



Comhshaol, Pobal agus Rialtas Áitiúil  
Environment, Community and Local Government



## CFPA Dhún na nGall

(Coiste um Fhorbairt Pobail Áitiúil Dhún na nGall)

## GCA Treoraithe

(Grúpa Ceantair Áitiúil Treoraithe)

### Stratéis Forbatha Áitiúla Dhún na nGall

### Donegal Local Development Strategy



LEADER Rural Development  
Programme 2014-2020

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# Section 1: The LAG

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## 1. Legal Name of LAG

Donegal Local Community Development Committee

## 2. Postal Address, Telephone No.

Donegal County Council  
County House  
The Diamond  
Lifford  
Co. Donegal

Tel: 074 9153900

## 3. Primary Contact for LEADER/Name of Contact Person, Position

Paddy Doherty, LCDC Chief Officer

## 4. Postal Address, Telephone No., Email Address

Donegal County Council  
County House  
The Diamond  
Lifford  
Co. Donegal

Tel: 074 9153900

Email [paddy.doherty@donegalcoco.ie](mailto:paddy.doherty@donegalcoco.ie)

## 5. Legal Description of LAG

The Donegal LCDC will act as the LAG for the Donegal Sub Region. The key provisions regarding LCDCs are contained in Part 6 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014. Part 6 inserts new sections 49A and 128A to 128F into the Local Government Act 2001 and provides for:

- the establishment of LCDCs as Committees of local authorities,
- the functions of LCDCs,
- LCDC membership,
- administrative support for LCDCs by local authorities, and
- co-operation with the work of LCDCs by local development agencies.

The changes to the Local Government structure commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2014 and have full legal effect from that date.

## 6. Date of Establishment of Donegal LCDC

1st July 2014

## 7. CRO No. and Tax Clearance Certificate

Company Number; IE 8F28103W

Tax Clearance Cert; 00519651-33156D (expire date; 30/06/2016)

## 8. Legal Structure

Sub committee of Donegal County Council

## 9. Operational ethos: description of main activities

Please see attached Supplementary Information on LAG Governance Model, Appendix 1.1, Standing Orders for LCDC, Pg 1-8.

## 10. LAG Composition / Donegal LCDC Members

Name	Sector	Organisation	Expertise
Seamus Neely <b>Chairperson</b>	Local Authority official, Chief Executive	Donegal County Council	Extensive public service career with Donegal County Council, Cavan and Monaghan County Councils. Chief Executive since 2011 overseeing an annual budget of €130m with the key priority of developing the County to its full potential from an economic, social, infrastructural and culture viewpoint. Also Chairman of Donegal Tourism Ltd.
Cllr. Martin McDermott <b>Vice Chairperson</b>	Local Authority official, Councillor	Donegal County Council	Wide experience in community development with specific expertise in tourism, industry, social inclusion, funding and youth provision.
Michael Tunney	Local Authority official, Local Enterprise Office	Donegal County Council	Over 30 years of experience in planning, and in economic and enterprise development. Experienced in community development and funding, agri-tourism and tourism development, small and micro business development, project assessment, and experienced in the preparation and delivery of local, county and regional development strategies.
Cllr. Niamh Kennedy	Local Authority official, Councillor	Donegal County Council	Experienced in local and community development with a particular interest in finance, funding, social inclusion and administration. Over 20 years experience in the fishing industry covering Health and Safety and Administration Management.
Cllr. Marie Therese Gallagher	Local Authority official, Councillor	Donegal County Council	Extensive experience in community development with specific expertise in rural tourism, business, social inclusion and grants.
Paul Hannigan	State Agencies	Letterkenny Institute of Technology	Paul Hannigan has been President of Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT) since 1998. Paul is a former member of the Higher Education Authority (HEA) and the Central Applications Office (CAO). He currently serves on the North West Regional Executive of IBEC. He is also a

			member of the Council of Eurashe, the European Association for Technological Higher Education Institutions, and sits on the Advisory Board for U-Multirank which is a new multi-dimensional, user-driven approach to international ranking of higher education institutions.
Maire O'Leary	State Agencies	Health Service Executive	Experience in community development and social inclusion work in a health setting, having joined the North Western Health Board as a Community Worker in 1982. Has a particular interest in Traveller health, Community Participation in Primary Care and Inter-sectoral work for health.
Alan Ó Baoid	State Agencies	Udaras na Gaeltachta	Alan is a fluent Irish speaker from the Gaoth Dobhair Gaeltacht, Has particular strengths and experience in company development and job creation in sectors such as manufacturing and tourism. He is involved through his work and externally with community development and understands the difficulties associated with rural development.
Anne McHugh	State Agencies	Education Training Board	A former Principal, Education Officer and presently Chief Executive of the Donegal ETB. Specific expertise in the provision of education and training within the county to the community sector and working under the Youth Work Act. Through the Donegal ETB works in partnership with other agencies, both statutory and voluntary and is highly experienced working at committee and board level in the management and delivery of projects.
Anthony Doogan	Local Development Company	Inishowen Development Partnership	Extensive knowledge and experience of local development having served as Chairperson of Inishowen Development Partnership for 3 years. Currently employed by Department of Education.
Jim Slevin	Local Development Company	Donegal Local Development Company	Strong local business connection, extensive local development knowledge and experience having served as Chairperson of Donegal Local Development Co. for number of years.
Susan McCauley	Social Inclusion Interest	PPN	A highly experience professional in the area of health, wellbeing and mental health including disadvantaged and vulnerable people. An active member of the PPN covering Social Inclusion.
Susan Mc Loughlin	Community Voluntary Interest	PPN	Over 20 years experience in the community and voluntary sector including project management, budgets and actively participating on numerous task forces, forums and committees.
Martin McBride	Community Voluntary Interest	PPN	Extensive experience of local development structures and organizations involved in the delivery of local development



			programmes – including the LEADER/Rural Development Programme. An experienced board member who has also held various positions including Vice Chairperson and Secretary on a variety of boards in the areas of community development and social inclusion.
Emmett Johnston	Environmental Interest	PPN	Conservation ecologist with over 15 years professional experience in Ireland and abroad. Expertise in all aspects of Environmental Impact assessment including Natura 2000 screening, appropriate assessments and Environmental Impact statements and assessments. Also extensive experience in implementation and enforcement of environmental legislation.
Jan Feenstra	Business & Enterprise	IBEC Rep	An experienced business professional working for the largest seafood company in Ireland. Represents IBEC in leading, shaping and promoting business policy and conditions to drive economic success.
PJ Hannon	Trade Union	ICTU	Over 35 yrs dealing with the most marginalised and disadvantaged in our community through his work in the Community Psychiatric Services. An experience board member having held the position of chairperson of the Congress Centre for the Unemployed for over 10yrs and representing ICTU as a director of DLDC for the past 15yrs.
James O'Donnell	Farming & Agriculture	Famers Rep	Extensive experience in local and community development with particular experience in funding as a member of the PEACE III evaluation panel and the SICAP Evaluation Panel.
Noreen Ní Mhaoldomhnaigh	Islands interest	Comhar na nOileán	Highly experience professional in the community and voluntary sector with experience working at a regional and national board level including Comhdháil Oileáin na hÉireann (Federation of Irish Island) and as a board member of Comhar na nOileán. Over 10yrs experience working in management of a Community Development Organisation.

#### 11. Outline of the ongoing selection process for new LAG members and rotation of members over the course of the LEADER programme

See Supplementary Information on LAG Governance Model, Appendix 1.1, Section 4 Standing Orders plus Supplementary Information on LAG Governance Model, Appendix 1.3, Section 6 of LCDC Guidelines.

#### 12. Description of decision making structures/procedures including sub-committees and advisory groups

The LCDC committee will adhere to the committees Standing Orders (Supplementary Information on LAG Governance Model, Appendix 1.1, Pg 1-8) adopted on the 2nd September 2014 as part of its decision making process (Section 3) as detailed below.

#### Participation and Decision-making:

- The Chairperson will endeavour to ensure meaningful, focused and inclusive participation by all LCDC Members in the decision-making process. Matters for discussion at Board Meetings will be related to the functions of the LCDC as set out in 1.3.
- The standing order and operational issues may be amended by the LCDC from time to time.
- The LCDC should arrive at decisions, as far as possible, by agreement, and votes should be avoided. Where this is not possible, Board members shall agree to vote using roll call.
- Where the Chairperson has not formally declared the result of a vote, or is in doubt as to whether his/her declaration is right or wrong, s/he is entitled if s/he thinks fit to take a second vote on the matter, especially if s/he considers that through some misunderstanding the first vote did not properly represent the sense of the meeting at that time.
- Each member present at a meeting of the LCDC shall have a vote unless prohibited by any enactment. A member may abstain from voting, and such abstention shall be recorded in the minutes. Where there is an equality of votes, a matter before a meeting shall be determined by a second or casting vote of the person chairing the meeting.
- A proposal to revoke or amend a resolution of the LCDC can only be made if submitted in advance for inclusion in the Agenda. The Agenda item shall state the resolution to be revoked or amended and detail the terms of the new proposal to be made. No such proposal may appear on the Agenda to revoke or amend any resolution of the LCDC within six months of the date of the adoption of such resolution except with the written assent of not less than eleven members of the LCDC. A resolution may not be revoked at the meeting at which it has been adopted.
- In order to adopt a proposal to revoke or amend a resolution of the LCDC at least eight or more of the total number of members of the LCDC must vote in favour and subject to any statutory requirements.

This will be further supported by the LCDC Guidelines published by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government on the 10 July 2014 including Section 10 (as detailed below) whilst implementing the wider guidance as attached in Supplementary Information on LAG Governance Model, Appendix 1.4, Pg 1-16.

#### Decision Making by LCDC's

- All acts of the LCDC, and all questions coming or arising before it, will be determined by consensus of those members present and eligible to vote. Where agreement cannot be reached, the members present and eligible to vote will vote on the matter before it.



- Neither public authorities nor any single interest group should represent more than 49% of the voting rights. A vote taken or decision reached where any single interest group or public authority represents more than 49% of the voting rights is invalid.
- Procedures should be put in place to deal with conflict of interest situations involving LCDC members. It is important to ensure that these procedures deal with situations where LCDC members must absent themselves from the consideration of, or decision-making in respect of, matters before the LCDC because of a conflict of interest. In any event, members with a conflict of interest should be prohibited from participating in deliberations and other decisions related to the conflict of interest.
- The balance of members attending and eligible to vote on issues must be weighted in favour of the private sector members at all times. If a private sector member has to absent themselves from deliberations and decision making processes in respect of a particular issue, the balance of members remaining eligible to vote is must still weighted in favour of the private sector members.
- Arrangements should be put in place to provide for such scenarios and may require, in some circumstances, some of the public sector members absenting themselves from a vote on issues to ensure that the appropriate balance is maintained. The exact process or arrangements in this regard should be set out in the standing orders.
- LCDC's shall prepare and maintain non-discriminatory and transparent decision-making procedures. Procedures should allow for the possibility of appeal against decisions, where relevant. Procedures should also provide for decisions by written procedure.
- The Chief Officer will arrange for the keeping of records of all LCDC decisions, including the results of votes taken. This is particularly important in the context of funding decisions by LCDC's.

### **13. Frequency of LAG committee meetings**

Meetings take place every 6-8 weeks and as necessary, also refer to section 2.1 Standing Orders for LCDC.

### **14. Roles & responsibilities of LAG members for LEADER regarding financial management; administration; animation and calls for proposals; management of staff; monitoring/evaluation.**

The LCDC as the LAG will have overall responsibility for the implementation and successful delivery of the LDS. Their role will include:

- a) allocate tasks among the LAG partners
- b) approve parameters for calls for proposals in accordance with the priorities and objectives set out in the LDS,
- c) give ultimate approval for project applications in accordance with Art. 34(3)(f) of Regulation 1303/2013,
- d) develop and sign Service Level Agreements with lead financial partner (DCC Executive) and lead Implementation Partners (IP's)
- e) monitor and review performance of the implementation partners as per service level agreement with the LCDC,
- f) monitor and review the performance of the LA as lead financial partner, and

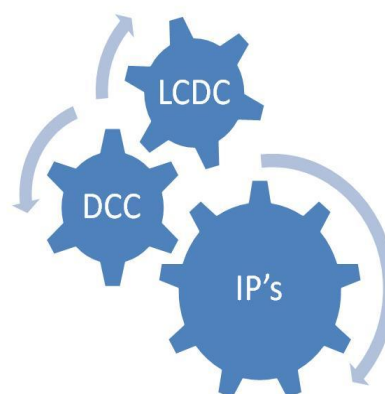
- g) monitor and review on an ongoing basis progress under the LDS, and agree corrective action, where required.

Donegal County Council is the lead financial partner of the LCDC/LAG and will carry out the administrative tasks associated with this role, including;

- a) providing advance administration and animation funding to implementing partners,
- b) due diligence checks on funding applications,
- c) expenditure verification checks in line with Article 48 requirements,
- d) development and issuing of contracts,
- e) making payments to promoters on behalf of the LAG, and
- f) requesting quarterly drawdown of monies from DECLG.

The Implementing Partners will develop projects and animation related actions associated with the implementation of the LDS. They will carry out all work from the issuing calls for proposals up to, and including, submitting project recommendations to the LAG and the lead financial partner for approval. The role and responsibility of the Implementing Partners includes –

- a) developing and issuing calls for proposals,
- b) managing call for proposals processes,
- c) developing funding proposals with project promoters,
- d) managing open-call project application processes,
- e) implementing, managing and coordinating animation activity in the LAG area,
- f) receiving and supporting funding applications,
- g) developing and implementing IP's led projects,
- h) submission of projects to the LAG evaluation committee,
- i) project development, management and monitoring work with project promoters, and
- j) preparing and collating documentation for verification and submission to Donegal County Council as lead financial partner.



## 15. Financial controls and management procedures for LEADER

Comprehensive procedure manuals will be developed for all elements of the implementation of LEADER by the LAG. The development will be lead by a LAG Operational Working Group with membership drawn from the lead financial partner and the four Implementing Partners.

Donegal County Council has developed extensive financial and control systems based on Local Authority procedures and best practices identified though the implementation of EU and nationally funded programmes. These systems ensure that all programmes are managed both operationally and financially using a proven financial control system and this

will form part of the financial controls and management procedures documented within the operational procedures manual developed by the LAG.

#### **16. Procedures for management oversight of the implementing body that has responsibility for financial management of LEADER**

Donegal County Council will be the lead financial partner for the Donegal LAG. The role of Donegal County Council as lead financial partner will be delivered through adherence to Local Government Audit guidelines, LEADER Operating Rules, LAG Procedure Manuals and Council's own operational and financial procedures as directed by the Head of Finance. The process will be overseen by the Divisional Manager within the Community, Enterprise and Planning Directorate.

Donegal County Council will provide budget reports to the LCDC and its sub committees as part of the oversight process. These reports will provide up to date financial data covering both the administration and project spend. These reports will detail the spend profile, any deviation and rationale for same and narrative to support the financial detail within the report.

#### **17. Adherence to public procurement requirements.**

Donegal County Council operates in accordance with the National Public Procurement Policy Framework and effectively implements value for money purchasing while ensuring transparency and accountability.

#### **18. Confirmation of the LAGs 'financial partner' for LEADER and how the system will operate.**

A Project Control Unit will be established within the Community, Enterprise and Planning Division of Donegal County Council to manage the financial element of LEADER. This will be overseen by the Divisional Manager. He will be further supported by a Senior Responsible Officer managing the programme budget, Service Level Agreements, Programme Implementers and reporting and monitoring progress for the LAG. Two Verification Officers will support the day to day performance of the programme including liaising with Programme Implementers, verification checks, site visits and budget management of each project. A Clerical Officer will support the duties of the Verification Officers and carry out the general office administration associated with successfully managing the LEADER programme.

Under the 2014-2020 LEADER programme, an arrears and an advance payment system will be in operation. The Advance Payment system will operate whereby an advance will be made to Donegal County Council which will in turn be issued to the PI's to cover administration and animation expenditure only. In this context, the proposed procedure for the flow of funding is as follows;

Payment of advance by DECLG to Donegal County Council at **the start of each financial quarter based** on LAG estimates of funding requirements (DCC will have a dedicated job code so that advance funds are used for **LEADER** only).



DCC transfers the relevant portion of the advance funding to the 4 Implementing Partners within 5 working days of receipt.



Implementing Partner submits vouched expenditure returns to DCC at the start of each month. This monthly return is facilitated through the LEADER ICT system.

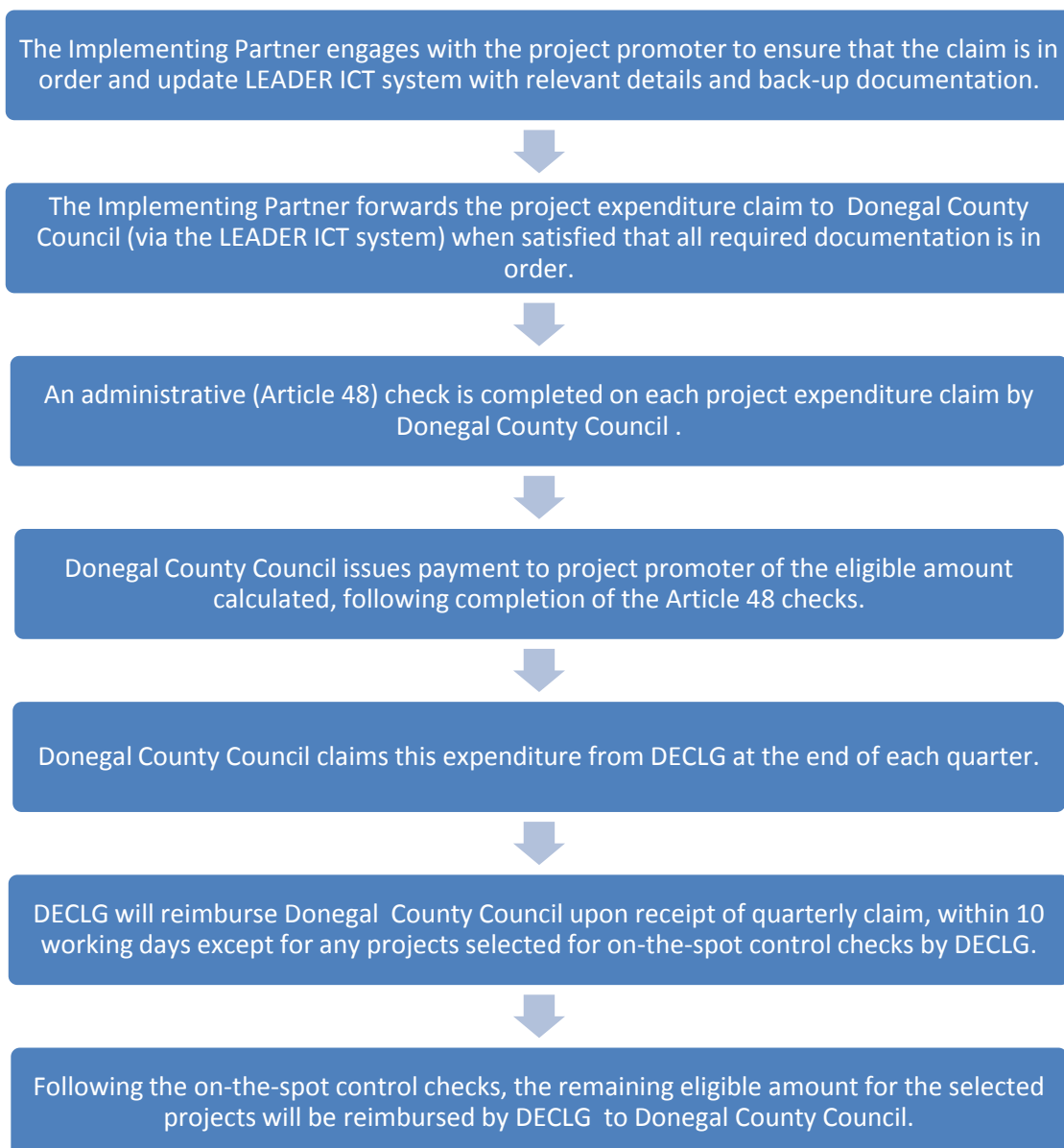


Chief Officer of the LAG verifies, approves and submits monthly return to DECLG .



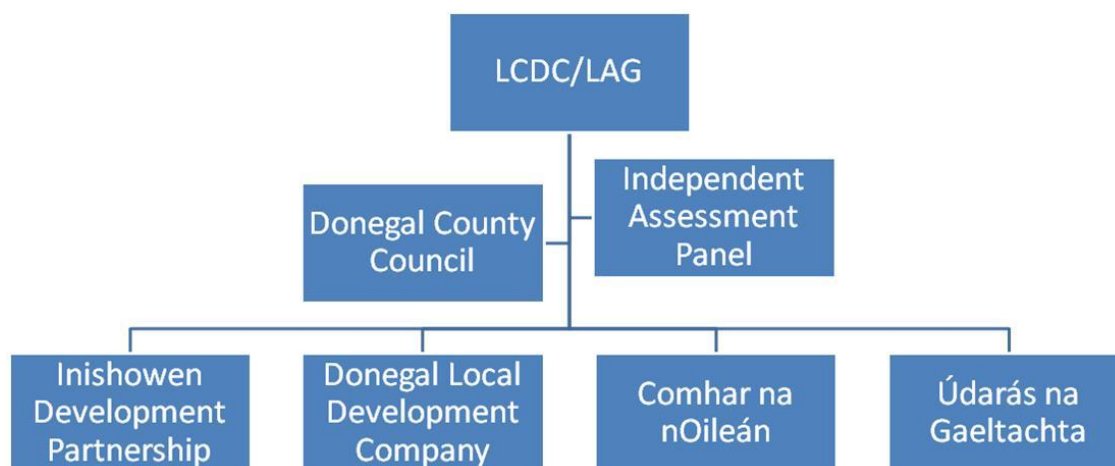
Administrative checks are completed on the expenditure returns by DECLG each month.

The project expenditure will be an Arrears Payment System. Donegal County Council will issue payments to project beneficiaries and claim reimbursement of these payments from DECLG on a quarterly basis. In this context, the proposed procedure for the flow of funding is as follows –

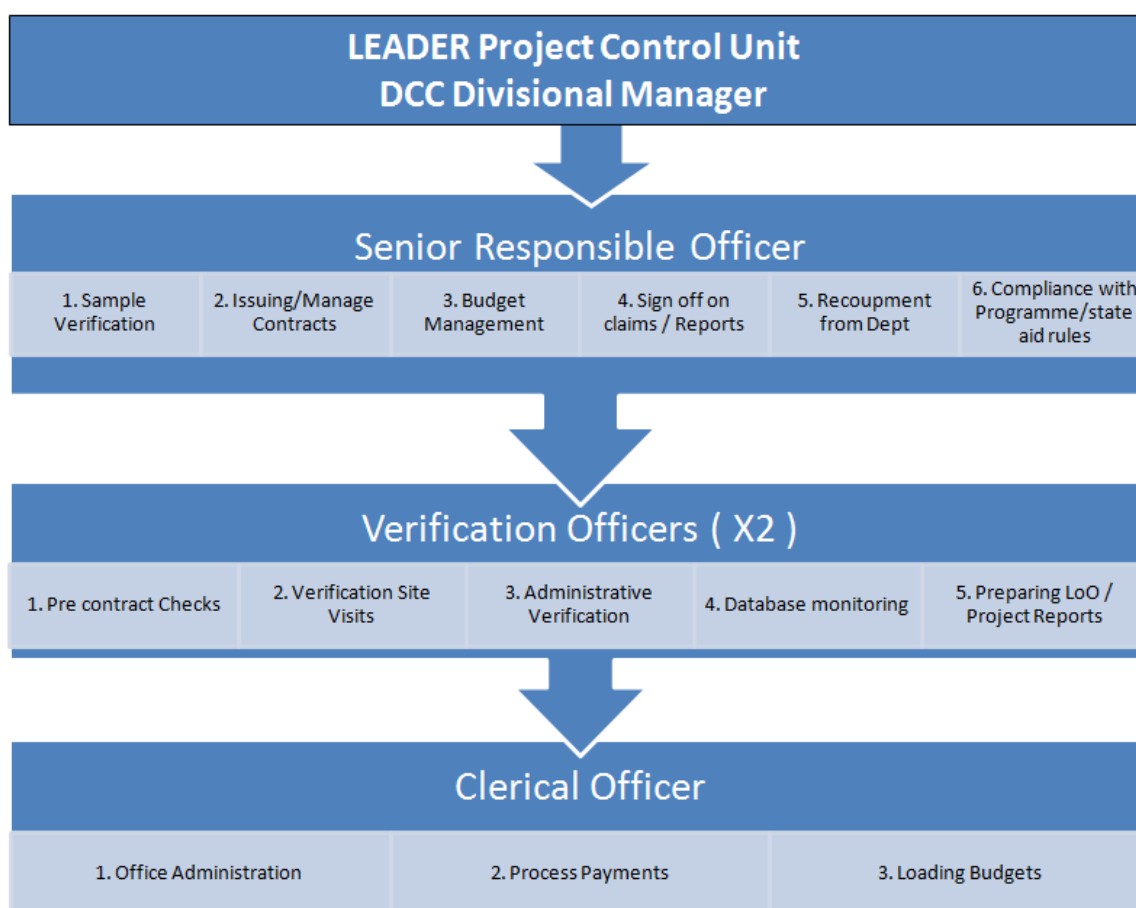


#### **19. Organisational chart illustrating the proposed management and staffing structure of LAG financial / implementation partners.**

The management structure is as detailed below and includes the Independent Assessment Panel, Donegal County Council as the lead Financial Partner and the four Implementation Partners.



A specific LEADER Project Control Unit will be established within Donegal County Council to oversee and manage all aspects of the programme. The structure is as detailed;



The Implementing Partners staffing complement will deliver the administration and animation of the LEADER programme. Details of the actual times worked on LEADER by individual staff members are confirmed within the Financial Template.



Implementing Partners (PI's)			
IDP	DLDC	C na nO	Údarás
1. CEO 2. Financial Officer 3. Project Officers x2	1. CEO 2. Financial Manager 3. Manager 4. Administrator 5. Project Officers x3	1. CEO 2. Financial Officer 3. Project Officers x 2 4. Administrator	1. Manager 2. Project Officers x2 3. Administrator

## 20. Procedure for managing the appraisal and selection process for project promoters & the LAG, to ensure a transparent selection procedure

The procedures which will be used to administer the LDS will be legally binding and adhere to Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013. The delivery of this programme will also comply with the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 Operating Rules and the conditions of the contract (Agreement) between the Donegal LAG and the Department.

Format for submission of applications will be as follows:

- a) Applicants will be provisionally assessed upon initial contact with Implementing Partner (either through a general meeting or telephone call). Once it is established that the project may be LEADER permissible, an Expression of Interest (EOI) can be submitted by the promoter to the Implementing Partner.
- b) Pre application discussion (Site visit if required)
- c) Applications submitted and acknowledged by the project administer / project officer as appropriate.
- d) Appraisal including site visit/project site inspection to ensure no works have commenced prior to potential grant offer.
- e) Consultation between Promoter and Project Officer
- f) Consultation with DCC/IP's & DECLG\* (approval sought if required) and with other State Agencies
- g) Internal IP's Evaluation
- h) Appraisal and Recommendation by Implementing Partner
- i) Appraisal and Final Decision (Donegal LAG)
- j) Letter of offer / refusal issued by Donegal LAG
- k) Letter of acceptance received

As per Article 48 of Regulation (EU) 809/2014, administrative checks shall be carried out on all applications for support by the lead financial partner including payment claims and other

declarations submitted by a beneficiary or third party, and shall cover all elements that can be checked and are appropriate to be checked by means of administrative checks. The checks will include the recording of control work undertaken, the results of the verification and the measures taken in respect of discrepancies.

### **Project Evaluation Sub Committee**

Three Evaluation Subcommittees will be established by the LCDC/LAG. These sub committees will be established on a geographical basis having regard to the geographical size of the county. These sub-committees (not LDC Boards) will be independent from the LCDC/LAG and will be made up of individuals (non-LCDC/LAG members) with appropriate expertise and experience in the relevant areas including two members from each of the following sectors –Rural Development; Environment; Rural Tourism, Social Inclusion; Rural Communities; Business & Enterprise Development and Economic & Job Creation in addition to the LAG Manager and Secretary.

The sub committees will be administered by Donegal County Council as the lead financial partner and will be formed following the approval of this Local Development Strategy.

### **Conflict of Interest**

All Evaluation Committee members, LAG Members and Implementing Partners staff will provide a conflict of interest declaration form which will be completed annually. In cases where Conflicts of Interest exist, the relevant applicant will not receive the project summary or the Evaluation committee recommendations and must absent themselves from any deliberations on a specific project application where such a declaration is made. This will also be recorded in the minutes and a Conflict of Interest data-base which will be updated regularly by the LAG.

## **21. Project selection criteria and scoring framework.**

In order to determine the eligibility of applications, the following will be required:

- a) A fully completed application form with accompanying supporting documentation.
- b) Confirmation that the project is consistent with:
  - the objectives of the Programme
  - the objectives of the LDS
  - EU and national regulatory requirements
  - the requirements outlined in the relevant section(s) of the Operating Rules
- c) Confirmation that the project:
  - does not have the potential to cause displacement
  - respects the de-minimis rule
  - will provide added value to the local economy/community (job creation/enhancement
  - is assessed for viability
  - is environmentally sustainable (no negative impact)

- will involve networking and co-operation
  - is innovative
- d) That the promoter has provided assurance that deadweight is not an issue.
  - e) That funding is not available from other sources to fund the project (additionality).
  - f) That the applicant can show evidence of title to carry out the project where evidence of title is required.
  - g) That the applicant possesses the requisite qualifications, training and ability to deliver the project.
  - h) That the relevant sections of the Check-list are completed both by the relevant project officer and the supervisor.
  - i) That as per Section 10.9 of the Operating Rules, Article 26.2(e) of Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1975/2006 an administrative check is carried out on all applications for support. This check includes a verification of the reliability of the applicant, with reference to any previous co-financed operations undertaken since 2000.

In order to ensure that the appraisal process respects the selection criteria set out in the Rural Development Programme, the LCDC when appraising projects for grant aid will ensure that:

- a) The project criteria is consistent with proposed actions contained within the LDS.
- b) A formal assessment scoring record has been developed for the Evaluation Committee and LCDC which may include scoring weights.
- c) That the project meets the criteria to establish the theme from which the funding is requested.
- d) That the relevant sections of the file check-list are completed both by the relevant project officer and their supervisor.

Projects will also be assessed for compliance with relevant legislation including procurement legislation and other appropriate obligatory standards established by either national legislation or within the Rural Development Programme itself.

In order to ensure that projects assessed and are in compliance with the above, the Donegal LAG will ensure that the following information has been provided and is available on a separate project file for each project:

- A fully completed signed and dated application form; date stamped and initialled on receipt by staff member, as well as allocated a reference number.
- An assessment report and initial site visit report completed by a project officer who investigated issues of viability, innovation, displacement, deadweight and availability of other sources of funds for the specific proposal.
- A Business Plan if applicable.
- Certification of current accounts and bank statements.
- Evidence that consultation has taken place with all relevant Departments and agencies regarding the availability of alternative sources of funding.(Additionality).
- Confirmation from the Revenue Commissioners whether the applicant is registered for VAT.

- Evidence that in the case of tourism projects, the project is in compliance with Fáilte Ireland or other standards and consistency with the regional tourism strategy.
- Evidence that the project is in compliance with the relevant planning, building and fire regulations, and other statutory regulations, for example Article 45 of 1305/2013.
- Evidence that any procurement processes conducted are compliant with relevant procurement policy together with documentation of the process undertaken.
- Confirmation that the application was made in accordance with the Operating Rules and the relevant EU Regulations.
- Completed Check-list by both the relevant project officer and the supervisor.

### Sample Scoring Sheet

Assessment Criteria	Objective	Rationale for Score	Weighting	Score
Compatibility with Local Development strategy	Do the project proposals meet the criteria set out in the LDS for the relevant measure?		15	
Innovation	Is the product innovative in its nature and does it displace existing enterprises?		15	
Promoter experience	Does the promoter have the Training/skills, track record or experience to deliver?		20	
Financial Viability	Are the project costs justifiable and is adequate funding available to co-fund the project?		20	
Sustainability	Is the project viable and will the service continue to be delivered?		10	
Requirement	Does the proposal target a specific need or address a specific gap in the market?		15	
Projects impact Environment / Climate Change.	Does the project have the potential to have a positive impact on the environment./ climate change?		5	
Total			100	

N.B. Projects must receive a minimum score of 60% prior to being recommended for approval.

## **22. Confirmation of adherence to time limited calls for proposals**

The Donegal LAG can confirm that the required 40% minimum project budget will be allocated to 'time-limited' calls for proposals. The targeted calls will be spread across all themes outlined in the LDS and there will be at least one target call each year from 2016-2020.

## **23. Managing and administering calls for projects to local promoters.**

The Donegal LAG brings a wide breadth of experience to the management and administration of calls for projects. Comhar na nOileán has been established since 2007 and has many years experience in preparing strategic plans. It provides a support structure to promote island development and sustainability using creative and innovative approaches to counter the effects of geographical, economic, social and cultural marginalisation.

LEADER has been administered by DLDC since 1995 and to date, in excess of €23M in funding was approved to some 725 projects which in turn enabled a total investment in excess of €55 Million within the DLDC catchment.

Similarly, IDP has successfully delivered LEADER programmes in Inishowen since 1996 and to date in excess of €16 million in funding was approved and some 619 projects completed. Comhar na nOileán, IDP and DLDC have also been instrumental in managing and administering calls for projects under several other programmes including for example SICAP and many other EU and Exchequer funded programmes.

Údarás na Gaeltachta has over 30 years experience in supporting the linguistic, economic and social development of all Gaeltacht areas in order to ensure they achieve their full potential.

All four of the Implementing Bodies of the Donegal LAG have also experience in working on a cross-border and transnational basis. Donegal County Council as the lead financial partner is confident that the four Implementing Bodies possess the necessary skills and competencies to effectively manage and administer the call for projects.

## **24. Developing an area-based approach to economic development in rural areas.**

The Donegal LAG comprises over thirty years of experience in the development, implementation and delivery of area based local development strategies within the catchment area. During this time the four implementing bodies have also established a vast network of local, national and international development Partnership's with Government departments, agencies, local authority bodies, social partners and the community and voluntary sector. These networks and strategic alliances are critical in assisting the respective organisations to liaise with other local development stakeholders within Donegal as part of a holistic, integrated local development approach capturing synergies through knowledge transfer and collaboration on project delivery. This process is also widespread to ensure there is no duplication of services.

## **25. Delivering interventions that support social inclusion and poverty reduction, in particular those that target 'hard to reach' communities.**

In delivering successive social inclusion programmes in Donegal, Comhar na nOileán, DLDC and IDP have all gained valuable experience and expertise in the development and delivery of interventions that support social inclusion and poverty reduction and which have targeted hard to reach communities throughout the county.

Furthermore, Údarás na Gaeltachta works consistently in the promotion of community development and capacity building in its regional and rural areas. It achieves this through targeting, assisting, and improving employability and by way of strengthening/developing and encouraging community and social enterprise. Sustainability is also achieved by way of promoting lifelong-learning and community education. In addition, to help alleviate poverty concerns and achieve an integrated approach to community development, An tUdarás has schemes and supports in place to tackle early school leaving. Working with ethnic minorities and social excluded groups also remains a large component of Udarás na Gaeltachta's strategy and mission.

The priority needs identified in the Donegal LDS have been identified through the development of a comprehensive consultative process and the development of a detailed area profile. The consultative process undertaken included consultation with key stakeholders and sectoral interest groups as well as the general public including people from disadvantaged communities, target groups and those considered hard to reach.

## **26. Management of relevant Exchequer or EU funding in the last 3 years.**

Donegal County Council has extensive experience in the planning, implementation and participation of a great number of EU projects, particularly since the establishment of the Council's EU Policy and Funding Unit in 2009. Donegal County Council has successfully operated as a lead or partner organisation on a wide variety of funding programmes including successive Peace Programmes, INTERREG Programmes, and various Transnational programmes.

