated approach to the collection and analysis of data required for monitoring and evaluation of the CDB strategies.
- Create and maintain a regional geographical information system as a planning tool and also as a means of sharing information between agencies and with the general public.

## **The National Context**

This strategy has taken account of a number of national policies and will continue to do so throughout the 10 year life of the process. These include:

- The National Development Plan 2000-2006
- NESC Report on Opportunities, Challenges and Capacities for Choices
- The National Sustainable Development Strategy 1997
- Towards Sustainable Local Communities, Guidelines on Local Agenda 21, 2001
- The National Children's Strategy 2001
- The National Drugs Strategy 2000-2008
- The White Paper on Rural Development, Ensuring the Future, 1999
- The National Anti-Poverty Strategy 1997
- The National Equality Policy
- The National Health Strategy
- The White Paper on Community and Voluntary Sector Activity, 2000
- The forthcoming National Spatial Strategy

IT IS PROPOSED TO ESTABLISH A REGIONAL CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE (RCC) FOR THE GDA. THIS WILL CONSIST OF THE DIRECTORS OF THE SEVEN COUNTY AND CITY DEVELOPMENT BOARDS AND THE DIRECTORS OF THE MID EAST AND DUBLIN REGIONAL AUTHORITIES. THE RCC WILL MEET AT LEAST TWICE A YEAR.



# THE NEXT STEP?

HAVING IDENTIFIED THE OPPORTUNITIES AND PROBLEMS THAT FACE CO. WICKLOW NOW, THE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD IDENTIFIED A NUMBER OF ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE FOLLOWING SECTORS.

1. EDUCATION & TRAINING
2. TOURISM
3. RURAL DEVELOPMENT & AGRICULTURE
4. YOUTH AND CHILDREN
5. EMPLOYMENT & ENTERPRISE
6. SOCIAL INCLUSION
7. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, ARTS, SPORT & RECREATION
8. HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT
9. HOUSING & INFRASTRUCTURE

# WHAT THE COMMUNITY TOLD US...

TO ENSURE THAT THIS DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY REALLY DOES REPRESENT THE CONCERNS AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE PEOPLE OF CO. WICKLOW, THE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD INVITED MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AS WELL AS INTERESTED PARTIES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCESS OF ITS CREATION.

Photographer Alan Murphy



## PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS WERE HELD ACROSS THE COUNTY TO DISCUSS THE ISSUES THAT CONCERNED THE PEOPLE OF CO. WICKLOW.

Before public consultations were held across the County to discuss the issues that concerned the people of Wicklow, working groups were formed to deal with specific themes. Ideas and opinions that were expressed during the public consultations were referred back to these working groups who in turn worked with parallel groups (formed with interested parties from the public consultations). Together they created the actions that make up the key part of this Strategy.

### **The methodology of the public consultation process...**

- ➔ Draft vision statement formulated.
- ➔ Critical issues identified.
- ➔ Data available compiled.
- ➔ Strategies and agencies dealing with the relevant theme identified.
- ➔ Public consultation meetings held.
- ➔ Parallel group (consisting of interested members of the public who attended work shops) set up.
- ➔ Strategic objectives and actions drawn up for each theme with identified agencies and time frame.

These objectives and actions were considered and refined by members of the County Development Board at a series of meetings.

Public feedback has shaped this Strategy and will be used as the yardstick by which we measure our achievements in the future.

# 1. EDUCATION & TRAINING

**EDUCATION AND TRAINING WERE IDENTIFIED AS ISSUES THAT MUST BE ADDRESSED IF CO. WICKLOW IS TO DEVELOP AS A FULLY SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY IN THE FUTURE. AREAS THAT REQUIRED PARTICULAR ATTENTION WERE, LITERACY, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, LIFELONG LEARNING AND CHILDREN WHO FALL THROUGH THE GAPS.**

## **What the community told us...**

→ Co. Wicklow is well disposed towards information technology. There is a network of 16 IT centres in the county mostly in rural areas in addition to training provided by Teagasc, VEC, FÁS and private providers. There is a need for greater co-ordination between them, more training places at varying skills levels and more locally based programmes.

→ The timing and cost of courses, childcare and eldercare may act as barriers to people taking up courses. However the expansion of distance learning would reduce costs and access problems.

→ Maintaining information technology can be difficult. Trained staff are in short supply and hard to keep. It is expensive to remain up-to-date in technology, software and peripherals.

→ Teleworking is viewed as a positive development as it would allow more time flexibility and help to reduce congestion.

→ There is momentum gathering to tackle literacy problems among children and adults.

→ There is awareness that parents may need as much help as children and support networks for families are needed.

→ Mothers of children who may find reading and writing difficult could be supported through the school system. Parents could attend parenting classes where literacy and numeracy is part of the course when their children go to school. Mothers and fathers who work are more difficult to target.



**ENCOURAGING ADULTS TO GET HELP WITH LITERACY PROBLEMS IS HARD BECAUSE FEW WILL ADMIT TO IT. WHEN PEOPLE DO THERE IS A SHORTAGE OF VOLUNTEERS TO WORK WITH ADULTS IN THE EVENINGS AND THERE CAN BE HIGH DROPOUT RATES FROM CLASSES.**

**AN INNOVATIVE AND IMAGINATIVE APPROACH IS NEEDED TO DRAW PEOPLE IN. RADIO, TELEVISION AND ICT COULD BE USED HERE.**

→ Women are interested in education and recognise it as a stepping-stone to the workplace. Mature workers are becoming more valued in the workplace. The workplace is also adapting a family friendly approach. Modular systems of learning and accreditation of courses are essential.

→ Developing linkages with courses that have a work application might be the next step.

→ Although childcare is being tackled, women are the primary carers of older people in the community.

# 2.TOURISM

**THE TRUE POTENTIAL OF TOURISM IN COUNTY WICKLOW HAS YET TO BE REALISED. ISSUES SUCH AS PROVIDING VALUE ADDED ACTIVITIES, MARKETING AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTY'S CRAFT INDUSTRY MUST ALL BE CONSIDERED AND WORKED ON BEFORE THE COUNTY CAN REALLY BENEFIT FROM THE REVENUE POTENTIAL OF THIS SECTOR.**



Photograph right Copyright Wicklow County Tourism

## **What the community told us...**

- ➔ The general feeling is that Co. Wicklow is not being marketed as well as it should be. The strengths of marketing lie in the high profile of Co. Wicklow on television and in the film industry, the beautiful landscape and its image as a green county. Threats arise from competition from other counties, litter and overdevelopment of some places and the lack of indoor facilities.
- ➔ There is potential for the development of craft work as Co. Wicklow has a long tradition of pottery and other types of craft work.
- ➔ More public transport, better signage, more restaurants and pubs which provide live music could improve the experience of tourists.
- ➔ Accommodation spaces in the county must be increased. Co. Wicklow's proximity to Dublin makes it a day trip destination. For the local economy to really benefit from tourism, overnight stays are essential. Overnight stay is an essential plank of the agri-tourism industry. There are not enough large hotels capable of taking coach tours and a shortage of self-catering accommodation. Due to the natural beauty of Co. Wicklow obtaining planning permission is not straightforward and capital investment expensive.
- ➔ Co. Wicklow's strength is its range of outdoor activities.

**THE GENERAL FEELING IS THAT CO. WICKLOW IS NOT BEING MARKETED AS WELL AS IT SHOULD BE. THE STRENGTHS OF MARKETING LIE IN THE HIGH PROFILE OF CO. WICKLOW ON TELEVISION AND IN THE FILM INDUSTRY, THE BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPE AND ITS IMAGE AS A GREEN COUNTY.**

# 3.RURAL DEVELOPMENT & AGRICULTURE

**WICKLOW IS STILL ESSENTIALLY A RURAL COUNTY WITH A STRONG AGRICULTURAL TRADITION. LIKE ALL TRADITIONAL INDUSTRIES FARMING IS CHANGING. WHILE THE CHALLENGES TO THE FARMER ARE WELL DOCUMENTED, NEW OPPORTUNITIES EXIST IN AGRI-TOURISM, ICT, FORESTRY, THE ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPING THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE.**

## **What the community told us...**

→ Farming is undergoing a period of rapid transition. Off-farm income is crucial to the viability of some farms and more farmers are now working outside the farm.

→ Opportunities for farm diversification include organic farm produce, Co. Wicklow's 'Garden of Ireland' brand, REPS, agri-tourism and forestry. Co. Wicklow farmers are well placed to manage change because they are well educated, have strong farming organisations and the support of development agencies.

## **TO KEEP FARMERS ON THEIR LAND, INCOME LEVELS MUST BE INCREASED. FARMERS ARE VERY RELIANT ON HEADAGE PAYMENTS, WITH 60% OF INCOME DERIVING FROM THE EU.**

→ Farm income is falling, reflecting falling agricultural prices. While Co. Wicklow has a good dairy production base milk prices are reducing. Beef consumption is under threat due to concerns about food safety. Tillage is viable in some areas but the mountainous nature of the landscape poses natural limits. While farming is increasingly mechanised, the cost of investment in machinery is high. It is difficult to get additional labour on the farm at peak times.

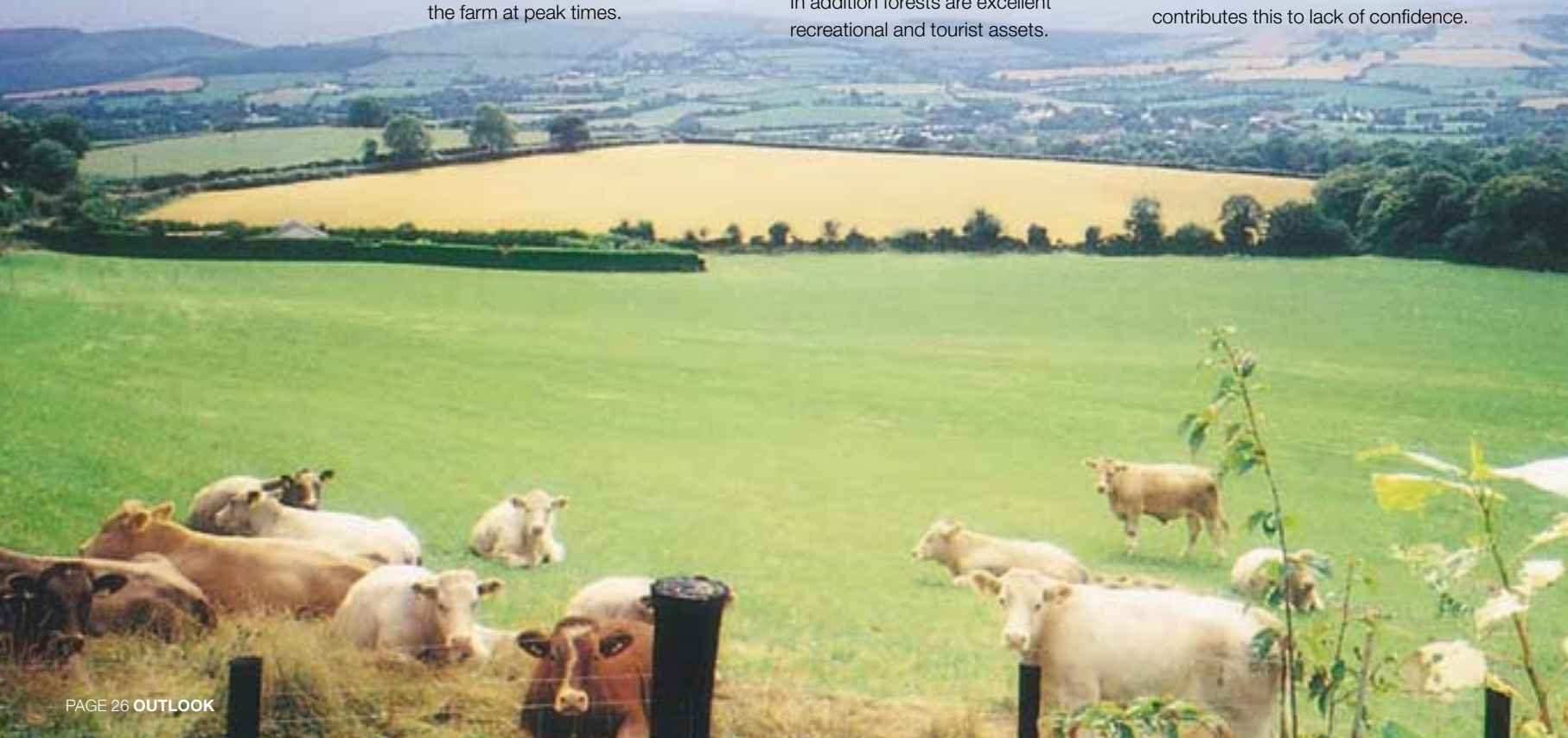
→ There is little funding available to bridge the gap between involvement solely in agriculture and getting an agri-tourism business off the ground. LEADER funding is not adequate and insurance is expensive.

→ Information technology is beginning to play a significant role on the farm and within the rural community. Off farm income could be earned through tele-working. There is demand for specific courses that will cater for the direct needs of the farming community.

→ Forestry is a productive use of marginal land and has the potential for additional income. However it is a long-term investment and requires careful planning from the start. Value could be added to the forestry industry through the manufacture of wooden goods from basic fencing, to furniture and housing. In addition forests are excellent recreational and tourist assets.

→ Co. Wicklow's environment is one of its best assets. However this asset needs protection. Greater up-take of REPS and planning a disbursed flow of recreational users throughout the county would be positive contributions. Sources of pollution in rural areas could be identified and the risk of pollution assessed. Action could follow in areas of greatest risk.

→ The role and contribution of women in agriculture is receiving recognition. The contribution may vary from unpaid labour, to cash generation and off farm income. Women are open to adopting new ways of earning income through agri-tourism, tele working, etc. However there are obstacles for women in agriculture. These include childcare and eldercare commitments, lack of transport and sometimes a lack of self-belief. The isolation of women on farms contributes this to lack of confidence.



# 4.YOUTH & CHILDREN

**OUR YOUNG PEOPLE ARE THE FUTURE OF COUNTY WICKLOW. WE MUST ENSURE THAT THEY HAVE THE OPPORTUNITIES AND FACILITIES THEY NEED TO REALISE THEIR OWN POTENTIAL. OUR FOCUS MUST BE ON TRAINING, WORKING WITH THOSE YOUNG PEOPLE ALREADY DISENGAGED FROM SOCIETY AND THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AT RISK.**

## What the community told us...

→ There are still very few places for young people to go where they can mix with their peers on a social basis, particularly in rural areas. There is a need for clubs for young people not solely focused on sport. However, there is a significant interest in organised sport.

→ Young people themselves are not consulted as to their needs and preferences.

→ There is funding available for training but there appears to be problems accessing it. There are opportunities in sports coaching but few are pursuing them. There are considerable strengths in the county in regard to training and these can be built upon.

→ There is an obvious need for more adult volunteers. Training could provide adults with an incentive to participate and increase their commitment. Specific training needs identified are child protection issues, dealing with disruptive young people and children who have problems.

→ The title “disengaged” refers to young people who are not in contact with any organised youth structure, be it a sports club, organised leisure activity or a youth club. There are distinctive categories of young people under this heading and measures need to reflect these differences. The first group is young people at risk. This could be young people who may have left school early or rarely attend, who may not be in work or who may be involved in substance abuse, etc.

The second group is young people who have recently moved into Co. Wicklow because parents have bought houses in the area. These children may not yet be settled in school and there may be few facilities in new estates. The third group is young people that simply have no interest in being part of an organised activity.

→ Organisations need rejuvenation. They need to make themselves more attractive to younger people. This may require some difficult decisions about changing structures and / or leadership. Young people may be reluctant to become involved.

**EARLY SCHOOL LEAVING IS A PROBLEM FOR US ALL BECAUSE IT RESULTS IN SOCIETY LOSING OUT ON THE CONTRIBUTION THESE YOUNG PEOPLE MAY MAKE.**

→ It can also be a sign that the family may be in need of support. The problem is often intergenerational, a continuous cycle.



Photographer: Derek Johnson

# 5. EMPLOYMENT & ENTERPRISE

**TO DEVELOP CONDITIONS WHERE ENTERPRISE AND THEREFORE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES CAN THRIVE SEVERAL SERIOUS ISSUES MUST FIRST BE ADDRESSED.**

**THESE INCLUDE THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE INFRASTRUCTURAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SMALL, MEDIUM AND LARGE ENTERPRISE, LABOUR ISSUES THAT IMPACT ON ENTERPRISE AND THE CHALLENGE OF SUSTAINING AND DEVELOPING JOBS WITHIN THE COUNTY.**



Photographer: Simon Burch

## **What the community told us...**

- Many people live in Co. Wicklow but work in Dublin or Kildare. This brain drain creates congestion, and does little to add to the local economy. By reversing this trend, the local economy would strengthen and the quality of life in Co. Wicklow would improve. However there is an absence of well-paid jobs in Co. Wicklow. The County needs to attract better employment opportunities.
- Business, tourism and the farming sectors are experiencing labour shortages. The labour force could be increased by various means.
- The Long Term Unemployed could be trained in the skills that are in short supply, there could be more childcare facilities provided for women returning to work and information on local jobs and services could be pooled. Service delivery to rural areas needs to be considered imaginatively.
- Knowledge and skills are crucial to ensuring Co. Wicklow's economy is sustainable in the future.
- There is a clear demand for more commercial premises and land zoned for business purposes. Space needs to be structured to meet the needs of different sized businesses.
- Co. Wicklow is well placed geographically and has a good road system. Two growth centres have been designated. These have priority in terms of resource allocation. However the west of the county lacks serviced land so extensive commercial or housing development cannot proceed. Co. Wicklow has poor internal transportation links. Both these points mitigate against significant development in the west. This prevents the area from supplying services to the Dublin and Mid-East regions.