A small selection of EU-funded projects which the Council has delivered in recent years includes:

- Freshwater Pearl Mussel Practical Measures Implementation Project (INTERREG IVA)
- Inch & Foyle Wildfowl Reserve (INTERREG IVA)
- RENNET (INTERREG IVA)
- Termon Project (PEACE III)
- Delivery, implementation and management of the Donegal PEACE III Action Plan
- SPACEial NW Project (INTERREG IVA)
- Energy Awareness & Public Consultation (SEAI, Energy Research, Development & Demonstration(RD&D) Programme)

The EU Unit continues to work to explore and maximise opportunities presented by the regions eligibility to compete in National and European funding programmes and will continue to actively explore opportunities under national and transnational funding streams with the aim of attracting further external funding to the county and wider region.



Over the last 3 years, LEADER groups in Donegal have administered the following Exchequer and or EU Funding:

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Partner(s)</b>
Rural Development Programme (LEADER)	Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government
LACDP (SICAP) Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme	Pobal 2000 – 2014 Donegal Local Community Development Committee over the years 2015 – to date.
Job Initiative Scheme	Department of Social Protection
Volunteer Programme (Donegal Volunteer Centre)	Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government
Tús Scheme	Department of Social Protection
Rural Social Scheme	Department of Social Protection
Countryside Recreation Scheme	Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government. Failte Ireland.
Volunteering in the Community Programme	International Fund for Ireland
The Job Club	Department of Social Protection
The Traveller's Job Club Coach Initiative	Traveller & Roma Inclusion Unit Dept of Justice & Equality
Digital Switchover Programme –	Dept of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources
Eircode Community Outreach Programme	Dept of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources
ReNew	Donegal County Council / INTERREG IVB etc
Football for Peace	International Fund for Ireland and Irish Football Association etc
Rural Transport	National Transport Authority
ENGAGE Youth, Border Links, Border Life, Border Villages Programme, One Donegal Hands of Peace	PEACE III

## **27. Leveraging additional match funding from other sources.**

Under the Operating Rules of the RDP (LEADER) 2007 – 2015 Programme, match funding from other Exchequer / EU sources in most cases was not eligible. However, in certain cases match funding was eligible as in the case of community projects being funded under the Village Enhancement and Basic Services measures. For mostly all community projects under the previous LEADER programme, the vast majority of match funding would have been provided either by:

- Benefit in Kind (BIK)– Voluntary Labour or Donation of Land.
- Credit facilities via USIT, Clann Credo or local Bank Facility.

In the case of BIK, several projects would have required the donation of site which in many cases would have been provided by Donegal County Council. Under Leader 11 and Leader+, many projects required the Leveraging of Funding from other sources in order to successfully deliver the overall funding package. Sources and projects which Programme Implementers previously and successfully leveraged funding for which enabled several projects to proceed included for example:

<b>Project</b>	<b>Funder</b>	<b>Value of funding Leveraged €</b>	<b>Year</b>
Rathmullen Enterprise	International Fund for Ireland	125,000	2004
Donegal Town Waterbus	International Fund for Ireland	350,000	2005
Convoy Community Play-ground	Donegal County Council	55,000	2011
Raphoe Community Play-ground	Donegal County Council	34,000	2012
Killybegs Play-space	Donegal County Council	40,000	2013
Ard Mc Cool	Donegal County Council	30,000	2013
Glenties Community Playground.	Donegal County Council	35,000	2013
Barrick Hill Town Park	Donegal County Council	100,000	2012
Amazing Grace Park	Buncrana Urban District Council	30,000	2013
Countryside Recreation Scheme	Failte Ireland	30,000 (5 yrs)	2009 - 2015
Transnational and Inter-territory projects	Leader Companies both in Ireland, UK, France and USA	Approx 650K	2000 - 2015

## Section 2: LDS Area Profile

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### 2.1 Area Selection

The proposed geographical catchment area for the Local Development Strategy (LDS) is the Donegal Local Authority area, which has a population of 161,137 persons and a land mass of 4,861 sq km's or 6.9% of the total land area of the State.

As the population of the LDS area is over the maximum 150,000 population threshold, the LAG wish to seek a derogation under the Common Provisions Regulation (Article 33(6)) to exceed this in order to allow the strategy to cover the entire Donegal Sub Region for the purposes of developing the Donegal LDS. In terms of the rationale for the derogation sought, the Donegal sub region is a naturally cohesive region comprising one geographical unit for a range of strategic planning purposes such as the preparation and implementation of the Donegal Local Economic and Community Plan, the Co. Donegal Development Plan, as well as the remit for the Public Participation Network, Tourism Agencies, the CSO and Pobal, etc. The granting of this derogation will facilitate the development of a more territorially coherent strategy for the area resulting in the implementation of a more efficient, rational and effective LDS for the Donegal Sub Region.

The LEADER Programme will be implemented by the LAG comprising of an agreed partnership between:

- **Lot 33.1: Inishowen Development Partnership** – covering the area as defined in SICAP Lot 33.1.
- **Lot 33.2: Údarás na Gaeltachta** – covering the area as defined by the Gaeltacht Act, apart from the offshore islands.
- **Lot 33.3: Donegal Local Development Company** - covering the area as defined in SICAP Lot 33.3.
- **Lot 33.4: Comhar na nOileán Teo** – covering the offshore islands under their remit.

A map illustrating the geographical boundaries of the 4 LAG partnership areas is contained in Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Figure 1, Appendix 2.1, Pg1, while a list of the small areas falling into each of the 4 LAG partnership areas can be found in Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Table 1(A-F), Appendix 2.1, Pg 2-16. In addition, a range of statistics relating to each of the 4 LAG partnership areas can be found in Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Table 2, Appendix 2.1, Pg16-18. Please note that while the 2 partnership areas relating to Údarás na Gaeltachta and Comhar na nOileán Teo have been taken together for statistical purposes in Table 2, they are 2 distinctly separate areas in terms of the LDS implementation.

County Donegal is located in the North West Border Region and is bounded on the southwest, west and north by the Atlantic Ocean<sup>1</sup> and on the east by Counties Derry, Tyrone, Fermanagh and Leitrim. County Donegal shares 93% of its entire land boundary with Northern Ireland and the remaining 9km stretch with County Leitrim at its most southerly point. The main urban centre is Letterkenny, which was designated as a joint gateway with

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<sup>1</sup> Giving it the largest mainland coastline in the country @ 1,134km

Derry in the National Spatial Strategy 2002; together they have a combined population of 113,099.

County Donegal is the fourth largest and fifth most rurally dispersed County in Ireland with 30.4 persons per sq km compared to a State average of 56 persons per sq km. Donegal comprises of a predominantly weak urban structure with 27.4% residing in such areas compared to 62% in the State. The rural nature of County Donegal is evident with 72.6%<sup>2</sup> of the population residing in aggregate rural areas compared to 38% in the State. The Donegal Gaeltacht has a population of 24,744 representing 24.5% of the total Gaeltacht population in the State; In addition, the Donegal Gaeltacht encompasses a geographical area of 1,502km<sup>2</sup>, this represents 26 % of all Gaeltacht areas in the State. Donegal has 13 inhabited offshore islands with a population of 796 persons in 2011.

Deprivation and social exclusion continue to present challenges in the Donegal context. The relative deprivation score<sup>3</sup> attributed to County Donegal in 2011 was -6.25, making it the second most deprived Local Authority area in the State after Limerick City at -6.66. The table below illustrates the deprivation breakdown across the 6 deprivation categories.

**Table 3: Deprivation Levels in the Donegal LDS Catchment Area**

Deprivation Category	Very Disadvantaged	Disadvantaged	Marginally Below Average	Marginally Above Average	Affluent	Very Affluent	Total SA's in LDS Area
Number of Small Areas	15	220	408	110	13	1	761

There are a total of 235 small areas designated as 'Disadvantaged' or 'Very Disadvantaged'. Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Figure 2, Appendix 2.1, Pg 19 maps these areas against the 4 partnership areas of the strategy. A full directory of deprivation levels by small area can be found in Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Table 4, Appendix 2.1, Pg 20 -27.

<sup>2</sup> 116,890 persons

<sup>3</sup> Trutz Haase & Jonathan Pratschke, August 2012 ' The 2011 Pobal HP Deprivation Index for Small Areas (SA's)'

## 2.2 Socio Economic Profile

### Chapter 1 Donegal, a Unique & Connected Place

#### 2.2.1 Defining Donegal

To appreciate Donegal's present socio economic picture, it is important to understand its evolution and a good starting point is its geography. The landscape is varied and dramatic, comprising of mountains, valleys, and fertile plains with a deeply indented coastline forming natural sea loughs, bays, peninsulas and many islands both inhabited and uninhabited. Donegal is the most northerly County in Ireland. The geographical context of Donegal is illustrated in Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Figure 1, Pg 28.

##### The Gateway

Letterkenny and Derry was designated as a joint Gateway in the National Spatial Strategy in 2002. Letterkenny is the largest urban centre in Donegal with a population of 19,588 having grown by 28% from 2002-2011. It is the 22nd largest town in the State<sup>4</sup> (197 towns in total) and is projected to grow to 23,000 by 2016 and 25,700 by 2022. The population of the Letterkenny Derry joint Gateway has increased from 105,894 to 113,099 persons from the period 2001/2002 to 2008/2011<sup>5</sup>. The significant growth experienced in the Gateway, serves as a platform to grow the small rural economies.

##### The Islands

Donegal has 13 inhabited islands with a population of 796 persons in 2011. The islands of Donegal are a huge natural resource, with rich levels of biodiversity offering huge potential for eco and cultural tourism and other niche types of development.

##### The Gaeltacht

In Donegal, the Irish Language is a living language where 69% of the total population regards themselves as Irish Speakers. The Donegal Gaeltacht has a population of 24,744 (24.5% of the States Gaeltacht population)<sup>6</sup>; In addition, the Donegal Gaeltacht encompasses a geographical area of 1,502km<sup>2</sup> (26% of total Gaeltacht land area in the State) and is a significant social and economic asset for the County.

##### Donegal's Functional / Cross Border Area

Donegal residents often ignore administrative boundaries in accessing services for example education, health, policing, fire services, work and retail, etc. Cross border linkages must be taken into account when developing any strategy to enhance rural development, reduce poverty and tackle social exclusion. A series of maps illustrating existing Educational, Health, Emergency and Financial services in the regional cross border context are included in Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 1, Figures 2-4, Pg 28-29.

#### 2.2.2 Accessing Services in the Donegal Context

##### Settlement Patterns

County Donegal is the fifth most rurally dispersed County in Ireland with 33.8 persons per sq km compared to a State average of 67 persons per sq km (Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 1, Table 1, Pg 30, highlights the low density levels in County Donegal compared to other counties). The County has a predominantly weak urban

<sup>2</sup> From a total of 197 towns, CSO 2011

<sup>5</sup> Includes the wider Derry Urban Area of Culmore, Strathfoyle and Newbuildings.

<sup>6</sup> Census 2011

structure with a large number of small towns, with just 9 settlements falling into the aggregate urban area category of over 1,500 inhabitants.

Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 1, Figure 5, Pg 31, illustrates the population density within County Donegal, with darker shading reflecting denser areas. The density pattern reflects the east/west settlement size divide within the County, with the majority of the larger and medium size towns located to the north east with the smaller towns to the south west. Similarly, an examination of population change in the County over the period 2006 - 2011, illustrates that above average growth has taken place along the eastern axis and around the linked Gateway Area. Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 1, Figure 6, Pg 32, breaks down the population of Donegal into the County's 5 Municipal Districts (MD's).

### **Connecting Communities Physically and Digitally**

Given the physical size of the County, its weak urban structure and low population density, accessing and providing services can be difficult. It is important that strategies take into account these challenges in developing efficient, sustainable and economically viable services. At the same time, it is important to examine creative and innovative methods to sustain rural services in Donegal. Connecting people to services can be done either physically or digitally, which requires the delivery of essential infrastructure such as a quality road network, bridges, bus services, high speed broadband, etc.

Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 1, Figure 7, Pg 33, illustrates a generally higher uptake of broadband along the eastern axis of the County and linked Gateway, notably areas with higher concentrations of populations under 15 years, while the western axis of the County has lower uptake and a notably higher concentration of population over 65 years. This tends to illustrate the emergence of a digital divide between the uptake of broadband among younger and older segments of the population but also in a geographical context and between urban and rural areas within the County.

The functionality of digital technologies provides an opportunity to counteract poor connectivity in areas such as access to online shopping, online public services, research, e-learning, connecting with friends and families, etc. In order for online services to be accessible to all, a primary consideration is the availability of physical access (broadband connection, laptop etc.) however, of equal importance is the individuals 'know-how' to have the competence to access.

## **Chapter 2 Repowering Our Towns**

### **2.2.3 Spatial Trends**

Donegal is often described as a rural County; however, after Cork it has more towns and villages<sup>7</sup> than any County in Ireland. These 61 settlements range in size from just over 100 inhabitants to almost 20,000 persons and are vital in sustaining economic and social vitality and growth in the County. They provide a wide range of services and employment functions which both drive and are supported by their rural hinterlands. The towns have the potential to play a crucial role in regenerating economically stagnant areas of the County.

### **Towns by Municipal District**

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<sup>7</sup> Census of Population, 2011 outlines that 54% of the population live in the open countryside; 12% of the population live in the Letterkenny Gateway; 34% of the population live in 60 relatively small geographically dispersed settlements.



46% of Donegal's total population (or 73,466 persons) live in the 61 settlements scattered throughout the County. Of the 61 towns there are 19 in the Inishowen Municipality,<sup>8</sup> 14 in Glenties Municipality, 12 in Donegal Municipality; 8 in Letterkenny Municipality and 8 in Stranorlar Municipality. Population change across the towns in each of the Municipal Districts is illustrated in Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 2, Figures 1-5, Pg 34-36.

### Healthy Towns

There is a shared public interest in ensuring the most efficient use of land and buildings, especially in urban areas. National policy<sup>9</sup> and local plans<sup>10</sup> recognise consolidation, revitalisation and the sustainable sequential development of towns outwards from the core as key development objectives for towns across the County. These policy approaches aim to reduce instances of vacancy, dereliction and underutilised land in our towns which can have a very damaging effect. To derive the maximum benefit from regeneration it is important to target central parts of the worst affected areas.

Our most stagnant urban locations can be identified using indicators such as vacancy, dereliction and population density. Analysis indicates the prevalence of dereliction and vacancy in our town centres, with just 4 of the 26 main settlements in the county having acceptable levels of vacant/derelict properties.<sup>11</sup> See Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 2, Table 1, Pg 37. In addition, the combined population density of Donegal's settlements<sup>12</sup> is 638 persons per sq km which is significantly lower than the State at 1,137 persons per sq km. There are a number of factors driving population density levels including undeveloped and underutilised urban lands etc. The population density of Donegal Towns are contained in Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 2, Table 2, Pg 38.

### 2.2.4 The People of the Towns

This section provides some socio economic characteristics of the people who live in the different rural towns in each of the Municipal Districts in County Donegal.

#### Age

On average towns in County Donegal had an age dependency ratio of 57.6%. This is a measure showing the number of dependents (aged 0-14 and over the age of 65) to the total population of working age (15-64 years). Age dependency ratio's in settlements in Donegal are detailed in Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 2, Pg 39-40.

#### Nationality

Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 2, Table 4, Pg 42-44, presents a breakdown of the population of towns by ethnicity. It illustrates that 11.3% (or 8,115 persons) of the population in County Donegal had a non Irish nationality<sup>13</sup>.

#### Lone Parent Families

Census 2011 illustrates that there are 4,762 or 35% of all families living in urban areas in County Donegal that are headed by a lone parent. See Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 2, Pg 45 -47.

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<sup>8</sup> Due to data confidentiality a full set of statistical data is not available for the Town of Gleneely therefore the following analysis is based on 60 towns.

<sup>9</sup> Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, 2009, Pg. 42 & PI & Dev Acts 2000-2012

<sup>10</sup> Donegal County Development Plan, 2012-2018

<sup>11</sup> Source: Geodirectory, Q1, 2012

<sup>12</sup> Calculated using Census Settlement boundaries

<sup>13</sup> Either UK, Polish, Lithuanian, Other EU 27, Rest of World

### People with Disabilities

15.4% of the population or 11, 286 persons with a disability were living in towns in County Donegal. (See Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 2, Table 6 , Pg 47 -49). Figure 6, (Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 2, Pg 49) illustrates the number of persons with a disability in Donegal towns by age cohort. On average 36% of persons with disability in rural towns were aged 65 years and over while 15% were under 15 years.

### Social Class

Table 7 (Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 2, Pg 50 - 53); examines the top socio economic groups of all persons living in private households in each town by Municipality.

### Non Labour Force Participation

Table 8 (Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 2, Pg 53-55); illustrates that 42% of the population living in rural towns in County Donegal were not participating in the labour force, this equates to 23,986 persons. The reasons for non participation in the labourforce were mainly due to persons being retired (37%), being students (26%), looking after the home or family ( 23%) or unable to work due to sickness or disability (14%).

### Educational Attainment

The levels of educational attainment in the towns in each Municipal District varies greatly across Donegal. The disparities between the east of the county and the west are evident again in this instance with primary or no formal education equating to 38.5% in some towns in peripheral parts of the County. The highest educational attainment levels tended to be in those towns to the east of the County or those in proximity to the Gateway. The breakdown in town by Municipal District can be examined in Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 2, Figures 7-11, Pg 56-58.

## 2.2.5 Economic Activity

### Unemployed & Employed

9,402 persons living in rural towns in County Donegal were unemployed, this equates to 28.4 % of the total labourforce<sup>14</sup> for these towns. There were 23,730 urban dwellers at work in County Donegal in 2011, giving a work rate of 71.6%. (See Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 2, Table 8, Pg 53-55).

### Economic Activity

In the absence of a comprehensive business database at the local level in Donegal we can look at the number of commercial or non-residential buildings in Donegal towns. 44% (6,597) of non residential buildings in the County are within the counties 61 settlements, with the largest proportion (1,536) in Letterkenny. Table 9 (Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 2, Pg 58) sets out those with the highest % share among the towns in the County.

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<sup>14</sup> The total labour force is the sum of persons at work, unemployed and first time job seekers and in 2011 this equated to 33,132 persons

## Chapter 3 Delivering Socially Inclusive Services

### 2.2.6 Examining Deprivation in Donegal

Deprivation and social exclusion continue to present challenges in the Donegal context. The Haase Pratschke Relative Deprivation Score attributed to County Donegal in 2011 was -6.25<sup>1</sup> making it the second most deprived local authority area in the State after Limerick City at -6.66. An analysis of the indicators making up Haase Pratschke Index reveals that the key drivers of Donegal's low deprivation score are low educational attainment (@ 26.1%) and high male unemployment rates (@ 31.4%). Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 3, Figure 1, Pg 59 gives a geographical picture of deprivation levels occurring across Donegal.

### 2.2.7 Hard to Reach Communities

#### Rural Dwellers

The Census 2011 classifies an aggregate urban area as comprising of populations of 1,500 inhabitants or more and there are nine such towns in County Donegal; Letterkenny, Buncrana, Ballybofey-Stranorlar, Donegal Town, Carndonagh, Ballyshannon, Bundoran, Lifford and An Bun Beag-Doirí Beaga. Therefore, 27.4%<sup>15</sup> of the total population of County Donegal reside in aggregate urban areas compared to 62% in the State<sup>16</sup>. This further emphasises the rural nature of County Donegal with 72.6% of its population (or 116,890 persons) residing in aggregate rural areas compared to 38% in the State.

Figure 2 (Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 3, Pg 60) presents the changing population trends by Electoral Division in County Donegal, over the period 2006 - 2011. This map illustrates that the strongest population growth is located in Electoral Divisions along the North East Axis which coincides with the location of largest aggregate urban areas but also the fastest growing towns in the County. The weakest growth was recorded in Electoral Divisions in the South West of the County.

#### Gaeltacht Communities

The Donegal Gaeltacht is located mainly in the west of the County along the coast and is the second largest Gaeltacht in the country. The three parishes of Na Rosa, Gaoth Dobhair and Cloich Cheann Fhaola constitute the main centres of population of the Donegal Gaeltacht and with a combined population of just over 16,000 is considered to be the most densely populated rural area in Europe. While language is the foremost uniquely defining feature of this area, the Gaeltacht also maintains a rich social and cultural heritage. The peripherality of the Donegal Gaeltacht and use of the Irish language can often make accessing goods and services a major issue for persons living in Gaeltacht areas.

#### Coastal & Island Communities

Donegal has a rugged coastline of 1,134km (17% of the States total) and dotted with islands. Of the islands, Aranmore, Tory, Inishfree Upper, Island Roy and Gola are inhabited and located within the Gaeltacht. Ireland's territorial waters extend to the 12mile (22km) nautical limit. Historically, the fishing industry was of great importance in Donegal. However, restructuring and quota restrictions over the decades have impacted on this industry. The geographical location of the coastline and islands, creates difficulties associated with access, communications and economic development for these communities.

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<sup>15</sup> 44,247 persons

<sup>16</sup> Urbanisation has marginally increased in County Donegal since 2006 where there were 25% of the population residing in aggregate urban areas. The two new towns making it into the aggregate urban category are An Bun Beag-Doirí Beaga and Lifford. In addition Moville (1,481) & Convooy (1,438) narrowly missed this classification in 2011

## 2.2.8 Vulnerable Rural Groups

### Youth

In 2006 there were 33,426 persons under the age of 15 years compared to 36,949 in 2011. This represents a growth of 10.1% (3,523) compared to a growth of 13.3% in the State. So 23% of the population of County Donegal are under the age of 15 years and this is higher than in the percentage share in the State at 21.3%. Figure 3, (Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 3, Pg61) illustrates that there are lower concentrations of young persons towards the South West of the County and higher concentrations along the North East Axis. There were 45,704 persons aged 0-18 years inclusive and these can be broken down into a number of distinctive life cycles.<sup>17</sup>

### Elderly

People in County Donegal are living longer and in 2011 the population aged 65 years plus had increased by 17 % (or by 3,060 persons) to 21,471 of which 9,241 persons were aged 75 years plus, 168 persons were aged 95 years plus and 25 persons were 100 years plus. In total, Donegal had 13.3% of its population falling into the 65 years and over age category. The 2011 Census highlighted that 12.5% of the population of the Border Regional Authority Area were 65 years and over. Recent research carried out by AIRO<sup>18</sup> indicates that in 2031, 21.5% of the population of the Border Regional Authority Area will be over 65 years of age, bringing with it major demographic and service related challenges. Figure 4 (Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 3, Pg 62), reveals that above average concentrations of elderly persons are located towards the West and North West of the County, mainly in Gaeltacht areas and in areas that have experienced lower levels of population growth.

### Age Dependency Ratios

Given the changes in the population cohorts outlined above, it is not surprising that County Donegal had the second highest age dependency ratio at 56.9% in the State, where the rate was 49.3%. So for every 1 older or younger persons in County Donegal, there are 1.75 persons of working age. The impact of high age dependency rates are in terms of lower tax revenue, lower pension funds and higher Government expenditure on services.

## 2.2.9 Sustainable Community Service

### Community Centres

Community centres have the potential to combat many of the challenges faced by rural communities in Donegal. In recent years significant investment has been made in building and upgrading community centres, resulting in a high level network of community infrastructure throughout the County. An opportunity exists to increase activity and broaden the functionality of such centres. Community centres have the potential to act as training and digital hubs at local level to assist in achieving targeted skilling and online services to members in hard to reach communities who may not have the technology or skills to access such services. The potential of some community buildings to be used as multi service points comprising even social or cultural enterprises has great opportunities to increase tourism footfall with many spin off businesses becoming viable in the process.

<sup>17</sup> Census 2011 illustrates an increase in the number of pre-school children (0-4 years) from 11,168 in 2006 to 12,727 in 2011, a 14% increase (1,599 children). This is higher than the 9.4% increase in the population of County Donegal as a whole, but lower than the 18% increase experienced in the State. This has a number of implications for service delivery within the County, in terms of ample childcare provision, supports for children with special needs, access to GP's, hospital services etc. There was an increase in the number of children of primary school age (5 – 12 years) in County Donegal, rising from 17,830 in 2006 to 19,463 in 2011, an increase of 9.2% (or 1,663 children). The number of primary school children in the State in 2011 was 504,267, increasing by 12% over the inter-censal period and at a faster rate than in the State. Services are much the same for primary school children, however transport to schools and different type of sporting and recreation activities increase in importance. Secondary. There was a slight increase (0.2%) in the number of children of secondary school age (13-18yrs) in County Donegal from 13,482 in 2006 to 13,514 in 2011. In 2011, the total number of children in the State at secondary school age was 344,931, an increase of 0.8%. Again similar services are required as above in addition to transport to both schools, colleges and work placements etc.

<sup>18</sup> The All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO)

## 2.2.10 Sustainable Homes

Sustainability can be improved by investing in existing infrastructure, whether it's unfinished or inadequate new housing, older housing or vacant or derelict housing. This section examines our current position in terms of our existing fuel consumption, use of alternative transport, energy efficiency levels of our buildings, etc.

### Housing Age

Buildings built prior to 1992 (incl. those in Donegal) were not subject to building control regulations. Fig 5 (Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 3, Pg 63) details the housing stock constructed prior to 1992. Many of these buildings were deemed to be of a substandard build in terms of structure, fire, site preparation and resistance to moisture, materials and workmanship, sound, ventilation, hygiene, drainage and waste disposal, heat producing appliances, stairways, ramps & guards, conservation of fuel and energy, access for disabled people (this list sets out the various parts of the current regulations).

### Housing Ownership

There were 57,964 private households in County Donegal, increasing by 15% over the period 2006-11. Of which 57,721 were permanent private households (15% increase 2006 – 2011) and 243 were temporary private dwellings in 2011(-42% decrease 2006-2011).

### Households Composition

Of the 57,964 private households in County Donegal<sup>19</sup> 6,947 lone parents households (12%), marginally higher than the percentage for the State; 515 lone parents households with/without other persons (1%); 572 multiple family units households with/without other persons (1%); 2,307 non- family households comprising of related or unrelated persons (4%); 29% of all persons in the 65 years and over age category (or 5,763 persons) were living alone.

### Essential Housing Services and the Environment

The type of housing services used can have an impact on the environment.

- The high carbon nature of the fuel used to heat homes in Donegal is likely to have a negative impact - 93% of fuels used in the county are fossil fuel. (See Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 3, Table 1, Pg 64).
- According to the EPA, generally smaller private water schemes tend to have higher pollution rates. There are 5,355 households in County Donegal with a private water source. In addition, 89 households in County Donegal had no piped water in 2011 compared to 140 in 2006 (See Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 3, Pg 64).
- The North West River Basin Management Plan has identified private waste water treatment plants as high risk in terms of the threat that they pose to environmentally sensitive areas in the County. There are currently 30,383 individual septic tanks within County Donegal. In addition, 80 households did not have a sewerage facility compared to 163 in 2006.

## 2.2.11 Sustainable Employment Creation

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<sup>19</sup> 14,890 single persons households (26%), which is greater than the corresponding percentage for the State @ 24% 29,486 husband and wife households with/without children or other persons (51%), which is greater than the percentage for the State @ 49%. 3,247 cohabiting couple households with/without children or other persons (6%), which is lower than the percentage for the State @ 9%



## Employment Opportunities

There were 5,166 active enterprises<sup>20</sup> in County Donegal in 2012 decreasing year on year since 2006, when the number of active enterprises was 7,153. The number of persons engaged in these companies in 2012 was 25,460 while the number of employees was 22,249 persons. Figure 6 (Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 3, Pg 65) demonstrates the significant share of enterprises in 'Wholesale & Retail Trade, Repair of Motor Vehicles & Motorcycles' and 'Construction' sectors. Together these sectors account for almost half of all enterprises Donegal (47%) demonstrating a high economic reliance on these sectors in the County.

According to the Census there were 53,277 persons at work in Donegal in 2011 a decrease of 3,393 persons (or -6%) since 2006 which is in line with the decrease nationally. The top employment sectors in Donegal were: No 1, 'Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles' (ranked No 2 in 2006); No 2, 'Human health and social work activities' (ranked No 3 in 2006); No 3, 'Education' (ranked No 5 in 2006); No 4, 'Manufacturing' (ranked no 4 in 2006); No 5, 'Agriculture Forestry and Fishing' (ranked No 7 in 2006).

## Unemployment and Deprivation

In 2011, there were 18,869 people unemployed or first time job seekers an increase of 10,447 persons since 2006. Donegal's unemployment rate<sup>21</sup> increased from 12.9% in 2006 to 26.2% in 2011. Donegal had the highest unemployment rate for any County in the State (See Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 3, Table 3, Pg 65).

One of the key drivers of deprivation in Donegal is male unemployment. The number of males at work in 2011 was 27,933, a decrease of 14.9% over since 2006<sup>22</sup>, while the number of females at work was 25,344, increasing by 6.3%<sup>23</sup> over the same period. Youth unemployment is also an issue in County Donegal, where 32% of the population in the labour force aged between 16 and 35 years of age were unemployed in 2011 compared to 23% in the State. Further analysis shows, 39.4% of males<sup>24</sup> and 23% of females<sup>25</sup> falling into this age category were unemployed. To make rural communities more sustainable targeted interventions to create sustainable job opportunities through farm diversification, growth of social enterprises, business supports such as training, up-skilling, etc. are required.

### 2.2.12 Educational Attainment and Deprivation

One of the key drivers of poor deprivation rates within County Donegal is the level of educational attainment. Census 2011 reveals that of all the persons aged 15 years and over in County Donegal, who had finished their full time education:

- 24.9% finished with 'no formal or primary education' compared to 15.2% in the State;
- 18.5 % finished with 'a lower secondary education' compared to 16.6% in the State;
- 17.3% of person in County Donegal finished their education with upper secondary compared to 20% in the State;
- 16.6% had attained a technical/vocational qualification, an advanced certificate/completed apprenticeship and higher certificate compared to 18.8% in the State;33333
- 18.2% had attained a third level degree or higher compared to 24.6% in the State.

<sup>20</sup> According to the Business Demography Dataset from the CSO

<sup>21</sup> Which is calculated as the sum of persons unemployed or first time job seekers as a percentage of the labour force

<sup>22</sup> compared to -13.8% nationally

<sup>23</sup> compared to 3.7% nationally

<sup>24</sup> 28% in the State

<sup>25</sup> 18% in the State



Although the percentage of persons whose full time education ceased without formal or primary education in 2011, improved in County Donegal since 2006<sup>26</sup> when ranked amongst all other counties in the State, it still retains it ranking as the County with the highest percentage of persons with 'no formal or primary education'. Females are more likely to attain a third level qualification or higher in County Donegal in that 22.1 % of all females (11,710) whose full time education has ceased have attained a third level degree or higher in County Donegal compared to 14.4% of all males (7,580). Both percentages are lower than in the State where 27% of all females and 22% of all males whose full time education had ceased had attained a third level qualification.

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<sup>26</sup> 28.9% in 2006

## Chapter 4

### 2.2.13 Protecting & Harnessing Our Rural Environment

#### A Wild and Varied Biosphere

Donegal's environment offers huge opportunities for growth and development for enterprise creation and tourism product development whilst also improving recreational access for Donegal residents. Protecting our most important habitat and promoting a pristine environment along with our green image is an integral part of developing the Donegal Brand.

The County offers visitors and residents access to a range of rich and unique ecosystems from whale & dolphin watching, to basking sharks, from the Golden Eagle and corncrake to the seal colonies around our coast. This richly diverse environment has led to the designation of a number of international, national and locally important sites across the County which are protected under a range of legislation and policy documents. The map in Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 4, Figure 1, Pg 66) illustrates the extent and location of these designations in the North West. Further profiling and examination are required to ensure that appropriate strategies are developed and implemented to promote and protect these sensitive sites.

### 2.2.14 Environmental Assets

Donegal wealth of environmental assets present significant opportunities to grow the recreational and tourism sectors in rural areas. These can be classed as follows:

- Donegal has 72 internationally important Natura Sites or 7% of Ireland's land cover.
- There are 14 Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and 74 proposed NHAs in the County. Other wildlife protection areas in the County include Glenveagh National Park, 4 Ramsar Sites, 9 Nature Reserves, 6 Wildfowl Sanctuaries, a Wildfowl Reserve, a Biogenetic Reserve and a Refuge for Fauna. See Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 4, Table 1, Pg 67) for a full listing of these sites.
- Glenveagh is one of 6 National Parks to be found in the state. It is the second largest in size comprising of 16,958 hectares of rugged mountain, blanket bog and pristine lakes. The park is a significant ecological, recreational and educational asset to the County. The park's appeal and value is immense, exemplified in the fact that it remains the largest tourist attraction in Donegal. Glenveagh and the NPWS plays a huge role in terms of monitoring, managing and protecting wildlife in the county.
- Ramsar Sites were established as a result of the Ramsar Convention, the mission of which is 'the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local, regional and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world'. There are 45 such sites in Ireland with 4 sites in Donegal.
- Donegal's breathtaking landscape was voted the top reason for tourists choosing to holiday in Donegal<sup>27</sup> serving to highlight the significance of protecting and promoting our landscape in the sustainable development of the tourism sector in Donegal. While projects should seek to harness the significant benefits from our landscape by promoting awareness of and increasing access to its beauty, it is crucial that such initiatives ensure that the integrity of our scenic areas are not compromised.
- Donegal is one of the most geologically complex areas in all of Ireland with 145 designated Irish Geological Heritage (IGH) sites.

### 2.2.15 Water

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<sup>27</sup> *Faillte Ireland's Holidaymaker Study 2013 – Donegal/Sligo*

## Water Quality

Clean water is one of the most important elements for life. This is critical not only to our own human existence, but also to sustain plant and animal life. Recent reports have indicated a number of challenges in the area of water quality:

- According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), of the 695 waterbody units in the County, 252 fall below 'good status' as they are classified as either 'bad', 'poor' or 'moderate'. A full listing of the quality status of all waterbodies monitored in the County are contained in Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 4, Table 2, Pg 67).
- In terms of drinking water in 2013, the compliance rate for microbiological parameters (such as coliform bacteria, e-coli, specific pathogenic bacteria) was 100%, while the compliance rate for chemical parameters (such as bromate, lead, fluoride, trihalomethanes, etc) was 99.1%.
- Since 2013, 10 public water supplies in Donegal serving a total population of 39,508 persons have remained on the Remedial Action List (See Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 4, Pg 68), highlighting the most serious deficiencies in our water supply.

Therefore it is essential that targeted interventions focus on identifying pollution sources, maintaining and enhancing the quality of our groundwater, rivers, lakes and coastal waters.

## Water Usage and Unaccounted for Water<sup>28</sup>

In 2010, the water consumption level in the County was 5,168,636m<sup>3</sup>. This figure decreased slightly to 5,149,697m<sup>3</sup> in 2012. It rose by 480,927m<sup>3</sup> in 2013 and decreased the following year in 2014 to 5,157,934m<sup>3</sup> (Laboratory Dept, Donegal County Council 2015). The loss of treated drinking water through leakages, etc. is a significant issue in Donegal, with an average 'Unaccounted for Water' rate of 45% between 2008-2013.

### 2.2.16 Renewable Energy Resources

Wind power and biomass are by far the most common form of renewable technology used in the North West Region<sup>29</sup>. In 2010, Donegal was producing approximately 15% of electricity from renewable sources.

Biomass is the biological material derived from living, or recently living organisms. For centuries people in Donegal relied upon our natural resources including peat as a source of fuel and seaweed for the fertilisation of crops. While the harvesting of peat is increasingly unsustainable there is a wide range of sustainable and affordable alternatives. The County has large areas of sustainable managed commercial forestry which has potential for use as wood fuel for both domestic and commercial markets. In addition, the growth of interest in energy crops such as willow, rape seed and miscanthus, all represent alternative biofuel opportunities which are viable and already growing in the County. Opportunities exist in Donegal for communities to tap into Bio Remediation through Willow.

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<sup>28</sup> Local Authority Service Indicators, Annual Reports 2008-2012

<sup>29</sup> Ren Net – Renewable Energy Business Network; Interim Evaluation Report 2014.

## Chapter 5 Donegal's Primary Sectors

### 2.2.17 Developing a Vibrant Local Food Economy

Consumer spending patterns are crucial to local economic performance. Research by the London Economics Foundation has found that every €10 spent in a local food business is worth €25 to the local economy. Therefore, a substantial multiplier effect occurs when money is circulated locally. According to projections from the TASTE Council, by 2020 the existing base of Artisan and Speciality Food Firms have the potential to double their output from 3 – 6%, increasing their market share from 3 – 6% resulting in the creation of new jobs for the local economy. The potential of the food sector in assisting with the development of a vibrant local food economy in County Donegal is high.

### 2.2.18 Agricultural Trends

#### Farm Numbers

There were a total of 9,240 farms in County Donegal in 2010, decreasing by 4.9% (435 farms) over the 2000-2010 period and by 9.7% (988 farms) over the 1991-2010 period. The total number of farms decreased by 1,667 in the State over the 2000-2010 period. Farm sizes are also increasing in County Donegal, from an average farm size of 26.2 HA in 2000 to 27.9HA in 2010. For example, in 1991 there were 41.6% of farms less than 10 AAU compared to 26.5% in 2010. In addition, farms between 30 and 100 AAU increased from 17.8% in 1991 to 29.7% in 2010. The average farm size in the State in 2010 was 32.7 Ha. (See Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 5, Figure 1, Pg 69)

#### Age of Holder

More than half (54%) of all farm holders in County Donegal were aged 55 years or older in 2010, compared to 43% in 2000. In 2010, 29% were aged 65 years and over compared to 23% in 2000, the comparable figure for the State was 26% in 2010. The numbers of holders aged less than 35 years has decreased from 13.4% to 8.2% over the 10 year period in County Donegal; however this decrease is not as severe in the State, where numbers almost halved (See Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 5, Figures 2, 3 & 4, Pg 70 - 72).

#### Farm Workers

The number of persons working on farms in County Donegal increased by 10% over the period 2000-2010, from 13,975 to 15,503 persons. The corresponding increase for the State is 6%. Although, there was an increase in the actual number of holders, spouses, other family members and non family regular labourers; the largest driver of this change was in other family members increasing by 665 persons. Of the 15,503 persons engaged in farming in County Donegal, 14,734 were family workers (95%) and 769 were regular non-family workers (5%). Collectively this workforce provides 8,970 annual work units. One annual work unit is equal to 1,800 hours or more of labour input per person per annum (See Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 5, Table 1, Pg 73).

#### Agricultural Area (incl. Commonage)

Of the 330,770 hectares of agricultural land used in County Donegal, 52% was for grassland (lower than the State @ 76%); 23% was for rough grazing (higher than the State at 9%); 22% was for Commonage (higher than the State @ 8%); 2% was for Cereals (lower than the State @ 5%) and 1% was for Other Crops (lower than the State @ 2%) (See Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 5, Pg 73).

### 2.2.19 Agricultural Produce & Markets

A profile of some key produce including potatoes, cattle, sheep, pigs, poultry, deer & equines is contained in Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 5, List 1, Pg 73-74,

### **Farmers Markets**

Country Markets has been a co-operative business for over 60 years. It is a national organisation with branch markets in most counties in the country. These indoor markets generally operate one day a week to market the shareholders' fresh farm, garden and home produce and handcrafts. Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 5, Table 2, Pg 74 lists the farmers markets that take place around Donegal each week.

### **2.2.20 Forestry**

Forestry and woodlands in County Donegal present considerable opportunities for the development of rural areas in Donegal and the North West Region. The development of forestry and woodlands in Donegal also assists in tackling environmental challenges through sustainable land use and eco-system management. At a time when Donegal needs to reduce its dependency on oil as an energy source, forestry provides significant opportunities for the development of the whole Biomass<sup>30</sup> Wood Energy Sector whilst forests also sequester CO<sup>2</sup> emissions from the atmosphere.

### **Forestry Ownership**

In 2012, the area of forest in Ireland was estimated at 758,761 ha compared to 752,109 ha in 2011. Total land area covered by forestry in 2012 was 11%, of which 47% (or 360,834 ha) was in private ownership and 53% (or 397,927 ha) was in public ownership. These forests are managed by Coillte. Growth in the area covered by forestry is mainly driven by growth in private sector afforestation. The location and extent of forest cover by ownership type is illustrated in Figure 6 (See Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 5, Pg 75). The total area of forestry in Donegal in 2012 is estimated at 59,177 ha or 12.25% of the total land area in 2012. 38% (22,770.67ha) was in private ownership and 62% (36,406 ha) was in public ownership. Ownership by hectare is tracked from 1980-2012 in Figure 7 (See Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 5, Pg 76).

### **Donegal Woodland Owners**

Donegal Woodlands Owners Society Ltd (DWOSL) is a wood fuel supply co-operative which supports and promotes sustainable forest management and timber marketing. Inishowen Forestry Owners group is in its infancy and is open to forest owners and others interested in maximising local forest potential.

### **Environmental Impacts and Benefits**

Environmentally, trees are a necessity in our environment. They have physical, social and psychological benefits. Physically they offer health benefits in terms of carbon sequestration. Socially and psychologically they are an important cultural resource and offer invaluable recreational space to individuals by enhancing everyday health and well being. Sustainable land use management is of extreme importance. Forestry development must be carried out in an appropriate manner to ensure its sustainability such as in the areas of visual impacts on the landscape, water pollution risks, etc. As a carbon sink, trees have the potential to significantly offset CO<sup>2</sup> emissions from agriculture.<sup>31</sup>

### **Community Forests in Donegal**

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<sup>30</sup> Biomass is fuel developed from organic materials and renewable and sustainable sources of energy, from forestry debris, scrap lumber, certain crops, manure etc

<sup>31</sup> Carbon Sequestration of 3.4 tonnes per hectare (36,407 +22,771) 59,178 = 201,205 tonnes.

Community forests provide a fantastic outdoor recreational facility in Donegal for both young and old. Many have disabled access. Forests offer considerable recreational benefits and can also be an educational area for wildlife enthusiasts. They are an area of interest also for tourists and can provide for an inexpensive outdoor activity for a family.

## 2.2.21 Seafood Sector

### Donegal Fishing Communities

A short profile highlighting the strengths, challenges and opportunities within some of Donegal's main fishing communities can be found in Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 5, List 2, Pg 76 – 78).

### Fishing Ports

The top fishing ports in Ireland are Killybegs, Castletownbere, Dingle, Ros A Mhil, Dunmore East, Kilmore Quay, Howth, Greencastle and Union Hall. With 2 of these ports located in Donegal, the County has a significant stake in the Irish sea fisheries industry. In 2013 Killybegs rank No. 1 in Ireland in terms of tonnage and value of landings in 2013, while Greencastle ranks No. 5 in terms of tonnages and 8<sup>th</sup> with regards to value of all Irish Ports. (See Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 5, Table 3, Pg 78).

### Fish farming and Sea Fish Processing

County Donegal has developed a successful aquaculture industry both in the fin fish and shellfish areas with numerous farms around the coast. While the industry has potential for expansion, it's impact on the environment is an important consideration as is the impact of other industries and activities on aquaculture. Table 4 (Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 5, Pg 78 -79), Chapter 5 sets out the aquaculture production areas in the County Donegal, the species involved and their monitoring classifications for 2014/2015. A full list of sea food producers and processors in County Donegal are outlined in Table 5 (Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 5, Pg 79).

### Education, Training, Research & Development

To counteract the challenges facing the declining coastal communities, it is essential that training and development initiatives are supported that harness the skills base of the community; add value to marine produce; reuse bi products; retrain into growth sectors. Existing infrastructure includes:

- Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT) offers many courses, one of which is a National Apprenticeship Programme in Professional Cookery at the Killybegs Campus, Tourism College. Courses like this have been developed by Fáilte Ireland, IBEC, Irish Hotels Federation, The Restaurant Association of Ireland, SIPTU, LYIT and certifications representatives. Courses in the area of tourism and hospitality are offered from Certificate to Masters level.
- National Fisheries College in Greencastle, is one of two such training institutes in Ireland promoting careers in the fishing sector by training new entrants and up-skilling existing practitioners in catching, fish farming and seafood processing.
- The offshore training college in Falcarragh, *Effective Offshore*, is Ireland's most significant training location. It specialises in offshore training and skills necessary for exploration and development in oil, gas and renewable industries including health and safety, rope access, accident and emergency procedures. This centre of excellence is a key partner to Killybegs as the focus on marine diversification grows into the areas of offshore resources including tidal and wind energy prospects, underwater exploration, etc. The combination of human capital, strategic infrastructure and natural coastline gives Donegal strong comparative advantage putting the coastal communities in pole position to become world leaders in offshore exploration and marine based research and development.



## Chapter 6 Unlocking Our Cultural Resource

### 2.2.22 A Unique Cultural and Heritage Offering

The physical geography of the County has resulted in a truly unique natural environment<sup>32</sup>. The interactions of human geography<sup>33</sup> with this environment have shaped a very rich and distinctive identity for Donegal and its people. Historic periods and events such as the Flight of the Earls, The Plantation of Ulster, The Great Famine and the Partition of Ireland have impacted in a particular way in Donegal, on our thinking, our language, our relations, traditions, and our way of life. These impacts are evident through our ever changing economic, religious, social and political landscape.

### 2.2.23 Culture & Diaspora

Cultural activities are abundant throughout the County representing through an extensive network comprising of 429 facilities, providers and practitioners contribute to the cultural infrastructure of Donegal. In order to continue to grow our cultural sector and increase opportunities to showcase our cultural offering to residents and visitors, it is vitally important to consolidate our existing infrastructure through; increasing activities, increasing audience/visitor numbers through promotion, coordination, etc.

The Creative Edge Project identified 526 creative businesses/bodies within the County. Table 1 (Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 6, Pg 80) shows the number of these businesses by creative sector in Co. Donegal.

In terms of developing links with Donegal's' Diaspora, approximately 57,000 people are now engaging with Co. Donegal from 132 countries. A breakdown of numbers and share of the top 5 countries is illustrated in Table 2 (Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 6, Pg 81). It is recognised that this broad community, the Donegal Diaspora, is a key resource for the region, with the potential to create linkages that provide skill, experience, networks and resources.

### Festivals and Film

The County has successfully attracted many key events and festivals to the region. Highlights from the past number of years include; Oireachtais, Rinci Uladh, Pan Celtic Festival, European Strongman, Fleadh Ceoil, Ulster Special Olympics, Letterkenny Live etc. In addition a number of festivals are held annually in the County including; the Rory Gallagher Festival, Sea Sessions Festival, A Taste of Donegal, Errigal Arts Festival, An Guth Gafa, Donegal Bay and Bluestacks Festival, Heritage Week and Culture Night. A list of existing festivals and events can be found in Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 6, Pg 81 – 82).

Having played host to a long line of productions and with films such as A Shine of Rainbows, 48 Angels and Grabbers in recent years, Donegal has been firmly established as the perfect choice for film-making. Accommodating productions whether large or small has many direct and indirect benefits to the County. These include the direct creation of employment locally, increased business to local service providers and in many cases the final product acts as a global showcase of Donegal's offer.

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<sup>32</sup> For the purposes of LEADER Natural Heritage is mainly covered under Chapter 4. Rural Environment

<sup>33</sup> socio-economic & political



### 2.2.24 Language

The Gaeltacht presents an opportunity to naturally maintain the continuity of the Irish language but also provides the ideal environment for people who wish to become fluent in Irish. The population of the Donegal Gaeltacht is 24,744 persons having grown by 4% between 2006 - 2011. Of all Gaeltacht areas, 25% reside in Co. Donegal; (See Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 6, Figure 1 & Table 4, Pg 83-84).

There are 17,132 Irish speakers aged 3 years and over in the Donegal Gaeltacht comprising of 69% of the total Gaeltacht population<sup>34</sup>. Under the language Act 2012, the Donegal Gaeltacht is divided into 8 distinctive linguistic regions, each of which must develop a language plan over the next 2 years and implement within the 7 years via a wide range of activities. The individual plans must support the development of the language and Gaeltacht area taking into account the differing linguistic characteristics of each area.

#### The Age Composition of Irish Speakers

Table 5 (Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 6, Pg 84-85), breaks down the 17,132 persons aged 3 years and over in Donegal Gaeltachta Areas who are Irish Speakers into different age categories. This table reveals that for each four year age category over 60 years, Donegal has a higher percentage of Irish Speakers than in the State. These figures are indicating a longer term threat to maintaining Irish Language as a living language within the Gaeltacht. Therefore projects and initiatives are required to highlight the importance of the language within the County so that people from all over the County embrace this unique cultural asset so as assist in its promotion and integration into everyday life right across Donegal.

#### Gaeltacht Service Towns

The figures referenced above indicate that there is substantial potential to grow the Irish Language outside of the Gaeltacht and of particular interest here is the creation of Gaeltacht Service Towns, under the Gaeltacht Act 2012, which are defined as those towns situated in or adjacent to Gaeltacht Language Planning Areas and which have a significant role in providing public services, recreational, social and commercial facilities for those areas.

#### New Languages

According to the 2011 Census, it was determined that 34,992 people who were resident in County Donegal on census night, defined their birthplace as being outside Ireland, representing an actual increase of 7784 since 2006. 22% of the County's population were born outside of Ireland making Donegal a culturally diverse County and part of a much wider global community. This provides a wide range of opportunities in terms of enhancing the language skills of the labour force etc but also provides challenges in terms of integration into the economic, social and cultural fabric of the County and in delivering services.

### 2.2.25 A Rich Built Heritage

The cultural legacy of our past is embedded into the rich built fabric found in Donegal's built environment. This is evidenced in the market towns, clachan villages and Victorian terraces from the warehouses, bridges and railway stations, to the churches, mills, forts and piers,

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<sup>34</sup> [1] all countries excluding Ireland [2] 20 'other countries' with 742 people were excluded in this instance due to lack of actual figures by birthplace. Total represent 34250 from 47 countries Sources: CSO,2011

from the big houses, vernacular cottages and outbuildings, to stone circles, shipwrecks, milestones and water pumps. The range of built heritage assets across the County and off the Donegal coast are presented in Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 6, Figure 2, Pg 86). This map illustrates that:

- Donegal has many fine examples of architecturally important structures across a range of periods and styles. Our Record of Protected Structures comprises of 375 structures, our National Inventory of Architectural Heritage<sup>35</sup> comprises of 1,669 structures and provides a representative sample of the architectural heritage across Inishowen, Stranorlar, Glenties, Donegal and Letterkenny Municipal Districts. 12 carry a National rating while 1657 carry a Regional rating.
- Donegal has 3,129 monuments and sites according to the Archaeological Survey of Irelands (ASI) Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) identifies. As well as land based archaeology, we have a rich maritime heritage comprising of 252 shipwrecks. There are more German U Boats and ocean liners sunk off the coast of Malin Head than anywhere else in the world the majority of which were casualties of WW1 and WW2.

There are significant opportunities to develop the tourism potential of these assets.

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<sup>35</sup> Published by Heritage Council

## Chapter 7: Capitalising on Our Rural Tourism Advantage

### 2.2.26 Tourism Trends

The number of tourists visiting Donegal is consistently on the increase. In 2013, 199,000 overseas visitors came to Donegal, increasing by 14.3% since 2012. Of the visitors in 2013, 78,000 were from Britain, 70,000 from mainland Europe, 37,000 from North America and 14,000 from other locations. Overseas visitors were worth €48m to the local economy. The counties domestic visitors were also up from 245,000 (2012) to 260,000 (2013). The domestic tourism market was worth €64million. Figure 1 (Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 7, Pg 87) illustrates the range of tourism infrastructure mapped across Co. Donegal.

### 2.2.27 Our Rural Tourism Assets

Faillte Ireland's *Holidaymaker Study 2013 – Donegal/Sligo* found the most frequently cited reason for recommending Donegal/Sligo was the '*the Beautiful Scenery/Countryside*' (80%). The 10 top activities that tourists undertook while in Donegal/Sligo all related to outdoor recreation (See Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 7, Figure 2 & 3, Pg 88)

Tables 1 – 4 (Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 7, Pg 88-92) present the wide range of watersports, adventure centres, blue flag beaches, surf schools, golf courses, angling, pitch and putt, parks and gardens on offer in County Donegal

Tourism plays a significant role in Donegal's rural economy. Continued supporting measures for a varied and innovative approach to rural tourism development are crucial in sustaining rural communities into the future.

### 2.2.28 Food Tourism

Fáilte Ireland, identified in 2009, that €1.2 billion was spent on food and drink by the 9.8m overseas tourists. Applying these figures to the Donegal context for 2013, reveals that the 199,000 overseas visitors spent on average €25 million on food and drink in the County. Given the potential of the sector, it is important to strengthen the current producer base to ensure a large and robust number of producers across the various sectors.

The Donegal Food Strategy has presented a clear vision as to how to achieve this 'by working collectively to make Donegal famous for food and recognised as a pioneering region for its approach to fostering and growing new start up and existing food businesses'.

Donegal's unique location and natural environment has resulted in distinctive farming and fishing techniques. This has led to the production of distinctly Donegal food products, particularly in our most remote, inhospitable and least agriculturally productive areas. The agri food sector is continuing to experience growth as more and more indigenous brands are becoming established and being distributed to a wider consumer base. Such product proposals provide an opportunity for rural communities to diversify and establish alternative income streams by adding value and providing employment beyond primary agricultural and fishing production.

An opportunity also exists to link such local producers with the growing numbers of tourists visiting the County. The Food Coast – Donegal's Good Food Initiative has the overall aim of acting as the central platform for establishing Donegal as a "food County" – a place with a vibrant food culture and food economy. The establishment of the Wild Atlantic Way brings with it readily accessible routes to an ever expanding global market for local producers.

However, a co-ordinated approach is required to showcase our product range at events, markets, as part of tours, etc.

Chapter 5 Agriculture, Fishing and Forestry; provides more detail on opportunities to further develop our growing food sectors such as organic lamb from the Donegal hills, Donegal honey, Island pigs, seaweeds, etc.

## **2.2.29 Cultural Tourism**

Chapter 6 outlines Donegal's strong cultural sector comprising of a unique sectoral mix of practitioners, facilities and services. There has been continued investment of cultural and arts funding in Letterkenny from local and national sources, including; An Grianan theatre (€310,000 in 2013), Regional Cultural Centre (€135,000 - Arts Council in 2013), Donegal County Museum (grant funding 2011-2013).

Donegal has a rich Built, Natural and Cultural Heritage. These unique features and assets which are explored in depth in Chapters 4 & 6, provide a unique tourism product through our natural heritage designations.

## **2.2.30 Tourism Infrastructure**

The wealth of attractions outlined in the previous section are heavily distributed across the length and breadth of the County. In terms of accessing these areas, 74% of tourists travel by private motor car, 15% by private coach, 5% use public transport with the remaining 6% by other means<sup>36</sup>. Almost always accessed by either car based tourists or coach tours travelling along our scenic routes such as the WAW, Atlantic Drive, Inishowen 100. This road based travel requires a range of essential facilities, including;

### **Public Conveniences**

Current provision of public conveniences in the County include 15 such facilities currently provided throughout the County. To enable a wider provision of such services it will be necessary to review the current offer with a view to reopening facilities which are currently closed or to introduce new facilities where none currently exist. These may be particularly useful in the larger settlements or at key tourism locations across the County.

### **Picnic Areas & Viewing Points**

According to Ordnance Survey Ireland Donegal has numerous picnic areas and viewing points across the County, these are in locations such as; Ards Friary, Ludden Buncrana, Grianan an Aileach, Bundoran, Ballymacool, Ballyshannon, Donegal Town, Letterkenny, Pettigo etc. Increasing these types of facilities along the main tourist routes would greatly help in meeting tourist needs. Such facilities could display information on local attractions, events and services, waste and recycling facilities etc. It is important that these sites comprise necessary facilities.

### **Motor home Facilities**

Recent research conducted by students at LYIT has highlighted the distinct lack of the specific services required by motor home tourists in the County. An excellent example of such a facility opened in Buncrana in 2013, however there is a need for such provision at multiple locations Countywide. This service gap provides an opportunity for the rural community to provide motor home service points as a standalone income supplement or in conjunction with their existing business such as pub, shop, B & B's, activity centre, etc.

## **Environmental Impact - Litter & Recycling**

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<sup>36</sup> Fáilte Ireland's Holidaymaker Study 2013 – Donegal/Sligo

An increase in tourist numbers can have a damaging impact on our environment. This can occur in many ways such as where excessive numbers of visitors or inappropriate vehicles erode fragile surfaces, or where littering is taking place. Existing levels of litter and recycling facilities need to be re-examined given the significant increase in tourism numbers.

### Accommodation

Figure 4 (Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 7, Pg 93) presents these units in relation to the Wild Atlantic Way, to illustrate the availability of accommodation to cater for the potential update in demand given the increasing success of the WAW. This illustrates that there are currently 3,750 units along the 550km route. Figure 5 (Supplementary Information on Area Profile, Appendix 2.2, Chapter 7, Pg 94) provides analysis on the numbers of Fáilte Ireland approved accommodation units by type. This pie chart illustrates the clear dominance by the Hotel sector providing 69% of all units in the County. The lower levels of provision across the other sectors provides an opportunity for rural communities to make up this deficit through small scale conversions, existing farmhouses, outhouses and available land for camp and caravan parking. Of the 248 units available through camp and caravan parking, these are located at 6 sites (3 of which are located in the Downings/Rossguill area, 1 in Ballyshannon, 1 Portsalon and 1 in Rosbeg) leaving large areas of the WAW without such approved accommodation.

## 2.3 Review of Key Services and Programmes

### 2.3.1 Alignment of the Local Development Strategy

The LCDC carried out a review of the existing services and programmes as identified by the four programme implementers across the Donegal LCDC sub regional area to support economic development and social inclusion. These are detailed according to the three thematic areas of the RDP:

#### RDP Theme: Economic Development, Enterprise Development and Job Creation

- **The Back to Work Enterprise Allowance Scheme (BTWEA):** and Short Term Enterprise Allowance Scheme (STEA) encourage people in receipt of certain social welfare payments to become self-employed.
- **Regional Employment Service (RES):** provides practical advice, guidance and support for job-seekers i.e. CV preparation etc
- **Job Initiative Scheme provides:** full-time employment for people 35 years of age or over who have been unemployed for 5 years or more with the ultimate aim of preparing them for work opportunities in the open labour market.
- **TÚS:** The Tús initiative is a community work placement scheme providing short-term working opportunities for unemployed people.
- **The Rural Social Scheme (RSS):** The aim of the RSS are to provide income support for farmers and fisherpersons unable to earn an adequate living from their farm holding/fishing
- **Community Employment Scheme (CE):** The CE programme is designed to help people who are long-term unemployed and other disadvantaged people to get back to work by offering part-time and temporary placements in jobs based within local communities.
- **Traveller's Job Club Coach Initiative:** is a Special Traveller employment initiative funded by the Department of Social Protection which aims to create employment opportunities within the public, private and community sector for job-ready Travellers.
- **The Jobs Club:** provides advice, guidance and training services designed to support people in preparing to target local employment opportunities.
- **The Pobal Community Services Programme (CSP):** gives grants to community businesses that deliver services and create employment for people from disadvantaged groups.
- **The Local Enterprise Office (LEO):** the "first stop shop" for anyone interested in starting a new business or already in business. Provides a range of services throughout the County<sup>37</sup>
- **Enterprise Ireland:** is the government organisation responsible for the development and growth of Irish enterprises in world markets
- **IDA Ireland:** Ireland's inward investment promotion agency, the IDA, is a non-commercial, semi-state body promoting Foreign Direct Investment into Ireland through a wide range of services.

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1. Providing access and advice on the range of support and services available to any person proposing to set up in business and to all existing businesses Training, management development programmes, mentoring and facilitated networks to assist new and existing businesses achieve their development potential, e.g. Start Your Own Business, Small Business Accounts, Digital Marketing and Procurement. 2. Delivery of key management programmes such as Accelerate, Hi-Start and LEAN; 3. Promotes an enterprise culture within the county through a range of actions and programmes such as the annual Donegal Business Week and Donegal Business Awards, Student Enterprise Competition, Ireland Best Young Entrepreneur Programme and Competition. 4. Delivery of sector initiatives such as the Action Plan for Creative Entrepreneurship and the Food Coast aimed at the integrated development of these sectors and their constituent businesses. 5.Provision of grant aid to eligible projects i.e. micro businesses in the manufacturing or tradable services with the potential to trade internationally. 6Donegal County Enterprise Fund provides a range of micro credit loan schemes to new and existing businesses throughout the county

- **Western Development Commission:** The WDC Investment Fund provides investment funding for SMEs, Community and Micro Enterprises, based in, or relocating to, the Western Region that are able to demonstrate they can provide a return on investment commensurate with the investment risk being taken.
- **Faite Ireland:** This is the National Tourism Development Authority with the aim of supporting the tourism industry and sustaining Ireland as a high-quality and competitive tourism destination
- **Rural Recreation Program:** Donegal is one of 12 regions in Ireland that has a Rural Recreation Officer who works with communities, land owners and national agencies to support the development, maintenance and promotion of trail based outdoor recreation opportunities.
- **Walks Scheme:** launched in March 2008, this scheme is aimed at farmers, private landowners and landholders/users and involves the development, enhancement and maintenance of National Waymarked Ways and priority walks.
- **Inishowen Eco-tourism Network / Green Trail:** Inishowen Ecotourism Network is made up of 32 local companies who have come together to market the peninsula as a centre of eco-friendly and sustainable tourism and a Green Tourism Destination.
- **Inishowen Tourism:** Official Tourism organisation for the Inishowen Peninsula, their main object is to develop and promote Inishowen as a quality holiday destination
- **Donegal Tourism Limited:** is a public/private partnership industry representative organisation. Donegal Tourism has been responsible for the marketing of County Donegal for over 10 years
- **Faite Ireland:** is the National Tourism Development Authority with the aim of supporting the tourism industry and sustaining Ireland as a high-quality and competitive tourism destination.
- **The Arts Council:** is the national agency for funding, developing and promoting the arts in Ireland. It works in partnership with artists, arts organisations, public policy makers and others to build a central place for the arts in Irish life
- **The Design & Crafts:** Council of Ireland (DCCoI) is the main champion of the design and craft industry in Ireland, fostering its growth and commercial strength, communicating its unique identity and stimulating quality design, innovation and competitiveness.
- **Donegal Film Office:** works in cooperation with Bord Scannán na hÉireann (The Irish Film Board) to help filmmakers to find locations, cast and crew, technical services and local service providers.
- **Donegal County Council:** is the authority with responsibility for economic development, planning, housing, roads, environment, emergency services, community and culture.
- **Teagasc:** the Agriculture and Food Development Authority is the national body providing integrated research, advisory and training services to the agriculture and food industry and rural communities.
- **Inland Fisheries Ireland:** is the agency responsible for the conservation, protection, management, marketing, development and improvement of our inland fisheries and sea angling resources.
- **Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM):** mission is to grow a thriving Irish seafood industry; expand the raw material base, add value and develop efficient supply chains. It provides technical expertise, business support, funding, training and promotes responsible environmental practices.



- **The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP):** SICAP is a national programme that aims to reduce poverty and promote social inclusion and equality through local, regional and national engagement and collaboration.
- **Donegal Volunteer Centre:** provides supports for volunteers and volunteer management / community groups and organisations i.e. sourcing volunteers, training volunteers, training volunteer management committees, Garda Vetting etc.
- **Care of the Aged Committees:** provide a range of local services including for older people in including community day centres, meals on wheels, support accessing grants etc.
- **Good Morning Service Contae Dhun na nGall:** operates in five outreach centres throughout the county and offers a free telephone link service to promote health & well being at home, and enable recipients to have a caring and friendly link to their community.
- **Rural Transport Programme:** initiated as a response to the growing acknowledgement of the economic and social impacts of inadequate transport in rural areas and the increasing level of interest amongst community and local development groups in developing and implementing locally based solutions.
- **IFAN (Inishowen Family Action Network) (IFAN) :** established in 2007 to *'create an environment for a joined up and integrated approach to supporting parents, carers, children and young people living in Inishowen'*
- **Parentstop:** is a free and confidential support service for parents based in Co Donegal and offers one-to-one advice and support on parenting challenges and concerns, and advice on other supports available in the community.
- **Donegal ETB Adult Guidance:** is available on an outreach basis throughout the county and offers impartial and confidential information, advice, guidance and counselling on educational options.
- **Jigsaw Donegal:** provides a free and confidential support service for young people aged 15 – 25, with a drop-in centre based in Letterkenny. Jigsaw is supported by [Headstrong](#), the National Centre for Youth Mental Health
- **Men's Shed:** There are fourteen Men's Shed organisations throughout the county. These are community-based, non-commercial organisations which are open to all men where the primary objective is to advance their health and well- being.
- **Social Prescribing:** This is a new service that focuses on promoting health and wellbeing in the community. It links people with non-medical sources of support in local areas
- **Community Links Programmes:** these provide outreach support to communities and help address locally identified needs.
- **LIFELINE (Inishowen) Domestic Violence Service:** provide a community response in Inishowen which offers a first step to support women and children who are experiencing Domestic Violence and or physical, emotional, sexual and financial abuse.
- **Northwest Mens Helpline:** was set up in response to the high instances of suicide in the County and provides understanding, support, information and empathy to men in need.
- **The Citizens Information Board:** operates in a number of outreach venues throughout the county and provides information, advice and advocacy on a broad range of public and social services.
- **The Non-Gaeltacht Island's community development programme:** is funded by the Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht and is administered by Comhar na nOileán. This replaces the LCDP. **A language plan** is currently being developed for *each Gaeltacht district*
- **Action Inishowen:** is a Community Development Organisation. Their main objective is to tackle poverty, social exclusion and disadvantage. Examples of their

work include the Energy Action (Inishowen) Project where draught-proofing and attic insulation are installed in the homes of the elderly and low income households

- **Sports Capital Programme (Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport)** : aims to foster an integrated and planned approach to developing sports and physical recreation facilities throughout the country.
- **Donegal Sport Partnership (DSP)** : co-ordinates and supports the development of sport and physical activity in County Donegal and seeks to increase participation in sport and physical activity especially among the many low participation target groups in line with national objectives.
- **Family Resource Centres:** Key services provided by FRCs include the provision of family support, information and advice at a local level, practical assistance to community groups (such as training, information, advice and use of shared facilities), education courses and training opportunities, childcare facilities for those attending courses and after-school clubs.
- **Donegal Youth Service:** is a countywide youth agency with over 30 affiliated youth clubs and projects who deliver programmes and services to young people all over Donegal. It works with young people aged between 8 and 30.
- **Letterkenny Youth & Family Services LYFS:** provides support, education and guidance to young people and their families.
- **Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA):** is an important provider of quality services to people with limited mobility throughout the country.

### RDP Theme: Rural Environment

- **Donegal County Council:** administers the Local Agenda 21 (LA21) Environmental Partnership Fund 2015 which promotes sustainable development by assisting small scale, non-profit environmental projects at local level, increasing awareness of environmental issues locally and helping communities become more sustainable.
- **Irish Basking Shark Study Group:** based in Inishowen, this is an amalgamation of numerous basking shark centred programs of research and education with the overarching focus of supporting the sustainable management of basking sharks in the Irish and Northeast Atlantic context
- **Celebrate Water:** This is a community group that aims to raise awareness of environmental issues in an educational, creative and fun way. The group is based in the Moville / Greencastle area of County Donegal and focuses on local ecology and environmental issues that directly impact on the local geographic area.
- **Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI):** plays a leading role in transforming Ireland into a society based on sustainable energy structures, technologies and practices. It delivers a range of funding programmes including Better Energy Homes, Better Energy Communities, Better Energy Area Based Warmer Homes, Energy RD&D grants and Ocean Energy grants.
- **The Heritage Council:** This is a public body which is putting in place infrastructure and networks to enable communities to take responsibility for and participate in the development and conservation of their heritage assets.

The LDS will align with and complement the programmes and services outlined above that are currently being delivered in the County.

The Donegal LCDC is also cognisant of the comprehensive number of local, regional, and national strategic initiatives operating throughout the catchment, some of which will also be covered under 'Section 5 Strategic Integration'.

The LDS is aligned with the objectives of Failte Ireland as well as a number of local organisations including Co. Donegal Tourism Ltd, Inishowen Tourism and the Inishowen Eco-Tourism Network to develop strategic and sustainable tourism products and services throughout the County, and improve the marketing and promotion of same. The LDS is also closely aligned to Failte Ireland's overall strategic plan to develop the Wild Atlantic Way as it prioritises support for the provision of a range of actions to improve linkages between, and add value to a range of attractions and facilities along the route, for example, the Malin Head Project.

The aim of the Rural Recreational Programme and the Walks Scheme is to work with local communities and land owners to support the development, maintenance and promotion of trail based outdoor recreation opportunities. The LDS will add value to these programmes through the provision of infrastructural supports for the development of outdoor recreation and outdoor activity pursuits such as walking, hiking and cycling trails; as well as promoting Donegal as an outdoor activity pursuit's holiday destination. In addition, the LDS will provide complementarities to the objectives of Coillte in terms of promoting forests as places for recreational and activity tourism.

The LDS also align with and complement the objectives of the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) and Enterprise Ireland in terms of job creation and local economic development through the provision of a range of supports for start-up and expanding indigenous enterprises. The type of supports provided will include infrastructural investments, marketing and branding, training & mentoring as well as small scale research, analysis and development. It also provides complementarities with the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance Scheme (BTWEA) and Short Term Enterprise Allowance Scheme (STEA) through the provision of capital and training supports for innovative small scale start-up businesses set-up through these schemes. Sectoral agreements are also in place with the LEO and the Implementing Bodies to ensure information is shared with regard new and innovative business projects, and to avoid duplication of supports.

A key focus of the LDS is the development of innovative enterprises in the Artisan Foods sector. Actions supported will provide complementarity to the Food Coast, a LEO led initiative that aims to grow, support, promote and facilitate the food and drink sector in the County. Particular emphasis will be placed on the development of seafood sector, given Donegal's extensive coastline and the LDS is also closely aligned to Bord Iascaigh Mhara's mission to grow a thriving seafood industry.

The LDS also aligns with and complements the objectives of Donegal County Council (DCC) in terms of economic, social and cultural development of the County. It includes a range of supports that are complementary to DCC initiatives including the provision of recreational and social community infrastructure as well as support for general appearance upgrading, environmental and amenity improvement works to enhance the characteristics of towns and villages

## 2.4 Area Needs Analysis

The extensive socio-economic profiling and mapping exercise carried out in Section 2, and extensive consultations and SWOT analysis carried out in Section 3, have provided the building blocks that have enabled us to prepare a comprehensive needs analysis that guided the development of the Local Development Strategy. This Area Needs Analysis is divided into seven distinctive areas which follow.

### 2.4.1 Sustainable Digital and Physical Connections

The Socio Economic Profile has charted the ways in which the unique physical characteristics and colourful history of County Donegal have shaped the economic, social, cultural and political context of the present day. Together with the consultations, the profiling exercise has established the need for increased digital and physical connectivity to overcome the challenges in accessing services identified through the SWOT analysis; for example its peripherality, size, rugged landscape, weak settlement structure, island life and an extensive Gaeltacht area. (See Socio Economic Profile, Chapter 3). To offset the emerging digital divide (Socio Economic Profile, Chapter 1), focused and innovative solutions are required to support initiatives suggested through the consultations that seek to build up the digital capacity of rural communities to be able to shop, communicate, pay bills, etc. online. Key aspects should focus around up-skilling and knowledge transfer within the community based around existing digital schools, taobh tire centres in libraries, digital hubs in community centres, etc. Furthermore it is necessary to examine creative and innovative proposals that increase the online presence of rural enterprises including the functionality to process online transactions.

To physically connect our rural populations, it is necessary to support and facilitate proposals that provide innovative transport solutions in rural, disadvantaged and border areas (identified as an opportunity in the SWOT analysis) such as rural park-and-ride schemes, off-road walking and cycling corridors, rural carpooling and car sharing schemes, and bus and taxi schemes in consultation with public, private and community organizations. In addition, it is necessary to support initiatives that offset gaps in existing transport provisions especially at off-peak hours and on non-viable routes. Chapter 2 of the Socio Economic Profile identified how strong service towns which provide a high level of wide-ranging services are a key element in building a critical mass of consumers (a clear weakness in the SWOT) which in turn makes the delivery of more frequent and higher quality transportation services to and from such towns increasingly viable.