# 6.SOCIAL INCLUSION

**EVERY MEMBER OF OUR COMMUNITY SHOULD BENEFIT FROM POSITIVE CHANGE. BUT OFTEN A RANGE OF OBSTACLES MAY PREVENT MANY PEOPLE FROM GRASPING THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT COME THEIR WAY. THIS MUST BE ADDRESSED TO ENSURE THAT CHANGE IS AN EQUITABLE PROCESS THAT IMPROVES THE LIVES OF ALL THE PEOPLE OF CO. WICKLOW.**



Photographer: Simon Burch

## **What the community told us...**

- ➔ Statistics are vital to set targets for people with disabilities.
  - ➔ The disabled need an additional psychological screening service, a commitment from the authorities to create an enabling environment by both physical changes and the provision of transport. New housing should be adaptable for life long living, with grade level front doors and downstairs toilets. The adoption of the Barcelona Declaration would be useful.
  - ➔ Information is more widely available than ever before, however, accessing appropriate information is not always straightforward. It is necessary to know the right questions and the right person to ask. Computers have made information much more accessible. However computers are useless if one does not have access, literacy skills and IT training.
  - ➔ There are opportunities to increase access to information. These include the development of the Citizens Information Network and the Freedom of Information Act. People appear unaware of this Act, or that Government Departments have initiated Customer Service Action Plans to improve the quality of service to the citizen. At a local level, a Network of Information Givers is being set up and the CIN is evaluating its own service to clients.
- THERE IS A NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF 'CITIZEN CHARTERS' BY STATUTORY AGENCIES. THE NEED FOR SPEED, OPENNESS AND CLARITY IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES WAS EMPHASISED.**
- ➔ Specific groups such as lone parents, older people, those with housing needs and those rurally isolated are particularly vulnerable to social exclusion.

# 7.COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, ARTS, SPORT & RECREATION

**SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS, RESOURCING THE ARTS, GREATER LINKAGES BETWEEN SPORTING ORGANISATIONS – THESE ARE SOME OF THE MANY ISSUES THAT EMERGED DURING OUR PUBLIC CONSULTATION.**



Photographer Eugene Langan

## **What the community told us...**

- Greater support of the community and voluntary sector is needed. This includes acknowledging the validity of the voluntary sector as key stakeholders in the development of Co. Wicklow alongside other established sectors. Adequate supports should be put in place to enable the community/voluntary sector to participate in decision making at county and regional level.
- Measures must be developed to address both the psychological and physical gap between the east and west of the county.
- There is a significant problem with accessing national funding schemes. Traditional fund raising can also be difficult for local committees. There are gaps in support to the voluntary sector regarding information around funding and the ability to access it successfully. Training, with progression routes is a priority need especially with regard to facilitation.

- There is a sense of powerlessness in the community and voluntary sector and a feeling that the decision making process is too removed from ordinary people.
- The future of the Arts in County Wicklow should be inclusive which means greater resources to address barriers to participation.
- Strengthened linkages between arts and cultural groups in Co. Wicklow are needed to facilitate greater exchange of information/experience.

## **IT WOULD BE BENEFICIAL TO BRING MORE ARTISTS INTO THE COMMUNITY AND PROVIDE THEM WITH FACILITIES TO WORK THERE.**

- The era of the Celtic Tiger has diverted attention away from those not able to participate in sporting activities due to ongoing restrictions e.g. financial concerns/transport issues. There is concern about keeping teenagers engaged in sporting activity – how to stop boys in particular dropping out when they reach mid to late teens / how to encourage girls to participate in more active way. There should be monitoring of resources for sports / community / recreation facilities to ensure equitable distribution of resources.

- Both sporting and recreational activity should be developed in a sustainable manner and promoted from a socially inclusive perspective.
- More sports / recreational facilities are required to serve the needs of people with disabilities in Co. Wicklow. The success of the National Disabled Angling Facility in Aughrim is a great example of this type of facility.

# 8. HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT

**PROVIDING A HEALTH SERVICE THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF ALL MEMBERS OF SOCIETY IS A PROBLEM IN ANY COMMUNITY NOT JUST COUNTY WICKLOW. YET ACCESS TO EFFECTIVE HEALTH SERVICES IS A RIGHT THAT SHOULD BE SHARED BY ALL. HERE IN CO. WICKLOW WE SHOULD AIM TO PROVIDE THAT ACCESS AND DEVELOP STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE GOOD HEALTH AND THEREBY REDUCE THE PRESSURE ON OUR HEALTH SERVICES.**

**THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT OF COUNTY WICKLOW IS ONE OF ITS BIGGEST ASSETS. STRUCTURES ARE NECESSARY TO ENSURE THAT THIS ASSET IS PRESERVED AND PROTECTED BY THOSE WHO LIVE, WORK AND VISIT CO. WICKLOW.**

**THE QUALITY OF OUR SOIL, AIR AND WATER MUST BE PROTECTED AND IN MOST CASES IMPROVED. THE ISSUE OF WASTE MANAGEMENT MUST BE ADDRESSED WITHOUT DELAY AND ANY FUTURE DEVELOPMENT MUST BE SUSTAINABLE.**

## What the community told us...

- Health is like an iceberg with the 20% visible representing health services and the 80% invisible representing issues such as stress and wellbeing.
- As society has become more affluent in a general sense, there is more focus on issues such as self-worth and self-awareness and its relation to health. Since the 1900's the mortality rate has declined, most notably since the 1950's. The reason for this decline is social change. This means that now we can look at issues of quality regarding health.
- It would be beneficial to see more local health focus groups to allow more people a say in how the health service develops and delivers. Health should become more integrated into everyday life.
- Services should be accountable. There should be a properly constituted complaints procedure. An independent community health council could be set up for this.
- Travellers should define their own health needs. The most pressing problems include infant mortality rate and depression among women which is often a result of uncertainty regarding accommodation.

- Early intervention policy is necessary for family and community support as well as clinical psychologist/ counselling services.
- Specific problems in rural areas include travel and transport. Ambulance and GP services are restricted. There are difficulties in accessing pharmacies. Disability access is also a problem as is social isolation.
- More communication is needed between GP's and hospitals. This includes a provision of aftercare plans that have been agreed between patient and professionals.
- More support in the home is needed, to ensure independent living where possible and respite care where necessary.
- A health/community profile is needed – (this can also be linked to environmental health i.e. if particular health problem in area may be linked to some environmental problem – water, air pollution).

## What the community told us...

- Individuals must assume a responsibility for waste management. This responsibility is often passed onto other bodies. There is a lack of education regarding different approaches to waste management in Co. Wicklow at the moment. A huge drive is needed to raise the capacity of both the wider community and those with responsibility to effectively manage and reduce waste in the county. Systems should be put in place to adequately regulate and monitor those who collect waste. Producer/packaging has to be addressed at source.
- There is a need for innovative, holistic planning for all agencies with the participation of the public. Enforcement of agreed policy is essential.
- There is a need to protect, enhance and sympathetically develop our natural resources including protecting our biodiversity for the future.

- Seminars and training on sustainable development for targeted sectors in County Wicklow could be held – principles adopted and actions taken by various sectors.
- A website on the Wicklow Environment could be developed which would be accessible to all. Factories/ businesses should be invited onto this website, to participate in a public awareness campaign to demonstrate their environmental record/performance.
- Water quality should be monitored and systems for improvement developed. This can be a particular problem in rural areas.
- Transport Policy and land use strategy should reflect the desire to reduce dependence on motorcars.

# 9.HOUSING & INFRASTRUCTURE

**CO. WICKLOW'S PROXIMITY TO DUBLIN MEANS THAT THE COUNTY IS PLACED UNDER SUSTAINED PRESSURE TO PROVIDE EXTRA HOUSING TO COPE WITH THE CAPITAL'S POPULATION OVERFLOW. THIS MUST BE PLANNED FOR IN AN INTEGRATED AND SUSTAINABLE FASHION IN CONJUNCTION WITH A TRANSPORT AND SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE THAT WILL ENSURE VIABLE COMMUNITIES ARE DEVELOPED.**

**THE UPGRADING OF WATER AND SEWERAGE SYSTEMS, HOUSING NEEDS, ROAD CONGESTION, LACK OF ADEQUATE LOCAL TRANSPORT – ALL OF THESE ISSUES REQUIRE AN INTEGRATED PLANNING APPROACH.**

## **What the community told us...**

- There are difficulties for local people in obtaining housing.
  - Ideally the necessary social and structural infrastructure should be in place before more development takes place. Development should be carried out in accordance with development plans. Monitoring and enforcement should be carried out. It would be better if housing was developed near commuter routes to avoid traffic congestion. There is a need for affordable housing for people with disabilities and a need to take account of all types of disabilities when planning and designing housing and residential areas. Estate management and the size and maintenance of estates are an issue.
  - Commuting and the effects on infrastructure and the environment are a growing problem in the county, as is the problem of transport. There is a perception in the county that Dublin is the main destination while there is actually a lack of public transport within the county. The provision of public transport, especially in rural areas needs to be flexible and local. Access for those with disabilities and those mobility impaired would need to be taken into account.
  - Wicklow, as a county is experiencing unique pressures on both its natural resources and built environment. The upgrading of water and sewerage systems, housing needs, road congestion, lack of adequate local public transport – all of these issues require an integrated planning process, if we are to support viable communities throughout the county over the next ten years.
- Rural areas can be subject to power cuts. Considering alternative renewable energy sources such as windfarms could be explored. However these would need to be sensitive to the landscape and would probably be better placed at sea.

# DEVELOPING A STRATEGY THAT WILL WORK...

FROM THE OUTSET OUR AIM WAS TO PRODUCE AN INTEGRATED STRATEGY.

IT IS NO LONGER SUFFICIENT TO TREAT THE NINE THEMES IN ISOLATION FROM EACH OTHER. WE MUST WEAVE THEM TOGETHER INTO INTEGRATED THEMES TO ENSURE CO-ORDINATION, PARTNERSHIP AND ADDED VALUE. THE THREE THEMES THAT EMERGED AS A RESULT OF OUR WORK ARE:

1. URBAN SHADOW
2. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES
3. SOCIAL INCLUSION

Now we are attempting to build an holistic vision for the county. It is clear from what we have learned so far that economic progress is not just a matter of employment and enterprise but is dependant on factors such as the wellbeing and knowledge of the workforce. Education and training is crucial to every sector, as learning is the key to releasing our potential. The youth are the future of the county while health and a healthy environment are the cornerstones of a vibrant society. Economic inclusion goes hand in hand with social

inclusion while culture helps us to appreciate our creativity and express it in all aspects of life.

For this reason it is no longer sufficient to treat the nine themes in isolation from each other. We must weave them together into integrated themes to ensure co-ordination, partnership and added value.

**The three themes that emerged as a result of our work are:**

1. Urban Shadow
2. Sustainable Communities
3. Social Inclusion

**Setting targets that can be achieved**

- Over 247 actions were suggested during the preparation process of this strategy.
- In order to set ambitious but realistic targets, these actions had to be prioritised. This was done by

following the principles of the CDB, those of integration, 'added value' (adding something new to the approach), partnership and co-operation.

- 82 priority actions emerged. Each action has a lead agency which will take responsibility for its implementation in co-ordination with the supporting agencies and within the agreed timeframe.
- The remaining actions have been put on hold but will be revisited during the lifetime of this strategy.

# URBAN SHADOW

CO. WICKLOW'S PROXIMITY TO DUBLIN HAS ITS BENEFITS AND ITS PROBLEMS. WHILE ESSENTIALLY STILL A RURAL COUNTY THERE ARE FEW PARTS OF CO. WICKLOW THAT ARE IMPERVIOUS TO THE INFLUENCES OF OUR CAPITAL CITY.

# HOUSING, TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT OF CO. WICKLOW ARE ALL COMING UNDER PRESSURE FROM OUR METROPOLITAN NEIGHBOUR.

Nothing emphasises this pressure more than the increased rates of commuting between Co. Wicklow and the capital city.

**OVER 24% OF COUNTY WICKLOW'S POPULATION NOW TRAVEL OVER 15 MILES TO WORK AND 13.4% TRAVEL BETWEEN 10-14 MILES. THERE HAS BEEN AN ANNUAL INCREASE OF 11% IN ABSOLUTE NUMBERS OF COMMUTERS TRAVELLING OVER 15 MILES TO WORK.**

The consequences of the high level of commuting includes congestion, higher transportation costs, greater pressure on existing transport infrastructure and a negative impact on the environment. In addition there are social costs in terms of time, stress, the impact on family life and quality of life.

All these problems are acknowledged and addressed within the context of the Strategic Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area and the forthcoming National Spatial Strategy. The Strategic Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area will impact on the future development of County Wicklow, as they are now enshrined in the County Wicklow Development Plan.

The North east of the County encompassing the Bray/Greystones /Delgany/Enniskerry area is in the Metropolitan area, while Wicklow has been designated as a "Primary Development Centre" and Arklow as a "Secondary Development Centre".

Wicklow Town was selected as a Primary Development Centre due to its location relative to the metropolitan area and it's potential to be served by rail. It was recognised that Arklow has considerable potential to develop as a self-sufficient settlement due to its size and extent of available land. As such it

is likely to be the first of the secondary centres to be extensively developed.

The basis for the growth of the development centres is that they do not become primarily dormitory towns for the metropolitan area. By concentrating development into these urban areas, pressure on the countryside will decrease and a clear demarcation between urban and rural areas will emerge. By providing local employment alternatives to the metropolitan area, commuting will reduce.

Co. Wicklow is renowned for the beauty of its natural environment. Known as 'The Garden County' it is valued for the implied characteristics of beauty and tranquillity and is cherished as a haven from the pressures of modern life. This unique resource must be protected.

This strategy will work towards creating the infrastructure needed to support economic social and cultural opportunities for the population of Co. Wicklow. This will be achieved by improving and managing the use of the county's resources. Its land, infrastructure, natural environment and public and private investment will be used to create a better built and natural environment which will be developed in a sustainable manner.

# URBAN SHADOW

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

### HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- To ensure provision of sustainable high quality social, affordable and private housing to meet existing and likely future needs of all.
- To create a safe, accessible quality living environment for all members of the community.
- To provide for balanced sustainable growth while preserving a sense of community where residents can live and work in a quality environment.
- To support the provision of safe and efficient transport systems to meet economic, social and recreational needs of the various sectors in the county.
- To secure provision of improved physical infrastructure throughout the county.

---

### ENVIRONMENT

- To manage waste in Co. Wicklow in a sustainable manner having full regard to national and EU Waste Management Policies.
- To ensure that the quality of the environment in Co. Wicklow meets EU regulations.
- To seek to manage the future growth of Co. Wicklow in a way that will meet the current and future needs of all the people of the County by balancing economic, social and environmental considerations.

### TOURISM

- To promote the development of a sustainable tourism product by attracting further investment in tourism which embraces the highest standards of excellence while ensuring the protection of Co. Wicklow's natural resources'.
- To promote the importance of the economic benefits of tourism in Co. Wicklow. To sustain development of the tourism industry in the county while protecting the natural environment.
- To develop an economically sustainable craft sector within County Wicklow
- To promote a diverse range of sustainable consumer driven quality rural tourism products which will capitalise on our competitive advantages and provide a strategy to deal with issues arising from urban shadow.

---

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, ARTS AND SPORT

- To ensure that the voluntary effort in Co. Wicklow is acknowledged and developed in a supportive manner.
- To ensure that adequate resources are put in place to allow for investment in both the physical and human infrastructure in the arts in Co. Wicklow.
- To ensure that all venues and facilities in Co. Wicklow are accessible to all, from both a physical and social perspective and that where feasible, all facilities have multi-purpose uses.

# HOUSING & INFRASTRUCTURE

## HOUSING NEEDS OF COUNTY WICKLOW

### ACTION 1

- **Ensure adequate resources are in place to allow for the implementation of the Local Authorities Housing Strategies and the Strategic Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area.**

**Agencies:** WLA, Private Developers, Voluntary Associations

**Timeframe:** 5–10 years

## ACCESS DESIGN & ESTATE MANAGEMENT

### ACTION 2

- **Eliminate access barriers for all through good layout and design practices for roads, footpaths etc especially for older people, the disabled and young families. In the long term to create accessible environment in all developments including access to amenities, businesses and shops, restaurants and provision of accessible toilet facilities.**

**Agencies:** WLA, Private developers

**Timeframe:** 5-10 years

### ACTION 3

- **Promote the creation of a 1% capital grant building scheme similar to 1% Art scheme from Dept of the Environment and Local Government to supplement existing funding sources, to refurbish public and private developments to improve accessibility and facilities for people with disabilities.**

**Agencies:** WLA, DoELG

**Timeframe:** 0-3 years

### ACTION 4

- **Develop policy between local authorities and developers ensuring appropriate estate management. Encourage and support tenant and resident participation in the management of their estates to create a sense of ownership.**

**Agencies:** WLA, Developers, Communities

**Timeframe:** 0–3 years

# TRANSPORT

## ACTION 5

- **Provide quality and safe public transport systems to reduce car usage and associated congestion and environmental damage, while including the needs of people with disabilities and those who are mobility impaired. To include:**

- Provision of twin track rail system from Bray to Wexford which should be designed and implemented to provide for residential, employment, commercial and tourism growth in County Wicklow – particular emphasis to be placed on extending DART service as far as Wicklow Town.
- Introduction of Quality Bus Corridor to Wicklow Town incorporating Greystones.
- Development of Shanganagh junction as a major public transport hub.

- **Encourage cycling, increase number of cycle ways, car parks and park and ride facilities at commuter point and in towns/villages.**

**Agencies:** Dept. Public Enterprise, NRA, Dublin Bus, Bus Eireann, Iarnród Eireann, Luas Project office, WLA, DTO, Local Development Agencies

**Timeframe:** 0–3 years planning, 5–10 years implementation

## ACTION 6

- **Audit rural transport needs and services and use this data to support the provision of rural transport initiatives to meet varying needs of communities and help sustain and regenerate rural life.**

**Agencies:** WCDB, WLA, Local Development Agencies, operators

**Time:** 0–3 years

## UTILITIES

### ACTION 7

- **Develop and provide safe and reliable rural water plan.**
- **Lobby for National Water Conservation strategy.**

**Agencies:** WLA, DoELG

**Timeframe:** 3–5 years

### ACTION 8

- **Ensure full community consultation and input in all infrastructure developments. Improve dissemination of information on issues through improved use of area offices, one stop shops.**
- **All utility providers should make strategies and plans available in accessible format to the public.**

**Agencies:** WLA, all providers/operators

**Timeframe:** 3–5 years

### ACTION 9

- **Explore options to integrate telecommunication developments coming from neighbouring counties:**

- accelerate process for unbundling of local loop
- promote roll out of broadband infrastructure and digital subscriber lines
- reduce telecommunications costs
- encourage use of e-local government for citizens and encourage roll out of information society to all communities

**Agencies:** ODTR, key providers, local business/development agencies

**Timeframe:** 3–5 years

## ENVIRONMENT

### WASTE MANAGEMENT

#### ACTION 10

- **Implement and meet targets in the County Wicklow Waste Management Plan and ensure public participation in reviews of the Plan while increasing the capacity of the county to reduce and recover waste materials.**

**Agencies:** WCC, DoELG

**Timeframe:** 0–3 years

Proofing from Poverty Perspective:

View of the Proofing Committee that this Waste Management Section has potential to negatively impact on peoples' lives by not containing any actions which address cost of waste management for people in low income situations. Recommendation that action/s be added which adequately address this issue e.g. review of Local Authority waste waiver system, increase in no. of recycling facilities located in close proximity to targeted housing estates etc.

### ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

#### ACTION 11

- **Develop a local transport policy to lessen the adverse impacts of transport on air quality and reduce dependency on cars. This action is to include encouraging businesses to provide transport for staff, establishing more cycle routes and improving existing ones.**

**Agencies:** WCC, Dept. Public Enterprise, WRP Chambers of Commerce

**Timeframe:** 3–5 years

#### ACTION 12

- **Incorporate energy efficiency design and other 'green' building practices in accordance with the Building Regulations in all developments in Co. Wicklow to maximise energy efficiency by optimising benefits of sunlight, daylight and solar energy**

**Agencies:** WLA, DoELG, Developers, Irish Energy Centre

**Timeframe:** 0–3 years

# TOURISM

## TOURISM ACTIVITIES

### ACTION 13

- **To establish flexible partnerships between Co. Wicklow and adjoining counties, particularly Dublin and Wexford, and encourage co-ordination on joint tourism promotions.**

**Agencies:** WCT, MERTA, WUC,

**Timeframe:** 0–3 years

### ACTION 14

- **Further develop infrastructure in the county from a tourism perspective placing particular emphasis on traffic flow, improved sign-posting, car parking facilities, information signs etc with due recognition to constitutional property rights.**

**Agencies:** WCC, Private Sector, Bord Failte, WUC

**Timeframe:** 0–3 years

Equality Proofing from Race/Ethnic Minority perspective:  
Make provision where possible to provide information in range of internationally recognised symbols.

## RURAL TOURISM

### ACTION 15

- **Examine existing facilities to establish associated accommodation needs & to identify opportunities for agri-tourism development.**
- **Source funding and other supports to facilitate transition to agri-tourism**

**Agencies:** WRP, MERTA, WCT, Teagasc, WUC

**Timeframe:** 0–3 years

### ACTION 16

- **Encourage dialogue between landowners and interested users on access issues with a view to resolving same.**

**Agencies:** WUC, WRP, WCC, IFA, Teagasc, Cheviot Sheep Owners Association, all affected landowners

**Timeframe:** 0–3 years

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, ARTS AND SPORT

### ACTION 17

- **Ensure that % of Developers levy as well as other appropriate sources of funding is channelled into arts/community, amenity/sport related facilities in Co. Wicklow.**

**Agencies:** WCC, Wicklow Arts Office, ISC, Local Sports Partnership

**Timeframe:** 3–5 years

## GLOSSARY

**WLA** – Wicklow Local Authorities  
**DoELG** – Department of the Environment & Local Government  
**NRA** – National Roads Authority  
**DTO** – Dublin Transport Office  
**WCDB** – Wicklow County Development Board  
**ODTR** – Office of the Director of Telecommunication Regulation

**WIN** – Wicklow Information Network  
**WCC** – Wicklow County Council  
**WRP** – Wicklow Rural Partnership  
**MERTA** – Midlands-East Regional Tourism Authority  
**WCT** – Wicklow County Tourism  
**WUC** – Wicklow Uplands Council  
**ISC** – Irish Sports Council

# SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT

**A COMMUNITY IS SUSTAINABLE IF IT HAS THE CAPACITY TO CONTINUE. THIS IS A BROAD CONCEPT WITH MANY INTERLINKING ASPECTS. COMBINED, THESE ASPECTS MAKE UP THE QUALITIES NECESSARY FOR THE MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE ECONOMIC, CULTURAL, HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELLBEING OF COMMUNITIES.**



Photographer Simon Burch

The principle of Sustainable Development underpins all aspects of this strategy. It is often defined as “development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.

The Department of the Environment and Local Government defines it as:

“Sustainable development is not just about environmental protection, although this is important; it is also concerned with the quality of life, the range and distribution of resources and benefits, the interactions between environment and development, and provision for the future”.

The concept is therefore about balancing the socio-economic aspirations of society with the natural environment and its resources, to ensure that development is within the carrying capacity of the environment.

**SOCIAL EQUITY IS A FUNDAMENTAL ASPECT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. POVERTY, INEQUALITY AND A DIVIDED SOCIETY ARE UNSUSTAINABLE.**

Therefore a focus on social exclusion is necessary for the active participation of all in sustainable development.

“Sustainable Development – A Strategy for Ireland”<sup>1</sup> provides a national framework to ensure that the issue of sustainability is addressed throughout all sectors of society, including the economy.

Local Agenda 21 is a process, which facilitates sustainable development within a community. It is an approach based on collaboration and participation, which respects the

social cultural, economic and environmental needs of the present and future citizens of a community in all its diversity. It is not an environmental statement but a strategy, which integrates environmental considerations into the centre of policy in all aspects of a community’s development. The CDB process is a Local Agenda 21 process.

## **Healthcare in a Sustainable Community**

The concept of a healthy community is closely related to that of a sustainable community. Health is defined by the World Health Organisation as ‘the extent to which an individual is able to realise aspirations and satisfy needs, and to change and cope with the environment.’

A healthy community is one which ‘is continuously creating and improving those physical and social environments and expanding those community resources which enable people to mutually support each other in performing all the functions of life and in developing their maximum potential’ (Hancock and Duhl, 1986). In this way a healthy community both includes and goes beyond the traditional boundaries of health in terms of absence or treatment of disease.

Health service provision now takes place within the context of the National Health Strategy and Primary Care Strategy. It also takes place within the context of the wider definition of health, which includes quality of life. Public dissatisfaction with the health care system is higher in Ireland than in other EU countries. Nationally, research has shown that poverty is one of the most important determinants of health.

In Co. Wicklow there is a need for community based research, both in the sense of geographical communities and

<sup>1</sup>“Sustainable Development – A Strategy for Ireland”; Department of the Environment and Local Government, 1997.

<sup>2</sup>Public Policy on Children’s Play in Ireland, Richard Webb & Associates, 1999.

# “...DEVELOPMENT WHICH MEETS THE NEEDS OF THE PRESENT WITHOUT COMPROMISING THE ABILITY OF FUTURE GENERATIONS TO MEET THEIR OWN NEEDS.”

communities of interest, to determine health needs adequately and to ensure equity in access to health services. There is considerable concern in rural areas and among marginalised groups regarding access to services. This strategy sets out to address these issues along with factors such as lifestyle, access to education leisure and recreation, changing family structures, increased alienation from society and the environment in which we live. Issues such as these transcend the traditional boundaries of health.

## **Rural Life in a Sustainable Community**

The local, national, European and global context of agriculture is one which is characterised by a decrease in employment, increased specialisation and a decrease in the number of viable farms. Locally, in Co. Wicklow this has manifested itself in a fall in farm incomes, an increase in part-time farming and in off-farm employment.

In addition rural areas are vulnerable to isolation and marginalisation. This Strategy sets out to ensure a vibrant rural community through the enhancement of economic, social and cultural life in rural areas and in doing so will have regard to the Rural Development White Paper.

## **Lifelong Learning in a Sustainable Community**

Education and Training is the key to releasing our potential. The culture of education and training is now one of lifelong learning. This is widely recognised as a key component of a competitive economy and a vibrant society. It addresses both social and economic inclusion in the context of an increasingly technological society.

Culture in education allows us to explore and express our identity, both individually and collectively and develops our creative thinking. The impact of this sector permeates all areas of society.

This strategy seeks to create an environment in which all our people can develop to their full potential to enable them to participate in and contribute to all aspects of social, economic and cultural life.

## **Economic Growth in a Sustainable Community**

Employment and enterprise takes place within the context of the local, national and global economy and an increasingly technological society. In the case of Ireland this context is one of unprecedented growth in recent times. However the economy remains vulnerable to international fluctuations.

This Strategy focuses on adaptation to change and sustainable local employment to offset vulnerability to international forces. The strategy also seeks to address the mismatch between the needs of employers and the skills of employees. These issues are dependent on factors other than the economy such as the quality of life in Co. Wicklow, the knowledge, skills, creativity and health and wellbeing of the population of the county.

## **Individual Participation in a Sustainable Community**

Nationally and locally the contribution of the community and voluntary sector must be acknowledged and valued. The revitalisation of local government presents an opportunity for the community to participate in decision making at local level. In Co. Wicklow participation in community development has had a very positive impact on local communities.

The success of the community and voluntary sector has been due to their commitment but the sector faces many challenges in the future. There has been a decline in volunteering yet at the same time many demands are being made on the community and voluntary sector. This strategy will support and foster a strong sense of community based on participation, inclusion and respect. This strategy will support and build on the vibrancy of the Community and Voluntary Fora.

## **Recreation in a Sustainable Community**

Participation in art, sport and recreational activities are an essential component of healthy and sustainable communities. Health wise the benefits result in a physically and mentally healthy population. Participation in these activities should be an integral part of community living and impact on many sectors including education, tourism, economic, personal development and social cohesion. The strategy will work towards creating a vibrant and active art and sport sector, accessible to all.

## **Children, the Future of a Sustainable Community**

The status and wellbeing of children and young people is indicative of the values and quality of life within any society. Children today face so many different opportunities and challenges as Irish society has grown and changed rapidly. They are among the most vulnerable in our society and special emphasis must be placed on those who are ‘at risk’ of isolation, disadvantage, exclusion or early school leaving.

The National Children’s Strategy acknowledges and reinforces the changes that have taken place in the status of children – from those who were to be seen and not heard to those who are respected as young citizens.

At local level Wicklow CDB will establish a child/youth forum where young people will get the opportunity to express their views and participate in the development of Co. Wicklow.

Among the everyday changes affecting children’s lives are the increased volume of traffic and patterns of housing developments which have impinged on the places where children can play. In addition the mobility of children has been restricted.

**RESEARCH HAS FOUND THAT THE PERSONAL FREEDOM AND CHOICE PERMITTED A SEVEN YEAR OLD IN 1971 ARE NOT NOW PERMITTED UNTIL CHILDREN ARE AT LEAST NINE YEARS OLD.<sup>2</sup>**

These restrictions can reduce the range of social contact children have with people in their community. This in turn leads to suspicion and break down in social relations between the differing age groups. This causes particular problems with teenagers.

Children and young people need support to be able to live healthy and full lives. This Strategy has regard to the National Children’s Strategy and will work to make Co. Wicklow a child-friendly county where children can participate fully in economic, social and cultural life and where services relating to children and young people are delivered in a co-ordinated and comprehensive way.

# SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- To seek to manage the future growth of Co. Wicklow in a way that will meet the current and future needs of all the people of the county by balancing economic, social and environmental considerations.

### SUSTAINABLE HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

- Everybody should have equal access to health services regardless of ability to pay, disability or geographical location. Services should be quality driven, accessible to all, comprehensive and should have regard to differing needs of urban and rural areas. Services should service the needs of the person and not the needs of the service.
- To enable the people of Co. Wicklow to make healthier choices. Health Promotion and prevention should:
  - Adopt a community development approach
  - Be a quality product
  - Be delivered at individual, community, organisation and policy level
  - Adopt a multiagency approach
  - Include a peer element where appropriate
- To enhance the health and social gain of families, children and communities in Co. Wicklow, especially those who are most vulnerable and excluded. Regard must be paid to demographic change including the National Spatial Strategy.

### SUSTAINABLE RURAL COMMUNITITES

- To ensure the development of human resources which are required in agriculture and rural development in Co. Wicklow, to further develop more sustainable grass based milk, beef and sheep production, crop and alternative enterprises.
- To promote the economic, social and cultural position of women in agriculture and in rural areas in Co. Wicklow.

### TOURISM

- To promote the importance of the economic benefits of tourism in Co. Wicklow, to sustain development of the tourism industry in the county while protecting the natural environment.

### EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- Ensure that in the development and provision of education and training opportunities, that barriers preventing participation are identified and removed. To ensure co-ordination between the main training providers and to encourage the availability of progression training throughout the county.
- To encourage the adoption of new information technologies that continue to transform the working farm business environment. To ensure that rural dwellers are facilitated for life long learning and to ensure rural economic and social progression through information technology for all rural dwellers.

### EMPLOYMENT AND ENTERPRISE

- To increase the qualified labour force to meet recruitment requirements of employers, and to facilitate upskilling as appropriate to enable the unemployed / socially excluded gain access to the qualified labour force.
- To create the infrastructure and environment throughout Co. Wicklow which will safeguard current employment levels and facilitate the creation of new employment opportunities in keeping with current guidelines and policies.

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, ART AND SPORT

- To ensure that everyone in Co. Wicklow is given the opportunity to experience the arts in a meaningful way.
- To ensure greater integration of arts and cultural activity in the educational sector in Co. Wicklow as well as developing and supporting arts education and training on a county wide basis.
- To ensure sufficient investment in both the physical and human resource aspect of the sports and recreation sector in Co. Wicklow.

### YOUTH AND CHILDREN

- To provide facilities, support and personal development opportunities for the youth of the county.
- Develop, promote and sustain the concept of youth community development countywide by providing appropriate training opportunities which will enable young people to become more involved in their community and which will support and encourage adults working with youth. This will in the long term ensure a more caring and vibrant society.

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

## ACTION 1

- **Set up a sustainable Development Working Group for County Wicklow to promote the integration of the goals and principles of sustainable development including:**
  - Provide ongoing programmes of seminars and training on sustainable development for targeted sectors in the county including businesses and agencies.
  - Encourage participation in and provide practical support for subsequent actions and programmes.
  - Work for the empowerment of the people of Co. Wicklow by encouraging participation in the decision making process with special regard to sustainable development issues.
  - Develop and monitor headline sustainable development indicators for Co. Wicklow.
  - Set up a website on the environment in Wicklow and ensure information is disseminated widely and is accessible both physically and in terms of language used. Invite businesses and agencies to display their verifiable environmental record and performance.

**Agencies: Wicklow CDB**

**Timescale: 0–3 years**

## ACTION 2

- **Draw up a Local Agenda 21 plan for Wicklow County Council having regard to the recommendations in Towards Sustainable Local Communities, Guidelines on Local Agenda 21 (DoELG, '01).**

**Agencies: WCC**

**Timescale: 0–3 years**

# SUSTAINABLE HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

## SERVICES – EQUITY & ACCESS

### ACTION 3

- **Facilitate the implementation of the National Health Strategy and Primary Care Strategy in Co. Wicklow.**

**Agencies: ECAHB, SWAHB & Wicklow CDB**

**Timescale: 0–5 years**

### ACTION 4

- **Conduct an audit of service provision in the county, determining both strengths and weaknesses, to:**
  - Review and assess the health and social care needs of people in the county.
  - Identify health infrastructural gaps paying particular attention to acute hospital service, ambulance service and transport issues.

**Agencies: ECAHB, SWAHB**

**Timescale: 0–3 years**

### ACTION 5

- **Establish partnerships in the provision of health services with an inbuilt effective evaluation system:**
  - Among service providers.
  - Between agencies and the community and voluntary sector.
  - Between service providers and local business sector.

**Agencies: ECAHB, SWAHB** to lead Task Force consisting of WLA, Local Development Agencies and Voluntary reps.

**Timescale: 0–3 years**

### ACTION 6

- **Establish an independent community health council for Co. Wicklow to:**
  - Develop a voice for the public.
  - Assist with complaints.
  - Provide support and information.
  - Develop local health focus groups to allow for consultation and research in health services.

**Agencies: ECAHB, SWAHB** voluntary groups including WCP & WCN

**Timescale: 0–3 years**

## PROMOTION AND PREVENTION

### ACTION 7

- **Facilitate the implementation, in Co. Wicklow, of the National Health Promotion Strategy 2000 – 2005 through the creation of a county based task force led by ECAHB & SWAHB to assist in the delivery of the above Strategy.**

**Agencies:** ECAHB, SWAHB to lead Task Force consisting of WLA, Local Development Agencies and Voluntary reps.

**Timescale:** 3–5 years

### ACTION 8

- **Assess, support and develop policies to support families. Ensure adequate resources to implement these policies pro-actively. Special emphasis to be placed on needs of vulnerable children and families. Care to be taken to avoid duplication of service delivery.**

**Agencies:** ECAHB, SWAHB, DSCFA, Local Development Agencies, Gardai, Child Protection Agencies.

**Timescale:** 3–5 years

# SUSTAINABLE RURAL COMMUNITIES

## AGRICULTURE

### ACTION 9

- **Encourage partnerships to enable farms to be run effectively on a part-time basis and remain sustainable through shared labour, machinery resources.**

**Agencies:** Teagasc, Farm Relief Service, Farm Organisations

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

Proofing from Poverty Perspective.

Regarding the delivery of the above action, ensure that these services are targeted to meet specific needs of smallholder farmers & those farm families experiencing financial difficulties.

### ACTION 10

- **Investigate opportunities for Wicklow to develop new products including niche organic produce**

- Identify suitable sales outlets and market goods effectively.
- Promote and market a positive image of produce by establishing ways of tracing food 'from farm to fork'.
- Develop and promote a 'Garden of Ireland' brand.

**Agencies:** Teagasc, DAF&RD, Bord Bia, IOFGA, Farm Organisations, CEB, WRP

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

### ACTION 11

- **Encourage the production and promotion of a sustainable forestry plan for Wicklow by bringing together the relevant players to include downstream added value activities**

**Agencies:** WCC, IFA, Coillte, Teagasc, Private enterprise, WUC, WRP, Department of Marine & Natural Resources

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

### ACTION 12

- **Investigate the low take up of Rural Environmental Protection Scheme in Co. Wicklow and promote the benefits of the scheme.**

**Agencies:** Teagasc & DAF&RD, Farm Organisations

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

Proofing from Poverty Perspective.