Easily accessible streets and spaces make our towns more attractive places to live, work, visit and do business. The profiling and consultations reported that by maintaining, creating and promoting high quality routes within and around our towns and villages, it can be as easy and attractive to walk and cycle as it is to travel by car (combating upward increases in private car use, Section 2.2.4, Socio-Economic Profile). Projects and initiatives including small scale environmental improvements and works to public spaces (suggested through the consultations to revitalise town centres) should therefore have regard to how such proposals could improve the existing movement network by making them walk and cycle friendly. When examining service delivery in Donegal given the County's functional area, the development of strategies and initiatives should take place on both a regional and all island basis in creating solutions to enhance physical and digital connections within new and established cross border structures and partnerships (Section 6 Networking & Co-operation).

### **2.4.2 Driving Economic Growth Through Towns**

Towns and rural areas have a strong interdependency. Settlements provide a wide range of social and economic services to those living in their hinterlands while rural areas create demand for many services in the settlements through the production of raw materials and economic activities such as agriculture, manufacturing, tourism and recreation. Sustainable, vibrant and economically viable settlements are therefore essential in sustaining rural communities, which in turn serve to drive their settlement centres. (Chapter 2, Socio Economic Profile).

The consultations outlined in Section 3 illustrate that a number of towns across Donegal have been designated as development hubs. These designations set out to promote and guide more specific sectoral development in a number of key towns as follows: Marine Tourism – Bundoran; Cultural Tourism – Ballyshannon; Sports – Ballybofey Stranorlar; Tourism – Donegal Town, Buncrana, Carndonagh; Business Development – Gweedore; Renewables & Food – Killybegs. Large or small scale urban regeneration initiatives based around such sectoral themes have the potential to stimulate a range of towns across the County to act as sustainable economic drivers and service centres for their respective catchments.

It is essential that new projects, policies and initiatives maximise the potential of our towns to increasingly develop as economic and social drivers to support the sustainable development of their rural hinterlands by; Sequential development from the core; Reuse of vacant and derelict buildings; Targeted development of brownfield and other underutilised town centre lands (identified as a weakness and opportunity in SWOT). Section 2.2.6 of the Socio Economic Profile identifies the urban planning objectives of urban consolidation and strengthening<sup>38</sup> in the Donegal Core Strategy as a platform for regeneration and redevelopment initiatives. It is an objective to assist proposals developed by local communities and businesses, which are aimed at tackling urban decay and stagnation through regeneration and upgrade at central urban locations.

The above serves to address the trends identified with regard to town centre dereliction, vacancy and population density. Such proposals also serve to increase quality of life through enhancing our living environment and to grow our local service centres to increasingly serve as tourism bases, retail hubs, employment centres, etc. In general, opportunities to reuse existing buildings have the potential to conserve and promote our historic and architecturally important buildings, streetscapes and heritage towns. In this way other important LEADER themes associated to maximise finite resources such as land and to increase environmental efficiencies through building upgrade are all targeted.

### **2.4.3 Increasing Sustainability & Social Inclusivity in Rural Communities**

There are many people in Donegal who form part of our Hard to Reach Communities, whether they are single men, lone parents, suffering from a disability, or those that live in remote locations, in the Gaeltacht or in coastal/island communities. (Section 2.2.10, Socio Economic Profile). Throughout the County those in key vulnerable groups such as the youth and the elderly are on the increase. There are many ways to increase and improve inclusivity through social and economic initiatives and opportunities. Such improvements can only take place through the availability of quality, accessible services and economic infrastructures. The improvement of such services as identified through the Area Profile, Community Consultations and the SWOT require increasing access to:

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<sup>38</sup> Core Strategy, Donegal County Development Plan 2012-2018

- **Training Programmes and Initiatives** must be specific to economic opportunities and infrastructure locally so as to enable participants to use the skills attained through such courses.
- **Online services** By enabling individuals physical access but also the 'know how' and assistance to use services such as online billing, banking, retail, information services, communication, etc through their local community centre.
- **Enhanced rural transport services** Using innovative ways to provide transport for individuals such as community rota systems, safer routes such as off road trails and cycle ways, vehicle pooling, working in conjunction with other communities and other services being provided in the locality, e.g. meals on wheels, community nursing, etc.
- **Increased Accessibility for those with disabilities** Initiatives and projects to maximise accessibility so as to enable those with disabilities to integrate and interact with day to day services through multi sensory and highly accessible services and infrastructure.
- **Community Centres as Opportunity Hubs** Initiatives to increasing viability (reducing running costs and increasing potential income streams) and activities in community centres to act as digital and tourism hubs gateways to training and employment for vulnerable groups through participation in classes, courses and to enable increased digital and social interaction
- **Employment and Enterprise** Initiatives to enable hard to reach communities to tap into increasing economic opportunities from tourism such as providing accommodation, tours on local cultural and heritage, shops, cafes, outdoor recreation enterprises, etc. Such projects may include the reuse of buildings for such uses, the development of tourism products, etc.

Closer alignment between the activities of local communities, the business community, local government, and tourist/social agencies in terms of employment creation, increasing economic viability and in harnessing and servicing local tourists are essential. This cross sectoral working will increase the development of social enterprises particularly in towns and villages which will in turn benefit from increased footfall, business activity and overall future viability (Area Needs analysis & Participative Planning).

#### 2.4.4 Protecting and Harnessing our Natural Heritage & Water Resource

##### Sustainable Access and Promotion

The Socio Economic Profile showcases the natural heritage of the County as a key asset for local, national and international tourism. The consultation phase and SWOT exercise highlighted sustainable access to and promotion of these assets as central to its further development. In conjunction with NPWS locally, an array of ways have been identified through the LDS development process in which our natural environment can be accessed. Opportunities exist to develop and enhance these such as bus tours, packages, guided hiking and cycling, boating, watersports, trail development, bike, segway hire, beach access, whale and dolphin watching, interpretative on site and online promotional resources. Natural heritage tourism can be combined with cultural and built heritage (Chapter 6) such as folklore, archaeology, genealogy, architecture and history to provide a more comprehensive tourism offering.

##### Developing a Hub to Donegal's Biosphere

The rich and diverse elements of geology, landscape and habitat have created a truly unique biosphere in Donegal as outlined in a number of chapters of the Socio Economic Profile. Therefore a real and present opportunity exists to develop a 'Natural Network' for the County's biosphere. Such a network would serve to 'join up' the unique designations and eco locations across the County for the purposes of protection and promotion through information and access. The development of such a tool presents the opportunity to build on Glenveagh's unique comparative advantage so that it can develop further as the 'biosphere



hub' for the region. Furthermore, the key towns in the regions have the potential to develop as central access points from which the richness of satellite locations can be experienced.

The Nature Education Centre, Glenveagh run various programmes aimed at children across a range of age groups to educate and develop young people's appreciation of the natural world. Opportunities exist to develop educational programmes and information initiatives across a range of ecological areas and locations. These will serve to increase promotion and conservation across the Counties biosphere network.

### **Small Scale Water & Wastewater Infrastructure**

Chapter 4 of the profile together with the consultations identify the need for collaborative opportunities to upgrade water and wastewater infrastructure in rural Donegal, particularly small scale private or public schemes that are not under auspices of Irish Water, where small investments or targeted measures would enable commercial and tourism development to take place

### **Our Environment as a Cross Cutting Theme**

As part of the implementation of the LEADER programme, the promoting, protecting and enhancement of all areas of our environment must be considered across all emerging objectives and projects. As outlined in Section 7 Monitoring, Review and Evaluation, all LEADER projects and initiatives shall be screened to identify opportunities where environmental enhancement measures can be incorporated. Environmental enhancements identified through the LDS development process included potential measures to: increase water protection and conservation; pollution reduction; low impact methods for development; facilitation of native species; sustainable waste management; increased energy efficiency and use of renewable energy.

## **2.4.5 Developing the Primary Sectors in Donegal**

Donegal's primary sectors are at the heart of rural Donegal. According to public and sectoral consultations these areas are or have the potential to be key growth sectors at the forefront of economic restructuring and recovery in rural communities. Agricultural, fishing and forestry have a significant role to play in driving our food, scientific and tourism industries. (Socio Economic Profile, Chapter 5). The skill set and experience of those involved in these sectors as well as the lands, waters and buildings used for such activities present significant opportunities for rural communities to harness the growing tourism, recreational and off-shore sectors. Given the aging farming population identified in Chapter 5, Socio Economic Profile, there is an ever increasing need to reinvigorate interest and creativity within the younger farming population so as to maximise incomes and increase the future sustainability and viability of primary sector activities in rural Donegal through encouraging: successful and timely farm/business succession planning; innovation in sustaining traditional farming by adding value to produce; increasing promotional aspect of primary sector activities; the undertaking genuine and realistic farm holding/business review by each producer in the County to identify realistic opportunities for diversification and adding value (in line with consultative feedback).

### **Key Areas with Significant Potential for Development**

A number of key areas have been identified (as part of the consultation exercise) with significant potential for development. These include:

- **General Food:** Facilitate, develop and market entry for food producer groups, including for example the development of a number of food academy's in the County to link producer networks with end users, to drive growth in food tourism by providing such a centre of excellence.



- **Lamb:** Significant potential exists for producers in the County to add value in the area of lamb production, which has a growing global reputation. Development of the *Donegal Hills Lamb Brand* - Teagasc has identified the potential for the Mountain/Hill flock to produce higher value added cross-bred stock to meet expansion requirement of the lowland sheep enterprises.
- **Potatoes/Seed:** An opportunity exists to develop this specialist area further by maximising the potential of existing expertise in the County. Marketing initiatives to highlight the health benefits of potatoes would also assist in sustaining this sector.
- **Shows, Festivals & Markets:** There is considerable potential for marketing of primary sector products through agri events, shows and initiatives. Within this there is scope for; hosting national events such as the Sheep Shearing Championships through cooperation between key stakeholders and farming bodies. Farmers markets offer great potential for rural producers to get their products established as well as the arts and crafts industry. However, there is a requirement for codes of practice to be developed and implemented around the operation of these markets, with a clear leadership role established with a particular focus on local Donegal products.
- **Honey:** The socio-economic profile identified high levels of demand for honey and a number of support networks for bee keepers concentrated in South Donegal. The Teagasc Options Course brings such networks together to share learning, examine ideas and determine what worked and what did not work through; however there is a gap following such courses in translating these ideas into practice or business ventures.
- **Organic Farming:** This is a significant growth area; however initiatives are needed to scale up production so there is substantial supply to continue to increase its viability.
- **Equines:** The profile identified the current state of recovery of the equine industry following a significant collapse in 2008. Consultations with the Irish Horse Board highlight demands for performance horses and ponies continue to rise. Increasing the performance level of stock, will result in increased sales and a continued rise in demand to return to sustainable levels. Consultations with the equine community identified how projects and initiatives such as equine training or breaking programmes would further increase these levels particularly for young stock. Careful structuring and management of any such projects or initiatives is required to avoid the exacerbation of existing problems such as the breeding of low quality stock.
- **Primary Sector Waste:** A key area for the circular economy is the potential for reuse of the many bi-products from the agricultural, forestry and fishing sectors. Research is required to explore the most effective options in extracting and developing useful new products from waste including the extraction of useful materials from food waste. This may also involve identification of where volumes of waste are occurring, identifying new uses for such products.
- **Medicinal Properties:** Another area with significant potential, for example the medicinal properties of the many varieties of seaweed in Donegal. Again this area requires further research to be carried out. AlfAran Kilcar, is becoming a key health product in cosmetics and in food.
- **Seaweed:** Seaweed production in a growing industry in Donegal's coastal communities. Seaweed is a great fertiliser and is often used in golf greens (K Club), sporting pitches, horticulture, etc. The many known and unknown uses for the wide range of seaweed forms have enormous potential as an important growth area. Japan consumes 90% of all seaweed consumed globally, giving Ireland and indeed Donegal producers a massive market for export.
- **Salmon Fishing:** According to the Irish Salmon Growers' Association, salmon farming offers considerable scope for sustainable jobs in Donegal's coastal communities. With

increasingly high global demands, an opportunity exists to meet this, however efficiencies in supply and production are required to ensure a year round quality and sustainable exports. A key focus must be based around ensuring the sustainability of salmon farming practice, to prevent any associated pollution of our transitional and inshore habitats. This requires aquaculture policymakers to build specific links with the industry and the subsequent introduction of enablers in this area.

- **Off Shore Training & Development:** Growing area of expertise in Donegal, where skills from the fishing industry and renewable sector can be transferred across to sectors such as offshore exploration & emergency training.
- **Forestry Owner Groups:** Present huge opportunity for the on-going development of forestry in the County through potential acquisition of harvesting equipment, retain stronger bargaining power together when negotiating with buyers, and are more attractive to buyers as they can access larger volumes via a single contact point.
- **Community Forests:** They provide a huge opportunity for rural communities to develop small scale tourism projects.
- **Forestry Enterprise Development:** Supports required for feasibility studies, start up costs for a business and equipment costs, small scale harvesting, seed collectors, and nurseries requirement to add value.
- **Sustainable Forestry:** Timber Certification can be used as another environmental marketing tool to increase the value of forestry produce. Research is required to establish the outlay required to attain such certification across the County's many producers.
- **Training Opportunities:** There are many training requirements that would increase efficiencies and outputs in this area such as chainsaw skills; Measurement; Business Supports and equipment; Marketing; Distribution.
- **Biomass:** An area of growth and potential in Donegal. The demand for biomass is easily quantified however difficulties arise in ensuring supply and quality control. Structures are required to monitor quality and guarantee supply levels.
- **Marine Infrastructure:** Our strategic location, our island communities and our fishing industry have all contributed to an extensive network of marine infrastructure around the County comprising some 154 piers, jetties and slipways. This resource provides a great opportunity across a range of rural development sectors such as servicing the islands, marine tourism, ecological tours, fishing development, accessing shipwrecks, water sports etc. Work is required to review this network and develop a marine infrastructure strategy for the County which prioritises island and strategic access, as well as ensuring the development of a high quality network of recreation and leisure infrastructure around the County. Proposals must integrate accessibility requirements for those with mobility impairment.
- **Seafood Marketing:** As the largest fishing County in Ireland Donegal would benefit significantly from effective marketing in this area to raise awareness, demand and expectations of customers within Ireland, from an export perspective and from a food tourism standpoint.

#### 2.4.6 Conservation through Access & Promotion

Chapter 6 of the Socio Economic Profile provides a comprehensive analysis the quality of cultural resources in the County and together with feedback from community consultations this section sets out how such assets can be unlocked in the interest of awareness creation, preservation and enhancement.

- **Sustainability Access & Promotion:** Many elements of our cultural heritage are for the most part unknown and underutilised. Therefore initiatives and projects are encouraged which seek to interpret such sites through either information provision and/or physical access carried out in a sustainable manner. This includes the many elements particularly unique to this region such as the shipwreck inventory, rich archaeological zones, scenic coastal and upland areas, musical and other cultural traditions, our islands, language, whale watching, etc.
- **Economy & Enterprise:** Donegal's rich culture and heritage presents an enormous opportunity for enterprise development and economic growth, while at the same time enhancing the protection and sustainability of our rich heritage. As well as adding to the attractiveness of Donegal for tourists these elements greatly enhance our sense of place and our identity as highlighted through community consultation. Therefore the development, conservation and in particular the promotion of our built and natural heritage is a key economic factor for the County. Projects and initiatives are welcomed which serve to increase awareness locally and regionally of the significance of our culture and heritage in order to maintain and promote it as a vehicle for economic regeneration in our rural communities.
- **Film & Festival:** The above profile and community consultations also identified opportunities to develop new and existing festivals and events around products and traditions that are indigenous or of particular importance in the County. Suggested traditions included turf cutting, Donegal fiddle tradition, potato, seaweed, storytelling & recitation, An Gaeltacht Dhún na nGall, extreme outdoors and Donegal's biosphere.. Suggestions in this area included the continued increasing promotion of the County as a diverse yet convenient filming location, continued collaboration between the Donegal Film Office and industry, raising awareness locally of the positive impacts and outcomes from producing films in the County.
- **An Ghaeilge:** The Area Profile identified falling levels of Irish speakers in a number of age groups as a real threat to maintaining the Irish Language as a living language in the Donegal Gaeltacht in the longer term. The Area Needs Analysis and public consultation feedback stated that opportunities to integrate the Irish language into all facets of day to day life and popularise its use through innovation must be continually targeted in the County. E.g. its use in work environments, in delivering services, shop display, job creation in and promotion of linguistic and cultural tourism, broadcasting and other media, festivals.
- **Built Heritage:** Section 2.2.31 of the Socio Economic Profile maps the rich built heritage assets in the County. In line with the recommendations of the SWOT analysis an opportunity exists to conserve and promote our built heritage and to reinvigorate our spaces and communities at the same time by reducing instances of vacancy and dereliction through the restoration and reuse of buildings and structures for accommodation, local enterprise, retail and tourism services. Community consultations recognised the value of our network of archaeological sites as key to their preservation and enjoyment. Opportunities exist to develop archaeological trails in Donegal to increase awareness and accessibility to such sites. There exists, significant potential to promote and develop underwater archaeology in the County both in terms of diving and research potential of wreck sites but also as an educational resource around the activities, routes and purposes of such vessels off our coast.

## 2.4.7 Building on Our Strong Tourism Base

As well as presenting the wide ranging tourism offer in Co. Donegal chapter 7 of the Area Profile highlights the rising tourism numbers in the County and the potential factors driving this such as the promotion of the Wild Atlantic Way, development at Slieve Liag, etc. The profile, the consultations and the Area Needs Analysis emphasise the countywide requirement to capitalise on these growing numbers by harnessing tourism potentially and diversification locally. As well as developing attractions this also involves exploring ways to

inform visitors around our unique natural, built and cultural heritage as well as increasing access to such heritage features in the most appropriate and sustainable manner. Extensive consultation with key stakeholders has identified that it is now essential that high quality tourism services are in place to cater for this growth. A clear opportunity now exists for rural communities to tap into this growing industry, to achieve this, more focused development is required in the following areas:

- **Marketing & Promotion:** While strategic marketing is successfully taking place in terms of promoting the County as a great place to visit, more localised promotion is required by local agencies, communities, businesses and individuals to ensure that tourists are aware of the vast amount of attractions across the County and how they can access them. It is important to create awareness within communities of everyone's role in tourism promotion. Significant opportunities exist to develop online facilities to assist tourists in navigating the many routes and in finding the many attractions and services the County has to offer. Such initiatives must be coordinated, adaptable and comprehensive.
- **Rural Diversification:** As the number of visitors increase, Donegal's rural communities, businesses and individuals must be ready to tap into this valuable resource by creating new tourism related enterprises and services. Not only will this result in an enhanced tourism offering for visitors, it will also supplement incomes for rural communities. This is particularly attractive for those communities along the Wild Atlantic Way, where opportunities exist to reuse vacant houses and other structures to provide accommodation, cafes, shops, etc.
- **Creating Recreational Access:** There is enormous potential among rural communities in the County to develop tourism trails as a means of increasing tourist footfall locally through the promotion of the many smaller scale or lesser known unique cultural, natural and built heritage features such as our shipwrecks, geological sites, our unique islands, historic towns and villages, archaeology, rare birds and animals, our uplands, etc.
- **Coordinating Our Tourism Offer:** There are many opportunities for new and existing companies in the tourism sector to combine their services in order to offer ready made package holidays incorporating multiple destinations and activities around the County.
- **Tourism Infrastructure:** As visitor numbers increase, we must ensure that adequate facilities are available throughout the County. This is particularly important given the transient nature of the Donegal tourism industry as a result of initiatives such as the Wild Atlantic Way. Businesses and communities must play their part in providing public conveniences, parking, waste services etc. Projects and initiatives must ensure such services will be provided.
- **Tourism Product Development:** Both the expansion of existing tourism products and the development of new tourism offerings are encouraged. Areas of our built, natural and cultural heritage provide tourists with a unique experience through for example watersports, horse riding, walking, rock climbing, island hopping, cruising in our sea loughs and inland waterways. Opportunities exist to develop and upgrade coastal, riverside and lakeside facilities including accessibility infrastructure, recreational equipment, off road trails and cycle ways.
- **Diaspora:** Through initiatives such as the Gathering, the strength and benefits of our Diaspora is clear. Other initiatives to engage with our Diaspora are encouraged, particularly from a tourism perspective.
- **Accommodation & Ancillary Facilities:** Initial examination of accommodation levels around the County, show an existing and future need to increase provision in a wide range of locations. Recent tourism surveys have identified that visitors to the region are seeking unique accommodation experiences as part of their stay. Therefore projects which seek to increase accommodation provision such as through the reuse of historic and unique buildings, structures and objects are welcomed. Alternatives in this regard include the range of glamping options, motor home parking and services, bunkhouses, bothies, disused agricultural and industrial structures, pods, etc.

## Section 3: Participative Planning

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### 3.0 Overview of the Consultation Process

The Donegal LDS has aimed to engage key stakeholders and empower disadvantaged communities and individuals to play a greater role in addressing social exclusion and equality issues within their area. The plan itself is underpinned by a Community Led local development approach and is in line with the emerging policy context which emphasises the role of citizen engagement. A number of consultative methods have been used to maximise involvement and ensure impact across target groups who to date, have been unable or unlikely to access mainstream supports or services. These included:

- One-to-one consultations which were held with a range of local experts from within the county. For example inputs was sought from the Head of Development, Letterkenny Institute of Technology and key staff from within the Local Enterprise Development Office and other sections of Donegal County Council on the area of Enterprise Development etc. These consultations were co-ordinated by the LCDC staff
- Sectoral / themed consultations, which were led by the Local Development Organisations (LDOs) and covered the 9 LEADER Sub Themes while also allowing for scope should other sub themes emerge from the consultations
- Area based consultations, which were led by the Local Development Organisations and covered the four geographical catchment areas as outlined in Supplementary Information, Area Profile, Appendix 2.1, Figure 1, Pg 1.

### 3.1 A multi-sector approach

In order to ensure the Local Development Strategy was explored from a multi-sectoral perspective, the strategy was developed within the context of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP). The multi-sectoral model calls for holistic inter-organisational and inter-agency efforts which promote participation from people of concern, as well as interdisciplinary cooperation, collaboration, and coordination across key sectors. Community consultation was integral in the formation of the LECP. The development of the LDS was also shaped by a combination of factors, which included a comprehensive review of strategic plans, policies and research carried out by the LCDC Partners, whilst also tapping into the work of countywide sectoral fora and working groups<sup>39</sup>.

#### 3.1.1 Outcome of the SWOT

A series of SWOT exercises were undertaken as part of the public consultations to the LECP. These formed the overarching framework for the development of the LDS SWOT. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified from the one-to-one consultations, the sectoral and area based consultations all fed into the compilation of the SWOT. Drafts were presented at a number of working group meetings and the SWOT was amended and revised accordingly. The LDS summary SWOT is presented below while the LECP SWOTs and Area Consultation SWOT are contained in Supplementary Information on Participative Planning, Appendix 3.1(A), Pg 1-18, Appendix 3.1(B), Pg 1-9 and Appendix 3.1(C), Pg 1.

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<sup>39</sup> These included the Social Inclusion Measures Group; the Donegal Cultural Forum; the Donegal Planning and Economic Development Strategic Planning Committee (SPC); the Community Culture and Social SPC; the Donegal Heritage Forum; the Donegal Digital Economy Working Group; the Donegal Tourism Sectoral Forum; the Rural Transport Working Group; the Donegal Age Friendly Working Group; Grúpa Oibre na Gaeilge etc



**Figure 1- Overarching Key Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats arising from the public submissions.**

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Richness of county's assets particularly for tourism such as landscape, natural environment, heritage, culture, geology, archaeology, built heritage, wildlife, biodiversity, friendliness of Donegal people, Donegal accent, fishing tradition, extent of existing cultural facilities</li> <li>- A diverse economic base with a strong track record of SMEs, entrepreneurship, strong entrepreneurial culture &amp; spirit, can do attitude; a vibrant creative sector; existing sports from development agencies</li> <li>- LYIT CoLab Innovation Centre -clustering of vibrant SMEs, provides incubation space and business supports to start-up enterprises</li> <li>- Significant investment in education and training infrastructure across a wide range of settings for example in Libraries, Community Centres</li> <li>- The Donegal Gaeltacht, Island and Coastal Communities</li> <li>- Proximity to Derry, the fourth largest city on the Island of Ireland and designation of Letterkenny/Derry as a joint gateway in the National Spatial Strategy</li> <li>- Excellent track record in working with cross border structures in delivering interregional and inter territorial EU funded projects</li> <li>- Strengths in a number of key towns referred to including Ballybofey- Stranorlar, Bundoran, Killybegs, Donegal Town, Ardara</li> <li>- Strong community culture, community groups, networks and infrastructure to drive local development projects, social inclusion &amp; youth initiatives e.g. FRCs, youth services &amp; youth clubs, sports orgs, tidy towns groups, heritage groups</li> <li>- Significant investment into key flagship attractions for example the Wild Atlantic Way</li> <li>- Exceptional quality of the rural environment with one quarter of the county covered by natural designations, blue flag beaches, green coastal awards; significant wind and natural resources, woodland resources</li> <li>- Quality food produce with potential to add value to same</li> <li>- The Donegal Brand is becoming increasingly recognised nationally and internationally for example Food, Culture, Film</li> <li>- The Donegal Diaspora offering extensive worldwide networks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of employment, high male and youth unemployment</li> <li>- Dependence on a road based transport system and lack of adequate rural transport &amp; broadband</li> <li>- Emergence of a North East/ South West divide in terms of population growth, deprivation, age dependency, unemployment and the use of digital technologies</li> <li>- Peripherality presents specific challenges in delivering services</li> <li>- Low population density, weak settlement structure, stagnant rural towns, lack of critical mass reducing economic viability</li> <li>- Stagnant Town Cores with high levels of vacancy and dereliction</li> <li>- Lack of accessible marine infrastructure and special training to maximise the potential of these assets</li> <li>- Lack of quality cycle networks</li> <li>- Lack of tourism infrastructure such as information boards, signage, picnic areas, lay-bys</li> <li>- Lack of training in social enterprises</li> <li>- Enterprises experiencing difficulties re cashflow, market entry and promotion etc</li> <li>- Lack of consistent funding stream in respect of community and voluntary sector</li> <li>- Diminished capacity in community organisations</li> <li>- Lack of appropriate physical spaces for services and activities across the sectors</li> <li>- Digital media not fully utilised to promote and preserve the counties assets</li> <li>- Lack of public access to places of interest</li> <li>- Natural assets not utilised to their full potential</li> <li>- Low levels of educational attainment amongst the older sectors of the population</li> <li>- A growing number of hard to reach communities.</li> </ul>

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Capitalise on our cross border linkages and long established partnerships
- To harness growing sectors including Tourism/marine, ICT, Agriculture/Food
- To further develop the County's creative and green economies
- To provide innovative & integrated rural transport solutions
- To diversify in the areas of Heritage, Culture, Walking, Cycling, Irish language, Angling, Fishing, Town regeneration, 'Experience Tourism', Accommodation
- To promote Donegal as 'Healthy Donegal'
- To improve health through greater access to the outdoors in particular green prescriptions, community forests, spiritual retreats etc
- To be an exemplar in Donegal for promoting and enhancing the network of environmental assets; the circular economy ; habitat restoration etc
- To further develop the potential of a number of particular locations including Malin Head, Killybegs
- To regenerate rural towns to enable them to act as tourism hubs & vehicles for economic growth in rural hinterlands
- Further opportunities to work in partnerships and collaborate across all the sectors
- Provide creative waste solutions
- Enable people through increased training and learning opportunities.
- Explore alternative uses for vacant lands and buildings to serve the communities, protect built heritage and develop strong town cores
- To establish a Donegal Energy Agency
- To develop innovative mechanisms to reduce our carbon footprint and harmful emissions
- To learn new heritage and culture from the County's multi- cultural population
- To broaden the functions of existing community facilities, schools, town halls, libraries etc to enable them to act as focal points within small rural communities for training, language, tourism, enterprise , service delivery
- To make sports, recreational amenities, community and cultural facilities more accessible
- To develop rural tourism enterprises that capatilise on tourism numbers to large flag ship attractions
- To develop projects around Donegal's rich artistic , religious and natural heritage

## THREATS

- High Deprivation Scores
- Population decline, aging communities, severe unemployment levels resulting in declining towns and villages in rural, Gaeltacht, coastal and island communities
- Brain drain due to emigration/ exodus of young people. Rural depopulation especially in the South West of county and in rural , coastal and island communities
- Reliance on community and voluntary sector especially volunteers, to reach marginally excluded groups
- Sustainability of community organisations
- A risk of overdeveloping the landscape and sacrificing the main reason that tourists visit the county
- That heritage is not harnessed in an appropriate manner thereby compromising its character for future generations
- Further closure of services and facilities such as Garda Stations
- Conflicting interests in the development of the renewable energy sectors and the rural communities
- Limited number of existing employers therefore levels of employment are vulnerable
- Impact of charges and taxes on SME's
- Lack of control on a number of external determinants
- Adverse movements in Euro/Sterling Exchange Rates





They were solution and opportunity focused, and a number of particular sectors and areas for targeted growth and resources emerged as follows –Tourism and the Wild Atlantic Way, The Marine, Agriculture, The Green Economy, The Creative Economy, Education, learning and training, Capacity building within the community and voluntary sector, Health and wellbeing, Collaborative and Partnership approaches, The need to address digital exclusion and language barriers, The need to support community and cultural infrastructure. In summary, the emergence of the Local Economic and Community Plan was critical in providing a framework for the development of the LDS and the values underpinning it are reflected throughout.

### 3.2 One - to - One Consultations led by LCDC staff

A number of one-to-one consultations were carried out by LCDC staff with local experts, in order to garner their expertise to inform the development of the LDS. These included consultations with people from the following sectors:

Sector	Consultation Date
Energy, Environment, Renewables	2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2015
Agriculture	10 <sup>th</sup> April 2015 / 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2015
Wood Sector	13 <sup>th</sup> April 2015
Fisheries and the Marine	6 <sup>th</sup> May 2015
Social Exclusion	26 <sup>th</sup> May 2015 / 9 <sup>th</sup> June 2015
Youth	28 <sup>th</sup> May 2015
Food Technology	24 <sup>th</sup> June 2015
Culture	20 <sup>th</sup> July 2015
Rural Tourism	12 <sup>th</sup> August 2015
Enterprise & Creative Industries	18 <sup>th</sup> August 2015
Village Renewal	15 <sup>th</sup> September 2015

### 3.3 Sectoral Consultations

In order to encourage a participatory approach, a number of workshop style consultation meetings were also held, hosted by the Local Development Organisations. The purpose of these workshops was to seek input from the public in terms of key areas/actions that should be prioritised for support through the Local Development Strategy.

There were nine Sectoral Working Groups (SWGs) held in total. These focused on specific themes namely; 1. *Rural Tourism (2 in total)*, 2. *Enterprise Development*, 3. *Rural Towns & Broadband*, 4. *Social Inclusion* 5. *Rural Environment*. 6. *Gaeltacht*, 7. *Arts*, 8. *Fishing* and 9. *Education*. The members of the various working groups were selected for their specific area of expertise, and included a combination of community, private and public sector representation. They were identified from a variety of sources including internal databases, the PPN register as well as consultation with other agencies e.g. Failte Ireland for tourism stakeholders, Donegal County Council for environmental sector etc.

### 3.4 Area Based consultations led by the Local Implementing Bodies

The LAG has had ongoing consultation with the four implementing bodies in order to inform the strategy and ensure key stakeholders are engaged on an ongoing basis. A total of 13 public consultations (promoted by the Implementing Bodies) took place in order to inform the strategy. Their purpose was to actively engage the local

community in identifying the challenges and opportunities (economic, social, and environmental) of their respective areas.

The consultation process was inclusive and local needs were explored from a multi-sectoral perspective. They involved broad representation from key stakeholder groups that included sectoral groups; local community; private and public sector organisations; special interest groups etc. A full list of groups/organisations that participated in the consultation process is included in Appendix 3.2 (Supplementary Information on Participative Planning, Appendix 3.2 (A), Pg 1-2, Appendix 3.2(B), Pg 1-20, Appendix 3.2(C), Pg 1-9, Appendix 3.2(D), Pg 1-4, Appendix 3.2(E), Pg1 and Appendix 3.2(F), PG 1-3)

A PowerPoint presentation was initially made to participants who attended the area based consultations. This included an overview of the themes/sub-themes of the new LEADER Programme (See Supplementary Information on Participative Planning, Appendix 3.3 (A) - (C)). During the subsequent workshop sessions, participants were asked to complete an economic SWOT analysis to identify the internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats that are faced in the county. Attendees were then given the option to participate in one of three themed workshops which reflected the RDP themes namely; 1) *Economic Development*, 2) *Social Inclusion* and 3) *Rural Environment*. Participants were then asked to identify key actions to be prioritised for support in the new LEADER programme (having been advised that each action identified must directly link to a LEADER theme and sub-theme). The workshops sessions were facilitated by staff from the Implementing Bodies.

The public consultation meetings were advertised extensively in local newspapers and through social media. In an effort to engage with 'hard to reach' communities, a number of community organisations that work with disadvantaged groups were also targeted directly via email e.g. Family Resource Centres (FRCs), Community Development Projects (CDPs), youth groups, disability groups, community fora /networks etc. A comprehensive list of community & voluntary organisations contacted about the public consultation meetings is included in Appendix 3.4 (A) & (B) (Supplementary Information on Participative Planning, Consultation Invitation Lists). In addition, in an effort to accommodate as many members of the public as possible, a variety of both daytime and evening meetings were held, (Supplementary Information on Participative Planning, Timetable of Consultations Appendix 3.5, Pg 1) Finally, Small Island Meetings took place (by arrangement) between 13<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> October 2015. (Supplementary Information on Participative Planning, Appendix Appendix 3.6 (A) – (E) Feedback from Consultation Meetings).

### 3.5 Methods to engage hard to reach groups

The Donegal Local Area Group recognises that it is vital to build social capital at a local level to ensure objectives that emerge from the consultations are owned by those they most affect, and are shaped by their experiences. To this end, the LAG has attempted to rally and animate disadvantaged communities from the outset, running consultations across the geographic region (and at different times of the day) to ensure they are accessible to a wide variety of people. Participants were then supported through an inclusive delivery format of both small focus group and one-to-one discussions which enabled them to identify critical issues affecting them.

Thus the LAG has attempted to fully consider not just local needs but also local potential. The LAG recognises that 'hard to reach' groups are not homogenous.

They have particular characteristics and barriers to engagement and an engagement method that is effective with one group may not work with another; or necessarily with the same group in another area.

A number of methods have been used to involve hard-to-reach groups in the consultation process. These include the following:

- Public meetings hosted in outreach locations throughout the county. These took place in accessible venues and local transport provision was provided where possible
- Promotion of consultations in local newspapers and radio advertisements
- Electronic promotion through contacts from the respective Implementing Bodies
- Mail Shots
- Direct Mail to individuals who had already expressed an interest in the new programme
- Questionnaires / surveys
- Stakeholder meetings
- Focus Groups
- Social media sites such as Facebook (See Supplementary Information on Participative Planning, Promotion, Appendix 3.7 (A) – (D3))

In summary 445 individuals engaged in the area consultations which were co-ordinated by the Local Development Companies, representing some 217 organisations. This figure also included members of the public, who were not aligned to any community group.

### 3.6 Outline of the process undertaken to agree priorities and objectives

The Donegal Local Area Group has attempted to develop a strategy which is evidence based, and premised on the findings of the area profile and wider consultation process. The extensive Socio-Economic Profile and mapping exercise as presented in Section 2 'Area Profile' provides a solid informed approach to the development of priorities and interventions in specific catchments, and for specific disadvantaged groups in the four geographical areas.

The area and sectoral consultations carried out by LCDC Administration Staff and the Local Development Organisations have also been critical to informing the priorities and actions. The broad range of themes identified and covered within the actions of the LDS merely reflect the county's many challenges and complexities – i.e. its sheer scale, border location, large Gaeltacht, huge coastline, and levels of widespread deprivation within it. For this reason, the LDS is intentionally inclusive of all the themes outlined in the framework guidelines. The strategy aims to maximise the county's strengths and exploit intrinsic opportunities (for example through valuing the county's pristine landscape, and maximising its potential through support for innovative tourism initiatives). It also aims to minimise its weaknesses, for example by addressing some of its infrastructural deficits such as the lack of quality cycle networks, and it will attempt to guard against threats as presented in the SWOT, by addressing the lack of employment opportunities for young people by encouraging youth entrepreneurship.