Regarding the delivery of the above action, ensure that REPS is targeted to meet specific needs of smallholder farmers & those farm families experiencing financial difficulties.

## ACTION 13

- **Develop partnerships between farming organisations and employment and training services.**

**Agencies:** Teagasc, Farm Relief Service, Farm Organisations, FÁS, WRP, BP

**Timescale:** 3–5 years

## AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

### ACTION 14

- **Promote farm and litter campaigns to reduce waste and litter emanating from farming practices as per the Co. Wicklow Waste Management Plan.**

**Agencies:** WCC, Teagasc, Farm Relief Service, Commercial Organisations

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

## WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE & RURAL AREAS

### ACTION 15

- **Compile a comprehensive statistical evaluation into the role and position of women on Wicklow Farms.**

**Agencies:** Teagasc, IFA, WRP

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

Proofing from Poverty Perspective.

Regarding above action, ensure that this evaluation incorporates a poverty profile of women in agriculture in Co. Wicklow.

### ACTION 16

- **Identify relevant agencies/schemes to facilitate eldercare/home helps in rural areas both as care providers and a source of local employment – investigate new opportunities under FÁS Social Economy Programme.**

**Agencies:** ECAHB, SWAHB, FÁS, DAF&RD

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

### ACTION 17

- **Support the implementation of the recommendations arising from the report of the Advisory Committee on the Role of Women in Agriculture.**

**Agencies:** Teagasc, WRP

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

# TOURISM

## TOURISM MARKETING

### ACTION 18

- **Develop and promote the use of the county website [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie) by establishing links with other tourism sites to ensure best possible return on all international and national tourism marketing funds through pooling of resources, expertise and experience. Develop concept of ‘one stop booking’ i.e. source destination, book travel etc.**

**Agencies:** WCT, MERTA, WCC, WRP, BORD FAILTE

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

### ACTION 19

- **Support the development of partnerships between tourism providers to market a range of tourism packages e.g. golf, equestrian activities, language schools, gardening, walks etc. Packages to include ‘trail of attractions’ to encourage short stay visitors to lengthen their stay in County Wicklow as well as targeting corporate and incentive groups.**

**Agencies:** WCT, MERTA, All tourist businesses

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

Disability Proofing.

Ensure that in the delivery of these packages, provision is made for people with a physical / sensory disability.

### ACTION 20

- **Develop and implement a Marketing Plan for the County similar to the TDI Report (1998) so that the industry can monitor marketing improvements and strategies.**

**Agencies:** WCT, WCC, WRP, stakeholders

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

# EDUCATION & TRAINING

# EMPLOYMENT & ENTERPRISE

## LIFELONG LEARNING

### ACTION 21

- **Ensure that all education and training programmes are locally available with appropriate social support systems to allow full access for targeted people. This entails providing the necessary facilities, which may be home or education/ community based, to ensure local access to the learning programmes which would include crèche, transport or IT support.**

**Agencies:** FÁS & VEC, Local Development Agencies, DSCFA, ECAHB, SWAHB, Public/private partnerships

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

### ACTION 22

- **Maximise access to IT Training for excluded groups and individuals by removing barriers to participation e.g physical access, financial barriers. Additionally promote employment opportunities for tele-working in rural areas through training and education.**

**Agencies:** FÁS, WIN, VEC, Local Development Agencies, WCC, Teagasc

**Timeframe:** 0–3 years

### ACTION 23

- **Increase level of support to IT centres in Co. Wicklow to enable them take on an expanded role e.g developing existing IT Centres as job clubs / information centres for people seeking employment.**

**Agencies:** Local development agencies, CWCIN

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

## LABOUR AND EDUCATION

### ACTION 24

- **Increase awareness of Career Guidance Teachers in 2nd level schools of emerging labour requirements in Co. Wicklow. Particular attention to be paid to potential early school leavers.**
- **Promote development of 3rd level Outreach College in Co. Wicklow to provide required relevant training, with a mandate that appropriate provision is made for non-CAO qualifiers.**
- **Actively promote links between schools and industry including business development links with a third level institution within or outside the County. (i.e. Carlow/Dublin etc).**
- **Promote links between schools, industry and further education sector within Co. Wicklow.**

**Agencies:** VEC, Wicklow CEB, FÁS, Dept. of Ed & Science. Local Development Agencies

**Timescale:** 3–5 years

## SUSTAINING AND DEVELOPING JOBS LOCALLY

### ACTION 25

→ **Assist employers to maintain existing staff and secure new staff through series of training /awareness raising sessions paying specific attention to:**

- Introduction of new management styles
- Offering progression routes for staff
- Incentive schemes for staff
- Improved working conditions
- Local provision of childcare
- Better public transport links
- Investigating options for affordable accommodation / housing

Specifically promote childcare in-house in large enterprises or industrial parks.

**Agencies:** WCEB, FÁS, Chambers of Commerce, Local Development Agencies, IDA, Enterprise Ireland, Co. Childcare Committee

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

### ACTION 26

→ **Adopt a cohesive and co-ordinated approach to the provision of incubation /start-up units throughout Co. Wicklow as a key strategy in developing local businesses/employment. Training & mentoring support to be provided as part of overall package and smaller population centres to be targeted for location of these units.**

**Agencies:** WCC & WCEB, Enterprise Ireland, Local Development Agencies, PPPs, FÁS, DSCFA

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, ART & SPORT

### VOLUNTEERISM

#### ACTION 27

→ **Promote the establishment of a number of volunteer bureaux throughout the county to match volunteers with prospective voluntary agencies.**

**Agencies:** WCDB, Local Development Agencies, WCP, WCN, CWCIN

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

#### ACTION 28

→ **Initiate a county based Awards Scheme for Voluntary Activity in the county – this should target efforts of community groups as well as efforts of key individuals.**

**Agencies:** WCDB, WCC, VEC, WCP, WCN, WUC, CWCIN

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

## RESOURCING THE COMMUNITY SECTOR

#### ACTION 29

→ **Establish web based grants database for Co. Wicklow which will detail the main grants available to the community sector – this system to be used to track distribution of grants throughout the county.**

**Agencies:** WCDB, WIN, WCN

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

#### ACTION 30

→ **Prioritise the training of local facilitators through delivery of accredited facilitation training programmes and support this resource pool on an ongoing basis within Co. Wicklow.**

**Agencies:** Local Development Agencies, VEC

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

## COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AT DECISION MAKING LEVELS

### ACTION 31

- **Ensure that established community based networks in county i.e. WCP and WCN are recognised and supported as the key voluntary networks for informing Community Development policy and activity in Co. Wicklow.**

**Agencies:** All WCDB agencies, WCP, WCN

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

### ACTION 32

- **Seek to ensure that all voluntary representatives on statutory and other committees are properly recompensed for their time and travel – this should be specifically aimed at supporting those least able to afford to participate.**

**Agencies:** WCDB

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

## PARTICIPATION IN THE ARTS

### ACTION 33

- **Increase supports to assist arts/culture groups and individuals to network effectively within the county. This includes recognising and supporting Wicklow Arts Network (WAN) as the key voluntary networking body for informing Arts/Cultural policy and activity in Co. Wicklow.**

**Agencies:** Wicklow Arts Office, Arts Council

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

### ACTION 34

- **Explore ways of increasing the number of artistic centres in Co. Wicklow to facilitate greater access to and participation in the arts including provision of dedicated space for Youth Arts and Amateur Arts.**

**Agencies:** WCC, Wicklow Arts Office

**Timescale:** 5 years+

### ACTION 35

- **Support the establishment of a network of craft workers to develop and promote the design/craft sector in the county.**

**Agencies:** Craft Council of Ireland, WCEB, FÁS, WCC, WRP, Craft Reps

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

## RESOURCING THE SPORTS / RECREATIONAL SECTOR

### ACTION 36

- **Support the establishment of an adequately resourced Local Sports Partnership in Co. Wicklow.**

**Agencies:** WCDB, VEC, Irish Sports Council Dept. of Tourism, Sport & Recreation, ECAHB, SWAHB, WCC

**Timescale:** 3–5 years

## RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY IN CO. WICKLOW

### ACTION 37

- **Promote the development of a long distance walk for West Wicklow – explore potential to extend Wicklow Way to loop into West Wicklow.**

**Agencies:** WCC, ECAHB, SWAHB, Duchas, Coillte, WUC, WCT

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

## YOUTH AND CHILDREN

### ACTION 38

- **Facilitate greater co-ordination and co-operation between statutory agencies and voluntary groups dealing with and providing services to young people. This could be achieved by the employment of a Youth Development Officer for the County who would facilitate these links and implement agreed programmes of activity.**

**Agencies:** VEC, Wicklow CDB, ECAHB, SWAHB

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

## YOUTH NEEDS & FACILITIES

### ACTION 39

- **Following consultation with young people, provide and support creation of drop-in centres. These centres should focus on the needs of disengaged young people, be run in participation with young people and with the support of a youth worker.**

**Agencies:** DSCFA, ECAHB, SWAHB, FÁS, VEC, Local Development Groups

**Timescale:** 5–10 years

### ACTION 40

- **Train and provide professional youth development facilitators.**

**Agencies:** Local Development Agencies

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

### ACTION 41

- **Develop policy on provision of green areas and public parks/playgrounds throughout Co. Wicklow.**

**Agencies:** WCC

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

### ACTION 42

- **Produce an audit of all youth groups agencies, services and facilities for youth in the county.**

**Agencies:** WCDB

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

## MAKING WICKLOW A CHILD FRIENDLY COUNTY

### ACTION 43

- **That Wicklow CDB will oversee the implementation of the National Children's Strategy in the county.**

**Agencies:** Wicklow CDB

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

### ACTION 44

- **That Wicklow CDB will develop and oversee the implementation of a play policy for the needs of young people in the county.**

**Agencies:** Wicklow CDB

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

### ACTION 45

- **That Wicklow CDB supports and endorses the policy and work of the County Wicklow Childcare Committee**

**Agencies:** Wicklow CDB

**Timescale:** 0–3 years

### GLOSSARY

**Wicklow CDB** – Wicklow County Development Board

**WCC** – Wicklow County Council  
**ECAHB/SWAHB** – East Coast Area Health Board/South Western Area Health Board

**WLA** – Wicklow Local Authorities

**DSCFA** – Department of Social Family & Community Affairs

**DAF&RD** – Department of Agriculture Food & Rural Development

**IOFGA** – Irish Organic Farm Growers Association

**WCEB** – Wicklow County Enterprise Board

**WRP** – Wicklow Rural Partnership

**WUC** – Wicklow Uplands Council

**BP** – Bray Partnership Ltd

**WCN** – Wicklow Communities Networking

**WCP** – Wicklow Community Platform

**WCT** – Wicklow County Tourism

**MERTA** – Midlands-East

Regional Tourism Authority, Wicklow

Information Network

**CWCIN** – Co. Wicklow Citizens Information Network

# SOCIAL INCLUSION

Social Inclusion involves facilitating participation so that those who experience exclusion are actively involved in decision making. It is clear that the issue of equity in economic social and cultural affairs is essential to achieving the vision at the heart of this strategy.

This is an essential aspect of this CDB Strategy. This strategy also takes account of key national and public policies including the National Anti-Poverty Strategy, the NDP, Equality legislation and Information Age Policy.

## **Social Exclusion is an Urban Problem**

Research recently conducted into social exclusion in Bray documented in graphic human terms the experience of exclusion.<sup>1</sup> The research highlighted the many complex elements of inter-generational exclusion from the social, cultural, economic and political perspectives. The report identified barriers to breaking the cycle of exclusion such as the difficulty of retaining young people in school; inadequate resources for material well being; lack of facilities and programmes for young people; lack of co-ordination of services and schemes and lack of information regarding entitlements, rights and opportunities.

The report reinforced the importance of integrated solutions. For example the potential benefits of one initiative (e.g. second chance education) cannot be realised without complementary supports being made available such as childcare.

It is interesting to note that no other single issue received more comment and debate amongst participants than that of education. The research found that educational disadvantage remains a pivotal obstacle to effective inclusion.

While much work on social exclusion has been undertaken in Bray, this work will be enhanced by the inclusion of 5 areas of Bray under the RAPID Programme.

## **...and a Rural One**

More research would be useful on the extent and nature of social exclusion in rural areas of Co. Wicklow and this will be addressed in this strategy. NAPS identified tackling rural poverty as one of its key themes. Often rural poverty can be more dispersed and less visible than in urban areas.

For people living outside towns, rural social exclusion is dispersed, individualised and often invisible. It lies hidden, disguised and compounded by depopulation, unemployment and underemployment, poor infrastructure, especially transport, and inadequate and declining access to services.<sup>2</sup>

In a study undertaken on social inclusion in rural areas it was found that many of the essential services required in daily living are beyond the grasp of a substantial proportion of families.<sup>3</sup>

**THIS STUDY ALSO FOUND THAT A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS, ESPECIALLY UNEMPLOYED HOUSEHOLDS INDICATED A FEELING OF ISOLATION.**

**SOCIAL INCLUSION IS ESSENTIALLY ABOUT THE INDIVIDUAL'S FULL PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY. THIS PARTICIPATION IS BASED ON HIS OR HER ACCESS TO CORE RIGHTS FOUNDED ON CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS. THESE RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS LEAD TO EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL AND ARE NOT BASED ON SOCIAL OR ECONOMIC STATUS.**

This isolation includes physical remoteness, feelings of being cut off from the wider community and stigma attached to poverty – implying a sense of shame or failure. This strategy seeks to examine the nature and extent of social isolation in rural areas and identify measures to address this problem.

## **Social Exclusion and Children**

Child poverty is multi-dimensional in nature in that it impacts on all aspects of a child's life. The consequences for children are particularly severe because poverty in childhood has a long-term impact on health and life expectancy, development and overall life-chances. While many of the factors regarding child poverty are at national and international level, much can be done at local level to address the needs of children. This strategy will strive to address the needs of our most vulnerable children and young people.

## **SIM working group.**

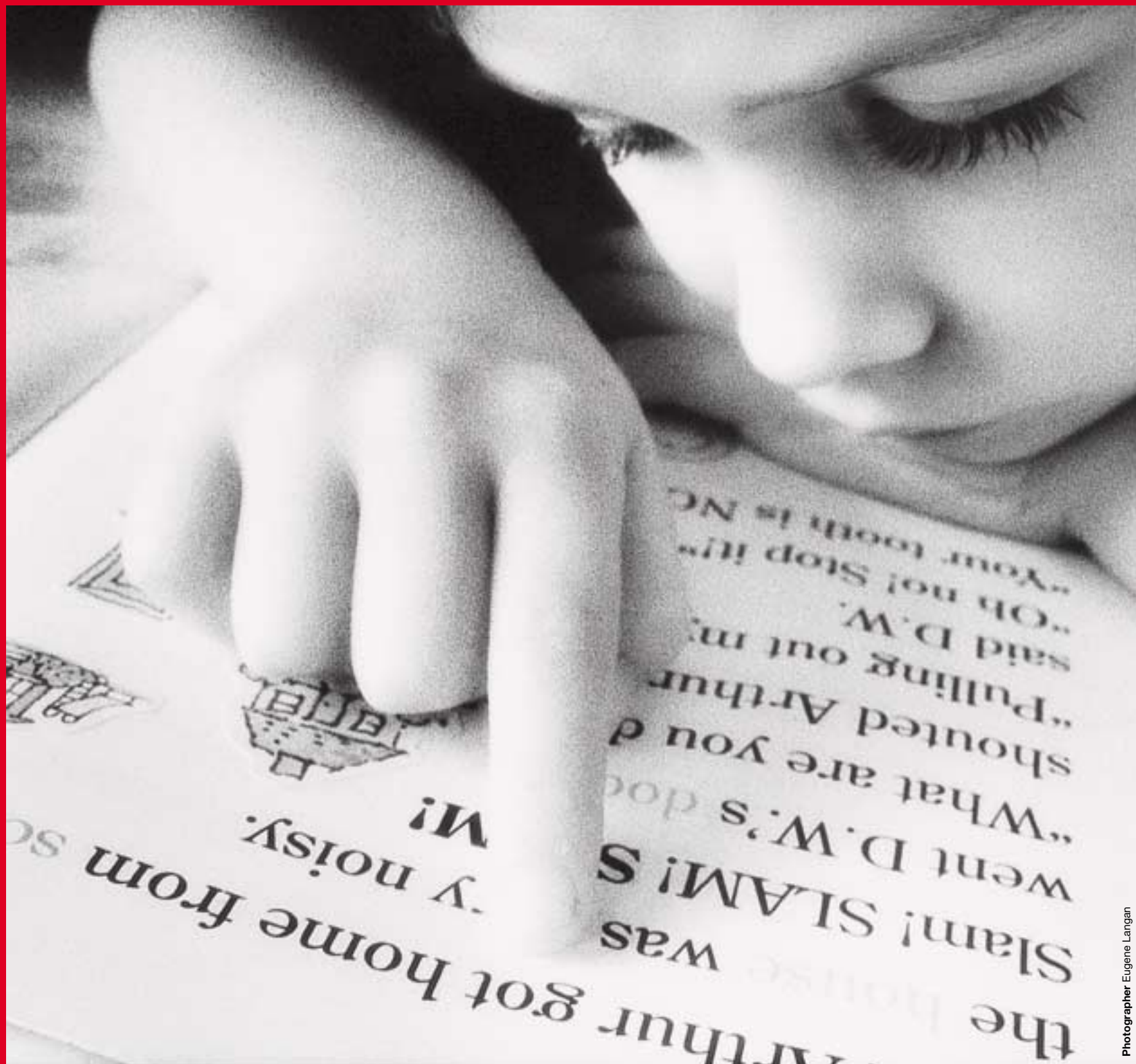
To further the work of the Wicklow CDB regarding social inclusion a Social Inclusion Measure (SIM) working group has been set up. Its role is three-fold:

1. To co-ordinate the delivery of social inclusion measures at local level.
2. To report to the County Development Board (and the Task Force as required) on progress.
3. To feed into the social inclusion aspects of this strategy by taking a wider perspective than just the NDP social inclusion measures, and responding to and assisting the CDB in any social inclusion matters.

<sup>1</sup>Heading in the Wrong Direction, 80:20/Bray Partnership, 2001.

<sup>2</sup>Rural Renewal – Combating Social Exclusion, Forum Report No. 12 (1997), NESCC.

<sup>3</sup>Social Inclusion in a Rural Area of Munster, J Frawley & G Hickey, 2001



Photographer Eugene Langan

...THE RESEARCH FOUND THAT EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE REMAINS A PIVOTAL OBSTACLE TO EFFECTIVE INCLUSION.

# SOCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

## SOCIAL INCLUSION

- To enable people with disabilities in Co. Wicklow to participate equally in social, community and economic life
- To encourage a freely accessible, user friendly, client focused service which will be available to all throughout the county.
- To promote the equality of opportunity and outcome on the 9 grounds covered in Equal Status Act 2000 regarding gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, race, sexual orientation, religious belief and membership of the Traveller community.

## YOUTH AND CHILDREN

- To facilitate all voluntary and statutory organisations and groups to actively put in place specific mechanisms to integrate disengaged young people in all youth activities and programmes in County Wicklow.
- To co-ordinate the approach of the main agencies in terms of identifying the range of services available to children at risk and promote the efficient use of resources for children with respect to new programmes, staffing and funding in this area. This should be done in an integrated way to tackle the recurring problem of poverty and social exclusion.

## EMPLOYMENT AND ENTERPRISE

- To increase the qualified labour force to meet recruitment requirements of employers, and to facilitate upskilling as appropriate to enable unemployed/ socially excluded gain access to qualified labour force.

## HEALTH

- To enhance the health and social gain of families, children and communities in Co. Wicklow, especially those most vulnerable and excluded, having regard to demographic change including the Strategic Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area.

## EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- To ensure development of a comprehensive range of programmes to meet the needs of all sections of the community with literacy problems.

## RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND AGRICULTURE

- To address the problems of isolation and social exclusion in rural areas.

## HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- To ensure provision of sustainable high quality social, affordable and private housing to meet existing and likely future needs of all.

## ART, SPORT AND RECREATION

- To recognise and appreciate cultural differences in our community while specifically targeting support to ensure full participation by all in arts/cultural activities in Co. Wicklow.

# SOCIAL INCLUSION

## DISABILITY

### ACTION 1

- Carry out a statistical analysis to determine both the range and extent of disability in Co. Wicklow in conjunction with the proposed national physical and sensory database.

**Agencies:** WCDB, Bray Partnership, ECAHB, SWAHB, DSCFA, Comhairle

**Timeframe:** 0–3 years

### ACTION 2

- Develop an independent advocacy service for disabled people – potential actions to include creating a new position within the county e.g. Development Officer to tackle needs/rights/entitlements of people with a disability in Co. Wicklow. Specific jobs to include:

- Design and deliver an awareness programme that challenges the stereotypical attitudes to disability and promote a positive image of disabled people.
- Enhance and support the networking capacity of disability organisations to create effective networks on a countywide basis.

**Agencies:** Comhairle, Wicklow CIC, ECAHB, SWAHB, local development agencies and disability groups

**Timeframe:** 0–3 years

### ACTION 3

- To promote the implementation of the social model of disability in all aspects of policy and service development. Additionally to support the process of disability proofing social and public policy to ensure the inclusion of the needs of people with disabilities.

**Agencies:** Bray Partnership, Comhairle, ECAHB/SWAHB, Local Development Agencies & local disability groups

**Timeframe:** 3–5 years

### ACTION 4

- The development and provision of comprehensive information service on a pro-active basis in terms of rights, entitlements and broader issues. Information to be made available in all the various formats for people with learning disabilities

**Agencies:** Wicklow CDB, WWCIN, Comhairle,

**Timeframe:** 0–3 years

### ACTION 5

- To create employment opportunities for disabled people including mainstream and supported employment.

**Agencies:** FÁS, Comhairle, NTDI, Chambers of Commerce, WIN

**Timeframe:** 3–5 years

## ACCESS TO INFORMATION

### ACTION 6

- Wicklow CDB to devise it's own Citizen's Charter and to ensure best practice in information dissemination models. This to include drawing up of model of good practice and guidelines regarding the conducting of public consultations by all public bodies.

**Agencies:** Wicklow CDB

**Timeframe:** 0–3 years

### ACTION 7

- Wicklow CDB to promote the widespread use of user-friendly language, paying due heed to issues around literacy and accessibility.

**Agencies:** Wicklow CDB

**Timeframe:** 0–3 years

### ACTION 8

- Wicklow CDB to promote the establishment of a countywide information-providers network. This is to ensure the delivery of information, avoidance of duplication of resources, effective referral and ensuring best practice models are developed. Wicklow CDB to encourage all information agencies to proof their services from social inclusion perspective

**Agencies:** Wicklow CDB, CWCIN, Local Development Agencies, WCP and WCN

**Timeframe:** 0–3 years

## EQUALITY

### ACTION 9

→ **All CDB partners to develop an Equality Implementation Scheme for their respective organisations within 6 months of the CDB Strategy commencement. This scheme is to be developed where appropriate, in consultation with the Equality Authority and in accordance with their guidelines. Additionally, Wicklow CDB to consider incorporating the Equality Authority's equality proofing guidelines alongside it's existing proofing guidelines in future reviews of the strategy.**

Equality Implementation Scheme to include:

- What policies and actions the organisation will put in place to ensure equality internally and in the wider community.
- How the organisation will assess and consult on the likely impact of policies and services adopted or proposed to be adopted by the organisation on the promotion of equality.
- Monitor impacts of policies and services adopted by the organisation on the promotion of equality.
- Arrangements for publishing the results of such assessments annually.
- Staff training provision.
- Ensuring public access to information and to services provided by the Equality Authority.
- Other emerging issues.

**Agencies: All Wicklow CDB members**

**Timeframe: 0–3 years**

### ACTION 10

→ **Ensure that in terms of service delivery, specific emphasis is placed on needs of following groups in Co. Wicklow as a means of addressing equality of opportunity:**

- The childcare needs of clients accessing and of staff in providing services.
- The needs of clients with disabilities accessing and of staff with disabilities providing services.
- The needs of Traveller clients accessing and of Traveller staff in providing services.
- The difficulties of so called "non-statistical" women have in accessing training and education opportunities.
- The low numbers of women achieving management positions in organisations.
- The particular needs of marginalised men in Co. Wicklow including long-term unemployed older men and the accommodation needs of single and separated men.
- Other emerging groups.

**Agencies: All Wicklow CDB members**

**Timeframe: 0–3 years**

## YOUTH & CHILDREN

### DISENGAGED YOUTH

#### ACTION 11

→ **Engage in a research project to:**

- a) Draw up an audit in order to establish the numbers and locations of disengaged young people in County Wicklow.
- b) Directly consult with young people to ascertain their needs.
- c) Draw out lessons from models of good practice in other areas.
- d) Consider a range of actions arising from the above research to address needs identified.

**Agencies: VEC, HSLO, JLO, ECAHB, SWAHB, Gardai, ADM groups, Traveller groups**

**Timeframe: 0–3 years**

#### ACTION 12

→ **Support the implementation of the National Drugs Strategy 2000 – 2008 in Co. Wicklow in order to address the issue of substance misuse in a comprehensive and coordinated way.**

**Agencies: Wicklow CDB**

**Timeframe: 0–3 years**

### CHILDREN AT RISK

#### ACTION 13

→ **Develop a forum on early school leaving in Co. Wicklow with remit to:**

- Commission research on the prevalence and profiles of early school leavers in the county.
- Review current practices of dealing with early school leavers and children with difficulties.
- Investigate models for mentoring and tracking potential children at risk within the school system.
- Support initiatives that ease the transition from primary to post-primary education.
- Investigate broadening range of second chance educational opportunities available within Co. Wicklow.

**Agencies: VEC, FÁS, Dept. of Ed.&Sc, Local Development Agencies, JLO, HSLO, ECAHB, SWAHB**

**Timeframe: 0–3 years**

## ACTION 14

→ **Support initiatives to deal with the very basic elements, which may prevent children from achieving in school; e.g. lack of breakfasts etc.**

Additionally to support children from the following sectoral groups to participate fully in education and society:

Traveller Community

Ethnic Minorities

Children and Young People with disabilities

**Agencies:** Dept Ed & Sc, VEC, FÁS, WCC, Local Development Agencies, Traveller groups

**Timeframe:** 0–3 years

# HEALTH

## FAMILY & COMMUNITY HEALTH

### ACTION 16

→ **Identify specific health needs within following sectoral areas in consultation with those directly affected and develop appropriate action plans. Target areas to include:**

- Older People
- Travellers
- Children
- Mental Health
- Domestic Violence
- Disability
- Asylum Seekers/refugees
- Emerging groups

**Agencies:** ECAHB, SWAHB & other relevant agencies

**Timeframe:** 0–3 years

# EMPLOYMENT & ENTERPRISE

## SERVICES TO THE UNEMPLOYED

### ACTION 15

→ **Ensure priority is attached to delivery of upskilling programmes to people not already in labour force to meet needs of local businesses. This training will happen at local level possibly through establishment of mini-taskforces throughout the county. Role of these taskforces to be extended to include:**

- Auditing the existing skills of the LTU and the skills needs of local businesses in order to match existing/potential labour availability to market requirements.
- Developing local awareness of local job opportunities – particular emphasis on more rural (<1500) areas where access to the larger urban centres is difficult.
- Promoting variety of schemes to both employers & potential employees in Co. Wicklow regarding subsidisation of salaries, maintaining benefits etc. This action to include highlighting services to the unemployed provided by local ADM companies, FÁS, community based enterprise groups, & other development agencies.

**Agencies:** Local Taskforces comprising FÁS, VEC, DSCFA, Local Development Agencies incl. LES service in Bray

**Timeframe:** 0–3 years

# EDUCATION & TRAINING

## LITERACY

### ACTION 17

→ **Set up a County Literacy Network Group, building on existing networks, representative of all providers.**

**The brief of the group would include:**

- Identifying difficulties and gaps in provision with a view to addressing the problems.
- Co-ordinating and developing present services and programmes at local and County level and deciding on new programmes
- Setting up a database of present providers and services and those availing of these services under headings such as gender, age and geographical location.
- Examining the use of ICT, PR and word of mouth and how effectively it could be used to encourage more learners to come forward.
- Explore the possibility of continuous assessment for literacy without exams especially at primary level.

**Agencies:** VEC, Dept. of Education, FÁS, NALA, CWCIN, ECAHB, SWAHB

**Timeframe:** 0–3 years

Proofing from Disability Perspective.

Ensure that the views of people with disabilities are represented on this Network – proposal that CWCIN movement be added as key agency.

# RURAL DEVELOPMENT & AGRICULTURE

### ACTION 18

→ **Set up a working group with the relevant parties to identify the main causes of social isolation on farms and rural areas and to look at ways on a partnership or self help basis to overcome these issues.**

**Agencies:** ECAHB, SWAHB, IFA, ICA, Teagasc

**Timeframe:** 0–3 years

# HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

### ACTION 19

→ **Promote all housing options available to reduce and eliminate local authority housing lists by implementing and monitoring effectiveness of:**

- Local authority house building programmes
- Traveller Accommodation Programme
- Action Plan for Homelessness
- Provide emergency accommodation within the county to cater for short term crisis housing situations
- Housing schemes for elderly e.g. Avoca initiative
- Support housing associations to promote increased development of voluntary housing throughout the county
- Increase the number of Affordable Housing Schemes

**Agencies:** WLA, ECAHB & SWAHB, Voluntary Bodies, DoELG.

**Timeframe:** 0–3 years

# ARTS, SPORT & RECREATION

### ACTION 20

→ Ensure that additional resources are invested to remove barriers to access and participation in the Arts.

**Agencies:** Wicklow Arts Office, Arts Council, Local Development Agencies

**Timeframe:** 0–3 years

## GLOSSARY

**Wicklow CDB** – Wicklow County Development Board

**ECAHB/SWAHB** – East Coast Area Health Board/South Western Area Health Board

**DSCFA** – Department of Social, Community & Family Affairs

**CWCIN** – Co. Wicklow Citizens Information Network

**NTDI** – National Training & Development Institute

**WIN** – Wicklow Information Network

**WCN** – Wicklow Communities Networking

**WCP** – Wicklow Community Platform

**HSLO** – Home School Liaison Officer

**JLO** – Juvenile Liaison Officer

**WCC** – Wicklow County Council

**LES** – Local Employment Service

**NALA** – National Adult Literacy Association

**WLA** – Wicklow Local Authorities

**DoELG** – Department of the Environment & Local Government

**LTU** – Long Term Unemployed

# GETTING THE JOB DONE

WHILE THE ULTIMATE RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS STRATEGY LIES WITH THE CDB, ITS SUCCESS IS DEPENDENT ON THE COMMITMENT OF ALL THE STAKEHOLDERS IN UNDERTAKING OF AGREED ACTIONS AND THE REALISATION OF OBJECTIVES.

This strategy primarily contains actions, which will be carried out by one or more development organisations operating in the county.

## **THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY INVOLVES AN APPROACH WHICH WORKS THROUGH THREE TIERS:**

- 1. THE CDB ITSELF**
- 2. IMPLEMENTATION WORKING GROUPS**
- 3. THE STAKEHOLDERS**

To ensure that this Strategy is implemented the CDB will:

- Establish the relevant implementing workgroups and agree their role and function.
- Carry out of specific actions as identified in the strategy as the remit of the CDB.
- Monitor, Evaluate & Review workgroup progress.
- Establishment and review of Targets and Indicators.

- Communicate the Strategy to the public, (seeking commitment & buy-in).

- Review and update documents including Audit of Service Providers, Base line data & CDB Website page.

- Disseminate information on new programmes and policies emanating at Local, National & EU level.

- Maintain Economic & Spatial watch on the county (review NDP spend in the county).

- Lobby for additional resources, shift of policy or reprioritising of funding.

### **Role of Implementing Workgroups**

"The Next Step" requires that the strategy must be accompanied by an annual implementation programme specifying actions, lead agencies and time frame for actions. In order to meet this requirement Wicklow CDB has decided to establish 3 implementation working groups, which will be formed on the basis of the following groupings of integrated themes:

- Urban Shadow
- Sustainable Communities
- Social Inclusion

In general each Implementation working group will include representatives of the County Development Board and other organisations who have expressed a level of commitment to the identified actions. The working groups will:

- Develop annual action plans for the themes for which they have responsibility.
- Review progress of stakeholders undertaking agreed actions.
- Identify issues impeding the delivery of agreed actions and objectives.
- Prepare progress reports for consideration by the board.
- Support co-operation, co-ordination & collaboration among stakeholders.
- Enable key players not on the CDB to be involved in the process.
- Provide a framework for monitoring and review of the programme of actions.

### **The Role of the CDB Member Organisations is to**

- Proof their own plans against the CDB strategy.
- Revise plans and strategies on the basis of this proofing.
- Fulfil their commitment as a Lead or Supporting organisation in carrying out agreed actions.
- Actively co-operate and collaborate with other stakeholders to ensure the achievement of objectives as agreed in the Strategy.
- Seek necessary resources from parent organisation.
- Mainstream actions / programmes which are contained in the strategy.
- Establish and agree monitoring & evaluation data & information to be collected by stakeholders and made available to the CDB.
- Support the CDB in ensuring that key documents are up to date e.g. Audit of Service Providers & Base Line Data.
- Provide feedback on progress to Implementing Working Groups.

# MAKING SURE THE JOB IS DONE RIGHT

MONITORING REPORTS WILL BE PRESENTED ON A SIX-MONTHLY BASIS BY THE IMPLEMENTATION WORKING GROUPS TO THE CDB. THESE REPORTS WILL REVIEW PROGRESS AGAINST KEY RESULT AREAS.

## Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

Monitoring, review and evaluation also involves a three-tiered approach.

Monitoring refers to the regular tracking of any activity and immediate outputs on a reasonably short-term basis. As well as tracking the progress of projects and actions, it will also track evidence of increased co-operation between CDB organisations and evidence of new thinking and innovative methodology.

Monitoring reports will be presented on a six-monthly basis by the implementation working groups to the CDB. These reports will review progress against key result areas. These reports will form the basis of an annual review of the strategy by the CDB.

A comprehensive evaluation of the strategy will be undertaken at three yearly intervals.

This will focus on the ultimate impact of the CDB on the ground and as well as measuring progress, will look at issues such as progress on sustainable development and working towards elimination of all forms of social exclusion.

## Proofing

Every action in this strategy has been proofed from the following perspectives:

- Poverty
- Gender
- Equality
- Rural Development
- Sustainable Development

Throughout the process of the preparation of this strategy the principles underlying the above areas were taken into account. In addition two subgroups were set up – the Social Inclusion Proofing Group and the Sustainable Development/Rural Development Proofing Group. Both groups proofed a total of 247 actions and recommendations were made to the CDB. The proofing process will continue at implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages. Part of this process will be to develop the expertise of the CDB in proofing mechanisms and their application.

All public service bodies operating in the county will be expected to “proof” their strategies against this CDB strategy.

# OUR LONG TERM GOALS LOOKING AHEAD

A LOT OF GOOD IDEAS EMERGED AS A RESULT OF OUR PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS.

THE FOLLOWING PAGES OUTLINE MANY OF THE ACTIONS THAT WE DO NOT WISH TO LOSE FROM THIS STRATEGY. THESE WILL BE REVISITED DURING THE LIFETIME OF THIS STRATEGY.

## ENTERPRISE & EMPLOYMENT

### Theme: Infrastructural requirements for small, medium & large enterprises

**Strategic Objective:** To ensure that plans and programmes are put in place for infrastructure provision to facilitate businesses in the County and that policies are adapted and adopted to facilitate the location of start up enterprises.

**Action 1:** Ensure balanced development within Co. Wicklow. Actions to focus on accessibility issues & investment in telecommunications infrastructure in the county.

Agencies: WLA, IDA

Timescale: 5-10

**Action 2:** Identify and provide sites for employment enterprises in development centres throughout the county, including provision of more publicly owned business parks.

Agencies :WLA, WCEB, PPPs, Enterprise Ireland, IDA.