In addition, a number of organisations have had an integral role in agreeing priorities and objectives of the Local Development Strategy. The PPN has played an important role in the design and development phases of the LDS for County Donegal;

and the Social Inclusion Measures Working Group has played a decisive role in the development of the LDS in the context of social inclusion and poverty. Furthermore, The Donegal led LAG will continue to drive meaningful citizen and community engagement in the scoping, planning, delivery and evaluation of the LEADER programme. In essence, the strategy continuously attempts to reinforce the ethos that communities are best placed to be the key decision makers and to identify the type of support needed to facilitate the development of their own areas.

### 3.7 Inter relationship between Identified themes and actions

The following is a brief synopsis of the key themes identified through the one-to-one, sectoral and area based consultations. These documented comments have then been aligned with strategic actions subsequently devised within the LDS. The objectives have been directly influenced by the information garnered in the consultations as illustrated overleaf.

#### Theme 1: Economic Development, Enterprise Development and Job Creation

##### Rural Tourism

- Provide for initiatives that contribute to the development of the Wild Atlantic Way (WAW) including improved infrastructure and signage, access to technologies for tourism; support to improve linkages between and add value to attractions and facilities along the route. (Strategic Action 1.3).
- Bring existing tourism providers / attractions up to quality standards (Refer to Strategic Action 1.3).
- Support communities to develop and implement localised tourism strategies and studies to identify potential projects and maximise the potential of the WAW. (Refer to Strategic Action 1.3).
- Enhance and develop initiatives which provide Recreation / Outdoor Pursuits including development of walking and hiking routes/trails, specialist accommodation such as hostels and campsites, development of off road cycling routes for leisure cycling (Refer to Strategic Action 2.1).
- Development of Marine Tourism and niche tourism specialism's e.g. basking sharks, dolphins etc. (Refer to Strategic Action 1.3).
- Development and promotion of flagship tourism attractions such as Malin Head and other iconic sites (Strategic Action 1.3).
- Promote cross border tourism (Refer to Strategic Action 1.4; 2.1).
- Development of cultural/heritage/spiritual tourism and cultural infrastructure for tourism purposes including cultural heritage attractions, promotion of heritage trails, and delivery of genealogy projects; promotion of archaeological sites, and protection/restoration of heritage. Further development of the existing Donegal Diaspora project. (Refer to Strategic Action 1.4)
- Delivery of innovative, sustainable and quality festivals and events that showcase the County and attract national and international visitors to the area such as aviation events, food festivals, marine and water based festivals/events, garden shows etc. (Refer to Strategic Action 1.4).

- Provision of specialist accommodation where there is an identified need such as green eco/carbon neutral accommodation, hostel accommodation, glamping sites, etc. (Refer to Strategic Action 1.3).

### Enterprise Development

- Support growth of research and development as well as products to support renewable energy (Refer to Strategic Actions 7.1).
- Establishment of motor home facilities/service bays. (Refer to Strategic Action 3.1).
- Collective marketing and branding/bundling of specific tourism products / activities, (Refer to Strategic Action 3.2).
- Nurturing and promotion of the Irish language, music, folklore, craft and artistic heritage (Refer to Strategic Action 1.4, 8.1, 9.1).
- Develop further the eco tourism network, provision of animation support to small scale tourism providers enabling them to plan and develop their business ideas, (Refer to Strategic Action 5.1, 5.2).
- Support for initiatives which promote the development of social enterprise in leisure, recreation etc. i.e. petting farms/kids play areas, sports, renewable energy, creative enterprises, artisan foods etc. (Refer to Strategic Action 6.1).
- Supports for start-up and expanding innovative indigenous enterprises & creative industries and visual arts enterprises including generation of flagship creative products. (Refer to Strategic Action 9.1, 4.2, 3.1).
- Innovative enterprises in the renewable energy sector in particular small scale wind, solar, hydro, biomass and bio energy initiatives that exploit Donegal's indigenous natural resources. (Refer to Strategic Actions 3.1, 8.1, 9.1).
- Diversification of the fishing and farming sector to broaden their economic base, for example to grow niche wood products (Refer to Strategic Action 3.1, 4.1).
- Establishment of cross border/transnational links in order to research new opportunities for profitability and production markets. Support for business networks and local and regional branding initiatives (Refer to Strategic Action 7.1).
- Support the growth of the creative industries, including provision of equipment, training, and cultural facilities to make rural communities more sustainable and address the challenge of depopulation and an aging population. (Refer to Strategic Action 9.1, 3.1).
- Support the growth of social enterprises and rural diversification. (Refer to Strategic Action 6.1).

### Rural Towns

- Further development, refurbishment of on-shore, riverside and lakeside facilities, and procurement of equipment for water sports based enterprises. (Refer to Strategic Action 10.2).



- Support general appearance upgrading and environmental and amenity improvement works to enhance the characteristics of towns and villages, and make them more vibrant and a more attractive place to live. e.g. upgrading of community parks, green areas, local walks, redevelopment of disused railway lines etc. Develop focal points in towns and villages, implement action plans that support enhancement, provide recreational amenities like playgrounds, skateboard parks etc. (Refer to Strategic Action 10.1).
- Creative actions on derelict buildings, streetscapes; initiatives that make towns and villages more accessible, as well as develop access facilities which will enable people with disabilities to engage in recreational activity. (Refer to Strategic Action 10.1).
- Develop town branded food and craft markets. Promote regeneration of vacant/derelict buildings. (Refer to Strategic Action 10.1).
- Build on achievement of tidy towns and develop 'Edible towns' i.e. planting up areas with vegetables/herbs instead of shrubs (Strategic Action 10.1).

### Broadband

- Support initiatives that assist people to become more digitally connected through the development of Community Digital Hubs using existing community owned buildings and infrastructure e.g. provision of IT suites in community centres to facilitate the delivery of ICT training and access to ICT, provision of incubation spaces for digital business and web start-ups etc. (Refer to Strategic Actions 11.1, 15.1).
- Development of small scale "Futuristic Fáilte" type facilities in towns particularly those towns located along the WAW, and creating WIFI hotspots in towns and villages. Provide funding for small scale equipment, such as boosters, for local businesses (Refer to Strategic Actions 1.3, 15.1).

## Theme 2 Social Inclusion

### Basic Service

- Use ICT to enable Donegal to become a low carbon county (Refer to Strategic Actions 18.1).
- Provide digital skills training for hard to reach communities (Refer to Strategic Action 13.1, 15.1, 16.1).
- Address unemployment on the islands for example through upskilling new skills to address labour market shortages, for example in marine tourism development, knowledge of the unique flora and fauna of the islands etc. (Refer to Strategic Action 12.1, 13.1).
- Support training activities to build the capacity and assist the sustainability of new and existing community organisations for example to develop recreational and leisure facilities, upgrade existing community facilities or provide new community facilities where none exist (Refer to Strategic Action 13.1, 17.1, 19.1).

- Support actions that develop community networks to share knowledge and good practice and promote active and healthier lifestyles etc. (Refer to Strategic Action 20.1).
- Support challenges to overcome and address specific island challenges and promote coastal economic growth. (Refer to Strategic Action 19.1).
- Support language planning or alternative methods to increase and exploit the employment potential of islanders for example, through the provision of immersion education and learning. (Refer to Strategic Action 16.1, 19.1, 12.1).

### Rural Youth

- Support actions that encourage youth entrepreneurship including for example, practical training initiatives to pursue outdoor recreation (e.g. surfing, kayaking, etc.); as well as the development of work placement / 'street work' initiatives, volunteering programmes in private and community sector (in conjunction with secondary schools). (Refer to Strategic Action 13.4, 20.1).
- Provide for training initiatives that facilitate the transfer of traditional skills, address identified skills shortages, life-skills training etc. Provision of animation and mentoring support to enable young people to plan and develop their business ideas. (Refer to Strategic Action 20.1).
- Promote positive mental health, address isolation and improve communication skills through provision of social and recreational facilities such as development of youth facilities based on Men's Sheds model for younger men, youth cafes, outdoor play areas for teenagers e.g. with zip lines etc. (Refer to Strategic Action 13.2, 20.1, 21.1).
- Support rural transport initiatives in conjunction with existing providers to better enable young people to access services. (Refer to Strategic Action 21.1).
- Support personal development initiatives, train the trainers in youth development, leadership training for youth in all fields; youth re-skilling, encouragement self employment for young people etc. (Refer to Strategic Action 13.1, 20.1).

## Theme 3 Rural Environment

### Protection and Sustainable use of Water Resources

- Support initiatives which create awareness of water management issues and encourage conservation, e.g. community environmental initiatives that protect the natural marine resource whilst developing the blue economy e.g. community led coastal erosion prevention (especially for Island communities), beach management, river/loughs and lake management, reducing environmental pressures. (Refer to Strategic Actions 22.1, 24.1).
- Support waste reduction methods (for example, water) (Refer to Strategic Action 23.1).

### Protection and Improvement of Local Biodiversity

- Examples of support under this initiative include creating awareness and eradication of invasive species of plant, or encourage communities to develop 'more attractive areas' like the 'Golden Mile' initiative in Galway. Encourage training and create awareness of local biodiversity e.g. existing trail infrastructure, community led bird conservation initiatives such as provision of

swift nest boxes or bird hide projects similar to the Blanket Nook initiative. (Refer to Strategic Actions 25.1, 26.1, 26.2, 26.3).

### **Development of Renewable Energy**

- Support initiatives that provide for efficient harvesting and minimal damage to woodland and wetlands, e.g. small scale equipment, initiatives which exploit the natural resource and create sustainable renewable energy resources for the benefit of the rural community for example adoption of renewable energy actions that promote the use of green technology in community owned buildings such as rainwater harvesting, alternative energy provision (Refer to Strategic Action 27.1, 27.2, 27.3, 27.4).
- Develop Donegal's status as a leader in eco-accreditation (Refer to Strategic Action 27.4).
- Provide alternative energy for new and existing community buildings. (Refer to Strategic Action 27.1, 17.1).
- Promote the use of natural resources. (Refer to Strategic Action 27.1).

## Section 4: LDS Action Plan

### Donegal LAG Vision for the Local Development Strategy under the LEADER / RDP 2014 – 2020

***To stimulate and support sustainable and innovative rural development that builds a diverse and sustainable economy, creates greater ownership of the environment, heritage and culture, that contributes to the quality of life for the citizens of Donegal and a collective sense of purpose in achieving 'Life in Balance'.***

To achieve this vision, this chapter presents the strategic action plan as developed by the Donegal LCDC led LAG. Table 1 below presents a summary of the action plan.

**Table 1: Summary of LCDC Led LAG Action Plan**

Obj no	Objective	Action Ref	Strategic Action Title
Sub Theme: Rural Tourism			
1	To harness the potential of Donegal’s world class authentic tourism offerings ( including the Wild Atlantic Way) for the benefit of rural communities by facilitating diversification and the creation of indigenous tourism enterprises , community based tourism initiatives and ancillary facilities	1.1	To develop & promote equestrian activities & facilities
		1.2	Support the development of digital tourism
		1.3	To capitalise on the Wild Atlantic Way
		1.4	Religious Trails & Cultural/Language Tourism
2	To encourage initiatives that facilitate accessibility and access to engage and participate in the enjoyment in activity, adventure and recreational based activities	2.1	Support and develop green trails
		2.2	To increase access and accessibility
Sub Theme: Enterprise Development			
3	To collaboratively support and promote an enterprise ecosystem, which will improve competitiveness, investment and job creation; and nurture innovation and entrepreneurship throughout Donegal	3.1	Rural Enterprises including Artisan Food Producers
		3.2	Marketing Branding and Bundling
4	To support enterprises and initiatives which add value to local produce and which build on the core competencies and resources of the region.	4.1	Stimulating Farm Diversification
		4.2	To support the development of Culinary Academy's
5	To stimulate job creation across all rural areas in County Donegal and address the distinctive training and support needs of operating businesses in rural areas	5.1	To assist in facilitating Business Planning
		5.2	Training for Tourism Providers
6	To support social enterprises promoted by local community and voluntary groups which address	6.1	Social Enterprise

	local needs and services.		
7	To support and facilitate research and knowledge transfer on the potential of Donegal's natural resources	7.1	Research and Development
8	To support initiatives that unlock the potential of Donegal's built, natural and cultural heritage	8.1	Woodland Development
9	To facilitate the development of cultural facilities that support artistic endeavour and provide training and mentoring programmes to increase the capacity and skills base of arts organisations and artists within the county, whilst also recognising the opportunities presented by the Gaeltacht	9.1	Supporting and nurturing creative industries
Sub Theme: Rural Towns			
10	To stimulate rural town and village cores, to enable them to act as the hubs to drive economic, social and cultural renewal for the surrounding hinterland	10.1	Build strong town cores
		10.2	Harbour Development
Sub Theme: Broadband			
11	To develop Donegal as a connected place physically and digitally, by enhancing accessibility to quality infrastructure and ICT in rural areas	11.1	Community Broadband Initiatives
Sub Theme: Basic Services Targeted at hard to reach communities			
12	To build sustainable rural, coastal and island communities in County Donegal by focusing on local comparative advantage and nurturing existing expertise, skills and assets.	12.1	Potential of Coastal Community Heritage
13	To build more inclusive communities throughout County Donegal through the provision of a number of capacity, animation and leadership training programmes that are based on local needs, complement existing programmes and maximise the uptake of funding	13.1	Training and Capacity Building
		13.2	Social Prescription
		13.3	Targeting Initiatives at Older People
		13.4	Rural Youth Entrepreneurs
14	To develop community space and infrastructure within the county that will ensure better access for example to ICT, Training, Language, Business and Public Services for hard to reach communities	14.1	Supporting Community Organisations
		14.2	Recreational Supports
15	To foster local community participation in the Digital Society by supporting projects and initiatives that facilitate the growth of sustainable and inclusive communities through the use of ICT & digital technologies	15.1	Digital Participation
16	To support activities that enhance the use of Irish as a living language through which communities can engage in social, cultural and economic activities	16.1	Digital Language
17	To support the establishment, growth and development of social enterprises	17.1	Consolidating and Reusing Community Facilities

18	To support environmentally sustainable initiatives that promote energy conservation and energy independence and do not impact negatively on the needs of future generations.	18.1	ICT and the Green Economy
19	To support measures that strengthen island communities by improving access to basic services, increasing skill levels and empowering them to engage in all decisions regarding their future sustainability	19.1	Addressing Island/Coastal Challenges
Sub Theme: Rural Youth			
20	To work in partnership with key stakeholders to widen social, cultural, economic and employment opportunities; and address the issue of isolation for young people in rural areas	20.1	Social and Recreational Facilities for Young People
21	To develop innovative solutions that address rural transport concerns and help to build sustainable eco communities and villages	21.1	Rural Transport
Sub Theme: Protection and Sustainable Use of Water Resources			
22	To support programmes and projects that assist with sustainable coastal zone management	22.1	Coastal Protection
23	To explore local opportunities that utilise waste as a resource to reduce greenhouse gas emissions whilst also creating new growth and job opportunities such as better eco-design, waste prevention and reuse	23.1	Reducing Waste
24	To complement and support the implementation of the North Western International River Basin Management Plan within which Donegal is located.	24.1	Improve Water Quality
Sub Theme: Protection and Improvement of Local Biodiversity			
25	To value the benefits provided by the environment and the potential they offer to develop activities based around spiritual enrichment, eco retreats, cognitive development, reflection, recreation and aesthetic enjoyment.	25.1	Promote Sustainable Development and Showcase the Environment
26	To support measures which will coordinate, promote, protect and enhance Donegal's rich biosphere and facilitate opportunities for the development of sustainable tourism and enterprise and social development	26.1	Supporting Renewable Energy and Sustainable Development
		26.2	Creating Awareness of Environment Amongst Communities
		26.3	Efficient Harvesting
Sub Theme: Development of Renewable Energy			
27	To support initiatives that will increase the use of renewable energy and promote sustainable energy use in the transport realm, and in homes, businesses and communities	27.1	Stimulate the Uptake of Renewable Technology
		27.2	Promoting Energy Efficiency
		27.3	Support for the Green Technology Sector
		27.4	Eco Accreditation



## Theme 1 Economic / Enterprise Development & Job Creation

### Subtheme: Rural Tourism

Local Objective 1	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To harness the potential of Donegal's world class authentic tourism offerings ( including the Wild Atlantic Way) for the benefit of rural communities by facilitating diversification and the creation of indigenous tourism enterprises , community based tourism initiatives and ancillary facilities</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Economic Development, Enterprise Development and Job Creation
<b>Sub Theme</b>	Rural Tourism
<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	The profile, consultations and Area Needs Analysis underline the countywide requirement to capitalise on rising tourism numbers by harnessing tourism potential and encouraging diversification. As well as developing attractions this involves exploring ways to inform visitors about our unique heritage as well as increasing access to same in an appropriate and sustainable manner. Consultations identified the need to develop coastal, riverside and lakeside facilities and for the provision of initiatives that contribute to the development of the WAW including improved infrastructure and signage, access to technologies for tourism, and support to improve linkages between and add value to attractions and facilities along the route. In addition it will be necessary to ensure adequate services in terms of accommodation, waste disposal, motor home services, etc .
<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€1,272,735</b>
<b>No Strategic Actions</b>	<b>4</b>
Strategic Action 1.1	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Developing &amp; Promoting Equestrian Activities and Facilities</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Market Donegal as a quality destination for equestrian holidays. Develop equestrian facilities and trails; as well as promote Natural Horsemanship courses, equine training, Western Trail riding etc
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Aspiring tour operators start-ups & established equestrian services and tourism businesses
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Failte Ireland, Teagasc, AIRC
<b>Time Frame for delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 – 2020 IDP & UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	12 projects funded, Minimum of 15 new jobs created ( No FT/PT/Seasonal) No of existing jobs sustained Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation No of visitors
Strategic Action 1.2	

<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Supporting the Development of Digital Tourism</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Support the development of promotional material and digital information which better markets all types of tourism products such as walks, cycle ways, trails etc including the development of interactive maritime maps and mobile applications detailing maritime leisure activities and events, and the production of digital content to show the natural and cultural assets existing in Donegal; for example, the development of apps which tell the stories of lighthouses, fishermen's cottages, fishermen's stories etc. Support initiatives to develop small scale 'futuristic failte' type facilities in towns particularly those located along the WAW.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Local community, tourism businesses and providers, individuals, local restaurants, food providers, coastal communities
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Faile Ireland , Dept Agriculture, Marine & Natural Resources, BIM
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 – 2020 IDP & UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators &amp; Target</b>	16 projects funded 16 jobs sustained Increase in sales by 15% Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation No of visitors
<b>Strategic Action 1.3</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Capitalising on the Wild Atlantic Way</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Contribute to the development of the 'Wild Atlantic Way' including support to improve linkages between, and add value to, a range of attractions and facilities along the route. This includes bringing existing tourism providers up to quality standards; further development of new business' by supporting small activity providers located along the WAW for example those involved in water-based activities or mountain biking; support for local communities to develop and implement localised tourism strategies to maximise the potential of the WAW. Support the development of environmentally sensitive viewing points along the WAW to complement those already in existence; including bothies and shelters for use for maritime life and coastal bird watching enthusiasts. Support infrastructural and service development on an inter-agency basis along existing and new walking routes and maritime hotspots; in particular, specialist accommodation where there is an identified need such as carbon neutral accommodation, disability friendly accommodation, hostel accommodation, camping facilities; glamping sites etc to include toilet and shower facilities, as well as improved access and adequate interpretative signage and signposting, so visitors can experience and fully enjoy marine and leisure activities.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Aspiring entrepreneurs, start-ups & established tourism businesses along the WAW, local communities along the WAW
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Faile Ireland, BIM, Department Agriculture Marine & Natural Resources, DLSRP, Bird Watch Ireland, Sports Ireland, Community

	Groups, Artists, Craft Providers , Private Individuals, Tourism & Accommodation Providers
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 – 2020 IDP & UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators &amp; Target</b>	37 projects funded Create minimum of 37 jobs ( No FT/PT/Seasonal) Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation No of enterprises funded by sector
<b>Strategic Action 1.4</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Religious Trails and Cultural/Language Tourism</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Develop initiatives in consultation with local heritage societies and Donegal County Council's Heritage programme for restoration/rebuild of locally significant, historical, natural and environmental structures and areas. Develop cultural tourism including improved access to archaeological and historical features, identifying and recording important historic Battlefield sites in the County. Support the development of heritage based tourism based on early Christianity, for example to link St Columba and Tory Island to the Columba Trail; or assist the 'Amazing Grace' initiative. Develop cultural heritage and language tourism attractions, including cultural infrastructure, for example, visitors centres, distilleries; restoration of significant historical cottages/homes, railway line infrastructure (pillars, bridges, aquaducts), promotion of heritage and biodiversity trails, and delivery of genealogy projects. Develop linkages with the Donegal Diaspora and preservation of Donegal's distinctive world renowned traditional music heritage etc.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Aspiring entrepreneurs, start-ups & established tourism businesses, local community, heritage & culture groups, private individuals
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Faile Ireland, The Heritage Council, National Parks & Wildlife Service, Inishowen Heritage Group, Inishowen Tourism, Foras na Gaeilge, Biodiversity Ireland
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 – 2020 IDP & UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators &amp; Targets</b>	18 projects funded Create minimum of 9 jobs ( No FT/PT/Seasonal) Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation No of start-up enterprises funded by sector No of existing enterprises funded and when founded % change in linguistic capabilities No of persons trained No of links to Donegal Diaspora No of vacant or derelict heritage buildings

<b>Local Objective 2</b>	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To encourage initiatives that facilitate accessibility and access to engage and participate in the enjoyment in activity, adventure and recreational based activities</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Economic Development; Enterprise Development & Job Creation
<b>Sub Theme</b>	Rural Tourism

<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	The wide range of natural, built and cultural heritage features of the LDS catchment area have been extensively documented in the Area Profile. Through the SWOT analysis and consultations held, the potential of the County's heritage was to the fore in terms of increasing the quality of life of rural communities but also in terms of enterprise creation and tourism growth through for example the development of tours, trails and initiatives to access and utilise heritage features; access to relevant information regarding natural, built and cultural heritage features online, onsite and/or at tourism hubs; appropriate physical access to such heritage features and works to preserve, enhance and promote such sites or features.
<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€590,705</b>
<b>No of Strategic Actions</b>	2
<b>Strategic Action 2.1</b>	
<b>Strategic Action Title &amp; Number</b>	<b>Developing Green Trails</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Support and develop a modern and fit for purpose Greenway infrastructure throughout Donegal and on a cross-border basis making use of available corridors of land where possible. Examples of what could be supported under this initiative include the development of on-road and off-road cycling routes to complement existing routes; support for the maintenance, development, marketing and promotion of riverside, lakeside, hill, coastal and mountain walks; and hiking routes and wildlife and heritage trails on an interagency basis, with particular emphasis on the routes with recreational and tourism potential along the Wild Atlantic Way. To include the initial consultation phase which secures access routes from communities and landowners; the design and construction phase in consultation with the National Trails Office, and the promotion and marketing phase of the project once established. Also provide support for the associated industry and service providers including bike-hire and accommodation providers.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Aspiring entrepreneurs, start-ups & established tourism businesses, local community, private individuals, land owners, local authorities
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Faillte Ireland, Coillte, National Trails Office, Sport Ireland
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC CNO 2016 – 2020 IDP & UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	23 projects funded Minimum of 23 jobs No FT/PT/Seasonal) No of spin off businesses Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation No of km of trails developed
<b>Strategic Action 2.2</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Increasing Access and Accessibility</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Support initiatives that make towns and villages more accessible and ensure social inclusion, accessibility and local connectivity are a priority

	in all future planning. For example, projects (including mobile facilities) that enhance wheelchair access at piers, jetties', boardwalks, promenades and slipways to ensure inclusive participation in maritime activities. Improve access to same amenities through the creation or establishment of maps, signage, interpretation etc
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Local community based groups, coastal communities, private individuals, tourism providers
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Department Agriculture, Marine & Natural Resources, Accessibility NGOs for example IWA , Other implementing partners
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 – 2020 IDP & UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators &amp; Target</b>	15 projects funded Maintain 5 jobs ( No FT/PT/Seasonal) Enhanced access to facilities in at least 10 locations No of facilities upgraded No of highly accessible facilities in the county.

### Subtheme: Enterprise Development

<b>Local Objective 3</b>	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To collaboratively support and promote an enterprise ecosystem, which will improve competitiveness, investment and job creation; and nurture innovation and entrepreneurship throughout Donegal</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Economic Development, Enterprise Development and Job Creation
<b>Sub Theme</b>	Enterprise Development
<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	Various sections of the socio economic profile outline a number of challenges facing Donegal such as high unemployment, low educational attainment, infrastructural deficits and high deprivation rates. Closer alignment between the activities of local communities, the business community, local government, and tourist/social agencies in terms of employment and enterprise creation, increasing economic viability for existing businesses and in harnessing tourism locally are essential. Cross sectoral working was identified as particularly significant in towns and villages in order to increase footfall. The consultations and the SWOT analysis also highlighted the need for supports for start-ups and expanding innovative indigenous enterprises; research to be undertaken to establish sustainable methods to exploit our natural resources; establish cross border/transnational links to develop new synergies and markets (including production); the economic opportunities presented by Letterkenny - Derry Gateway and support for business networks and local and regional branding initiatives particularly in tourism.
<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€343,522</b>
<b>No Strategic Actions</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Strategic Action 3.1</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Rural Enterprises including Artisan Food Producers</b>
<b>Brief Description of</b>	Provision of a range of supports for start-up and expanding innovative



<b>Strategic Action</b>	indigenous enterprises with a particular focus on artisan food and drink producers. This includes support for those seeking to move from primary to secondary artisan food production. Development of marketing and branding strategies for new and emerging markets for artisan and local seafood's, in conjunction with key agencies such as Bord Bia, for example the development of regional 'Good Food' guides. Other examples of support include the establishment of an artisan food co operative to jointly market artisan produce and seek new markets for export; development of traditional aquaculture species with particular emphasis on those which offer commercial potential for artisan production and which value could be added through tourism initiatives such as food trails etc. Facilitate and explore new methods to research, test, process and develop artisan produce, for example, artisan smoking. Inspire, inform and encourage innovation and new product development, supported where appropriate with mentoring and accredited training.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Aspiring entrepreneurs, start-up and established business owners, artisan food producers, local restaurants, coastal communities, tourism providers and community groups
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Bord Bia, Teagasc, Bord Iascaigh Mhara, Fáilte Ireland
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 -2020 IDP& UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	21 projects Create minimum of 25 jobs Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation No of start-up enterprises funded by sector No of existing enterprises funded and when founded No of persons trained
<b>Strategic Action 3.2</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Market Branding and Bundling</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Promote initiatives that add value to local products and services including support for business networks, collective marketing (for example for creative industries/organic produce) and branding/bundling of local and regional products such as Donegal lamb or cheese; as well as activities and services to promote collaborative development; for example, Donegal Self-Catering Association, Outdoor Recreation Network, or specific geographic areas(such as the Islands, coastal areas or neighbouring villages and towns). These could complement and connect existing products and marketing channels for example, activity packages such as fishing and kayaking or heritage/culture and outdoor recreation. Support the development of promotional directories to market indigenous produce and the establishment of marts or other group marketing strategies and plans which can support several producers simultaneously.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Aspiring entrepreneurs, start-ups & established tourism businesses and providers, local community, community based groups, individuals , local restaurants, food providers, coastal communities
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán



<b>deliver Action</b>	
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Failte Ireland, Inishowen Tourism, DSRP
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 -2020 IDP& UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators &amp;</b>	23 projects Create minimum of 12 new jobs created (FT/PT/Seaonal) Increase in sales by a minimum of 10% in marketing projects Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation No of start-up enterprises funded by sector No of existing enterprises funded and when founded

<b>Local Objective 4</b>	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To support enterprises and initiatives which add value to local produce and which build on the core competencies and resources of the region.</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Economic Development, Enterprise Development and Job Creation
<b>Sub Theme</b>	Enterprise Development
<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	Chapter 4 of the Area Profile, Protecting & Harnessing Our Rural Environment sets out the opportunities that the Donegal environment offers in terms of potential growth and development for enterprise creation and tourism product development whilst also improving recreational access for Donegal residents. Chapter 5 Donegal's Primary Sectors set out the different aspects of Donegal's Food Resource to demonstrate the potential it offers for farm diversification, creation of rural enterprises, and development of rural tourism and long term sustainability of rural communities. Agricultural activity for many decades has been a primary sector of economic and social importance in Donegal. However over the decades this sector has experienced significant change brought about by diversification. Change has also taken place in the areas of fishing and forestry. The SWOT analysis and the consultations identified the need for diversification in the areas of fishing and farming sector to broaden their economic base, for example to grow niche wood products.
<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€284,389</b>
<b>No Strategic Actions</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Strategic Action 4.1</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Stimulating Farm Diversification</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Document best practice and support research which will establish consumer demand and purchasing habits, in order to lead, shape and stimulate farm diversification and enable small operators to envision a better living through expansion into other sectors which can add value and improve their long-term income. Encourage growth and innovation in alternative farm enterprises and niche sectors for future development through for example, the establishment of snail farms; the creation of cycle ways, horse riding trails, rock climbing areas, walled gardens and organic farms for supplying local industries etc. Facilitate field trips and site visits to view best practice enterprises and tourism models nationally and internationally which have scope to become operational in County Donegal for example rural farm trails similar to those successfully running in Iceland. Explore methods to get more young people (and women) involved in farm diversification, for example through the development of accredited farm placement modules in schools or utilising innovative approaches to access and engage hard to reach participants.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Members of the farm household, community based groups, individuals, local farmers, co-operatives and tourism providers, businesses
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Teagasc, Dept of Agriculture, Marine & Natural Resources, IFA, Inishowen Coop, Cross Border Partners, Failte Ireland and DLSRP
<b>Time Frame for</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO

<b>Delivery</b>	2016 – 2020 IDP & UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	13 projects funded Create minimum of 20 jobs.(FT/PT/Seasonal) Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation No of start-up enterprises funded by sector No of existing enterprises funded and when founded Farm ownership composition and income levels
<b>Strategic Action 4.2</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Supporting the Development of Culinary Academy's</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Support the development of cookery/ seafood schools and seaweed events, and integrate seafood into local festivals and regatta type events which showcase ships and maritime activity. Support initiatives that can establish the provenance of local products, for example, the development of culinary academies which can help rejuvenate isolated towns and link with local businesses in expanding the tourism product range.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Community based groups, individuals ,local restaurants, food providers, coastal communities, tourism providers, businesses
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	BIM, Fáilte Ireland and Bord Bia
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 – 2020 IDP & UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators &amp; Target</b>	12 projects funded Create minimum of 6 jobs. No of new links to Donegal Food Coast

<b>Local Objective 5</b>	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To stimulate job creation across all rural areas in County Donegal and address the distinctive training and support needs of operating businesses in rural areas</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Economic Development, Enterprise Development and Job Creation
<b>Sub Theme</b>	Enterprise Development
<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	The Area Profile and SWOT analysis identify unemployment as a key weakness within the LDS catchment area. In 2011 Donegal had the highest rate of unemployment of any County in the State at 26.2%. Male and youth unemployment were identified as particular challenges in this regard at 31% and 32% respectively. To combat this, the stimulation of job creation directly or the creation of the conditions necessary for economic activity to take place is a recurring feature across the LDS. Building our competitive advantage in opportunity areas such as food, the marine and off shore sectors; technology & innovation; adding value to the primary sectors; rural diversification, tourism, protecting, promoting & harnessing the built, natural & cultural heritage were identified through enhancing the provision and accessibility to key infrastructure (transport, broadband, community services, education & training, health, water, wastewater, etc. In addition, targeting relevant general and specialist training for existing business, entrepreneurs, the unemployed, and members of the rural community will assist in driving economic activity in the County.

<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€267,050</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Strategic Action 5.1</b>	
<b>Strategic Action Title &amp; Number</b>	<b>Facilitating Business Planning</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Provide job creation initiatives and robust business planning training for local entrepreneurs and cooperative type groups, for example in business start up, obtaining bank loans, financial planning, accounting and effective tax practices, farm succession, addressing local supply chain and quality handling issues, connecting with larger industry players etc where gaps in existing service provision by public organizations have been identified.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Aspiring entrepreneurs, start-up & established business owners, private individuals, local businesses, graduate students, community based groups, coastal communities
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Comhar na nOileán
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Other implementing partners
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 – 2020 IDP & UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	12 projects funded Maintain existing jobs and create minimum of 6 new jobs (FT/PT/Seasonal) Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation No of start-up enterprises funded by sector No of existing enterprises funded and when founded No of participants trained
<b>Strategic Action 5.2</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Training for Tourism Providers</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Provide animation support to local tourism providers and operators enabling them to plan and develop their business ideas and utilize e-booking and social media effectively; support training in areas with identified skills shortages for example certified guide and tour operators; accredited training in rural tourism marketing, eco-marine tourism, such as sail, kayak leadership and marine and eco-tourism products and knowledge. Provide training to local tourism providers aimed at adding value to the tourism product, for example, marketing, business development and management training; hospitality and customer service training for front-line staff; local tourism product awareness training. Also, in-depth training on the coastal landscape and wildlife in order to develop the eco tourist industry and meet demand for marine tourism specialism's such as those based around Basking Sharks or the Northern Lights etc
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Aspiring entrepreneurs, start-ups & established tourism businesses, local community, individuals, coastal communities.
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal

<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Faite Ireland, NPWS, Heritage Council
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 – 2020 IDP & UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators &amp; Target</b>	45 projects funded 10,000 additional visitors Increase sales by 15% Create minimum of 22 jobs (FT/PT/Seasonal) Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation No of start-up enterprises funded by sector No of existing enterprises funded and when founded No of operators trained.