Timescale: 3-5

**Action 3:** Develop policies that could be incorporated into the County Development Plan to encourage and sustain start up enterprises such as requiring employment zonings/developments to include a fixed proportion of floor area as enterprise units.

Agencies: WLA

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 4:** Upgrade ports and port access and investigate how existing and new businesses can be linked to them.

Agencies: Harbour Board, Dept of Marine, Private Enterprises, WLA PPPs.

Timescale: 3-5yrs

### Key Theme: Labour Issues

**Strategic Objective:** To increase the qualified labour force to meet recruitment requirements of employers, and to facilitate upskilling as appropriate to enable unemployed/socially excluded gain access to qualified labour force.

**Action 5:** Training Requirements. That training be tailored to meet the emerging employment needs of employers throughout Co. Wicklow. Training requirements can be informed through:

- Ongoing consultation with key support agencies – FÁS, ISME, Chambers of Commerce, VEC, Wicklow Information Technology Centres, Local Development Agencies, IBEC, the LES, trade unions and employees, ACE and WWT
- At a localised level, encourage setting up of Employer led training networks to identify key training needs within their specific areas

Agencies: Taskforce approach of all organisations listed, Chamber of Commerce, FÁS, ACE and WWT

Timeframe: 0-3

**Action 6:** Promote increased flexibility in hours of work in all sectors – lack of adequate childcare for employees to be highlighted as biggest obstacle to flexibility at present.

Agencies: WCEB, Chambers of Commerce, Employer bodies, Trade Unions, County Childcare Committee.

Timeframe: 0-3yrs

**Action 7:** Promote concept of Teleworking to much greater extent in Co. Wicklow with particular emphasis placed on opportunities for women within this sector.

Agencies: WIN, WRP, WCEB, Telework Ireland, WWT

Timeframe: 0-3

Proofing from Disability Perspective: Ensure that in delivery of above action, facilities and supports are put in place to enable people with disabilities to avail of teleworking opportunities in Co. Wicklow.

**Action 8:** Publish brief information booklet outlining core roles and services of each service provider/agency involved with Enterprise/Employment creation in Co. Wicklow. This to include details of specific support structures for smaller scale entrepreneurs in the county employing five people or less. (Wicklow CDB to progress this initiative in association with the service providers).

Additionally, develop and promote the role of the business mentor for small and medium enterprises, by setting up a panel of local business mentors, particularly using the experience of retired business people.

Agencies: WCEB with support of other relevant agencies including WCDB

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 9:** Provide relevant supports for foreign/overseas workers in Co. Wicklow.

Agencies: VEC, Chambers of Commerce, Local Development Agencies ACE and WWT

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 10:** Focus on training opportunities for skilled manual workers and for traditional trades in Co. Wicklow.

Agencies: FÁS, VEC

Timescale: 0-3

### Theme: Sustaining and Developing Jobs Locally

**Strategic Objective:** To create the infrastructure and environment throughout County Wicklow which will safeguard current employment levels and facilitate the creation of new employment opportunities in keeping with current guidelines and policies.

**Action 11:** Encourage broad range of enterprise development within Co. Wicklow thereby avoiding over-dependence on specific sector.

Agencies: WCEB, WRP, Enterprise Ireland

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 12:** Establish a Co. Wicklow Jobs Web-page and newsletter, in tandem with a promotional campaign highlighting the benefits of living and working in the same county.

Agencies: WCEB, WRP, WLA, WWT

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 13:** Support ongoing evaluation of Co. Wicklow's performance from employment/enterprise perspective including:

- Benchmarking local enterprises against both national and EU competitors
- Monitoring incorporation of new processes / R&D initiatives by local enterprises
- Monitoring linkages formed by local enterprises at regional, national and international level
- Monitoring Co. Wicklow's capacity to attract/ facilitate new business start up within county.

Agencies: Enterprise Ireland, IDA, WLA, WCEB

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 14:** Investigate ways of sharing local business knowledge in order to promote and encourage use of existing services within the county.

This could be achieved by carrying out an audit of existing industries/services in the County; setting up a pilot network of services available; marketing services available on a local and county basis; market services available outside the county to adjoining counties etc.

Agencies: WCEB, WLA, Enterprise Ireland, ACE and WWT

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 15:** Support the ongoing development of Co. Wicklow from employment/enterprise perspective through no. of marketing initiatives including:

- Hosting series of publicity events showcasing range of enterprises in Co. Wicklow
- Focus on development & marketing of growth centres of Wicklow & Arklow in line with Strategic Planning Guidelines.

Agencies: WCEB, WRP, WLA, DoELG, IDA, Enterprise Ireland

Timescale: 3-5

# HOUSING & INFRASTRUCTURE

## Housing

### Theme: Housing needs of County Wicklow

**Strategic Objective:** To ensure provision of sustainable high quality social, affordable and private housing to meet existing and likely future needs responsive to the requirements of all categories of persons in the county.

**Action 1:** Ensure local area plans are prepared, following adequate consultation, to allow for sustainable growth in smaller towns and villages with particular emphasis on local housing needs and having regard to the Strategic Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area.

Agencies: WLA

Timescale: 3-5

**Action 2:** Review local authority scheme of letting priorities to take cognisance of the changes and needs in the county.

Agencies: WLA

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 3:** Introduce appropriate procedures to deal with refugees/asylum seekers through

- improved consultative process between the authorities and communities prior to and after placement to facilitate integration
- placement of smaller numbers to allow improved integration into communities and to avoid creation of 'ghettos'.

Agencies: DoJELR, WLA, ECAHB & SWAHB

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 4:** Continue to improve and maintain condition of existing housing stock through local authority housing maintenance programmes.

Agencies: WLA, DoELG

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 5:** Promote current housing grants and assistance available for elderly and people with disabilities for home adaptation which allow improved independent and integrated living standards.

Agencies: Wicklow County Council, ECAHB & SWAHB

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 6:** Examine best practice in other Public/Private Partnerships and encourage benefits for future development in the county.

Agencies: WLA, Private Developers, DoELG

Timescale: 0-3

### Theme: Access, Design & Estate Management

**Strategic Objective:** To create safe, accessible quality living environment for all members of the community.

**Action 7:** Public or open spaces to be provided and appropriately designed and maintained in consultation with appropriate agencies, communities and services. Turning areas should be provided for emergency

vehicles: access and estate roads to have appropriate speed and traffic safety controls in consultation with appropriate agencies.

Agencies: WLA, Developers, local communities, Gardai, ECAHB & SWAHB

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 8:** Schemes to be designed and reviewed from an architectural perspective to ensure variety of dwelling types to accommodate range of dwelling needs and to avoid monotony of house types and visual effect on environment and social segregation.

Agencies: WLA, Developers, DoELG, RIAL, Royal Town Planners Institute

Timescale: 3-5

**Action 9:** Identity of villages and urban neighbourhoods to be conserved through aesthetic and sensitive design and layout of developments.

Agencies: WLA

Timescale: 3-5

**Action 10:** Strengthen payment of planning bond procedures to ensure developments are finished and landscaped to highest quality before refunding monies.

Agencies: WLA

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 11:** Planning enforcement to be improved to ensure that all development is carried out in accordance with development plans, conditions etc.

Agencies: WLA, DoELG

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 12:** Provision of trained staff to deal with all aspects of housing provision and design.

Agencies: WLA, DoELG

Timescale: 0-3

### Theme: Community, Employment & Transport

**Strategic Objective:** To provide for balanced sustainable growth while preserving a sense of community where residents can live and work in a quality environment.

**Action 13:** All new developments, where appropriate, to have provision for community, recreational, social and employment infrastructure. Specific consideration to be given to following:

- the promotion of the development of strong local employment and service bases
- sufficient research must be carried out into employment needs of current residents
- planning decisions must be sensitive to local needs particularly in rural areas to maintain rural communities
- lobby for initiatives similar to Rapid Programme to assist in eliminating identified disadvantaged areas.

Agencies: WLA, Local Dev Agencies, FÁS, IDA, Enterprise Ireland, CEB

Timescale: 0-3

**Proofing from Poverty Perspective:** Ensure that in delivery of the above action, adequate supports are put in place to allow people experiencing income poverty to avail of both employment opportunities and recreational / other facilities.

**Action 14:** Provide, in a proactive way, planning guidelines which establish acceptable house types/development in areas which will allow for consistency in planning decisions.

Agencies: WLA

Timescale: 0-3

## Transport

**Strategic Objective:** To support the provision of safe and efficient transport systems to meet economic, social and recreational needs of the various sectors in the county.

**Action 15:** Upgrade and improve national, regional and local road network to promote social and economic development in an environmental and sustainable manner.

Agencies: NRA, WLA

Timescale: 5-10

**Action 16:** Provide non visual and other disability aids for all transport modes.

Agencies: Bus Eireann, Dublin Bus, Iarnród Eireann, PAMBO, WLA, Taxis, Disability Groups

Timescale: 3-5

**Action 17:** Integration of public and private transport systems and timetables removing all restrictions which are impinging the provision of an efficient and full service for the public.

Agencies: DTO

Timescale: 3-5

**Action 18:** Increase economic potential of county's ports and provide access relief roads.

Agencies: Harbour Commissioners, WLA, Private sector

Timescale: 3-5

**Action 19:** Improve road safety enforcement to reduce road fatalities and injuries in the county through

- the introduction of penalty points system,
- substantial increase in fines
- increase mandatory warning signs
- introduction of a lower speed limit on non national roads.

Agencies: Gardai, WLA, DoELG

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 20:** Develop and implement sign posting plan within the County.

Agencies: NRA, WLA, WCT

Timescale: 0-3

## Utilities

**Strategic Objective:** To secure provision of improved physical infrastructure throughout the county.

**Action 21:** Assess, provide and upgrade water and wastewater/sludge schemes in the county

- Provide strategic planning for schemes to service present and future development requirement.

Agencies: WLA, DoELG, Chambers of Commerce

Timescale: 3-5

**Action 22:** Co-ordinate provision of services during development – ESB, Gas, cable TV etc and encourage sharing of resources during development of utility services

- Service provider to cover cost of repair to roads, footpaths etc
- Protect and improve land/streetscapes through provision of underground electrical and telecommunications wiring.

Agencies: WLA, DoELG, IDA, EI, IBEC, Chambers of Commerce, Key service providers

Timescale: 3-5

**Action 23:** Liaise with service providers to assess and ensure capacity of power systems will meet existing and future needs.

Agencies: Nat. Reg. Office on Power, key providers, Eir grid.

Timescale: 3-5

**Action 24:** Support provision of digital TV and associated interactive services.

Agencies: Key service providers

Timescale: 3-5

**Action 25:** Extend natural gas pipeline to areas designated for future development and promote use to existing industries.

Agencies: Bord Gais, WLA, Chambers of Commerce

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 26:** Support provision and resourcing of alternative sustainable energy supply where appropriate- solar energy, wind farms and maximise efforts to capture and support economic on shore benefits.

Agencies: WLA, Dept. of Marine, Dept. of Public Enterprise, Local Dev /Business groups

Timescale: 3-5

**Action 27:** Review structures and procedures for the development of major infrastructure projects so as to reduce undue delay in the provision of same.

Agencies: WLA, DoELG, DJELR

Timescale: 0-3

# EDUCATION & TRAINING

## Education and training

**Proofing Recommendation:** This theme previously addressed education and training needs of women only. Wicklow CDB adopted proofing recommendation that from an equality perspective, this theme should focus on needs of men and women in terms of Education & Training provision. The actions were amended accordingly.

### Theme: Lifelong Learning

**Strategic Objective:** Ensure that in the development and provision of education and training opportunities, barriers preventing access participation by men and women are identified and removed.

**Action 1:** To identify and develop a comprehensive range of flexible modular programmes, including web-based training, for women and men who are planning to re-enter the workforce.

Agencies: FÁS, VEC, BP, ACE, WRP, WWT

Timeframe: 0-3

**Proofing from Equality Perspective:** Recommendation that focus of this action be changed. Priority to be attached to provision of accessible training programmes from educational perspective as opposed to focusing solely on training to 're-enter the workforce' 'This action potentially 'negative' from 'Family Status' perspective if left in current form.

**Action 2:** Set up a central resource to jointly publicise all programmes to targeted groups. This includes joint brochures, web-page or advertisement features.

Agencies: WRP, FÁS, WWT, ACE, BP, ICA, IFA, VEC, LCG's

Timeframe: 0-3

### Theme: Information Technology

**Strategic Objective:** To ensure co-ordination between the main training providers and to encourage the availability of progression training throughout the county.

**Action 3:** Develop links between the main IT training providers in Co. Wicklow with view to:

- encouraging progression training throughout the county
- incorporate IT training as a core module in all school curricula
- bring existing IT centres of learning to best-practice standards by ensuring sufficient supply of equipment and staff.

Agencies: FÁS, VEC, WIN, Dept. of Education & Science, Teagasc

Timeframe: 0-3

### Theme: Literacy

**Strategic Objective:** To ensure development of a comprehensive range of programmes to meet the needs of all sections of the community with literacy problems.

**Action 4:** Network nationwide with other groups and agencies to share information, experience and examples of best-practice.

Agencies: Co. Literacy Network, NALA, VEC

Timeframe: 0-3

**Action 5:** Identify ways to make greater use of library and multimedia facilities and educational institutions.

Agencies: WCC, VEC, FÁS, NALA

Timeframe: 0-3

# RURAL DEVELOPMENT & AGRICULTURE

## Rural development and Agriculture

### Theme: Rural-Tourism

**Strategic Objective:** To promote sustainable, consumer driven quality and diverse rural tourism products which will capitalise on our competitive advantages and provide a strategy to deal with issues resulting from the 'urban shadow'.

**Action 1:** Establish a rural tourism working group to develop and prepare a sales and marketing programme promoting Co. Wicklow as the ideal short stay destination focussed around the county's natural resources – fishing, walking, golfing, equestrian, heritage, religious, scenic and other land based tourism activities.

Encourage co-operation with tourism and business sector to further develop rural weekend theme.

Agencies: WCT, Teagasc, MERTA, WRP, WUC, business sector

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 2:** Investigate how the local economy can maximise benefits from existing market of visitors to National Parks, forests, while sustaining the natural environment.

Agencies: WRP, MERTA, WCT, Coillte, Duchas, Teagasc

Timescale: 0-3

### Theme: IT and Rural Development

**Strategic Objective:** To encourage the adoption of new information technologies that continue to transform the working farm business environment; to ensure rural people are facilitated for life long learning and to ensure rural economic and social progression through information technology for all rural dwellers.

**Action 3:** Develop and market a comprehensive range of farm oriented computer courses through Teagasc, FÁS and WIN and other relevant agencies based on the level of computer literacy.

- Encourage progression onto further IT course levels
- Promote use of the internet for farm operation purposes
- Investigate methods to promote use of IT on farms through incentive schemes, seminars, promotional programmes.

Agencies: Teagasc, WIN, FÁS, VEC, WRP

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 4:** Identify appropriate hardware and software options for farmers and other rural dwellers through partnership.

Agencies: WRP, Teagasc, WIN

Timescale: 0-3

### Theme: Forestry

**Strategic Objective:** To encourage the development of the farm and corporate forestry sector through co-operation between associated forestry development agencies; to ensure forestry development in Co. Wicklow is environmentally sensitive and sustainable.

**Action 5:** Produce a Walking Guide for Co. Wicklow promoting the county's many forest attractions.

Agencies: Coillte, WRP, WCT

Timescale: 0-3

### Theme: Women in Agriculture & Rural Areas

**Strategic Objective:** To promote the economic, social and cultural position of women in agriculture and in rural areas in County Wicklow.

**Action 6:** Develop local farm women discussion groups on a pilot basis as a support network to focus on issues affecting women in agriculture/rural areas

- training to be provided to facilitate these groups.

Agencies involved: IFA, ICA, Teagasc, FÁS

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 7:** Address barriers to women's participation in education and training and provide and promote properly accredited training courses to women in rural areas

- training agencies/business community to form a partnership to establish local employment needs as well as identify and target job opportunities for women in rural areas.

Agencies: Teagasc, VEC, FÁS, WRP, Local business community

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 8:** Establish links between relevant agencies to provide focussed farming related courses for women.

Agencies: Teagasc

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 9:** Promote information and funding available for childcare facilities in rural areas.

Agencies: County Childcare Committee

Timescale: 0-3

**Proofing from Poverty Perspective:** Regarding the delivery of the above action, ensure that this childcare provision is financially accessible to targeted women in rural areas in County Wicklow.

**Action 10:** Encourage and support rural women to set up their own businesses.

Agencies: CEB, WRP

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 11:** Encourage and actively promote female participation in all sport, cultural, community and political activity.

Agencies: ICA, WRP, IFA, Teagasc, Local Community groups

Timescale: 0-3

### Theme: Agriculture

**Strategic Objective:** To ensure the development of human resources that are required in agriculture and rural development in County Wicklow, to further develop more sustainable grass based milk, beef and sheep production, crop and alternative enterprises.

**Action 12:** Assist full time farmers to maximise their income thereby contributing to their long-term sustainability.

Agencies: Teagasc, Farm Organisations, DAF&RD, WRP

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 13:** Develop suitable off farm income opportunities for part-time farmers.

Agencies: Teagasc, DAF&RD, FÁS, Farm Organisations, Farm Relief Service

Timescale: 3-5

**Action 14:** Develop training schemes which build on the skills of farmers and the needs of the labour market in the locality.

Agencies: Teagasc, FÁS, Farm Organisations

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 15:** Develop a sense of civic and farming pride in the industry

Agencies: Teagasc, Farm Organisations, ASA

Timescale: 0-3

### Theme: Environment

**Strategic Objective:** To maintain and enhance the rural environment of County Wicklow and to support best environmental practice in rural development using all opportunities available.

**Action 16:** Encourage good farming practices which promotes working in harmony with the natural environment.

Agencies: Teagasc, Farm Organisations, DAF&RD

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 17:** Liaise with relevant agencies to identify areas most at risk from pollution and promote pollution prevention measures including farm environmental training courses under REPS.

Agencies: Duchas, FÁS, WCC, EPA, Farm Organisations, DAF&RD

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 18:** Encourage planning authority to produce and disseminate guidelines on acceptable building designs in rural areas.

Agencies: WCC

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 19:** Establish demonstration centres promoting 'good environmental practice' initiatives in rural areas.