<b>Local Objective 6</b>	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To support social enterprises promoted by local community and voluntary groups which address local needs and services.</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Economic Development, Enterprise Development and Job Creation
<b>Sub Theme</b>	Enterprise Development
<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	A key challenge identified through the Socio Economic Profile was accessibility to services particularly in hard to reach communities while the consultation phase identified concerns around the viability of existing community infrastructure. The Area Needs Analysis highlighted the importance of enabling community organisations or social enterprises to expand their remit and service offer (by hosting digital, training and tourism hubs for the locality and become more relevant and effective to meet the escalating needs of rural communities. Again closer alignment between the activities of local communities, the business community, local government, and tourist/social agencies (including on a cross border basis) were identified as essential in terms of employment creation, targeted training provision, driving rural towns, increasing economic viability, diversification and adding value in the primary sectors; tourism infrastructure provision and in harnessing natural, built and cultural heritage locally.
<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€342,878</b>
<b>No of Strategic Actions</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Strategic Action 6.1</b>	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>Supporting Social Enterprise</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Support initiatives which enable and promote the development of social enterprise within existing and new community facilities including investment in leisure, recreational, animal husbandry, sports, renewable energy and other commercial activities; or develop linkages with local businesses such as creative enterprises or artisan foods e.g. hire out of existing commercial standard community kitchens to local food producers, or rental of halls for communities activities. Increase service provision and recreational use of underutilised lands and buildings adjacent to community venues, for example through the

	development of motor home parking or other accommodation provision where it can add value; development of distinctly separate areas for motorized sports such as off-road four wheel drive, quad biking, motor bikes, scrambling etc. Provide an alternative source of income in off peak seasons by innovative means, for example, develop small enterprises on a timeshare basis.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Start-ups & established social enterprises, community based groups, individuals, tourism providers, businesses
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Bord Bia, Fáilte Ireland, Other implementing partners.
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC 2016 – 2020 IDP & UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	18 projects Minimum of 12 jobs 23 projects created (FT/PT/Seasonal) Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation No of start-up enterprises funded by sector No of existing enterprises funded and when founded Range of services offered in Social Enterprises Community participation rates No of economically viable social enterprise within the county

<b>Local Objective 7</b>	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To support and facilitate research and knowledge transfer on the potential of Donegal's natural resources</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Economic Development, Enterprise Development and Job Creation
<b>Sub Theme</b>	Enterprise Development
<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	The Area Profile outlined the unique location, geography, geology, landscape, ecology, etc which go to make up the natural resources of the LDS catchment area. The SWOT analysis and consultation feedback highlighted the significant potential to harness the County's natural assets whilst ensuring that such development is carried out in a manner which secures their future sustainability. The Area Needs Analysis established a range of areas where such potential exists. However, in order to fully understand the optimal way of carrying out such development, particularly with regards the more scientific and technologically specialised areas such as the circular economy, further research and strategy development is required.
<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€104,389</b>
<b>No Strategic Actions</b>	1
<b>Strategic Action 7.1</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Supporting Research and Development</b>



<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Support Research and Development (including feasibility studies) which explore opportunities to exploit Donegal's natural resources. To include for example, research on adding value to the timber resource; potential for the development of renewable energy including wind/hydro models; wave/tidal power, bio-fuel and biomass ; the extraction of health benefits from food and fish; extending the shelf life of fresh produce etc. Analysis and support of new product development; testing, market research and entry, business planning for sectors such as seafood and seaweeds, and their use in areas such as food, animal feed supplements, nutraceuticals and horticulture etc
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Aspiring entrepreneurs, start-ups & established business owners, community based groups, private individuals, tourism providers
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	BIM, Department of Agriculture, Marine & Natural Resources, Teagasc, SEAI
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC 2016 – 2020 IDP & UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	19 research and development projects funded Minimum of 4 Jobs (FT/PT/Seasonal) Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation No of start-up enterprises funded by sector No of existing enterprises funded and when founded

<b>Local Objective 8</b>	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To support initiatives that unlock the potential of Donegal's built, natural and cultural heritage</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Economic Development, Enterprise Development and Job Creation
<b>Sub Theme</b>	Enterprise Development
<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	The wide range of natural, built and cultural heritage features of the LDS catchment area have been extensively reported through the Area Profile. Through the SWOT analysis and consultations held, the potential of the County's heritage was to the fore in terms of increasing the quality of life of rural communities but also in terms of enterprise creation and growing the localised tourism offering. Areas highlighted may include access to relevant information regarding natural, built and cultural heritage features both online, onsite and/or at tourism hubs; appropriate physical access to such heritage features, on foot, by bike, by car, by bus, by boat, etc and appropriate works to preserve, enhance and promote such sites or features.
<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€269,843</b>
<b>No Strategic Actions</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Strategic Action 8.1</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Supporting Woodland Development</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic</b>	Provide business supports and stimulate innovation amongst small scale harvesters and entrepreneurs in the woodland sector to

<b>Action</b>	encourage new start ups, develop added value products and improve the supply chain to effectively market and distribute timber produce. Promote group schemes which maximise the benefits to wood growers and facilitate knowledge transfer and collaborative networking, as well as market entry within the woodland sector. Promote forests as places for recreational and activity tourism. Research and establish potential markets for new and innovative wood produce (such as eucalyptus and willow).
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Aspiring entrepreneurs, start-ups & established tourism businesses, local community, businesses, private individuals, local/Donegal Woodland Growers Association
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal & Islands
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Faite Ireland, Coillte, Teagasc
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC 2016 – 2020 IDP & UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	9 projects funded Minimum of 9 Jobs(FT/PT/Seasonal) No of wood growers group schemes developed Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation No of start-up enterprises funded by sector No of existing enterprises funded and when founded

<b>Local Objective 9</b>	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To facilitate the development of cultural facilities that support artistic endeavour and provide training and mentoring programmes to increase the capacity and skills base of arts organisations and artists within the county, whilst also recognising the opportunities presented by the Gaeltacht</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Economic Development, Enterprise Development and Job Creation
<b>Sub Theme</b>	Enterprise Development
<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	The extensive network of cultural activities and infrastructure in the County was highlighted in Chapter 6 of the Area Profile. The Donegal Diaspora and an Gaeltacht were highlighted as important growth areas requiring a range of infrastructural and training initiatives to enable them to reach their potential. Similarly, the consultations revealed the need to nurture creative industries and visual arts enterprises including the generation of flagship creative products. The establishment of cross border / transnational links to maximise profitability and production markets in the creative sector as well as local and regional branding initiatives were also highlighted.
<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€341,395</b>
<b>No of Strategic Actions</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Strategic Action 9.1</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Supporting and Nurturing Creative Industries</b>

<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Support, nurture and develop the creative industries such as textiles or knitting, with particular emphasis on craft and handicraft enterprises which could enable rural families to become more sustainable. Provide training and mentoring programmes to support creative industries, for example, to manufacture traditional music instruments or increase the capacity and skill base of arts organisations and artists. Provide specialised equipment for artists such as laser machines. Support the development of existing community facilities to provide space to support the creative sector, for example, art galleries, exhibitions etc
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Aspiring entrepreneurs, start-ups & established business owners in the creative industries sector, private individuals, artists, craft providers, private individuals, tourism providers
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Design & Crafts, Council of Ireland, The Arts Council, Ealaín na Gaeltachta Teo
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 – 2020 IDP & UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	16 projects funded 20 jobs 23 projects (FT/PT/Seasonal) No of projects linked to 'My Creative Edge Project' Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation No of start-up enterprises funded by sector No of existing enterprises funded and when founded

### Subtheme: Rural Towns

<b>Local Objective 10</b>	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To stimulate rural town and village cores, to enable them to act as the hubs to drive economic, social and cultural renewal for the surrounding hinterland</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Economic Development, Enterprise Development and Job Creation
<b>Sub Theme</b>	Rural Towns
<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	Chapter 2 of the Socio Economic Profile identifies high levels of town centre dereliction and vacancy across the County and low levels of town centre vitality as detrimental to economic growth and quality of life in rural towns. However, the Area Needs Analysis and the consultations identify the great potential which exists to revitalise and rejuvenate rural towns to act as vehicles for economic revival. Chapters 6 & 7 also identify significant opportunity (encouraged by increasing visitors numbers) to establish towns across the County as tourism access hubs. The Area Profile and consultations also identify the need to conserve and promote our built heritage whilst reinvigorating our town/village spaces and communities through the restoration and reuse of buildings and structures for accommodation, local enterprise, and retail and tourism services. Consultations also identified that improving the visual appearance of towns/villages through environmental and amenity improvements will enable towns to become more vibrant and attractive places to live in, work in & visit.

<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€579,598</b>
<b>No Strategic Actions</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Strategic Action 10.1</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Building Strong Town Cores</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Develop strong town cores that will promote economic and sustainable development. Examples of how this could be done include for example, the facilitation of high standard agricultural marts, food markets etc; support of infrastructural improvement works including upgrading of community parks, green areas, picnic areas, civic areas, forest parks, river walks, looped walks, existing walled gardens and Sli na Slainte walks as well as other forms of urban and village renewal. Provision of recreational amenities such as playgrounds, community based gardens, outdoor gyms, and skateboard/roller parks. Also, through general appearance upgrading including the repair of publically owned buildings such as halls, community centres, community ground open to the public etc. Regeneration of vacant/derelict buildings i.e. fit out as incubation spaces for start-up enterprises, creative hubs for local designers/creative industries, reuse of historic buildings to house tourism attractions; promote the use of creative art work on derelict buildings, enhance streetscapes, provide painting schemes for traditional type frontage etc.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Local community, businesses, community based groups, private individuals, tourism providers, landlords
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Heritage Council, Faillte Ireland, Roinn Ealaíon Oidhrreachta agus Gaeltachta, Crafts Council of Ireland, Arts Council, Department of Agriculture, Marine and Natural Resources,
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC 2016-2020 IDP, UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators &amp; Target</b>	15 Projects Delivered Physical and environmental improvements in 15 locations Population change in town No of vacant or derelict properties in the town. Increase in Town vitality,
<b>Strategic Action 10.2</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Facilitating Harbour Development</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Address key infrastructure issues and promote strategic approaches to harbour management in order to address dereliction, depopulation and vacancy, as well as promote sustainable development and increase the multi-use value of harbours and piers. Examples which could be supported under this initiative include the renovation of disused buildings for seafood and marine tourism purposes, or enhancement of existing marine heritage attractions. Further development of on-shore, riverside and lakeside facilities (including training facilities) for water sports and activity based tourism. Furthermore, procurement of equipment to enhance marine tourism such as picnic tables, the

	purchase of boats (new or second hand) for island hopping/sea angling or other activities which enhance the tourism experience for those utilising marine facilities; and equipment for water sports based enterprises such as deep sea diving, sailing, white-water rafting, whale watching, etc. Also, support for initiatives to enhance facilities and attractions for the development of the charter boat product and cruise ship market and tourism packages which complement on shore attractions, for example the development of sailing trails, which integrate seafood and fisheries into the marine tourism product.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Local community, businesses, coastal communities, tourism providers, community based groups, private individuals
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Faillte Ireland, Inland Fisheries Ireland, Bord Iascaigh Mhara, Department of Agriculture, Marine and Natural Resources, Faillte Ireland
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC, CNO 2016 – 2020 UNG & IDP
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators &amp; Target</b>	13 projects 5 full-time jobs created & 8 Jobs sustained (FT/PT/Seasonal) No of buildings reused No of facilities upgraded Population growth rates Reduction in deprivation rate Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation No of start-up enterprises funded by sector No of existing enterprises funded and when founded

### Subtheme: Broadband

<b>Local Objective 11</b>	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To develop Donegal as a connected place physically and digitally, by enhancing accessibility to quality infrastructure and ICT in rural areas</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Economic Development, Enterprise Development and Job Creation
<b>Sub Theme</b>	Broadband
<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	Donegal is the fifth most rurally dispersed County in Ireland. Statistical profiling on access to physical and social infrastructure identified an emerging communication divide with higher levels of accessibility to transport and broadband and pc toward the south eastern axis of the County, and lower levels in the more marginal areas to the north and west. The area profile and community consultation both highlighted the need to connect our rural populations through innovative solutions which could offset gaps in existing provision especially at off-peak hours and on non-viable routes; and through the development of Community Digital Hubs and ICT training which could contribute to sustainable growth.
<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€282,699</b>
<b>No Strategic Actions</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Strategic Action 11.1</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic</b>	<b>Community Broadband Initiatives</b>

<b>Action</b>	
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Provide a range of supports to determine broadband deficiencies and promote innovative community led solutions for local and visitor access to an improved broadband service. Actions could include the development of community owned broadband networks in areas that not within the scope of existing national initiatives; and the creation of wifi hotspots in towns and villages. Supports could also stimulate and facilitate the incorporation of digital technologies into traditional companies and businesses in order to 'go global'; open new market opportunities and adopt more efficient and sustainable business models. In addition, facilitate access to, and enable rural communities/businesses to utilise audio visual conferencing facilities/media and provide funding for small scale equipment such as boosters for local businesses.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Local communities, Businesses, Tourism Providers, Private Individuals
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Seirbhís Iompair Tuaithe Teo, Ernact
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016- 2020 IDP & UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	13 capacity building/ training/ information projects funded Create minimum of 11 jobs (FT/PT/Seasonal) Enhanced broadband access in 13 communities Increased uptake of households having a internet or broadband connection Increased no of households having a PC Number and socio economic demographic breakdown of participants on training courses Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation Increased broadband access at community centres. No of small scale equipment projects funded.



## Theme 2 Social Inclusion

### Subtheme: Basic Services Targeted at Hard to Reach Communities

Local Objective 12	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To build sustainable rural, coastal and island communities in County Donegal by focusing on local comparative advantage and nurturing existing expertise, skills and assets.</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Social Inclusion
<b>Sub Theme</b>	Basic Services targeted at hard to reach communities
<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	By using a range of indicators, statistical analysis has illustrated rural, coastal and island communities were identified as the hardest to reach in the County. However a review of cultural, built and natural heritage assets in Donegal also revealed they are among the richest in the county in terms of landscape, geology, archaeology, architecture, language, etc. It is essential that these unique elements are preserved, enhanced and promoted to increase sustainable access to them locally, whilst integrating their promotion into the entire countywide tourism product offering.
<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€175,610</b>
<b>No of Strategic Actions</b>	1
Strategic Action 12.1	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Potential of Coastal Community Heritage</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Provide training and build the capacity of coastal communities to best exploit their assets and protect their heritage including the provision of language planning for key personnel and volunteers on committees; as well as support initiatives that effectively market and promote language planning. Enable people living in coastal communities to transfer experiences and upgrade certification to improve their employment potential for example, as historic maritime ambassadors or traditional boat builders etc.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Community based groups, individuals, coastal communities, tourism providers, language planning groups
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Inishowen & Gaeltacht
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	BIM, Roinn Ealaíon Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta,.
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	2016- 2020 IDP & UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	18 training projects funded Improvement in deprivation rates Sustained coastal populations Level of employment No of services funded

	Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation.
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<b>Local Objective 13</b>	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To build more inclusive communities throughout County Donegal through the provision of a number of capacity, animation and leadership training programmes that are based on local needs, complement existing programmes and maximise the uptake of funding</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Social Inclusion
<b>Sub Theme</b>	Basic Services targeted at hard to reach communities
<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	Analysis carried out in the Area Profile on the level of accessibility to physical and social infrastructure identified a clear need to increase inclusivity by enhancing accessibility to services and gateways to employment at the local community level. To facilitate this, the consultation phase recommended actions to develop community networks to share knowledge and good practice; training initiatives to facilitate the transfer of traditional skills, address identified skills shortages, life-skills training; animation and mentoring support to enable young people to plan and develop their business ideas and a range of other training initiatives.
<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€533,009</b>
<b>No of Strategic Actions for the Objective</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Strategic Action 13.1</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Training and Capacity Building</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Carry out independent research and feasibility studies/evaluations on programmes carried out by the community & voluntary sector to determine their impact in tackling social and rural exclusion and foster best practice. Provide facilitation training and mentoring support to foster partnership working, build capacity and animate the community sector. This could include a wide range of areas for example business and marketing planning to stimulate social enterprise; address service gaps such as the lack of qualified chain saw operatives within the county; build community networks and leadership; address farm Health and Safety; provide women centred capacity building programmes; training to enable fishermen to exploit offshore work opportunities; car safety for young people, establishment of Codes of Practice and leadership training to run and operate farmers markets etc.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Local community, Individuals, CNO, Island Communities, Schools, Tourism Providers , Youth Groups
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Faite Ireland, Irish Lights, Heritage Council, Roinn na Mara, BIM, An Garda Síochana

<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 -2020 IDP &UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	29 training projects funded to build and animate the community sector No of training courses by sector No of participants by socio economic background
<b>Strategic Action 13.2</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Social Prescription</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Expand the social prescription model to build social networks and increase capacity amongst people at risk. Support actions that address health issues, suicide prevention; actions and training that promote active and healthier lifestyles and address childhood and adult obesity
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Local community, Care of the Elderly Groups, Youth Groups
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Health Service Executive (HSE), Other collaborating partners
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 -2020 IDP &UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators &amp; Target</b>	9 Projects funded to support people at risk Improvement in health indicators i.e. suicide rates, obesity rates, mental health rates etc No of participants by socio economic background.
<b>Strategic Action 13.3</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Targeting Initiatives at Older People</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Support for community groups/initiatives assisting seniors in the community; for example, expand provision of demonstration allotments and community garden sites and support training programmes built around these; meet educational needs for older people, for example in ICT or the provision of cultural or heritage programmes. Enable senior members of the community to inform young people about the local environment, history and language pertaining to the local biodiversity etc. Exploit natural capital for health and wellbeing benefits for older people and provide increased opportunities for older people to engage in sport and recreation, for example, through infrastructural improvement, signage provision on walking trails and through the growth of the green prescription programme.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Older people, Community Groups and Individuals , Care of the Elderly
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Health Service Executive (HSE), Other implementing partners, Biodiversity Ireland, DLSRP
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 -2020 IDP &UNG
<b>Anticipated</b>	21 Projects funded to support older people

<b>Outputs Indicators &amp; Target</b>	No of participants by age and socio economic background Increase use of broadband in areas with higher levels of older persons Improvement in life expectancy and health rates.
<b>Strategic Action 13.4</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Rural Youth Entrepreneurs</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Provide a range of animation supports to enable young people to plan and develop their business ideas and support youth entrepreneurship and innovation in schools. Training and mentoring initiatives could include those which facilitate the transfer of traditional skills such as weaving, traditional boat building, wood turning etc; delivery of life-skills linked to local employment opportunities on an outreach basis, young graduate programmes etc; training in maritime outdoor pursuits, or to encourage young entrants into the seafood sector in order to address the high levels of emigration by those of working age from coastal communities . Also, provide educational visits or support initiatives to instil an appreciation of nature and natural habitats among young persons in socially excluded or hard to reach communities.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Rural youth, aspiring young entrepreneurs, private individuals, local business, graduate students, community & youth based groups
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Donegal Youth Service, Foroige and other youth service providers; DLSRP, BIM, Failte Ireland, Biodiversity Ireland.
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 -2020 IDP &UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators &amp; Target</b>	34 animation and training projects funded (FT/PT/Seasonal) No of entrepreneurs participating by age and socio economic background Improvement in youth unemployment rates in the county Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation Reduction in youth emigration rates Reversal of the brain drain.

<b>Local Objective 14</b>	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To develop community space and infrastructure within the county that will ensure better access for example to ICT, Training, Language, Business and Public Services for hard to reach communities</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Social Inclusion
<b>Sub Theme</b>	Basic Services targeted at hard to reach communities

<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	The statistical profiling of access to physical and social infrastructure has identified an emerging communications divide. Initiatives to increase accessibility to transport and digital infrastructure were also identified through community participation. In particular, the need to maximise community space in the County was established. This would serve to increase future viability through increased usage but also broaden and intensify the functionality and offer of such infrastructure to the local community. The development of community digital hubs, targeted training programmes in business, language, innovative transportation solutions, ICT and online service access were identified as just some of the many ways to initiate such development.
<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€1,214,406</b>
<b>No of Strategic Actions for the Objective</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Strategic Action 14.1</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Supporting Community Organisations</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Enable community organisations or social enterprises to expand to become fit for purpose and meet escalating needs. Facilitate the development of multipurpose or one stop shop service facilities, in conjunction with key stakeholders for example Community Resource Centres, Enterprise Centres, Sports & Recreation Facilities etc. Utilise existing community focal points i.e. community facilities , libraries, social enterprises, digital hubs etc to increase access and provision of digital technology in hard to reach communities and businesses through the provision of IT suites
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Local community, private individuals, local businesses, graduate students, youth based groups.
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Other implementing partners, DLSRP
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 -2020 IDP &UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	27 social enterprise projects funded 5 jobs created No of functions carried out within community buildings/facilities etc No and type of education and training programme provided No and socio economic background of community participants Level of broadband access to community and social facilities Reduction in deprivation rates
<b>Strategic Action 14.2</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Recreational Supports</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Working with key stakeholders provide social and cultural infrastructure in rural communities such as recreational and leisure facilities including all-weather playing pitches, outdoor adult gyms etc; upgrade existing community facilities/ provide new community facilities including

	community centres in rural areas where there are currently none
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Local community, private individuals, community and youth based groups
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Relevant sporting organizations and DLSRP
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 -2020 IDP &UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators &amp; Target</b>	31 recreational projects supported Improvement in quality of life and health indicators Population growth rates Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation

<b>Local Objective 15</b>	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To foster local community participation in the Digital Society by supporting projects and initiatives that facilitate the growth of sustainable and inclusive communities through the use of ICT and digital technologies</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Social Inclusion
<b>Sub Theme</b>	Basic Services targeted at hard to reach communities
<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	As outlined in the Area Needs Analysis, offsetting the emerging digital divide (low level access to west & north, higher level access to south and east) identified through the Area Profile will require focused and innovative solutions by supporting initiatives that seek to build up the digital capacity of rural communities to be able to shop, communicate, pay bills, etc online. Key aspects should focus around up-skilling and knowledge transfer within the community, based around existing digital schools, Taobh Tíre centres in libraries, digital hubs in community centres, etc. Furthermore it is necessary to examine creative and innovative proposals that increase the online presence of rural enterprises including the functionality to process online transactions. The development of community ran digital hubs within community buildings, a range of targeted training programmes in business, language, innovative transportation solutions, ICT and online service access were identified through the area profile and community participation events as some of the ways to combat these trends.
<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€123,794</b>
<b>No of Strategic Actions for the Objective</b>	1
<b>Strategic Action 15.1</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Fostering Digital Participation</b>



<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Provide specific digital skills training for hard to reach communities ranging from programming skills for young people, digital marketing training for traditional businesses, basic eSkills for essential daily tasks, social media skills, on-line marketing etc .Foster local community participation in the Digital society by providing kick start sessions and regular drop in mentoring for community members to increase their 'know how' through doing, i.e. paying their motor tax online, buying products online, communicating with family members abroad etc. Encourage intergenerational educational transfer for example, for young people to engage with the elderly and assist them in learning the functions of modern technology appliances in terms of social media, internet , and mobile phone usage. Promote collaboration between companies and the community sector and facilitate the collaboration and participation of all stakeholders in the co-production of digital services (Open Innovation). Establish a network of Community Digital Hubs through the county to host digital businesses and boost web start-ups.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Local community, Individuals, Local Businesses, Graduate Students, Youth Based Groups
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Other implementing partners, NUIG
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 -2020 IDP &UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	14 training projects funded No and socio economic background of digital participants No of enterprises providing online services in the area Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation Reduction in deprivation rate

<b>Local Objective 16</b>	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To support activities that enhance the use of Irish as a living language through which communities can engage in social, cultural and economic activities</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Social Inclusion
<b>Sub Theme</b>	Basic Services targeted at hard to reach communities
<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	The Area Profile identified falling levels of Irish speakers in a number of age groups as a real threat to maintaining Irish as a living language in the Donegal Gaeltacht in the longer term. The Area Needs Analysis and public consultation feedback stated that opportunities to integrate the Irish language into all facets of day to day life and popularise its use through innovation, must be continually targeted in the County. E.g. it's use in work environments, in delivering services, shop display, job creation in and promotion of linguistic and cultural tourism, broadcasting and other media, festivals etc. By fostering pride and strong associations with the language, people can embrace this unique cultural asset so as assist in its promotion and integration into everyday life right across Donegal.

<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€98,794</b>
<b>No of Strategic Actions for the Objective</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Strategic Action 16.1</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Digital Language</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Provide marketing support and use digital technology to attract Irish language students to Donegal i.e. by helping Irish colleges/groups make a more intense use of digital technologies in order to promote their services and make them more attractive for students
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Private individuals, local businesses, graduate students, community based groups, Irish Colleges.
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal ( excluding DLDC area)
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	Other implementing partners, NUIG, Fáilte Ireland, Roinn Ealaíon, Oidhreacht agus Gaeltachta
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Udarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 -2020 IDP &UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	14 digital technology projects funded. No of persons by age cohort using language outside of the education system No and socio economic background of participants No of language associate services and enterprise funded or created.

<b>Local Objective 17</b>	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To support the establishment, growth and development of social enterprises</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Social Inclusion
<b>Sub Theme</b>	Basic Services targeted at hard to reach communities
<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	Donegal faces a number of unique challenges such as high unemployment, infrastructural deficits and high deprivation rates as described in the Socio Economic Profile. Therefore it is essential that innovative solutions are implemented to build on our comparative advantage and make best use of the unique assets of the County. Closer alignment between the activities of local communities, the business community, local government, and tourist/social agencies in terms of employment creation, increasing economic viability and in harnessing and servicing local tourists are essential. This cross sectoral working will increase the development of social enterprises particularly in towns and villages which will in turn benefit from increased footfall, business activity and overall future viability (Area Needs analysis & Participative Planning).
<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€443,653</b>
<b>No of Strategic Actions for the Objective</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Strategic Action 17.1</b>	

<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Consolidating and Reusing Community Facilities</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Strengthen the viability of community, recreation and heritage buildings by expanding their roles as recreational bases for walking and hiking, cycling, kayaking, etc in order to promote, and preserve the enjoyment of a range of built, natural and cultural heritage along tourist routes, and expand the potential for spin-off enterprises such as kayak hire, hospitality, Seaweed Safaris, Coast Watch etc
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Local community, individuals, coastal communities, tourism providers, youth groups, businesses
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Other implementing partners, Fáilte Ireland, BIM, Coillte, Heritage Council,
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/ Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 -2020 IDP &UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	42 community facilities supported No of jobs sustained (FT/PT/Seasonal) No of services or activities provided Socio economic background of participants in the community facility Population growth rates Reduction in deprivation rate Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation

<b>Local Objective 18</b>	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To support environmentally sustainable initiatives that promote energy conservation and energy independence, and do not impact negatively on the needs of future generations.</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Social Inclusion
<b>Sub Theme</b>	Basic Services targeted at hard to reach communities
<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	According to the Area Profile oil, coal and peat make up 93% of fuel burned in Donegal. A range of areas were identified through the area needs analysis, SWOT and consultations where opportunities exist to conserve energy and promote sustainability. Community consultation also identified the continuing need to increase awareness around energy conservation and highlighted opportunities to use ICT to enable Donegal to become a low carbon county.
<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€236,392</b>
<b>No of Strategic Actions</b>	1
<b>Strategic Action 18.1</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>ICT and the Green Economy</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Explore methods to increase the use of ICT within the green economy — for example, through the deployment of smart systems that increase efficiency in the energy, transportation, building and manufacturing

	sectors. Use smart IT to help transform Donegal into a low carbon county through the use of IT for town-side 'carbon footprint' monitoring, management and visualization, public awareness campaigns and deployment of a pilot smart grid utilising open innovation approaches to involve communities, public sector, third level and private companies. Finally, support the innovative use of ICT in sustainable resource management and governance for the farming and fishing communities, for example, to map and measure forest boundaries, degradation, and carbon levels etc .
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Local community, private individuals, local businesses, graduate students, community and youth based groups, fishing & farming community
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	BIM, Teagasc, SEAI, other implementing partners ,
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC 2016 -2020 IDP &UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	10 ICT and green economy projects funded No of new jobs (FT/PT/Seasonal) created Reduction in pollution rates/ carbon footprint etc Reduction in deprivation rate Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation Reduction in energy usage through use of ICT No and socio economic background of participants.

<b>Local Objective 19</b>	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To support measures that strengthen island communities by improving access to basic services, increasing skill levels and empowering them to engage in all decisions regarding their future sustainability</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Social Inclusion
<b>Sub Theme</b>	Basic Services targeted at hard to reach communities
<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	The Area Profile identified our island communities amongst the most hard to reach, unique, culturally significant communities in the County. The profile also identified the vulnerable nature of Island Communities from a social, economic and environmental perspective highlighting unemployment, deprivation, environmental designations and service provision challenges. The need for infrastructural improvement so as to enhance island accessibility and facilitate tourism development along the Wild Atlantic Way as a means of sustaining these communities was identified. The consultations also highlighted the need for targeted training for tourism providers on the islands to add value to their unique tourism product. The need to address unemployment on the islands for example through up skilling or address labour market shortages was also established through both the area profile and public consultation.
<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€128,935</b>
<b>No of Strategic Actions for the</b>	<b>1</b>

<b>Objective</b>	
<b>Strategic Action 19.1</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Addressing Island /Coastal Challenges</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Protect the heritage of the Islands and coastal communities within the county by supporting market research and business planning on the development potential of Donegal's lighthouses and the opportunities to secure financial returns from recycling old and derelict boats, traditional boat building and boating activities etc. Support projects that overcome and address specific island challenges such as the increased costs of transportation; and which can promote coastal economic growth, through for example, the establishment of seafood businesses and marine tourism initiatives such as angling, photography, art, walking, climbing, and viewing wildlife. Build opportunities to link the Diaspora with maritime heritage initiatives on a national and international basis. Support animation and capacity building which adds value to accommodation facilities on the Islands and in the Gaeltacht, including achieving Fáilte Ireland standards in Eco-tourism, horticultural tourism and niche tourism products that complement the cultural heritage of Donegal in a sustainable manner.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Community based groups, individuals, coastal communities, tourism providers, Donegal Islands Residents
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal ( excluding DLDC area)
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Heritage Council, Department of Agriculture, Marine & Natural Resources, NPWS, Fáilte Ireland, other implementing partners, Irish Lights, Heritage Council, Roinn na Mara, UNG.
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 -2020 IDP &UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	36 projects funded to address coastal challenges. 30 jobs (FT/PT/Seasonal) Sustained island populations Reduction in deprivation rate Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation No of tourism related enterprises funded by type

### Subtheme: Rural Youth

<b>Local Objective 20</b>	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To work in partnership with key stakeholders to widen social, cultural, economic and employment opportunities; and address the issue of isolation for young people in rural areas</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Social Inclusion
<b>Sub Theme</b>	Rural Youth

<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	The Socio Economic Profile has identified high levels of unemployment, population decline and low levels of educational attainment amongst young people in various communities in Co. Donegal. Such trends can lead individuals to experience isolation and to become marginalised from the local community in the longer term. It is essential that steps are taken at localised level to combat these detrimental trends. Closer alignment between the activities of local communities, the business community, local government, and tourist/social agencies (including on a cross border basis) are essential in terms of employment creation, targeted training provision, driving rural towns, increasing economic viability, tourism infrastructure provision and in harnessing natural, built and cultural heritage locally.
<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€653,653</b>
<b>No of Strategic Actions for the Objective</b>	1
<b>Strategic Action 20.1</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Social and Recreational Facilities for Young People</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Provision of social and recreational facilities such as the development of youth facilities based on men's sheds models for younger men, youth cafes, outdoor play areas for teenagers for example zip lines etc
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Rural youth, community based groups, individuals, youth groups.
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Donegal Youth Service, Foroige and other youth service providers, DLSRP
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 -2020 IDP &UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	27 projects funded to support young people Improvement in health indicators for young people Reduction in youth unemployment Reduction in youth crime rates Improvement in the no of males and females completing third level education No and socio economic background of participants Reduction in deprivation rates

<b>Local Objective 21</b>	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To develop innovative solutions that address rural transport concerns and help to build sustainable eco communities and villages</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Social Inclusion
<b>Sub Theme</b>	Rural Youth



<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	Analysis undertaken in the Area Profile found settlement patterns to be dispersed and population densities to be low in Donegal. To physically connect our rural populations, it is necessary to support and facilitate proposals that provide innovative transport solutions such as rural park and ride schemes, off-road walking and cycling corridors, rural carpooling etc particularly those that offset gaps in existing provision especially at off-peak hours and on non-viable routes. Aligned to this, strong service towns which provide a high level and wide range of services are a key element in building a critical mass of consumers which in turn makes the delivery of more frequent and higher quality transportation services to and from such towns increasing viable. Easily accessible streets and spaces make our towns more attractive place to live, work, visit and do business. Area Needs Analysis identified that provision of high quality green routes within and between our towns and villages can make it as easy and attractive to walk and cycle as it is to travel by car.
<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€31,957</b>
<b>No of Strategic Actions for the Objective</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Strategic Action 21.1</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Enhancing Rural Transport</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Work in collaboration with existing providers to support the establishment of rural transport services (including green transport initiatives) that address identified transport blackspots (such as the Gaeltacht and Islands) and connect young rural dwellers to services in urban centres. Provide scope for community organisations to work together on a cross border and transnational basis to address joint needs, for example, rural transport issues
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Transport providers, tourism providers, private individuals, community based groups, businesses.
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Inishowen and Gaeltacht
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Seirbhís Iompair Tuaithe Teo, Other Implementing Partners
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	2016 -2020 IDP &UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	5 transport initiatives supported. No and socio economic background of rural transport users Increased rural transport routes/services Population growth in rural towns/villages Increase in accessibility to services No. of km of green routes/trails in the county Deprivation levels in rural communities

## Theme 3 Environment

### Subtheme: Protection and Sustainable Use of Water Resources

Local Objective 22	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To support programmes and projects that assist with sustainable coastal zone management</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Rural Environment
<b>Subtheme</b>	Protection and sustainable use of water resources
<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	Chapter 4 of the Socio Economic Profile (Protecting and Harnessing Our Rural Environment) outlines the importance of and potential opportunities to be gleaned from sustainably managing our water resources and natural heritage (unique marine ecosystems) occurring along Donegal's extensive coastline. The Area Needs Analysis identifies ways in which our natural heritage can be conserved, accessed and harnessed including improving beach access, pollution reduction and the sensitive and strategic development of marine/tourism/coastal infrastructure including our piers, public conveniences, ship wrecks, signage, parking, etc.
<b>Financial Allocations</b>	€227,243
<b>No of Strategic Actions for the Objective</b>	1
Strategic Action 22.1	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Coastal Protection</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Support initiatives that protect the natural marine resource, ensure the sustainable management of coastal areas and further develop the blue economy e.g. community led coastal erosion prevention or defence; promotion of eco friendly initiatives for waste disposal in coastal areas or development and implementation of beach management plans.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Coastal communities, Dept of Agri, Marine & Natural Resources, Community Based Groups, Private Individuals, Tourism Providers, Local Authorities
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	National Parks & Wildlife Service, Heritage Council, Dept. Agri, Marine & Natural Resources, Other Implementing Partners.
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 -2020 IDP &UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	13 coastal projects funded No of coastal zone management plans in the county No of designated beaches including blue flag beaches and green coast Change in quality of transitional and bathing waters

Local Objective 23	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To explore local opportunities that utilise waste as a resource to reduce greenhouse gas emissions whilst also creating new growth and job opportunities such as better eco-design, waste prevention and reuse</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Rural Environment
<b>Subtheme</b>	Protection and sustainable use of water resources
<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	Both the SWOT analysis and area needs analysis identified an opportunity in the County to reduce waste by adopting the principles and objectives of the circular economy through the exploration and implementation of viable methods to reuse the many bi products from the agricultural/food, forestry and fishing sectors. The Area Profile identified water and wastewater schemes and plants requiring upgrade through Irish Water's Strategic Investment Programme. It also identified collaborative opportunities to explore and undertake other infrastructural improvements such as small scale private or public schemes that are not under the auspices of Irish Water, where small investments or targeted measures would enable local enterprise and tourism growth.
<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€143,146</b>
<b>No of Strategic Actions for the Objective</b>	<b>1</b>
Strategic Action 23.1	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Reducing Waste</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Support the development of sustainable waste water management systems. Assist the processing sector to achieve cost reductions in energy, water and utilities; support a positive environmental profile and add value to products previously considered as waste, for example fish waste.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Community Based Groups, Private Individuals, Fish Processing Factories, Local Authorities,
<b>Geographic Area</b>	IDP and UNG Areas
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	Udarás na Gaeltachta, IDP
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	BIM, Dept of Agri, Marine & Natural Resources , Other Implementing Partners, SEAI
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	2016 -2020 IDP &UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	8 sustainable water or waste management projects funded Change in tonnage to landfill Change in tonnage recycled No of spin off business created
Local Objective 24	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To complement and support the implementation of the North Western International River Basin Management Plan within which Donegal is located.</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Rural Environment

<b>Subtheme</b>	Protection and sustainable use of water resources
<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	The Area profile identifies areas where challenges exist regarding water quality. Such shortcomings highlight the need to identify pollution sources in order to develop strategies to reduce such occurrences including potential threats from agriculture, wastewater, industry, recreational activities, etc. We must ensure that human impact on our rural environment is managed so we can maximise opportunities for growth and development particularly in terms of tourism and diversification in rural Donegal. As part of the implementation of the LEADER programme, the promotion, protection and enhancement of all areas of our environment must be considered across all objectives and projects through project screening to identify opportunities where environmental enhancement measures can be incorporated into project development, methodologies for implementation, etc. Such measures may include, increased water protection/conservation, pollution/waste management & reduction, low impact development, facilitation of native species, associated habitat restoration, increased energy efficiency, use of renewable energy etc.
<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€94,264</b>
<b>No of Strategic Actions for the Objective</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Strategic Action 24.1</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Improving Water Quality</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Support and equip local communities and individuals to promote improvement in water quality and improve water habitat conditions. Create awareness around water management issues as outlined in the Significant Water Management Issues in Ireland (SWMI) Report; and inform communities of the connectivity between landscape and water features. Support community environmental initiatives which protect and develop the amenity value of local water resources and nature areas. Endorse research activities into community water management and the principle of 'living better while using less' as outlined in the EPA sustainability strategy 'Towards a Resource Efficient Ireland'.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Local community, individuals, businesses, tourism providers, local authorities,
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal ( excluding Islands)
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC , UNG, IDP
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Inishowen Tourism, Biodiversity Ireland, NPWS, IFI.
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	2016 -2020 IDP &UNG Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	18 projects funded to improve water quality Improvement in water bodies quality Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation No of start-up enterprises funded by sector No of existing enterprises funded and when founded No of new jobs created and sustained (FT/PT/Seasonal)

## Subtheme: Protection & Improvement of Local Biodiversity

Local Objective 25	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To value the benefits provided by the environment and the potential they offer to develop activities based around spiritual enrichment, eco retreats, cognitive development, reflection, recreation and aesthetic enjoyment.</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Rural Environment
<b>Subtheme</b>	Protection and improvement of local biodiversity
<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	Consultations undertaken and findings from the Area Profile highlighted the current underutilization of our cultural/natural/built heritage infrastructure. Suggested opportunities to harness such assets included cultural heritage attractions, promotion of heritage trails, delivery of genealogy projects; promotion of archaeological sites, protection/restoration of built, cultural & natural heritage assets (archaeological sites, outdoor pursuits, scenic landscapes, the delivery of innovative, sustainable and quality festivals and events that showcase the County and attract national and international visitors to the area.
<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€195,258</b>
<b>No of Strategic Actions for the Objective</b>	1
Strategic Action 25.1	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Promoting Sustainable Development and Showcasing the Environment</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Support initiatives that encourage communities to develop more attractive areas showcasing their heritage and natural beauty in conjunction with Donegal County Council such as the 'Golden Mile' initiative in Galway; explore and develop innovative solutions to support and showcase sustainable development, for example, investigate the possibility of creating edible towns (planting vegetables instead of shrubs). Deliver innovative, sustainable and quality festivals and events that showcase the county such as aviation events, food festivals, marine and water based events, agricultural, festivals, garden shows, environment and wildlife events etc
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Local community, private individuals, tourism providers, local authorities, special interest groups.
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	National Parks & Wildlife Service, Fáilte Ireland, Inishowen Tourism, Other Implementing Partners
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 -2020 IDP &UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	32 environment projects supported Visitor numbers to increase by 100,000 No of events and festivals held No of new jobs created and sustained(FT/PT/Seasonal)

	Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation No of start-up enterprises funded by sector No of existing enterprises funded and when founded
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<b>Local Objective 26</b>	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To support measures which will coordinate, promote, protect and enhance Donegal's rich biosphere and facilitate opportunities for the development of sustainable tourism and enterprise and social development</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Rural Environment
<b>Subtheme</b>	Protection and improvement of local biodiversity
<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	Donegal has an rich and varied rural environment. Chapter 4 profiles the numerous sites comprising geological, ecological and landscape designations across the County. In terms of adding value to the primary sector and harnessing our natural resources public consultations captured calls for support initiatives that provide for efficient harvesting and minimal damage to woodland and wetlands, e.g. small scale equipment, initiatives which exploit the natural resource and create sustainable renewable energy resources for and promote the use of green technology in community owned buildings such as rainwater harvesting, alternative energy provision etc. Consultations also supported growth of research and development as well as renewable energy products.
<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€392,221</b>
<b>No of Strategic Actions for the Objective</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Strategic Action 26.1</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Supporting Renewable Energy and Sustainable Development</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Support initiatives that exploit Donegal's indigenous natural resources and facilitate the development of a diverse energy portfolio in the county. Provide a range of assistance types for start up and expanding innovative enterprises in the renewable energy sector i.e. wind, solar, anaerobic digestion, hydro, biomass and bio energy. Support infrastructural development for the woodland sector in conjunction with the community and voluntary sector in a way that encourages sustainable development and utilises innovative methods to protect sensitive habitats and reduce environmental impact, as well as appreciate the benefits of woodlands and their key role in sustaining environmental services such as biodiversity conservation, carbon sequestration and watershed protection.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Aspiring entrepreneurs, start-ups & established businesses in the renewable energy sector, local community, local schools, youth groups, tourism providers, local authorities, special interest groups
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán



<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), Coillte, Heritage Council, Other Implementing Partners, NPWS
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 -2020 IDP &UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	1 Training Course provided for 500 individuals 37 projects funded 5 jobs(FT/PT/Seasonal) Reduction in the % of households using fossil fuels Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation No of start-up enterprises funded by sector No of existing enterprises funded and when founded
<b>Strategic Action 26.2</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Creating Awareness of the Environment Amongst Communities</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Support initiatives that build capacity and create awareness in rural communities of the importance of environmental protection, combating climate change, and reducing environmental pressures. For example, through the development of children and nature networks; production of information packs on Streamscapes; creating awareness of biodiversity through workshops or the use of existing trail infrastructure; or through community led bird conservation initiatives such as provision of swift nest boxes or bird hide projects similar to the Blanket Nook initiative. Support community led initiatives to restock/replant native species for example native wildflowers. Similarly, identify and eradicate invasive species of plant on an area based method; for example, creating awareness, provision of training and subsequent eradication in conjunction with Inland Fisheries Ireland and National Parks and Wildlife.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Local community, individuals, businesses, tourism providers, local authorities,
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IDP, Comhar na nOileán
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Birdwatch Ireland, Inland Fisheries Ireland, National Parks & Wildlife Service, SEAI, Fáilte Ireland, Inishowen Tourism, Other implementing partners
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 -2020 IDP & UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators &amp; Target</b>	23 environmental awareness projects funded 4 jobs (FT/PT/Seasonal) No and socio economic grouping of participants Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation
<b>Strategic Action 26.3</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Efficient Harvesting</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Support alternative and efficient harvesting methods such as provision of smaller harvesting machinery that can operate with minimal damage to Donegal wetlands
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Aspiring entrepreneurs, start-ups & established businesses in the woodland sector, community based groups, private individuals, farming community, local authorities,
<b>Geographic</b>	Donegal

<b>Area</b>	
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, IDP, Údarás na Gaeltachta,
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Coillte, Teagasc, Inishowen Coop, Other implementing Partners, Biodiversity Ireland, NPWS
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC 2016 -2020 IDP &UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators &amp; Target</b>	12 projects funded 8 jobs supported(FT/PT/Seasonal) Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation No of start-up enterprises funded by sector No of existing enterprises funded and when founded

### Subtheme: Development of Renewable Energy

Local Objective 27	
<b>Title of Local Objective</b>	<b>To support initiatives that will increase the use of renewable energy and promote sustainable energy use in the transport realm, and in homes, businesses and communities</b>
<b>Leader Theme</b>	Rural Environment
<b>Subtheme</b>	Development of renewable energy
<b>Rationale for Objective</b>	Section 2.2.12 of the Socio Economic Profile identifies a high level network of community infrastructure across Donegal. Through the consultation process the issue of community centre viability was raised on several occasions with particular references made to high running costs such as heating, electricity, etc. Initiatives to reduce energy usage, increase the sustainability of energy sources, etc would serve to combat these challenges and secure the future viability of these community hubs. For residential buildings the profile identified that more than 2 thirds of the housing stock in the County was constructed prior to the enactment of National building regulations in 1992. This indicates potentially lower levels of energy efficiency and use of renewable technologies in a large proportion of the housing stock. Similar building inefficiencies are also likely to be effecting commercial premises, therefore a range of initiatives are required to reduce energy use and increase the sustainability of energy sources across all buildings. The profile identifies the County's reliance on road based transport. The consultation feedback also identified the need for the facilitation of greener transport options such as walking and cycling by developing a network of off road trails and encouraging a modal shift to reduce car trips by creating awareness of the many health and environmental benefits.
<b>Financial Allocations</b>	<b>€259,870</b>
<b>No of Strategic Actions for the Objective</b>	<b>4</b>
Strategic Action 27.1	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Stimulating the Uptake of Renewable Technology</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Develop education programmes to promote and stimulate the uptake of renewable technology, to include certified training programmes by green energy installers and bespoke training programmes for social enterprises

	and micro businesses working in the Green Economy to assist them in realising their full potential and assist their sustainability in the long-term. Develop mechanisms for community involvement and stake holding in renewable energy projects for example, to exploit the significant biomass development potential that exists within the catchment. Encourage the adoption of renewable energy actions and initiatives that promote the use of green technology in community owned buildings such as rainwater harvesting, alternative energy provision, development of energy positive/carbon neutral buildings etc
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Local community, individuals, businesses, eco tourism networks., tourism providers, local authorities,
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	DLDC, Comhar na nOileán, IDP, Údarás na Gaeltachta,
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), Inishowen Eco Tourism Network, Failte Ireland, Inishowen Tourism, Other Implementing Partners
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 DLDC & CNO 2016 -2020 IDP &UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators and Target</b>	1 Training X 38 Groups 17 renewable energy projects funded 4 Jobs (FT/PT/Seasonal) Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation No of start-up renewable enterprises funded by sector No of existing renewable enterprises funded and when founded % of households using renewable energy to heat their homes % of persons travelling to work, school or college using renewable transport
<b>Strategic Action 27.2</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Promoting Energy Efficiency</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Undertake actions to promote and facilitate energy efficiency and conservation to include for example, comprehensive retro-fit housing programmes, tourism accommodation and carbon-neutral self-catering accommodation.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Tourism Providers, Local Providers, Community Based Groups, Landlords
<b>Geographic Area</b>	UNG & IDP
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	IDP, Údarás na Gaeltachta
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Failte Ireland, Inishowen Tourism, Other Implementing Partners, SEAI
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	2016 -2020 IDP &UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators &amp; Target</b>	10 projects funded to promote energy efficiency Breakdown of funding by Capital, Training, Marketing, Animation No of start-up renewable enterprises funded by sector No of existing renewable enterprises funded and when founded % of households using renewable energy to heat their homes % of persons travelling to work, school or college using renewable transport

<b>Strategic Action 27.3</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Supporting the Green Technology Sector</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Support the network of small enterprises and micro businesses in the North West cross border region that are engaged in and wish to grow the renewable and green sector of their businesses, as well as reach new clients and markets on a cross border and transnational basis, for example, in the micro generation and wider renewable energy sector thus ensuring the North West gains profitability and productivity from opportunities in this growing economic field.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Community Based Groups, Private Individuals, Cross Border Partners, Local Authorities, Businesses
<b>Geographic Area</b>	Donegal ( excluding DLDC)
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	Comhar na nOileán, IDP, Údarás na Gaeltachta
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Cross Border Partners and Other Implementing, SEAI,
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	Q2/2016 - Q3/2019 CNO 2016 -2020 IDP &UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators &amp; Target</b>	1 Training X 5 SMEs 1 Training x 35 groups 6 Projects Funded
<b>Strategic Action 27.4</b>	
<b>Title of Strategic Action</b>	<b>Eco Accreditation</b>
<b>Brief Description of Strategic Action</b>	Develop Donegal as a national leader in eco-accreditation and in the utilisation of green technology by identifying 'green' champions within the county to promote the sectors growth and raise awareness of the potential of all forms of alternative energy and renewable resources through for example, support for the establishment of a Renewable Energy Resource Centre in County Donegal.
<b>Primary Target Groups</b>	Community Based Groups, Individuals, Tourism Providers,
<b>Geographic Area</b>	IDP & UNG
<b>Organisation to deliver Action</b>	IDP, Údarás na Gaeltachta
<b>Collaborating Organisations</b>	Faillte Ireland, Inishowen Tourism, Inishowen Eco Tourism Network, Other Implementing Partners
<b>Time Frame for Delivery</b>	2016 -2020 IDP &UNG
<b>Anticipated Outputs Indicators &amp; Target</b>	8 Additional Accredited Eco Tourism Businesses created 32 Existing Businesses Supported 5 Projects Funded

## Section 5: Strategic Integration

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Central to the planning, development and implementation of the Local Development Strategy (LDS) for County Donegal, are three cross cutting objectives; innovation, environment and climate change.

In terms of innovation there is scope for the Donegal LCDC led LAG to pilot new products, technology and markets etc. Having particular regard for the harder to reach rural areas, the LDS focuses on promoting entrepreneurship, new ideas and initiatives that enhance the competitiveness of small rural enterprises throughout the county. In addition, it supports new and innovative ways to deliver services to rural communities for example through the use of web based technologies or by developing community centric services etc. From an environmental perspective, the LDS actions are about preserving, protecting and enhancing the natural environment to ensure and bring about sustainable development for the present and future generations. Particular focus is on the efficient use, management and promotion of our natural resources by increasing rural tourism activities and developing local job opportunities. With regards to climate change, the proposed actions within the LDS are focused on reducing our carbon footprint for example by reducing green house gas emissions whilst also creating new growth and job opportunities such as better eco-design, waste prevention and reuse.

In planning and developing the LDS the three cross cutting objectives were considered during all stages. At the consultation stage there were a number of one-to-one consultations with stakeholders, where the three cross cutting objectives formed the central ground for discussion and were considered in developing the core principles, objectives and overarching strategic actions of the LDS. The details of consultations are outlined in Section 3. The project selection criteria contained in Section 1 ensures appropriate weightings are assigned to the three cross cutting objectives with regard to the project selection and appraisal stages. A number of indicators have been included to track progress and to ensure that targets are met in relation to the three cross cutting objectives. Further details can be found in Section 7 – Monitoring and Evaluation.

This chapter will demonstrate the strategic alignment of the LDS objectives, which the Donegal LCDC-led LAG have prioritised with ten local, regional, national and EU level strategies. Several of the objectives contained in the action plan in Section 4, cut across many of the objectives of the ten strategies/plans selected below and indeed provide a rationale for some of the objectives that have been selected in the LDS. Within the chapter, the objectives of the LDS have been extracted and set against the relevant local, regional, national and EU level strategies/plans. The objectives of the LDS align solely with individual strategies/plans in some instances but also cut across several strategies/plans in other instances.

As presented in the socio-economic profile in Section 2, Donegal is a unique County in terms of its cross border context, peripherality and its physical and geographical attributes, all of which has influenced the development of this strategy. It is for this reason that the LCDC chose the following ten strategic plans/strategies given their importance in targeting the development of rural areas. The three cross cutting objectives have also been aligned against the key strategies above.

The top 10 strategies/plans which the LDS has been most closely aligned to are:

1. Donegal Local Economic and Community Plan 2015-2021;
2. County Development Plan 2012-2018<sup>40</sup>;
3. Action Plan for Jobs 2015<sup>41</sup>;
4. Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas Research Report (CEDRA)<sup>42</sup>
5. The National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016<sup>43</sup>;
6. Irish Language Strategy 2010-2030<sup>44</sup>;
7. National Digital Strategy 2013<sup>45</sup>;
8. Further Education & Training Strategy 2014-2019<sup>46</sup>;
9. Climate Water & Sustainability 2014-2020<sup>47</sup>;
10. Fishing Local Action Group Strategic Plan;

The **Donegal Local Economic and Community Plan 2015-2021** through working with partner organisations, with border neighbours and international counterparts aims to achieve seven priority goals:

1. To develop Donegal as a connected place
2. To harness Donegal's natural and human capital
3. To value, sustain and develop our culture and creative resource
4. To promote sustainable, inclusive and healthy communities
5. To develop Donegal as a lead region for learning, research and innovation
6. To develop the Donegal brand
7. To promote entrepreneurship, investment and enterprise

These goals formed a key guide in the LDS development process and in particular the development of the action plan. The extent of consistency between the development of the LEADER Strategy with the LECP is highlighted in the table 1 below, where the relevant strategic objectives and cross cutting themes are set against the 7 priority goals of the LECP.

**Table 1: LECP Context for LDS Objectives**

LECP Goal	LDS Strategic Objective/ Cross Cutting Theme
1. To develop Donegal as connected place	11 Connectivity, 2 Accessibility, 14 Community Space & Infrastructure Development, 15 Digital Society Participation, 21 Innovative Rural Transport Solutions, 20 Partnership
2. To harness Donegal's natural and human capital	Donegal LAG Vision for the LDS – Quality of Life 7 Natural Resource development, 2 Rural Recreation, 18 Energy Conservation & Independence, 23 Development of Circular Economy, 27 Renewable Energy, 4 Adding Value to local Produce, Tourism Offerings

<sup>40</sup> [www.donegalcoco.ie/.../donegalcountyc/planning/.../viewdevelopmentplans...](http://www.donegalcoco.ie/.../donegalcountyc/planning/.../viewdevelopmentplans...)

<sup>41</sup> <http://www.actionplanforjobs.ie>

<sup>42</sup> [http://www.agresearch.teagasc.ie/rerc/CEDRA/CEDRA\\_Report.pdf](http://www.agresearch.teagasc.ie/rerc/CEDRA/CEDRA_Report.pdf)

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.welfare.ie/.../National-Action-Plan-for-Social-Inclusion-2007-2016.aspx>

<sup>44</sup> [www.per.gov.ie/en/20-year-strategy-for-the-irish-language-2010-2030](http://www.per.gov.ie/en/20-year-strategy-for-the-irish-language-2010-2030)

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.dcenr.gov.ie/communications/en-ie/Digital-Strategy/Pages/home.aspx>

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Further-Education-and-Training-Strategy-2014-2019.pdf>

<sup>47</sup> <http://www.epa.ie/pubs/reports/research/eparesearchstrategy2014-2020/EPA%20Research%20Strategy%202014-2020.pdf>



3. To value, sustain and develop our culture and creative resource	8 Built, Natural & Cultural Heritage development, 9 Cultural Facilities & Creative Industries, 16 Gaeilge as a Living Language, 25 Spiritual & Eco harnessing of the environment
4. To promote sustainable inclusive and healthy communities	13 Sustainable Communities by focusing on local Comparative Advantage & Training, 1 Tourism Offerings, 6 & 17 Grow Social Enterprises, 12 Build sustainable rural, coastal and island communities, 20 Widen opportunities & Reduce Isolation, 19 Strengthen Island Communities
5. To develop Donegal as a lead region for learning research and innovation	5 Job Creation, 12 & 13 Sustainable Communities by focusing on local Comparative Advantage & Training, Cross-cutting Theme Innovation, 7 Research & Knowledge Transfer, 15 Digital Society Participation
6. To develop the Donegal brand	3 Market Branding and Bundling, 1 Harnessing tourism offerings, 8 Unlocking Built, Natural & Cultural Potential
7. To promote entrepreneurship, investment and enterprise	10 Rural Towns, 3 Enterprise, competitiveness, investment and job creation 5 Rural Business Supports, 4 Enterprise support for added value products

In short, the priority goals and objectives of the LECP provided the starting point for the development of the 27 objectives and the 44 actions contained within the LDS for Donegal. These were further developed and refined through the widespread community led local development process as outlined in Section 3. The socio economic framework as set out in Section 2 was developed along the 7 priority goals of the LECP, to firstly provide a baseline for monitoring and evaluating the LDS and secondly to evaluate the impact that the LDS will have on achieving the goals and objectives of the LECP.

At a national level it was important across all aspects of the consultations and action plan development, to have regard for the Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG's). The vision of the RPG's is to strive towards a long-term planning framework for the North West region that is closely aligned with the National Spatial Strategy, Key Strategic Investment Programmes and the Regional Development Strategy in Northern Ireland.

Amongst the strategic goals of the RPG's, key matters of relevance and how they were taken into account during the drafting of the Action Plan include the following:

- Fostering the development of the Region's most important asset, its people by providing an improved quality of life: Donegal LAG Vision for the LDS.
- Alignment to the goals of Core Strategy of the County Donegal Development Plan 2012-2018 as set out below: Local Objective 10 (Rural Towns).
- To promote innovation, economic growth and competitiveness in the County's development potential and to facilitate emerging sectors to provide sustainable jobs for the future: Cross-cutting Theme (Innovation) Local Objectives 5 (Job Creation) 12 & 13 (Sustainable Communities by focusing on local Comparative Advantage & Training).
- To improve connectivity and mobility links: Local Objectives 11 (Connectivity) 14 (Community Space & Infrastructure Development) 15 (Digital Society Participation) 21 (Innovative Rural Transport Solutions).
- Economically, the need to make provision for agricultural diversification and rural enterprise (such as afforestation and renewable energy, subject to appropriate environmental considerations), opportunities for the establishment of enterprises

based on the processing of natural products as well as recognising the importance of our border location and maximising the opportunities it presents particularly to the retail & hospitality sectors in terms of attracting shoppers & visitors from Northern Ireland: Local Objectives 3 (Enterprise), 4 (Diversification), 4 (Adding Value to local Produce) 5 (Rural Business Supports), 7 (Natural Resource development), 2 (Rural Recreation), 18 (Energy Conservation & Independence), 23 (Development of Circular Economy) 27 (Renewable Energy).

- To protect and enhance the quality of the natural environment and built heritage: Cross-cutting Theme (Environment), Local Objectives 8 (Built, Natural & Cultural Heritage development) 9 (Cultural Facilities) 16 (Gaeilge as a Living Language), 22 (Coastal Zone Management), 25 (Develop Wider Benefits of the Environment) 26 (Promote, Protect & Enhance Donegal's Biosphere) 24 (Support North West International River Basin Management Plan).

The **County Development Plan 2012-2018** (CDP) incorporates a Core Strategy, which aims to ensure the proper planning and sustainable development of the County. Through the 'Urban Settlement Hierarchy', a system of development is envisaged based on the concept of tier type development; whereby the Gateway is in Tier 1, Strategic Support Towns in Tier 2, Strong Towns and Villages in Tier 3, Small Villages in Tier 4 and Rural Areas in Tier 5 (see Supplementary Information on Strategic Integration, Appendix 5.1 Table 2, Pg 1). Areas falling under each Tier will be permitted to develop according to the needs of that area.

The key concept behind the core strategy is that the Linked Gateway town, Letterkenny, is the primary growth centre that will strive to create critical mass and to provide the timely alignment of key infrastructure and services, which is crucial in driving development and prosperity for the region. This will create a trickledown effect that strives to revitalise and build strong town centres.

For the Tier 2 towns the plan aims to strengthen these key centres to increasingly act as economic drivers and service centres for their rural catchments. For Tier 3 & 4 towns the plan focuses on targeted development to consolidate and rejuvenate these smaller towns and villages and finally for Tier 5 towns the focus is on balanced development to sustain rural communities and protect the environment at the same time. Local Objective 10 of the LDS is in total alignment with the Core Strategy.

#### **Local Objective 10**

*'To stimulate rural towns and village cores, to enable them to act as the hubs to drive economic, social and cultural renewal for surrounding hinterland'.*

The CDP in its key strategic objectives sets out to develop a sustainable economic model and to embrace innovation, research and development, rural diversification, eco tourism initiatives, energy advances and the promotion of sustainable start-up enterprises. The plan aims to encourage and bring about social inclusion by creating greater equality and access to services. In developing the town cores there is a move towards reducing vacancy rates, reducing dereliction, making better use of in-fill sites or brownfield development sites. It is about making rurally isolated or difficult to reach communities more connected with the core centres by creating physical connections, digital connections or social connections.

It is an objective of the CDP to support and facilitate the development of the National Broadband Scheme for Un-served Rural Premises and similar projects subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. The CDP recognises the importance of mobile phone and broadband connections as essential infrastructure to

address the economic and social impact of remoteness and peripherality, and for modern communications and business support and this is reflected in Local Objective 11 of the LDS.

**Local Objective 11**

*'To develop Donegal as a connected place physically and digitally, by enhancing accessibility to quality infrastructure and ICT in rural areas'.*

In the area of natural resources, the CDP acknowledges the benefit of capitalising on the immense opportunities of the rural area. It is an objective of the CDP to facilitate a sustainable and diverse mix of developments, which limit the net adverse impacts associated with global warming such as promotion of renewable energy, the growth of local farm produce and the promotion of sustainable modes of public transport.

**Local Objective 21**

*'To develop innovative solutions that addresses rural transport concerns and help to build sustainable eco communities and villages'.*

The CDP recognises the importance of the built, cultural and natural heritage in Donegal. Therefore, it must be managed in a sustainable manner for future generations based on best types of conservation practice. This is enshrined in the LDS which seeks to preserve, protect, promote and enhance the built, cultural and natural heritage in terms of culture, society, environment, tourism and economy.

**Local Objective 8**

*'To support initiatives that unlock the potential of Donegal's built, natural and cultural heritage'.*

**Local Objective 9**

*'To facilitate the development of cultural facilities that support artistic endeavours and provide training mentoring programmes to increase the capacity and skills base of arts organisations and artists within the county, whilst also recognising the opportunities presented by the Gaeltacht'.*

**Local Objective 24**

*'To complement and support the implementation of the North Western International River Basin Management Plan within which Donegal is located'.*

The **Action Plan for Jobs 2015** in its objectives and actions serves to create more jobs, exports and start-ups, market penetration and innovation, efficiency of public interaction with business, finance and access to talent. The LDS in its objectives aims to align very closely with this strategy as it cuts across many sectors that are relative to the County. The Action Plan for Jobs aims to reduce red tape, stimulate the domestic economy through local employment in sectors such as; tourism, hospitality, agriculture and food. Donegal's natural pristine environment is a natural market asset that needs to be further developed and utilised. By tapping into market development through constructive and planned channels of advertising, Donegal has the potential to create employment, tackle social exclusion and bring about more structured and solid communities even in the most rurally isolated parts of the County.

**Local Objective 1**

*'To harness the potential of Donegal's world class authentic tourism offerings (including the Wild Atlantic Way) for the benefit of rural communities by facilitating diversification*

*and the creation of indigenous tourism enterprises, community based tourism initiatives and ancillary facilities’.*

Rural areas in Donegal have a natural competitive advantage given the natural beauty of the areas however there does exist the need to market these areas in a proactive manner to maximise their potential. The role of the Action Plan for Jobs and the LDS is to develop these rural areas, should it be through the refurbishment of properties to provide quality type accommodation or providing tourism, marine type activities etc. This is also set out in the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 (RDP) which focuses on increasing the competitiveness of the agri-food sector, by bringing about sustainable management of natural resources and ensuring balanced rural development.

### **Local Objective 3**

*‘To collaboratively support and promote an enterprise ecosystem, which will improve competitiveness, investment and job creation; and nurture innovation and entrepreneurships throughout Donegal.’*

The **Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas Research Report (CEDRA)** centres around a mission statement, that by 2025, rural Ireland will have a dynamic, adaptable and outwardly focused multi-sector economy supporting vibrant, resilient and diverse communities with opportunities to experience a high quality life. It aims to develop the rural economy, society, culture and environment in a sustainable manner by creating a partnership between rural and urban Ireland. One of the most important pillars of this strategy is ‘Putting People First’. It centres on the idea that micro enterprises and small business sectors need to be given support. CEDRA like the CDP recognises the need to improve the economic position of small and medium towns. Within CEDRA the need for future skills and the educational development of individuals is seen as a crucial asset for economic recovery and development. There is also a need for development in the area of ICT, the green economy and for business education for employees, managers and employers, and particular reference is made to the self employed. The up-skilling and re-skilling particularly of rural dwellers that had been affected by the downturn in the economy was seen as particularly important together with the idea of Life Long Learning. There is also a strong focus to be placed on the variation in the rural and urban differential. It states that training in these areas needs to be closely linked and responsive to sub-national economic development strategies that reflect the capacity and strengths of individual regions. There is also recognition of the decline in farming activities and profitability and the need to support and encourage farm diversification through the Teagasc Options Programme. CEDRA states that increasing access to education and training creates a social dividend, supporting social cohesion and public health and mitigating against poverty, crime and social welfare dependency.

To facilitate a more effective targeting of resources, the series of themes contained in CEDRA, that were identified as the overarching needs in rural Ireland have been the corner stone in shaping the development of localised strategies in the Donegal context.

### **Local Objective 4**

*‘To support enterprises which add value to local produce and which build on the core competitiveness and resources of the region’.*

### **Local Objective 7**

*‘To support and facilitate research and knowledge transfer on the potential of Donegal’s natural resources’.*

### **Local Objective 14**

*'To develop community space and infrastructure within the county that will ensure better access, for example; ICT, Training, Language, Business and Public Services for hard to reach communities'.*

**Local Objective 6**

*'To support social enterprises provided by local, community and voluntary groups which address local needs and services'.*

The CEDRA reports sets out that 'economic prosperity depends on maintaining and enhancing our assets, including natural capital'. It sets out the importance of the natural environment to both economic activity and growth and the importance of close linkages between environmental protection and management when considering economic development. The assets and services provided by the environment were divided into four broad categories; within these categories the objectives of the LDS are aligned.

**Local Objective 25**

*'To value the wider benefits provided by the environment and the potential they offer to develop activities based around spiritual enrichment, eco retreats, cognitive development, reflection, recreation and aesthetic enjoyment'.*

**Local Objective 26**

*'To support measures, which will coordinate, promote, protect and enhance Donegal's rich biosphere and facilitate opportunities for the development of sustainable tourism and enterprise and social development'.*

**Local Objective 27**

*'To support initiatives that will increase the use of renewable energy and promote sustainable energy use in transport realm, and in homes, businesses and communities'.*

**The National Action Plan for Social Inclusion Plan 2007-2016** – is complemented by the National Development Plan 2007-2013: Transforming Ireland – A Better Quality of Life for All. The plan aims to assist those who continue to be socially excluded from the living standards and opportunities that the majority of our society enjoys. It also strives to reduce consistent poverty to target groups including children, working age persons, people with disabilities, older people, people with disabilities, rural dwellers etc. It aims to create viable and sustainable communities and build on the social capital of the Country. Social inclusion is embedded in the LDS having conducted meaningful consultation with, and engaging with target groups in Donegal including hard to reach people in order to capture and include the views of all sectors of communities. Towards 2016 includes a focus on older people and aims to maintain their health and well-being as well as encouraging and supporting active participation in everyday life in an independent manner both in their own homes and community. The LDS is in alignment with this strategy through a variety of objectives outlined below, which focus on building more sustainable and inclusive communities in County Donegal by improving access to rural services such as to transport, broadband, health, cultural and community services etc. It also focuses on enhancing access to economic, employment, education and training opportunities. The strategy proposes a series of targeted initiatives that are aimed at groups who are most at risk of poverty and social exclusion for example they include younger persons, older persons and a number of key vulnerable groups who reside in isolated and highly deprived Rural, Gaeltacht, Island & Coastal areas.



**Local Objective 6**

*'To support social enterprises promoted by local community and voluntary groups which address local needs and services'.*

**Local Objective 13**

*'To build more inclusive communities throughout Donegal through the provision of a number of capacity, animation and leadership training programmes that are based on local needs, complement existing programmes and maximise the uptake of funding.'*

**Local Objective 20**

*'To work in partnership with key stakeholders to widen social, cultural, economic and employment opportunities and address issues of isolation for young people in rural areas'.*

**Local Objective 17**

*'To support the establishment, growth and development of social enterprises'.*

**Local Objective 19**

*'To support measures that strengthen island communities by improving access to basic services, increasing skill levels and empowering them to engage in all decisions regarding their future sustainability'.*

The **20 Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030** through its objectives, aims to increase on an incremental basis, the use and knowledge of the Irish language in the community. It strives to create a bilingual society in Ireland. However, the government recognises that the Irish language in itself sits as an identity icon in the Gaeltacht communities and needs to be maintained in these communities. The 20 Year Strategy for the Irish Language aims to enhance the use of the language by increasing opportunities for persons to carry out their daily business through Irish; to enhance the role of Irish in primary and secondary schools and third level institutes and also to create greater access for students to learn Irish. With particular reference to Gaeltacht areas, it recommends that language plans be drawn up at a community level for each Gaeltacht district, with the aim of integrating the approach to linguistic issues, education, physical planning, social and community development. Furthermore, there is an onus placed on increasing the provision of services through Irish. Local objectives 12 and 16 are in alignment with this strategy.

**Local Objective 12**

*'To build sustainable rural, coastal and island communities in Donegal by focussing on local comparative advantage and nurturing existing expertise, skills and assets'.*

**Local Objective 16**

*'To support activities that enhance the use of Irish living language through which communities can engage in social, cultural and economic activities'.*

The **National Digital Strategy (NDS) Phase 1 – Digital Engagement** was launched in July 2013. This strategy aims to get people engaged on-line. It has benefits for the individual, the small business, the potential market, the entrepreneur, the voluntary group, the community group etc through a clearly set out vision and a number of practical actions and steps, individuals can be helped and encouraged to do business on-line. It explores the cycle of the individual's spending patterns, the benefits of getting better connected and accessing new markets and how this can bring about growth and development. The overarching vision of this strategy is to bring about optimal economic



and social use of the internet by individuals, business and the government. Developing digital networks is a core priority of the LDS as set out in the objectives and aims to promote an increased uptake of digital usage in the County and in particular in rural areas. This may be through the development of courses in community & resource centres, schools, universities, online etc which can offer opportunities to target groups including farmers, older people, island dwellers etc. to become more connected with the activities in core centres.

**Local Objective 15**

*'To foster local community participation in the Digital Society by supporting projects and initiatives that facilitate the growth of sustainable and inclusive communities through the use of ICT and digital technologies'.*

The **Further Education and Training Strategy 2014-2019** aims to bring about high quality learning experiences developed in a world class integrated system of further education. The strategy centres on the area of skills development in further education that can ultimately bring about economic development, increase social inclusion, meeting the needs of learners, communities and employers. The strategy also reflects within it the priorities of the Action Plan for Jobs. Education and skills development empowers individuals and creates opportunities for all sectors of society. The LDS recognises the importance of creating opportunities to encourage individuals to become actively involved in the educational and training systems and to up-skill to create better opportunities both socially and economically.

**Local Objective 5**

*'To stimulate job creation across all rural areas in Donegal and address the distinctive training and support needs of operating business in rural areas'.*

**Local Objective 14**

*"To develop community space and infrastructure within the county that will ensure better access to ICT, Training, Language, Business and Public Services for hard to reach communities".*

The **Strategy for Fishing Dependent Communities in Donegal for the Period 2013-2020** together with the Axis 4 Programme and the other strategies that FLAGS implement will enable fishing communities to create new and sustainable sources of income to replace and enhance employment, income and quality of life in their local communities. There is a strong focus within this strategy on the inshore sector and the islands. It recognises that islanders face bigger challenges because of their location, peripherality, transportation costs, and alternative employment opportunities. There is also a strategic emphasis on environmental sustainability, renewables and marine innovation. These strategies recognise the potential of the coastal and island communities, in particular to generate tourism and enterprise development. These strategies are being implemented in conjunction with support from other agencies such as BIM, LYIT, Fáilte Ireland, the Local Enterprise Office and Donegal County Council. It is within this context that the LDS has been developed to support this work with particular reference to the island and coastal communities which have been further marginalised by the economic downturn.

Given the historical importance of the fishing industry to Donegal, its decline has shaped the development of the LDS and stimulated the need for fishing communities to diversify into other tourism base enterprises that focus on Donegal's local comparative advantage for example our deeply indented 1,134km of coastline forming natural sea

loughs, bays, peninsulas, dotted with islands and teeming with marine life and culture from a bygone era present a huge opportunity for marine tourism and cultural initiatives like Kayak hire, Hospitality, Seaweed Safaris, Coast Watch, Story of Lighthouses etc. There is also a requirement to add value to this primary sector via artisan production techniques like Artisan Smoking of Fish etc all of which are designed to create and nurture existing expertise skills and assets and thereby increase the future sustainability of the sector.

**Local Objective 12**

*'To build sustainable rural, coastal and island communities in County Donegal by focusing on local comparative advantage and nurturing existing expertise, skills and assets'.*

**Local Objective 19**

*'To support measures that strengthen island communities by improving access to basic services, increasing skill levels and empowering them to engage in all decisions regarding their future sustainability'.*

The **EPA Research Climate Water Sustainability Strategy 2014-2020** overarching aim is to (a) identify pressures on the current environment, (b) inform policy by generating evidence, reviewing practices and building models to inform policy, and (c) develop solutions using novel technologies and methods that address environmental challenges and provide green economic opportunities. Having regard to 'Climate', the strategy aims to make Ireland move towards a carbon neutral, low emission and climate resilient society and economy by 2050. It foresees achieving this by being a source of climate change, information and solutions. In terms of 'Water', the overall aim of the strategy is to support relevant water policy and to protect the water environment. A central objective is to achieve high quality water in Ireland. In terms of 'Sustainability', the strategy sets out the importance of the environment as a strategic and valuable asset, which needs to be managed and protected for all human beings to ensure good health and economic well being. It is recognised the value of natural capital and ecosystem services.

Through the role out of the LEADER programme, projects implemented will aim to safeguard and protect the environment from any adverse impacts on Conservation sites, Special Protection Areas, NUTURA 2000 sites etc.