Agencies: Teagasc

Timeframe: 0-3

**Action 20:** To promote environmental awareness from primary school level.

Agencies: WCC, ENFO, EPA, Duchas, WUC, Dept. of Education & Science

Timescale: 0-3

# SOCIAL INCLUSION

## Theme: Disability

**Strategic Objective:** To enable people with disabilities in Co. Wicklow to participate equally in mainstream social, community and economic life.

**Action 1:** Develop and provide a comprehensive information service on a pro-active basis in terms of rights, entitlements and broader issues. Information to be made available in a variety of formats for people with learning disabilities.

Agencies: CWCIN, WCDB

Timescale: 0-3yrs

**Action 2:** To address the needs of carers through the provision of quality and reliable respite and other forms of care as well as providing personal assistance for disabled people.

Agencies: ECAHB & SWAHB, DSCFA

Timescale: 3-5yrs

**Action 3:** Accessing Employment. To monitor progress or otherwise re. 3% public sector employment quota for the employment of disabled people by public bodies based in Co. Wicklow. This to be extended to look at figures within commercial / private sector as well.

Agencies: Comhairle & new Disability Dev Worker (CIC)

Timescale: 3-5yrs

**Action 4:** Accessing Education. To provide greater choice for parents regarding educational opportunities for children with a disability. This could include, where appropriate, increased opportunities in mainstream educational system by providing appropriate resources and training for mainstream schools to facilitate children with a disability.

Also, develop actions around providing access and participation by disabled people in adult education services, particularly in adult literacy provision.

Agencies: Dept. of Education, Disability Dev Worker CWCIN, VEC, FÁS WIN & local development agencies

Timescale: 3-5yrs

## Theme: Access to Information

**Strategic Objective:** To encourage a freely accessible, user friendly, client focused service, which will be available to all throughout the county.

**Action 5:** To encourage information service providers to develop a Citizen's Charter which will give basic information on people's rights and entitlements and guarantee a level of service.

Agencies: Wicklow CIC & Wicklow CDB

Timescale: 0-3yrs

**Action 6:** Wicklow CDB to promote professional, standardised delivery of information services throughout the county – (Citizens Information Centres to be used as model of good practice).

Agencies: Wicklow CDB

Timescale: 0-3yrs

**Action 7:** Ensure that Information Communication Technologies will be utilised to deliver a dynamic developmental and interactive approach to information provision in Co. Wicklow.

Agencies: WCC Library service, WIN, Wicklow CWCIN

Timescale: 0-3yrs

## Theme: Equality

**Strategic Objective:** To promote the equality of opportunity and outcome on the 9 grounds covered in Equal Status Act 2000 viz gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, race, sexual orientation, religious belief and membership of the Traveller community.

**Action:** All actions prioritised

Proofing Recommendation from Equality Perspective: That the words 'and outcome' remain in the Strategic Objective as evidence of an explicit commitment by Co. Wicklow CDB members to the terms and conditions of the Equal Status Act 2000.

# HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT

## Health

### Theme: Equity/Access/Services

**Strategic Objective:** Everybody should have equal access to health services regardless of ability to pay, disability or geographical location. Services should be quality driven, accessible to all, timely, comprehensive and should have regard to differing needs of urban and rural areas. Services should serve the needs of the person and not the needs of the service.

**Action 1:** Ensure adequate support systems for the provision of local services to be provided at the most appropriate level which at the same time fully meets the needs of patients / clients.

Agencies: ECAHB, SWAHB & voluntary groups

Timeframe: 0-3

**Action 2:** Make maximum use of the social economy to provide related services. This is to be in addition to and not in substitution for statutory provision.

Agencies: FÁS, ECAHB, SWAHB  
Local Development Agencies

Timeframe: 0-3

### Theme Promotion and Prevention

**Strategic Objective:** To enable the people of County Wicklow to make healthier choices. Health Promotion and prevention should:

- Adopt a community development approach
- Be a quality product
- Be delivered at individual, community, organisation and policy level
- Adopt a multi agency approach
- Include a peer element where appropriate.

**Action 3:** Promote the adoption by all agencies of a process of "health proofing" to influence positively policies that impact directly or indirectly on health.

Agencies: Task force

Timeframe: 0-3yrs

Proofing from a Poverty Perspective: The above action is identified as having potential to lift people out of income poverty situations. We recommend that in the delivery of the above action, those in low income situations are specifically targeted.

### Theme: Family and Community Health

**Strategic Objective:** To enhance the health and social gain of families, children and communities in Co.Wicklow, especially those most vulnerable and excluded, having regard to demographic change including the National Spatial Strategy.

**Action 4:** Carry out a broad-based healthy communities profile with particular reference to education, employment environment, & housing issues.

Agencies: Local Task Force including VEC and other education reps

Timeframe: 0-3

**Action 5:** Promote and support independent living as a realistic choice for people throughout Co. Wicklow.

Agencies: DSCFA, ECAHB, SWAHB, WLA, Dept. of Environment, FÁS

Timeframe: 0-3

**Action 6:** Provide and adequately resource primary care teams on a community basis throughout the county.

Agencies: ECAHB, SWAHB

Timeframe: 3-5

## Environment

### Theme: Waste Management

**Strategic Objective:** To manage waste in County Wicklow in a sustainable manner having full regard to national and EU Waste Management Policies.

**Action 7:** Ensure that the County Development Plan reflects best practice in waste management and that all planning permissions should include details re. adequate procedures/facilities for waste management. Specific steps to ensure an adequate waste management service in Co. Wicklow include:

- Develop a proactive policy to promote competition and choice in the management, collection and disposal of waste in the county
- Request the Minister for the Environment and Local Government to appoint a regulator to deal with waste management issues including pricing
- Ensure that systems are in place to adequately regulate / monitor those who collect, dispose or handle waste (for recycling or recovery) within the county according to national and county targets. (Being mindful of the targets and regulations/directives under EU legislation)
- Ensure that the EU principles of Sustainability, the Polluter Pays and the Proximity Principle are used to check policies and practices
- Promote the principles of the Waste Hierarchy among the commercial and domestic sectors – to include reduction through reusable packaging, composting etc.
- Promote partnership with other counties in providing best practice waste management policies
- Promote community, business and individual responsibility for managing waste in Co. Wicklow.

Agencies: WCC, WCDB, DoELG, EPA, Repak

Timeframe: 0-3

**Action 8:** Ensure significant investment in educational and promotional initiatives regarding managing waste in sustainable manner in Co. Wicklow.

Agencies: WCC, ENFO Dept. Ed & Science

Timeframe: 0-3

**Action 9:** Ensure that adequate forward planning is taken for the implications of the

increasing population in Co.Wicklow from a waste management perspective over the coming years.

Agencies: WCC

Timeframe: 0-3

**Action 10:** Ensure that adequate investment is available to support the waste management plan initiatives and that this infrastructure is economically sustainable in its entirety.

Agencies: WCC

Timeframe: 0-3

Proofing from Poverty Perspective: View of the Proofing Committee that this Waste Management Section has potential to negatively impact on peoples' lives by not containing any actions which address cost of waste management for people in low income situations. Recommendation that action/s be added which adequately address this issue e.g. review of Local Authority waste waiver system, increase in no. of recycling facilities located in close proximity to targeted housing estates etc.

### Theme: Environmental Quality – water

**Strategic Objective:** To ensure that the quality of the environment in County Wicklow meets EU regulations

**Action 11:** Monitor, maintain, publish and improve water quality and ensure water quality is at EU standards – this includes water of all types

Agencies: WCC, EPA, ERFB, ERHA

Timeframe: 3-5

**Action 12:** Review the impact of agriculture, forestry, industry and households on water quality in order to:

- assess impacts
- take action if necessary
- Publish results

Agencies: WCC, EPA,

Timeframe: 3-5

**Action 13:** Encourage best practice technology for wastewater treatment and water supply. Offer existing rural housing sewage schemes methods for improvement with the assistance of an appropriate grant scheme.

Agencies: WCC, ECAHB, SWAHB, DoELG

Timeframe: 0-3

**Action 14:** Maintain and increase the number of blue flag beaches

Agencies: WCC

Timeframe: 0-3

### Environmental Quality – Air

**Action 15:** Promote and review the use of cleaner fuels, cleaner technologies and production techniques

- Monitor air quality in specific areas and if necessary establish smoke-free zones

Agencies: WCC, EPA, ECAHB

Timeframe: 5-10

**Action 16:** Promote measures to lessen the adverse impacts of new developments, agriculture, industry and households on air quality and climate change

Agencies: DAFRD,WCC, EPA, IBEC

Timeframe: 3

**Action 17:** Develop and promote the uptake of forestry and the planting of indigenous trees and hedgerows with measures that are ecologically sustainable

Agencies: DAFRD Teagasc, Forestry Service, Coillte

Timeframe: 3-5

**Action 18:** Encourage best practice in the construction of energy efficient buildings

Agencies: WCC, DoELG

Timeframe: 3-5

### Theme: Environmental Quality – Soil

**Action 19:** Maintain and improve the quality of soil as follows:

- Monitor and address the problem of radon
- Identify contaminated sites and remediate them
- Monitor soil quality near transportation corridors

Agencies: WCC,DoELG, EPA, NRA,Dept. Public Enterprise

Timeframe: 3-5

**Action 20:** Encourage and support nutrient management schemes

Agencies: DAFRD, Teagasc

Timeframe: 3-5

### Theme: Sustainable Development – Local Agenda 21

**Strategic Objective:** To seek to manage the future growth of Co. Wicklow in a way that will meet the current and future needs of all the people of County Wicklow by balancing economic, social and environmental considerations.

**Action 21:** Provide a comprehensive, wide-reaching and ongoing education and awareness programme on environmental issues including waste management, water and energy issues and provide support for groups who may wish to implement their own programmes

Agencies: WCC, ENFO, Repak, EPA

Timeframe: 0-3

**Action 22:** Promote and support the Green Schools Programme and environmental aspects of the school curriculum

Agencies WCC, An Taisce, D. Ed&Sc.,

Timeframe: 0-3

# YOUTH & CHILDREN

## Youth and children

### Theme: Disengaged Youth

(Disengaged Youth – Children over 10 years who are not engaged in educational, social or cultural activities, including young Travellers and young people with disabilities. These young people are characteristically early school leavers and marginalised from community activities. Typically these young people are excluded from local organised youth activities (youth clubs, football teams, cultural events). Young Travellers and young people with disabilities are currently not included in mainstream activities for youth.)

**Strategic Objective:** To facilitate all voluntary and statutory organisations and groups to actively put in place specific mechanisms to integrate disengaged young people in all youth activities and programmes in County Wicklow.

**Action 1:** a) Ensure all agencies responsible for young people prioritise disengaged young people and implement / pilot preventative programmes relevant to the needs identified in the research.

b) Conduct an information campaign to ensure that all voluntary groups dealing with young people are aware of state supported programmes targeting disengaged young people.

Agencies: ECAHB, SWAHB, Local Dev Agencies

Time: 0-3

**Actions 2:** Resourcing and training voluntary groups involved with young people to widen the focus of programmes to include such activities as community arts, life skills, outdoor pursuits, video production and IT training.

Agencies: BP, WWT, WRP, ACE, BYS, Dept. Tourism Sport & Recreation

Time: 5-10

**Actions 3:** Target “older” young people in order to equip them with the necessary skills to become positive role models for the younger disengaged age group. This involves training and supporting “older” young people to design and implement relevant needs based programmes and activities in hobbies and interests.

Agencies: BP, BYS, WWT, WRP, ACE

Time: 5-10

### Theme: Youth needs and facilities

**Strategic Objective:** To provide facilities, support and personal development opportunities for the youth of the county.

**Action 4:** Produce an audit of all youth groups agencies, services and facilities for youth in the county

Agencies: CDB

Time: 0-3

### Theme: Training needs for youth and adults working with youth

**Strategic Objective:** To develop, promote and sustain the concept of youth community development countywide through providing appropriate training opportunities which will enable young people to become more involved in their community and which will support and encourage adults working with youth. This will in the long term ensure a more caring and vibrant society.

**Action 5:** To provide a Community Technical Aid Service for the county which would offer support and assistance to local groups to access funding, volunteers, training and other relevant information including child protection procedures

Agencies: Local Development Agencies

Time: 0-3

### Theme: Children at risk

**Strategic Objective:** To co-ordinate the approach of the main agencies in terms of identifying the range of services available to children at risk and promote the efficient use of resources for children with respect to new programmes, staffing and funding in this area. To do this in an integrated approach to tackle the recurring problem of poverty and social exclusion.

**Actions 6:** Support further research into the nature and extent of substance misuse in Co. Wicklow including:

- research into experimental and recreational substance misuse,
- the development of policies and services targeted at working with children and siblings of substance misusers, recognising in the context of addiction, that children are the significant losers.

Agencies: ECAHB, SWAHB, Gardai,

Time: 0-3

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT,

## Community Development

### Theme: Volunteerism

**Strategic Objective:** To ensure that the voluntary effort in Co. Wicklow is acknowledged and developed in a supportive manner.

**Action 1:** Encourage younger people in Co. Wicklow to volunteer by targeting schools for potential community activists.

Agencies: WCDB, WCP, WCN

Timescale: 0-3

### Theme: Resourcing the Community Sector

**Strategic Objective:** To adequately invest both in the necessary physical structures as well as needs of the community sector from a developmental perspective.

**Action 2:** Ensure delivery of Community Development training through more mainstream organisations within the county.

Agencies: FÁS, VEC, Local Dev. Agencies

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 3:** Ensure greater co-ordination of, as well as the increased delivery of community education / training courses on outreach basis.

Agencies: VEC, FÁS, Local Dev. Agencies, WIN

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 4:** Investigate potential of establishing & promoting a rurally based Community Development Programme in Co. Wicklow (DSCFA initiative).

Agencies: WCN, WCP, Local Dev. Agencies, DSCFA, Pobal Dev Agency

Timescale: 0-3

### Theme: Community Participation at Decision Making Levels

**Strategic Objective:** To ensure that the maximum number of community/voluntary groups are facilitated to participate at decision making / policy formulation level within County Wicklow.

**Action 5:** In terms of public consultations, ensure that all WCDB members agree to a common set of good practice guidelines regarding their consultative activity.

Agencies: WCDB

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 6:** Ensure provision of information at affordable rates to the community / voluntary sector -eg subsidised development plans, studies, online facilities, etc.

Agencies: WCDB

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 7:** Provide opportunities for community groups to learn more about local authority functions in Co. Wicklow.

Agencies: WLA

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 8:** Support greater networking by community sector at county, regional, national and European level to strengthen voice of this sector from policy perspective. This support will initially focus on existing community networks within the county.

Agencies: WCDB, WCP, WCN

Timescale: 0-3

## The Arts

### Theme: Participation in the Arts

**Strategic Objective:** To ensure that everyone in Co. Wicklow is given the opportunity to experience the arts in a meaningful way.

**Action 9:** Wicklow Arts Office and WAN to develop and co-ordinate a logo/image for the 'Arts' in Co. Wicklow to identify and promote all arts activities in the county.

Agencies: Wicklow Arts Office, WAN

Timescale: 0-3yrs

**Action 10:** Ensure that partners in the Wicklow CDB process develop and implement arts / cultural policy as an integral part of their service delivery.

Agencies: WCDB

Timescale: 5yr+

### Theme: Arts & Social Inclusion

**Strategic Objective:** To recognise and appreciate cultural differences in our community whilst specifically targeting support to ensure full participation by all in arts/cultural activities in Co. Wicklow.

**Action 11:** Provide specific range of supports for Arts initiatives, which integrate ethnic groups into mainstream arts/cultural activity in Co. Wicklow.

Agencies: Wicklow Arts Office, Arts Council, Local Dev. Agencies

Timescale: 0-3yrs

**Action 12:** Provide and support programmes to facilitate ethnic groups to preserve, develop and showcase their cultural heritage.

Agencies: Wicklow Arts Office, Arts Council, Local Dev. Agencies

Timescale: 0-3yrs

**Action 13:** Seek a major expansion of Wicklow Arts Office's Artist in Residence scheme and other appropriate schemes into more marginalised areas, both urban and rural, throughout the county.

Agencies: Wicklow Arts Office, Arts Council, Local Dev. Agencies

Timescale: 0-3yrs

**Action 14:** Promote use of community arts as a valuable tool in working with marginalised groups in Co. Wicklow.

Agencies: Wicklow Arts Office, Arts Council, Local Dev. Agencies

Timescale: 0-3yrs

**Action 15:** Develop concept of Festivals as a process rather than as an event, to stimulate on-going, long-term participation in the arts at a community level as well as encouraging festivals to be cross cultural and cross community.

Agencies: Wicklow Arts Office & AOIFE

Timescale: 3-5yrs

**Action 16:** Support the development of a pricing policy for arts/cultural activities which promotes access for all.

Agencies: Wicklow Arts Office

Timescale: 3-5years

### Theme: Improving Infrastructure to support and develop Arts in Co. Wicklow

**Strategic Objective:** To ensure that adequate resources are put in place to allow for investment in both the physical and human infrastructure in the arts in Co. Wicklow.

**Action 17:** Ensure that all future public amenity buildings incorporate space for artistic activity.

Agencies: WCC – Planning Section

Timescale: 3-5yrs

**Action 18:** Investigate alternative housing options for arts/cultural events in Co. Wicklow as means of developing expanded outreach service – eg encourage owners of buildings to get involved in art's space provision throughout the county.

Agencies: Wicklow Arts Office

Timescale: 5yrs+

**Action 19:** Implement range of initiatives to assist artists overcome financial obstacles to their work including

- increase number of dedicated studio spaces in the county for artists
- extend shared ownership programmes to artists for studios
- encourage financial institutions to develop arts-friendly terms and conditions
- increase output of information to professional artists
- increase support to amateur artists
- Increase supports to arts organisations to provide training / workshops.

Agencies: Wicklow Arts Office

Timescale: 0-3yrs

**Action 20:** Commission audit of existing arts facilities / buildings throughout the county which would be cross – referenced with artists in relevant areas.

Agencies: Wicklow Arts Office, WAN

Timescale: 0-3yrs

**Action 21:** Appoint a full time Arts Co-ordinator to manage provision of facilities for arts events in county including investigating ways of sharing arts resources/ materials within the county.