The LAG sees the role of the circular economy to be pivotal in the Donegal context and makes provision in the LDS for reducing and reusing waste in an environmentally friendly manner while introducing the concept that waste can be a valuable resource. This process has endless benefits on different levels and can be applied to many sectors of our economy, for example; tourism, fishing, agriculture etc. For the individual it can add monetary value to waste by maximising the use of valuable material e.g.; fish bones to create fertilizer, and minimise the waste output. From an environmental perspective it reduces the need for landfill or safe disposal of materials that cost additional money to dispose of.

**Local Objective 18**

*'To support environmentally sustainable initiatives that promote energy conservation and energy independence, and do not impact negatively on the needs of future generations'.*

**Local Objective 22**

*'To support programmes and projects that assist with sustainable coastal zone management'.*

**Local Objective 23**

*'To explore local opportunities that utilise waste as a resource to reduce greenhouse gas emissions whilst also creating new growth and job opportunities such as better eco-design, waste prevention and reuse'.*

To conclude, this chapter sets out the alignment of the objectives of the LDS with the priorities of ten relevant local, regional, national and EU plans. It demonstrated how the cross cutting objectives are the fundamental building blocks used in planning the LDS and will be sustained during the implementation stage of the LDS.

## Section 6: Networking and Co-Operation

### 6.1 Networking

The implementation of the LEADER programme 2015-2020 presents an opportunity to disseminate learning, innovation and added value through best practice and participation across the far reaching networking structures of the Donegal LCDL led Local Action Group.

As part of the development of the Local Development Strategy a review of the networking structures within the LAG membership was undertaken. This collaborative exercise resulted in the identification of an extensive networking structure comprising some 60 network members. The sections which follow outline the characteristics of this network and how this structure can be maximised to add value and enhance the implementation of LEADER in Donegal. The networking structure attained is set out in Supplementary Information on Networking and Cooperation, Appendix 6.1, Table 1, Pg 1-8. While it is considered extensive, it must be noted that the entire networking structure of all LAG members is not included. In addition, these structures are continually developing in response to changing socio-economic challenges and opportunities.

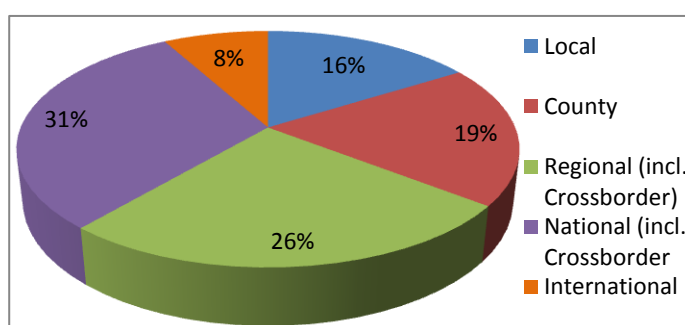
#### 6.1.1 Network Sectors

The structure is multi-sectoral in nature comprising bodies and groups across the following sectors; Tourism; Agriculture; Local & Regional Development; Community; Fishing; Business and Employment; Education & Training; Recreation, Energy; Culture; Health and Language. This broad spectrum covers the areas prioritised in the LDS. The LAG networking structure can therefore add value to forthcoming projects and initiatives.

#### 6.1.2 Network Levels

The workings of the LAG network are undertaken at a wide range of levels from highly strategic international interactions to local community consultations. While a number of bodies work across the range of levels, the overall breakdown is illustrated in adjacent figure.

Figure 1 Distribution of Network Member by Level



#### 6.1.3 Themes & Subthemes

A review of the topic areas covered by members of the LAG network revealed widespread coverage across the LEADER themes and subthemes. More than half of the groups which make up the LAG Network cover the sub themes of Enterprise Development (69%) and Basic Services Targeted at hard to Reach Communities (57%). Rural Tourism, Rural Towns, Rural Youth, Protection & Sustainable Use of Water Resources and Protection and Improvement of Local Biodiversity were covered by between 36% - 40% of groups on the network. Broadband at 15% and Development of Renewable Energy at 19% had the lowest coverage among network

members and is likely to be a reflection of the specialist nature of these sub themes. The Donegal Public Participation Network (PPN) is a key member of the LAG networking structure (representing key pillars such as environmental, energy, communications, etc). The PPN will play a key role in promoting LEADER activities and in the monitoring and evaluation of the programme. The figure below illustrates the actual number of groups covering the LEADER themes and sub themes.

**Figure 2 Coverage of LEADER Themes and Sub-Themes by Network Members**

Theme	Sub Theme				Total
Economic Development, Enterprise Development and Job Creation	Rural Tourism	Enterprise Development	Rural Towns	Broadband	–
	25	43	25	9	102
Social Inclusion	Basic Services targeted at hard to reach communities		Rural Youth		–
	35		22		57
Rural Environment	Protection and sustainable use of water resources	Protection and improvement of local biodiversity	Development of renewable energy		–
	23	24	12		59
Themes and Sub themes covered by LAG Network					218

#### 6.1.4 Adding Value to the LDS and the Implementation of LEADER

The above analysis of the LAG networking structure demonstrates it's suitability as a constructive forum in assisting the development of the LDS and in particular the local actions. Synergies can be developed by highlighting the work taking place through LEADER and through the work of the LCDC led LAG thereby identifying potential collaboration opportunities; branding & promotional work can be undertaken and potential partnerships can be developed. The review identified many methods of engagement which would add value to LEADER implementation in the County. Helpful information exchange, advice and guidance, would lead to a greater understanding of how the relevant issue(s) can be tackled at a wider level in the County. Such learning can lead to more effective network engagement and help reduce the occurrence of double funding, duplication deadweight, etc. resulting in a more effective and coordinated approach to project development and assessment. The scope of the network demonstrates its broad nature from local to regional to national and international and its diverse coverage in terms of the sectoral areas it represents. In terms of LEADER implementation, the LCDC led LAG networks can realistically add genuine value by ensuring the two way flow of information from local level to strategic level and back down to the grass roots. To achieve this on the ground, such information exchange must take place on a scheduled basis. These actions will serve to maximise the impact of LEADER projects and initiatives such as informing on best practice, avoiding pitfalls, engagement with similar current or past projects, developing co-operation projects, identifying gaps / priority areas resulting in significant project enhancement which will greatly increase the positive impact of LEADER in the rural communities of Donegal.

## 6.2 Co-Operation

### 6.2.1 The Donegal LAG - An Optimum Co-Operation Partner

Donegal's unique location and its social and cultural heritage as detailed in Section 2 continues to facilitate the development of many links at regional, national and international level. These linkages draw on the County's: extensive global diaspora networks; significant linguistic and cultural links through the Gaeltacht; distinct built, natural and cultural heritage, such as, maritime related, archaeology, ecology, landscape and vernacular & village architecture; border location including the impact of the troubles and the peace and reconciliation movement on the County; unique role in promoting and sustaining unique island communities and long term collaborative success in developing and implementing high level inter-territorial projects and programmes.

The diverse characteristics of the County have created unique opportunities in which regional challenges such as those associated with deprivation and peripherality can be tackled at the strategic level.

### 6.2.2 Building on Co-Operative Advantage

Partnership approaches and collaboration have been taking place between Donegal and many other regions for the past two decades. The working relationships that have formed and the expertise which has been gleaned from this work have made Donegal a lead co-operation partner in terms of project implementation and collaborative success regionally, nationally and internationally.

The EU Unit since its establishment within Donegal County Council in 2010 has worked extensively within various governance structures and funding streams and has undertaken significant projects with a range of partners at cross border, inter-territorial and international levels. A range of projects at various stages of development and implementation within the Unit are outlined in Supplementary Information on Networking and Cooperation, Table 2, Appendix 6.1, Pg 9 - 13. The programme of the Unit provides the LAG with an overview of the ongoing priorities and the types of project both taking place and currently under development. This will facilitate a coordinated approach increasing 'complementarity' between existing co-operation work and that being developed through the cooperation element of LEADER. The Donegal LAG has an ongoing commitment to partnership building internationally, nationally and across the region including on a cross border basis. Early stage collaborative exploration has led to the development of a number of working partnership commitments between the Donegal LAG and other regions such as Derry City and Strabane District, Causeway Coast and Glens, Fermanagh and Omagh, Sligo, Leitrim, Mayo, Galway, Cork, Scotland, UK, Wales, France, Spain, Portugal, Denmark, Finland, etc. The LAG considers such partnership and cooperation as a real opportunity to tackle a range of challenges and in particular those identified in the area needs analysis of the Local Development Strategy. These partnerships are continually developing with increasing levels of engagement such as a pre development meeting held in November 2015 between Donegal LAG members and members of the Derry Strabane LAG. The Donegal led LAG welcomes any future opportunity to participate in events aimed at partnership building and inter-territorial, transnational and international project development.



### 6.2.3 LAG Co-Operation Project Development Model

Project development work in respect of transnational and inter territorial co-operation shall:

1. Ensure proposals are consistent with LEADER goals and the objectives of the LDS.
2. Utilise the critical mass to be gained through co-operation, to drive the economic viability and sustainability of potential projects.
3. Ensure projects are of a sufficient scale, necessary to deliver at the strategic level.
4. Assess and encourage projects which demonstrate a high level of 'complementarity', i.e. can plug a critical gap, or will serve to progress meeting a strategic objective.
5. Ensure that potential projects do not displace another enterprise elsewhere.
6. Consider potential projects that incorporate and/or address the cross-cutting issues of climate change and the environment and those that represent new and locally innovative approaches.
7. Apply the principle of 'additionality' to potential projects, i.e. determine whether it would go ahead with normal public sector funding, or can be funded by other agencies or programmes.
8. Demonstrate a genuine added value (incl. the creation of important synergies) for the territories concerned.
9. Pool expertise and best practice and/or human and financial resources of partner areas.

### 6.2.4 Potential Project Priorities

The social, environmental and economic characteristics outlined in section 6.2.1 are in many cases mutually shared between the Donegal LAG and many potential co-operation partners at cross border level, nationally and internationally. Attributes and challenges commonly held between regions offer particular opportunities to stimulate and support sustainable and innovative rural development through promotion, collaboration and learning. Potential opportunities for co-operation are currently arising across the LEADER sub-themes. The nature of such initiatives is reflected in the action plan and encompasses, for example, the following broad areas:

- Promoting, protecting and increasing accessibility to natural, maritime, built & cultural heritage, through a range of measures such as, recreational trail development, harnessing the Wild Atlantic Way, maritime festivals, historical linkages and the development of recreation pursuits such as walking, cycling, sailing, mountain biking, surfing, rowing, kayaking, fishing, etc.

Inter regional and International exchange of best practice, learning and development, such as that held in the primary sector, by our island communities, Diaspora networks, agri-food sector, energy and broadband provision, youth entrepreneurship, linguistic and cultural promotion and development, enterprise development, tourism industry, water & environmental management, social farming initiatives, etc.

## Section 7: Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

### 7.1 Introduction: Overall Goals

A quality monitoring and evaluation plan is a key element in the development and implementation of any programme or project. The overall aim of the Donegal Monitoring & Evaluation Framework is to enable the quantitative and qualitative assessment of the Local Development Strategy 2014-2020. The LDS will be appraised in terms of development and performance so as to improve current and future management of outputs, outcomes and impacts of the LEADER element of the Rural Development Programme in County Donegal. The methodology outlined in this section which is consistent with the requirements of Operating Rules (Version 1.4 Section 6) and LEADER guidance documents will ensure a coherent and cohesive approach to monitoring and evaluation of LEADER 2014-2020 in Donegal.

### 7.2 Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

The framework comprises 6 key elements as outlined in fig. 1 below. It ranges in scale from low level output indicators (individual LEADER projects) to LDS outcome indicators (All LEADER Projects / LDS development) to programme impact indicators at strategic level overarching LEADER Objectives / RDP priorities/goals.



Figure 1 Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, Donegal LAG

### 7.3 Project Level Outputs

### 7.3.1 LEADER ICT System

At project level the chief monitoring tool will be the online LEADER ICT system. The LAG will use this software to capture a range of project information, such as the number of projects funded by type, number of employees, etc. The indicators to be inputted are listed in Supplementary Information on Monitoring, Review and Evaluation, Appendix 7.1, Table 1, Pg 1-4. The LAG will develop a series of forms and criteria for assessment and evaluation of potential projects. The main data source for these indicators will come from each project at various stages:

- **Application Stage** Most of the basic information on each project will be inputted at the point of application by the relevant Implementing Body (e.g. is it a new/existing project, how many [if any] are currently employed, and so on).<sup>48</sup>
- **Application Assessment Stage** The Implementing Partners shall complete a small number of fields on the ICT system as part of the assessment process and link the proposed project to one of the LDS local objectives, which, in turn, is related to one of the LEADER subthemes. Depending on the values entered at this stage, a relevant set of indicators on the ICT system will be associated with the project and a range of project indicators will be associated with each subtheme: Rural Tourism, Enterprise Development, Rural Towns, Broadband, Basic Services Targeted at Hard to Reach Communities, Rural Youth, Protection & Sustainable Use of Water Resources, Protection and Improvement of Local Biodiversity & Development of Renewable Energy. In order to evaluate the extent to which proposed projects address the 3 LEADER cross cutting themes (as required in the Operating Rules, 1.4 Section 6.3) the LAG will ensure that a mechanism for monitoring or screening projects in terms of how they complement, support and address issues regarding environmental impacts, impact on climate change and innovation is put in place. This may form part of the evaluation scoring card on the ICT system or in any case shall be built into the project selection / evaluation criteria.
- **Reporting on Project Outputs Stage** Each project is required to provide information on what has been delivered with the support of the funding through the indicators held on the ICT system. This reporting which will be undertaken by the Implementing Bodies shall also contain a qualitative element which will briefly describe the progress, achievements, and key learning from projects.<sup>48</sup> The timing of this reporting will depend on the type of project involved; final payment will only issue when all of the required data has been entered on the ICT system. Information related to some outputs will not be available immediately upon completion of the project such as capital projects where funding has been spent and reported before the facility has

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<sup>48</sup> As required in pages 33-36, LEADER Operating Rules (Version 1.4)

opened; in these cases, the outputs from the project will be entered no later than 12 months from the date of final payment.

The Lead Financial Partner will ensure that all projects comply fully with the above requirements through routine checks confirming data accuracy, consistency, and timeliness of reporting.

### 7.3.2 Project Case Studies

In addition to the above, the LAG will submit 4 Project Case Studies covering at least 2 different sub-themes for review. These will be carried out in each of the partnership areas by the Implementing Body and include information on the following aspects of the selected projects: Promoter background/description; Project / Business description; Products / Facilities / Services; Financial Information (previous funding / other sources of funding); Employment (current & potential); Compatibility with LDS / overall LEADER themes and cross cutting objectives; Benefit to the community.<sup>49</sup>

## 7.4 Programme Level Outcomes

### 7.4.1 Annual Report

Beginning in 2017, the LAG shall submit an Annual Report to the Department by the end of February each year mainly through the ICT system. This short report shall include:

- a) An outline of the achievements in the previous year relative to the priority actions identified and include information on the organisational structure, operations and decision-making within the LAG; issues or challenges encountered in the implementation during the year; particular successes to be highlighted; progress made in contributing to LEADER's cross cutting objectives.
- b) The priority actions for the year in which the report is produced.
- c) The Project Case Studies outlined in 7.3.2 above.<sup>2</sup>

The individual elements of the report outlined above shall be prepared by the Implementing Bodies and overseen by the LAG. For the first year of implementation (2016), the annual report will only include the priority actions.

### 7.4.2 LDS Development Appraisal

This element of the evaluation provides a review mechanism following the adoption of the Local Development Strategy. Evaluation of the LDS preparation and development will comprise a self evaluation by the LAG membership using a range of assessment techniques outlined below. While the evaluation tools and techniques to be used here will be developed, tested & coordinated by the Research & Policy Unit,

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<sup>49</sup> As required in pages 33-36, LEADER Operating Rules (Version 1.4)

Donegal County Council on behalf of the LAG, contributions and collaboration from the LAG membership will be essential.

- **LDS Development Survey** This survey will take the form of a questionnaire designed to attain the opinions of the LAG membership around a number of elements central to the preparation of the LDS in areas such as participation, communication, efficiencies, action plan content etc.
- **Community Participation** As outlined in Section 3, community participation is at the heart of the development of each stage of the LDS. Therefore, a key evaluation tool will be an assessment of the level of community participation at grass roots level. This will be carried out through the analysis of a number of quantitative and qualitative indicators such as: numbers attending workshops, numbers of submissions made, type of groups attending consultations, numbers undertaking training, community centre participation, relevance of actions to community proposals, etc. (LDS Section 3: 'Participative Planning' refers).
- **Strategic Fit** The evaluation will also assess the extent to which the LDS is strategically consistent with the RDP and LECP. In order to achieve this, the LAG shall carry out a cross-cutting exercise between the objectives of each plan.

## 7.5 Strategic Level Impacts

### 7.5.1 LDS Objectives

A number of indicators captured through the online system will prove useful in evaluating how the implementation of the LDS is meeting the LEADER objectives in Donegal. However, to enable a uniform and inclusive measurement it is vital that a series of indicators are developed which evaluate and monitor the progress or otherwise being made on each objective. These indicators will evaluate trends specific to each objective of the LDS, thereby capturing any potential impacts occurring on the ground as a result of the targeted approach used in the LDS in these specific areas. A baseline for each indicator will be captured as the project commences, those sourced from the Census shall use results from 2016 and 2021. Where indicators allow, a midterm review will capture progress at the halfway point in the programme. A final data capture for each indicator will take place as the programme closes. The Research and Policy Unit of Donegal County Council will oversee this element of the framework on behalf of the LAG. A full list of the indicators is provided in Supplementary Information on Monitoring, Review and Evaluation, Appendix 7.1, Table 2, Pg 5-8.

### 7.5.2 RDP Priority 6

The LEADER element of the RDP is programmed under Priority 6 which aims to promote social inclusion, poverty reduction and the economic development of rural

areas. As well as providing for the monitoring and evaluation of LEADER at project output level and LDS objective level it is also important to measure progress being made through initiatives such as LEADER in meeting these overarching objectives at the higher strategic level. The frequency of RDP evaluation will be every 6 years in line with census data for 2016 and 2021. The Research and Policy Unit, Donegal County Council on behalf of the Lead Financial Partner will oversee this element of the framework. 12 targeted indicators will be developed, agreed and monitored through the LCDC led LAG such as those in table 3 below.

**Table 3: Impact Indicators and Targets**

Impact Indicator	2011 Level	Target 2016	Target 2020
Employment			
Deprivation			
Population			
Health of Population			

It is envisaged that monitoring of other LEADER projects under Co-operation, REDZs or Artisan Food will be undertaken in a fashion similar to that outlined above.

## 7.6 Data Protection

The implementation of the LEADER Programme 2014-2020 in Co. Donegal shall be consistent with the policies set out in Donegal County Council's Data Protection Statement<sup>50</sup> in respect of LEADER elements under the control and remit of the Donegal LAG, including:

*"Any personal data provided by you to us will be held in accordance with the data protection principles set out in the Data Protection (Amendment) Act, 2003, the Data Protection Act, 1988, Electronic Commerce Act, 2000, and other relevant EU and Irish legislation."*

It is important to note that information submitted as part of a project application shall be uploaded to a national online management system in line with the LEADER Operating Rules. Data protection in this regard shall be the responsibility of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government whom shall (in accordance with the operating rules) be compliant with all regulatory requirements of that department. The LAG shall ensure that all project promoters will be furnished with the data protection information outlined in this section..

<sup>50</sup> <http://www.donegalcoco.ie/footer/dataprotectionstatement/>



## Section 8: Financial Plan

### Summary Sheet

	2015 (€)	2016 (€)	2017 (€)	2018 (€)	2019 (€)	2020 (€)	Total (€)
<b>Preparatory Support for the Development of the LDS</b>	€37,213	€16,787	€0	€0	€0	€0	<b>€54,000</b>
<b>Implementation of operations/projects under the LDS</b>							
Theme 1: Economic Development, Enterprise Development & Job Creation	€0	€202,687	€1,362,993	€1,397,106	€967,087	€749,330	<b>€4,679,202</b>
Theme 2: Social Inclusion	€0	€178,751	€873,193	€899,051	€953,913	€735,294	<b>€3,640,202</b>
Theme 3: Rural Environment	€0	€86,080	€303,816	€329,450	€366,409	€226,247	<b>€1,312,002</b>
<b>LAG Administration &amp; Animation Costs</b>	€0	€505,748	€700,205	€677,765	€663,665	€681,084	<b>€3,228,467</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>€37,213</b>	<b>€990,053</b>	<b>€3,240,206</b>	<b>€3,303,372</b>	<b>€2,951,073</b>	<b>€2,391,956</b>	<b>€12,913,873</b>

	Cost (€)	% of Total Budget Cost	Validation
<b>Total Administration &amp; Animation Costs:</b>	<b>€3,228,467</b>	25%	Okay

#### Explanatory Notes

- 1 The total cost for animation and administration cannot exceed 25% of the Total Budget Cost. If administration and animation costs exceed 25%, the budget must be revised.
- 2 This sheet should be automatically filled in with figures from the other templates. Please contact Pobal directly if this is not the case.

## Implementation of Operations/Projects under the LDS

	2015 (€)	2016 (€)	2017 (€)	2018 (€)	2019 (€)	2020 (€)	Total €
<b>Preparatory Support for the Development of the LDS</b>							
Preparatory Costs for the LDS	€37,213	€16,787					€54,000
<b>Theme 1: Economic / Enterprise Development &amp; Job Creation</b>							
Rural Tourism - Tourism Offering (1)	€0	€46,466	€427,161	€415,770	€257,655	€125,682	€1,272,735
Rural Tourism - Promote Recreation (2)	€0	€28,037	€174,560	€185,619	€82,019	€120,469	€590,705
Enterprise Development - Enterprise Ecosystem (3)	€0	€16,989	€100,176	€102,797	€103,463	€20,097	€343,522
Enterprise Development - Local Produce (4)	€0	€6,866	€66,354	€68,976	€74,219	€67,974	€284,389
Enterprise Development - Job Creation (5)	€0	€16,610	€61,963	€67,207	€66,693	€54,576	€267,050
Enterprise Development - Social Enterprise (6)	€0	€7,927	€108,476	€101,098	€66,341	€59,035	€342,878
Enterprise Development - Facilitate Research (7)	€0	€6,866	€26,354	€28,976	€24,219	€17,974	€104,389
Enterprise Development - Heritage (8)	€0	€7,366	€69,974	€75,218	€35,704	€81,582	€269,843
Enterprise Development - Cultural Development (9)	€0	€24,142	€90,995	€96,238	€94,193	€35,826	€341,395
Rural Town - Stimulate rural towns and villages (10)	€0	€25,720	€174,426	€187,413	€88,386	€103,653	€579,598
Broadband - Connected Place (11)	€0	€15,698	€62,552	€67,795	€74,193	€62,461	€282,699
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>€0</b>	<b>€202,687</b>	<b>€1,362,993</b>	<b>€1,397,106</b>	<b>€967,087</b>	<b>€749,330</b>	<b>€4,679,202</b>
<b>Theme 2: Social Inclusion</b>							
Basic Services - Sustain rural, coastal & island Communities (12)	€0	€16,597	€36,181	€39,167	€48,138	€35,527	€175,610
Basic Services - Inclusive Communities (13)	€0	€26,464	€129,033	€133,519	€138,349	€105,644	€533,009
Basic Services - Community Space & Infrastructure (14)	€0	€40,436	€315,043	€318,501	€319,703	€220,724	€1,214,406
Basic Services - Participation Digital Society (15)	€0	€11,110	€28,213	€27,956	€32,441	€24,075	€123,794
Basic Services - Irish as Living Language (16)	€0	€11,110	€21,963	€21,706	€26,191	€17,825	€98,794
Basic Services - Social Enterprise (17)	€0	€13,353	€103,691	€105,677	€114,649	€106,282	€443,653
Basic Services - Environmentally Sustainable Initiatives (18)	€0	€13,216	€41,654	€50,626	€68,570	€62,325	€236,392
Basic Services - Strengthen Island Communities (19)	€0	€26,367	€32,734	€32,734	€32,734	€4,367	€128,935
Rural Youth - Address Isolation (20)	€0	€15,853	€156,191	€160,677	€164,649	€156,282	€653,653
Rural Youth - Rural Transport (21)	€0	€4,245	€8,489	€8,489	€8,489	€2,245	€31,957
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>€0</b>	<b>€178,751</b>	<b>€873,193</b>	<b>€899,051</b>	<b>€953,913</b>	<b>€735,294</b>	<b>€3,640,202</b>
<b>Theme 3: Rural Environment</b>							
Protection & Sustainable Water - Coastal Protection (22)	€0	€13,517	€52,816	€57,088	€65,632	€38,190	€227,243
Protection & Sustainable Water - Reducing Waste (23)	€0	€8,531	€23,470	€29,878	€42,695	€38,573	€143,146
Protection & Sustainable Water - Improve Water Quality (24)	€0	€4,258	€20,653	€22,789	€27,061	€19,502	€94,264
Local Biodiversity - Value Environment Benefits (25)	€0	€14,578	€43,634	€47,906	€56,451	€32,689	€195,258
Local Biodiversity - Enhance Rich Biosphere (26)	€0	€23,189	€102,651	€106,924	€105,468	€53,989	€392,221
Renewable Energy - Renewable Technology (27)	€0	€22,006	€60,593	€64,865	€69,101	€43,304	€259,870
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>€0</b>	<b>€86,080</b>	<b>€303,816</b>	<b>€329,450</b>	<b>€366,409</b>	<b>€226,247</b>	<b>€1,312,002</b>
<b>Total Budget Cost</b>	<b>€37,213</b>	<b>€484,305</b>	<b>€2,540,001</b>	<b>€2,625,607</b>	<b>€2,287,408</b>	<b>€1,710,872</b>	<b>€9,685,406</b>

### Explanatory Notes

- Preparatory Support:** this cost relates to preparatory supports for the development of the LDS for 2015 as referenced in the Expression of Interest (Stage 1 of the LDS Selection Process).
- Sub-Themes:** LAGs are required to provide an estimated annual breakdown of expenditure against each LDS local objective, which is aligned to a sub-theme. NB: actual expenditure will not be monitored against this estimate. It is acknowledged that the financial estimates will change over the course of the programme.
- The details provided under each Sub-Theme and Local Objective number above should correspond with the information provided in Appendix 1: LDS Action Plan Template (Document 2: LDS Framework Guidelines)

- 1 **Preparatory Support:** this cost relates to preparatory supports for the development of the LDS for 2015 as referenced in the Expression of Interest (Stage 1 of the LDS Selection Process).
- 2 **Sub-Themes:** LAGs are required to provide an estimated annual breakdown of expenditure against each LDS local objective, which is aligned to a sub-theme. NB: actual expenditure will not be monitored against this estimate. It is acknowledged that the financial estimates will change over the course of the programme.
- 3 The details provided under each Sub-Theme and Local Objective number above should correspond with the information provided in Appendix 1: LDS Action Plan Template (Document 2: LDS Framework Guidelines)
- 4 Please contact Pobal if an additional number of objectives are required.

## Administration & Animation Costs

	2015 (€)	2016 (€)	2017 (€)	2018 (€)	2019 (€)	2020 (€)	Total (€)
Rent and Rates	€0	€16,879	€18,780	€18,780	€18,780	€13,780	€86,999
Office Costs	€0	€14,674	€20,120	€17,120	€17,120	€15,620	€84,654
Insurance	€0	€4,075	€4,950	€4,950	€4,950	€4,950	€23,875
Recruitment	€0	€3,754	€0	€0	€0	€0	€3,754
Staffing - Salaries	€0	€401,373	€579,525	€562,385	€562,385	€530,808	€2,636,476
Staff Training	€0	€2,625	€2,500	€2,500	€2,500	€1,000	€11,125
Communications/Publicity/Advertising	€0	€9,292	€9,500	€7,500	€5,000	€5,000	€36,292
Evaluation	€0	€2,350	€2,900	€2,900	€2,300	€2,300	€12,750
Financial/Professional Fees	€0	€8,654	€9,900	€9,900	€9,900	€9,900	€48,254
Travel & Subsistence	€0	€29,322	€39,930	€39,630	€32,630	€32,626	€174,138
Animation Costs	€0	€10,400	€9,000	€9,000	€5,000	€10,000	€43,400
Other	€0	€2,350	€3,100	€3,100	€3,100	€55,100	€66,750
<b>Total Budget Cost</b>	<b>€0</b>	<b>€505,748</b>	<b>€700,205</b>	<b>€677,765</b>	<b>€663,665</b>	<b>€681,084</b>	<b>€3,228,467</b>

### Explanatory Notes

- The total cost for animation and administration cannot exceed 25% of the Total Budget Cost.** See Summary Sheet for validation.
- Rent and Rates:** This cost refers to the rental cost of LEADER office; electricity and heating costs; service charges; and any Local Authority rates.
- Office Costs:** This cost includes but is not confined to other overhead costs such as: postage and couriers, mobile, landline, fax, broadband, printing and office supplies, IT maintenance, repairs and maintenance, purchase / lease of equipment, sundry expenses.
- Insurance:** This cost covers insurance for both premises and staff.
- Staffing:** This covers the entire LEADER salary budget for each year including Employers PRSI and pension contributions. See staffing sheet for more information.
- Communications/Publicity/Advertising:** This includes the animation costs involved in raising awareness of the LDS strategy and other communication costs that relate to LEADER.
- Evaluation:** This cost may include the fees of external evaluators and any other costs involved in the implementation of an evaluation strategy (e.g. data collection, surveys, focus groups)
- Financial/Professional Fees:** These costs include legal costs; audit and accountancy costs. NB: Bank interest or loan interest is not an eligible cost.
- Travel & Subsistence:** These costs refer to T&S incurred in the management or administration of LEADER by the staff of the LAG.
- Animation Costs:** These are any costs incurred in promoting the LDS in the sub-regional area such as capacity building and training and technical support for potential Project promoters. Costs may include venue hire, materials, sub-contractors with expertise in specific areas (e.g. facilitation, training, enterprise, economic development etc.). This cost does not include any salary costs relating to LEADER staff or any publicity / awareness raising costs. These are covered by other budget lines. Any costs associated with the preparation of the LDS is not to be included as animation costs.
- Other costs:** This budget relates to board costs, bank charges and a provision for other ad hoc costs. The budgeted other administration cost of €55,000 in 2020 relates to statutory redundancy costs and other provisions. These costs also include incidental expenses which arise during the period of the year and which cannot be foreseen, in particular servicing of various equipment such as the photocopier and computers.

## Staffing Costs

Title of Staff Role / Position	Full Time Equivalent	2015 (€)	2016 (€)	2017 (€)	2018 (€)	2019 (€)	2020 (€)	Total (€)
CEO (DLDC)	0.3	€0	€22,131	€29,509	€29,509	€29,509	€29,509	€140,167
Company Finance Manager (DLDC)	0.3	€0	€13,134	€17,513	€17,513	€17,513	€17,513	€83,186
Finance Officer (DLDC)	0.3	€0	€8,454	€11,271	€11,271	€11,271	€11,271	€53,538
Administration Officer (DLDC)	0.3	€0	€8,454	€11,271	€11,271	€11,271	€11,271	€53,538
RDP Manager (DLDC)	1	€0	€50,786	€67,715	€67,715	€67,715	€67,715	€321,646
RDP Project Officer (DLDC)	1	€0	€38,528	€51,370	€51,370	€51,370	€51,370	€244,008
RDP Project Officer (DLDC)	1	€0	€28,178	€37,571	€37,571	€37,571	€37,571	€178,462
RDP Project Officer (DLDC)	1	€0	€0	€17,140	€0	€0	€0	€17,140
Manager / CEO (IDP)	0.8	€0	€63,431	€82,460	€82,460	€82,460	€69,774	€380,585
Development Officer (IDP)	1	€0	€39,260	€51,038	€51,038	€51,038	€43,414	€235,788
Development Officer (IDP)	1	€0	€38,309	€49,802	€49,802	€49,802	€42,140	€229,855
Financial Officer (IDP)	0.5	€0	€18,023	€23,430	€23,430	€23,430	€19,825	€108,138
Manager (Udaras)	0.2	€0	€10,750	€21,500	€21,500	€21,500	€21,500	€96,750
Development Officer (Udaras)	0.6	€0	€17,500	€35,000	€35,000	€35,000	€35,000	€157,500
Development Officer (Udaras)	0.4	€0	€12,000	€24,000	€24,000	€24,000	€24,000	€108,000
Administrator (Udaras)	1	€0	€16,500	€33,000	€33,000	€33,000	€33,000	€148,500
CEO (Comhar na nOilean)	0.2	€0	€4,040	€4,040	€4,040	€4,040	€4,040	€20,200
Project Officer (Comhar na nOilean)	0.2	€0	€3,430	€3,430	€3,430	€3,430	€3,430	€17,150
Project Officer (Comhar na nOilean)	0.2	€0	€3,262	€3,262	€3,262	€3,262	€3,262	€16,310
Financial Administrator (Comhar na nOilean)	0.2	€0	€2,893	€2,893	€2,893	€2,893	€2,893	€14,465
Administrator (Comhar na nOilean)	0.2	€0	€2,310	€2,310	€2,310	€2,310	€2,310	€11,550
								€0
								€0
								€0
								€0
<b>Total:</b>	<b>11.7</b>	<b>€0</b>	<b>€401,373</b>	<b>€579,525</b>	<b>€562,385</b>	<b>€562,385</b>	<b>€530,808</b>	<b>€2,636,476</b>

### Explanatory Notes

- 1 The total staffing costs outlined above must equal the staffing costs in the Administration/Animation Budget Sheet.
- 2 When including the salary costs, only include the amount of costs being allocated for work completed on Leader. i.e. if 0.6 of an FTE is being allocated to Leader only 60% of the total salary costs should be charged to the programme. The salary cost for each member of staff must include



**Explanatory Notes**

- 1** The total staffing costs outlined above must equal the staffing costs in the Administration/Animation Budget Sheet.
- 2** When including the salary costs, only include the amount of costs being allocated for work completed on Leader. i.e. if 0.6 of an FTE is being allocated to Leader only 60% of the total salary costs should be charged to the programme. The salary cost for each member of staff must include Employers' PRSI and any pension contributions.
- 3** The full-time equivalent is the actual time that funded staff will allocate to LEADER activities. This takes into account staff who may be funded to work part-time on LEADER and part-time on other programmes. Where staff time is apportioned to LEADER and other funding programmes, the amount of public funding cannot exceed 100% of the total salary cost. Please indicate the full-time equivalent as follows:  
**5 day week = 1 FTE**  
**4 day week = 0.8 FTE**  
**3 day week = 0.6 FTE**  
**2 day week = 0.4 FTE**  
**1 day week = 0.2 FTE**
- 4** As part of the LDS, a job description must be provided for each member of LEADER staff (see Section 1 of the LDS Framework).
- 5.** The staff charged by Údarás na Gaeltachta to the LDS have been selected as they have the necessary skills and years of experience to do the additional work that the LDS requires, however their previous positions in the company would have to be backfilled. These staff will work on all aspects of the project lifecycle from animation, administration; project aftercare etc and timesheets will be supplied to cover the amount of time allocated to work on the LDS



## Section 10: Declaration and Disclaimer

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By submitting the Local Development Strategy (LDS), the Local Action Group (LAG) authorises the submission and declares that the information provided in relation to the organisation described in this LDS is true and complete to the best of its knowledge and belief.

The LAG acknowledges that any funds awarded must be used for the purpose stated and not used to replace existing funding. The LAG also understands that information supplied in, or accompanying this application may be made available on request under the Freedom of Information Acts 2014.

The LAG accepts, as a condition of the award of a grant, that it involves no commitment to any other grants from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government or Pobal. The LAG is agreeable to ongoing programme monitoring by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government and / or its agents and to allowing access to premises and records, as necessary, for that purpose.

The LAG also accepts that Pobal may contact other public funding organisations or Government Departments to discuss this application and previous funding awarded, as part of the appraisal process.

By submitting this Local Development Strategy application, the LAG acknowledges that it has read, understood and accepted the Framework Guidelines of the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 Ireland.

**Name (Print)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Position** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_