Agencies: Wicklow Arts Office, WAN

Timescale: 0-3yrs

**Action 22:** Increase funding and professional staffing levels in the County Arts Office

Agencies: Arts Council, WCC

Timescale: 0-3yrs

### Theme: Arts & Education / Training

**Strategic Objective:** To ensure greater integration of arts/cultural activity in educational sector in Co. Wicklow as well as developing and supporting arts education and training on countywide basis.

**Action 23:** Arts in the Classroom

- Increase the number, funding and promotion of the Artists in Schools scheme throughout the county
- Strategically co-ordinate linkages between Dept. of Education, county based educators and County Arts Office
- Develop programmes that would specifically involve arts practitioners in an integrated way in the classroom
- Create positions of employment for artists in schools as an integral part of the staffing structure
- Improve the quality of arts related courses offered to teachers in their professional training and in-service training.

Agencies: Dept of Ed of Science & VEC, Teachers Unions, Arts Council and Wicklow Arts Office

Timescale: 3-5yrs

**Action 24:** Provide training and create opportunities for artist to work in Health Care Services in Co. Wicklow – this to link with provision of a professional Art Therapy course in Co. Wicklow.

Agencies: ECAHB, Wicklow Arts Office

Timescale: 0-3yrs

**Action 25:** Create educational opportunities for performing artists and amateur artists to work with young people throughout County Wicklow.

Agencies: Wicklow Arts Office

Timescale: 0-3yrs

# ARTS, SPORT & RECREATION

**Action 26:** Provide bursaries for individual artists based in Co. Wicklow to train / specialise abroad

- Develop international marketing strategies to attract artistic events / work from abroad to Co. Wicklow – this to lead to supported exchange programmes from educational perspective
- Investigate models of good practice regarding arts education / training in other countries and implement in Co. Wicklow.

Agencies: Arts Council, Arts Office, VEC

Timescale: 3-5yrs

**Action 27:** Ensure that any third level college established in Co. Wicklow makes provision for an Arts Department

Agencies: Dept. of Ed

Timescale: 3-5yrs

## Sports/recreation

### Theme: Provision of Venues / Facilities

**Strategic Objective:** To ensure that all venues/facilities in Co. Wicklow are accessible to all, from both physical and social perspective and that where feasible, all facilities have multi-purpose uses

**Action 28:** Plan, invest and manage a number of high quality community based sports centres strategically located throughout the county

Agencies: WCC, ISC, Local Sports P'ship, Local Community Groups

Timescale: 0-3yrs

**Action 29:** Ensure that all sports centres should incorporate multi purpose sports usage as opposed to being dominated by specific sports. Also, assist in lengthening sporting year by making provision for sporting clubs in Co. Wicklow to acquire adequate outdoor floodlighting.

Agencies: WCC, ISC, Local Sports P'ship, Dept of T, S, R

Timescale: 0-3yrs

**Action 30:** Ensure that appropriate surplus land arising out of infrastructural development (i.e. hosing, roads etc) is identified for amenity / sporting development

Agencies: WCC, Local Community Groups

Timescale: 0-3yrs

**Action 31:** Investigate provision of low interest finance / revolving loan schemes to Sporting Groups to help address difficulties faced by high land prices in Co. Wicklow

Agencies: Local Sports P'ship, ISC

Timescale: 0-3yrs

**Action 32:** Investigate establishment of Group Insurance Scheme for sporting / amenity clubs in Co. Wicklow

Agencies: Local Sports P'ship, ISC

0-3yrs

**Action 33:** Support the development of a pricing policy for sports activities in Co. Wicklow which promotes access for all

Agencies: Local Sports P'ship

Timescale: 0-3yrs

**Action 34:** Improve access to sporting/ recreational activities from disability perspective throughout Co. Wicklow

Agencies: Local Sports P'ship

Timescale: 0-3yrs

### Theme: Resourcing the Sports/ Recreational Sector

**Strategic Objective:** To ensure sufficient investment in both the physical and human resource aspect of the sports and recreation sector in Co. Wicklow

**Action 35:** Ensure that when Sports Partnership in place in Co. Wicklow, priority attached to supporting voluntary effort involved in administering sporting clubs. Needs survey to be carried out, but needs already identified include:

- Basis committee skills training
- Accessing relevant information
- Accessing funding

Agencies: LSP

Timescale: 0-3yrs

**Action 36:** Implement series of initiatives to involve / encourage wider range of sports volunteers in Co. Wicklow, including:

- Targeting retired sector for sports volunteers
- Ease restrictions to allow people on FAS / other schemes to work on behalf of local sporting clubs

Agencies: LSP, Local Sporting Groups

Timescale: 0-3yrs

**Action 37:** Address shortage of referees and sports administrators in Co. Wicklow – investigate ways of encouraging people who have benefited from sport to give back to this sector

Agencies: LSP, Local Sporting Groups

Timescale: 0-3yrs

**Action 38:** Implement series of measures to enable children participate in wider range of sports activities in Co. Wicklow. Allied to this, encourage greater participation by children in sports activity in Co. Wicklow from non competitive perspective

Agencies: LSP, Local Sporting Groups

Timescale: 0-3yrs

### Theme: Recreational Activity in Co. Wicklow

**Strategic Objective:** To ensure balance is maintained between sporting / recreational activity in Co. Wicklow and safeguarding the environment

**Action 39:** Ensure that in the event of Coillte being privatised, access to forests remains open to all who currently avail of these facilities from sporting/recreational perspective

Agencies: Coillte, WCDB

Timescale: 0-3yrs

**Action 40:** Greater emphasis to be placed by Wicklow Local Authorities in providing and maintaining the number of amenity areas eg public parks/playgrounds in Co. Wicklow – also to ensure all new local development plans incorporate sufficient recreational areas.

Agencies: WCC, Local Community/Residents Groups

Timescale: 0-3yrs

**Action 41:** Implement series of measures to safeguard unique environment of Co. Wicklow including restricting movement / no. of cars in environmentally sensitive areas, implementing park and ride schemes throughout Co. Wicklow etc

Agencies: WCC, WCT, WUC, Public & Private Transport Providers

Timescale: 0-3yrs

# TOURISM

## Tourism

### Theme: Tourism Activities

**Strategic Objective:** To promote the development of a sustainable tourism product by attracting further investment in tourism embracing the highest standards of excellence while ensuring the protection of Wicklow's natural resources'.

**Action 1:** Devise a programme to encourage local communities to promote the concept of the Garden of Ireland theme/logo to emphasise the county's flora and organic food resources – the promotion to be used on all publications.

Agencies: WCT, MERTA, Local Development Groups

Timescale: 0-3

Equality Proofing from Race/Ethnic Minority perspective: Make provision where possible to provide information through internationally recognised symbols.

**Action 2:** Improve access to tourist facilities from a disability perspective e.g. proper access ramps with due recognition to constitutional property rights.

Agencies: All facility providers

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 3:** Identify and develop coastal facilities and water activities.

Agencies: Dept. M&NR, PPP, WCC, Local Community Groups

Timescale: 5-10

**Action 4:** Focus development for quality accommodation and visitor attractions throughout the county in accordance with the County Development Plan.

Encourage redevelopment of all old railway lines for various use – walking, cycling steam trains, horse riding etc.

Agencies: WCC, WCT, MERTA, WCC, Local Dev. Groups, PPP, Bord Failte

Timescale: 5-10

Equality Proofing from Sexual Orientation Perspective: Promote the Equal Status Act to ensure that all people, regardless of their sexual orientation, would not experience discrimination when accessing accommodation in Co. Wicklow.

Equality Proofing from Membership of Traveller Community Perspective: Promote the Equal Status Act to ensure that members of the Traveller Community would not experience discrimination when accessing accommodation in Co. Wicklow.

**Action 5:** Pilot an initiative to encourage private operators to provide transport within county throughout the year for tourism activities.

Agencies: WCT, Visitor attraction owners, Investors, Private Bus owners

Timescale: 0-3

Disability Proofing: Ensure that in the delivery of the above action, provision is made for people with a physical / sensory disability.

**Action 6:** Continue to actively promote, expand and sustain niche events for County Wicklow.

Agencies: WCT, MERTA, WCC

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 7:** Foster 'bring in/bring out' attitude at all visitor attractions.

Agencies: Visitor attraction owners, WCT, WCC

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 8:** Provision of pre-planning facilitation from Planning Authority for local community prior to start up/expansion of tourist related development.

Agencies: WCC

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 9:** Encourage investment for the development of Aughavannagh hostel as a Heritage project.

Agencies: Dúchas, Dept. of Arts, Heritage, An Óige, Gaelteacht and the Islands, FÁS, WCT, WCC

Timescale: 0-3

Disability Proofing: Ensure that in the delivery of the above action, provision is made for people with a physical / sensory disability.

Equality Proofing from Sexual Orientation Perspective: Promote existing legislation to ensure that all people, regardless of their sexual orientation, would not experience discrimination when accessing accommodation in Co. Wicklow.

Equality Proofing from Membership of Traveller Community Perspective: Promote existing legislation to ensure that members of the Traveller Community would not experience discrimination when accessing accommodation in Co. Wicklow.

## Tourism

### Theme: Marketing

**Strategic Objective:** To promote the importance of the economic benefits of tourism in Co. Wicklow, to sustain development of the tourism industry in the county while protecting the natural environment.

**Action 10:** To be proactive and co-ordinate measures with other tourism providers to improve and develop specialist activity niche markets – endurance sports.

Agencies: MERTA, WCT, WCC, Bord Failte

Timescale: 0-3

Disability Proofing: Ensure that in the delivery of the above action, provision is made for people with a physical / sensory disability.

**Action 11:** Lobby to attract and support major sporting events to Co. Wicklow.

Agencies: MERTA, WCT, WCC, Bord Failte

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 12:** Adopt new innovative approaches to develop indoor facilities and activities to overcome seasonality.

Agencies: MERTA, WCT, Bord Failte

Timescale: 5-10.

Poverty Proofing: Ensure that above three actions are delivered in socially inclusive way so as to avoid exploitation of people through low-paid seasonal work. Promote payment of minimum wage to all such workers.

**Action 13:** Support and encourage greater involvement by community /voluntary sector of in the development of their areas from a tourism perspective.

Agencies: WCT, MERTA, LCG

Timescale: 0-3

Equality Proofing from Race/Ethnic Minority perspective: Make provision where possible to provide information in range of internationally recognised symbols.

**Action 14:** Encourage all public and private sectors to use 'Wicklow Garden of Ireland' logo to emphasise the county's natural resources on all promotional material.

Agencies: WCT, MERTA, CC, LCG, all tourist businesses

Timescale 0-3

**Action 15:** Encourage communities to be proactive in enjoying the Co. Wicklow experience by making it a welcoming place to live, work and visit.

Agencies: WCT, MERTA, WRP, CDB, Schools, LCG

Timescale 0-3

Equality Proofing from Membership of Traveller Community Perspective: Promote existing legislation to ensure that members of the Traveller Community would not experience discrimination in terms of living, working and visiting Co. Wicklow – provision of transient halting sites for summer months a potential option here.

**Action 16:** Encourage maximum co-ordination between all agencies with tourism remit in the county.

Agencies: WCT, MERTA, WCC, LEADER, CEB, Local tourist providers

Timescale: 0-3

## Tourism

### Theme: Development of Wicklow Craft Industry

**Strategic Objective:** To develop an economically sustainable craft sector within County Wicklow.

**Action 17:** Develop a 'Brand of Excellence/Quality Code' for Co. Wicklow design/craft workers.

Agencies: FÁS, WCC, Craft Council of Ireland, Craft Reps, CEB

Timescale: 5-10

**Action 18:** Promote and market craft products made in Co. Wicklow in Design/craft and other centres.

Agencies: FÁS, WCC, Craft Council of Ireland, Craft Reps, CEB, WCT, MERTA,

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 19:** Develop IT skills/capacity within craft sector through targeting IT training courses specifically to craft producers. Development of web based activity to promote and distribute Co. Wicklow Craft products.

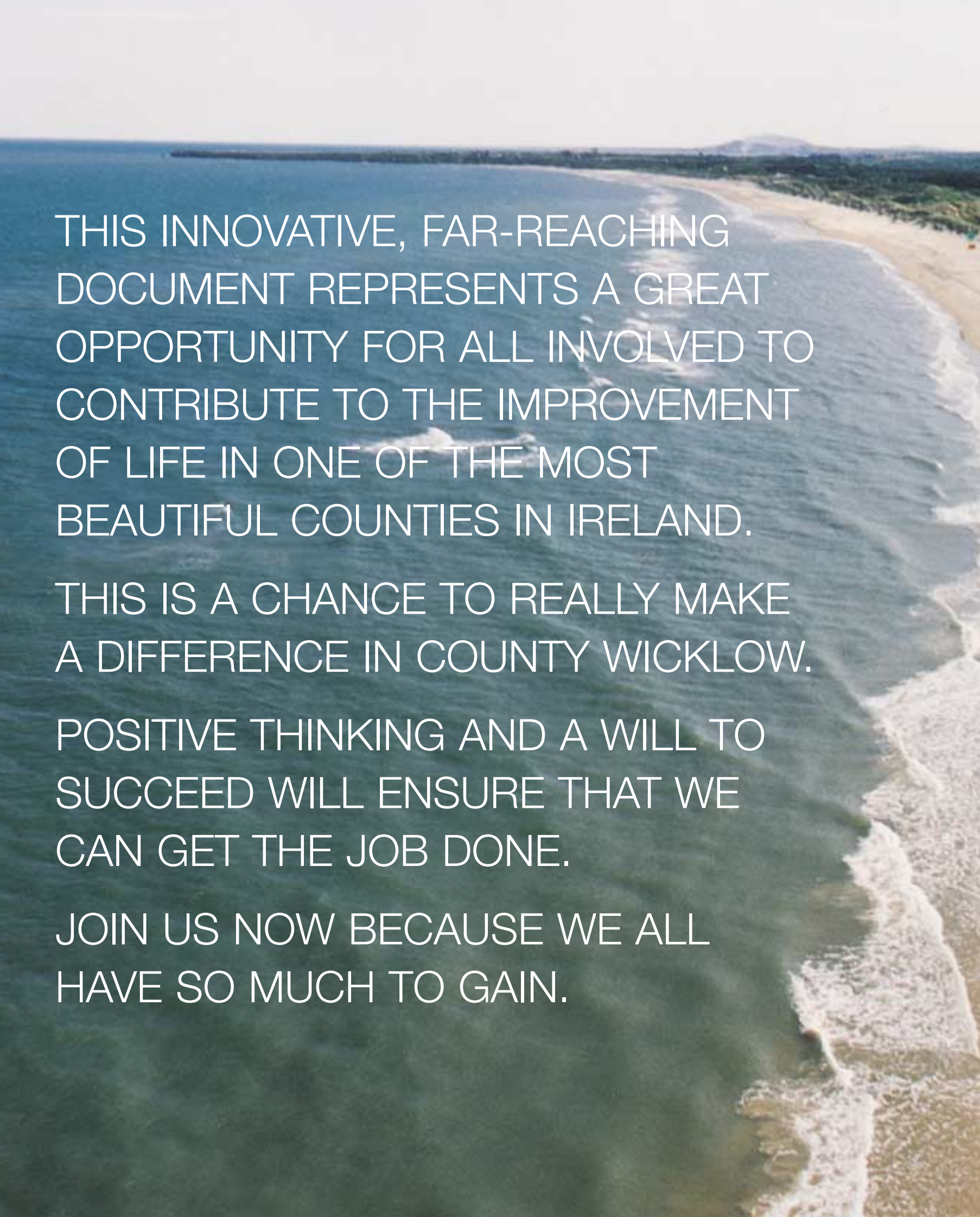
Agencies: FÁS, WCC, Craft Council of Ireland, Craft Reps, CEB,

Timescale: 0-3

**Action 20:** Support the establishment of a dedicated CraftCentre in the county to showcase local crafts and workshop units.

Agencies: FÁS, WCC, Craft Council of Ireland, Craft Reps, CEB,

Timescale: 0-3

An aerial photograph of a coastline. The sea is a deep blue-green color, with white foam from waves crashing onto a sandy beach. The beach is a light tan color. In the background, there is a line of green trees and a small island or headland in the distance under a pale sky.

THIS INNOVATIVE, FAR-REACHING  
DOCUMENT REPRESENTS A GREAT  
OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL INVOLVED TO  
CONTRIBUTE TO THE IMPROVEMENT  
OF LIFE IN ONE OF THE MOST  
BEAUTIFUL COUNTIES IN IRELAND.

THIS IS A CHANCE TO REALLY MAKE  
A DIFFERENCE IN COUNTY WICKLOW.

POSITIVE THINKING AND A WILL TO  
SUCCEED WILL ENSURE THAT WE  
CAN GET THE JOB DONE.

JOIN US NOW BECAUSE WE ALL  
HAVE SO MUCH TO GAIN.

**Wicklow County Development Board wishes to thank all those who contributed to this strategy. The time and effort is much appreciated.**

This strategy has been prepared under part 13, Section 129 of the Local Government Act, 2001, which provides a statutory basis for the establishment, composition and functions of the City and County Development Boards and for the preparation by the Boards of a Strategy for Economic, Social and Cultural Development.

**Errors & Omissions**

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this document, the authors and publishers cannot accept any responsibility for errors or omissions contained within.

**Photography**

WCDB wishes to acknowledge the kind assistance and co-operation of the following:

The pupils and staff of St Brigid's National School, Greystones

Wicklow Art Glass Studio, Wicklow

CEART – Centre for Education and Resourcing Travellers, Wicklow

Wicklow Fire Services

Wicklow Arts Office

Wicklow County Council

Wicklow County Tourism

Wicklow Film Commission

Wicklow Cheviot Sheep Owners Association

Kilcoole BMX riders/skateboarders

All unattributed photographs supplied by Wicklow County Council.

**Socio-economic research:**

NIRSA, NUI Maynooth

**Photographer, front cover:** Simon Burch

**Photographer, back cover:** Kevin Hanlon



 Printed on recycled paper.

**Design:** Rain design partners

**Print:** Hudson Killeen



**Wicklow County Development Board**

County Buildings, Wicklow.

**Telephone:** 0404 20208

**Email:** [dce@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:dce@wicklowcoco.ie)

**Website:** [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie)